BASIC ROLEPLAYING

UNIVERSAL GAME ENGINE

JASON DURALL AND STEVE PERRIN

CHAOSIUM INC.

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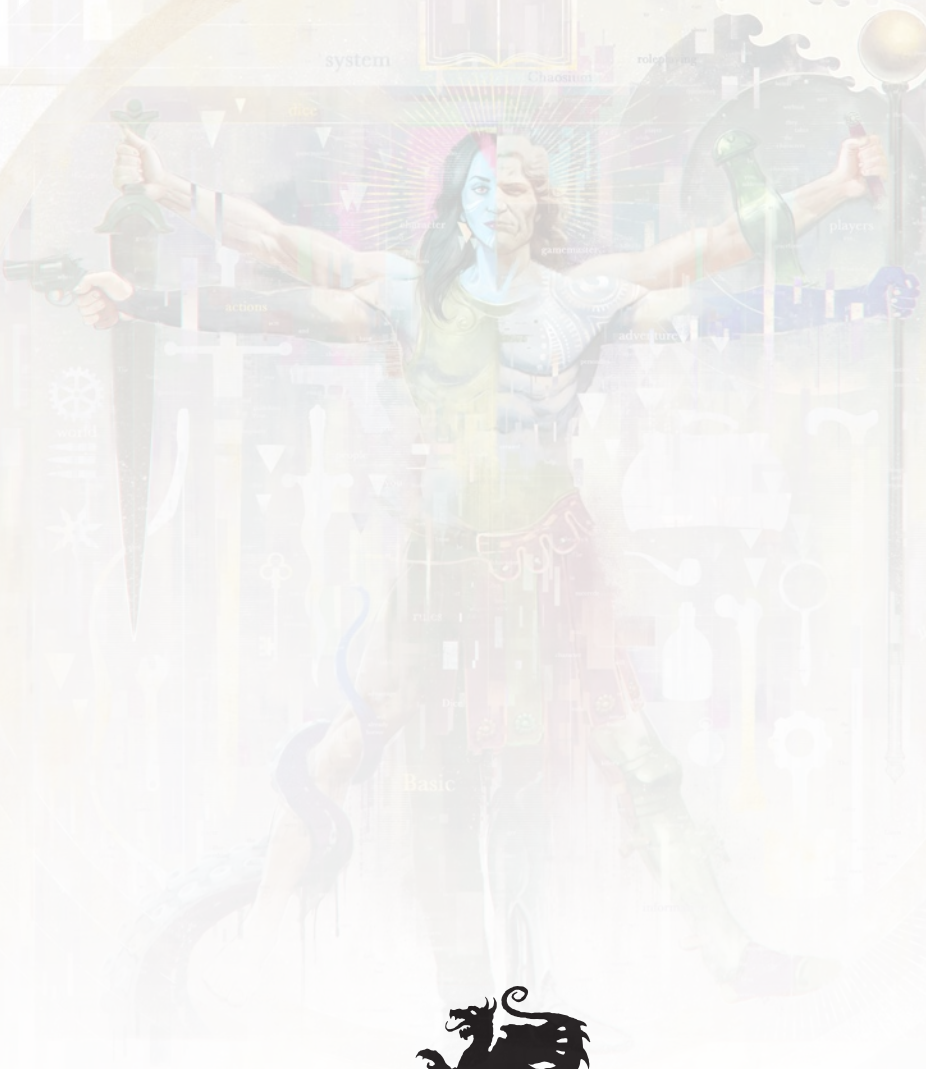

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Chaosium's Basic Roleplaying system, one of most influential roleplaying game systems in the world.

If you're familiar with roleplaying games or have played other Chaosium Inc. games like *Call of Cthulhu* or *RuneQuest*, you can skip through much of this introduction. This covers the basics of roleplaying games, a description of the Basic Roleplaying system. For veteran players, the only section in this introduction you should pay attention to is the *Optional Rules* sidebar on page 6.

If roleplaying games are new to you, keep reading.

Basic Roleplaying is a roleplaying game system. In a roleplaying game, one player usually takes on the role of the **gamemaster** (GM), while the other player(s) assume the roles of **player characters** (PCs). The gamemaster also acts out the roles of characters who aren't being guided by players: these are called **nonplayer characters** (NPCs). The system of a roleplaying game is a framework of rules to allow players to perform something like improvisational theater—usually seated or online with videoconferencing—and with dice (or dice rolling apps) determining whether the characters succeed or fail at what they attempt to do.

This introduction is aimed at you, the player, though it is also useful for the gamemaster.

THE BASICS OF ROLEPLAYING

Roleplaying is a form of social gaming, acting out a semi- to fully-improvised story. As a player, you create and play a role in the game as a player character: you and your fellow players are the protagonists, the heroes around whom the stories revolve. A group may be as small as one player and one gamemaster, or much larger, up to six or more players.

Your character might be a swaggering gunfighter, a cynical private eye, a gritty superhero, or a humble spacefarer trying to make ends meet. The gamemaster, on the other hand, devises and presents the situations you and other players adventure through, describing the world where you exist and how that world is affected by your actions. While you as a player act out only one role, the gamemaster presents the entire game setting—acting as its people, places, monsters, and even gods.

The gamemaster usually has an adventure for you—an interactive scenario in which you can interact with other imaginary gamemaster-controlled characters, the nonplayer characters mentioned above. Play is mostly conversation and negotiation, and resolving outcomes when they are in question.

Play usually follows this format:

- The gamemaster outlines some situation or encounter.
- Next, you and the other players say what your characters propose to do.
- The gamemaster responds through the actions or words of nonplayer characters, monsters, or the environment.
- If an outcome is in doubt and is important to the progress of the story, roll dice to determine what happens, using the characters' abilities as guidelines.
- You and the other players respond in turn.

This continues through various scenes and encounters, ideally forming something like a story, though happening at its own pace and shape. In this back-and-forth conversation, you and the other players embody your roles and the gamemaster describes the world and events in it. You use rules and roll dice to help determine what you can do, and whether you succeed or fail at what you try to do, when it is important. Your characters face challenges and conflicts, using abilities that you have defined using these rules.

As a player, you usually create your character yourself, using these rules to define their abilities in quantifiable terms. These abilities are qualities like strength, intelligence, speed, education, skills, but they can also be magic powers, passionate beliefs or feelings about certain topics, or innate special abilities.

Further, before and during play you get to create other abstract elements that make up a person—their personality—usually evoked by how you play or describe your character. For example, though there is no numerical value for "irritable", you may speak in such a manner and give that sort of personality to your character. Your character's abilities are a cross between a resume and a report card: they define what they can

do, and how good (or bad) they are at it. The rest is roleplaying, which brings your character to life.

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

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

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

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

Part of the pleasure in roleplaying is the interaction and cooperation between players: a novel gives solitary pleasure, but roleplaying gives the satisfaction of improv theater, where together you make a story evolve and sometimes go in unexpected directions.

In a spy thriller, the audience sees a spy, the protagonist, walking toward a closed door. The camera switches to the other side of the door, revealing a masked assassin waiting silently, silenced pistol out and ready.

The camera cuts back to the spy's hand on the doorknob, and then back to the killer's eyes.

The assumption is that the spy does not know about the assassin.

The door opens, and the assassin moves forward and shoots!

Is the spy there, to be shot unwittingly, or did they sense the assassin and get out of the way?

Cooperation among players is important in successfully completing the task or quest the situation is focused around, and in making the game enjoyable for all. You are not only the actors, but the audience as well. Success in roleplaying comes not from players bent on eliminating each other, as in chess or backgammon, but in memorably adopting the personae of characters quite different from themselves, and in reacting as those characters would to otherworldly scenes and creatures.

The rules in this book provide guidelines first for you to create a character in the gamemaster's world and for the gamemaster to represent the world they want you to explore, with rules to cover most situations and conditions.

Additionally, many optional rules are provided allowing the gamemaster the ability to add complexity to the system as desired. These optional rules are not suitable for every genre or type of game, and should be used selectively by the gamemaster to craft the most enjoyable and suitable game experience for all.

The Purpose of Play

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

The flipside of that is that if the players are not enjoying themselves, something is wrong. Their characters can be suffering, failing spectacularly, and even dying in the course of play, but this is still within the realm of fun. It is not fun when players are abusive or wreck the fun for others—through unkind language or discrimination, or through portrayal of scenes that the players find uncomfortable or personally stressful.

As such, the gamemaster should think of themselves as the host of a party. Make sure everyone is having a good time, check periodically that everything is fine, and pay special attention to any behavior or language that can take away from other players' experience.

Responsibilities of the Players

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

You don't need to know much about the game rules, especially if you're just getting started. Read the *Creating a Character* two-page spread on pages 18-19 , since you'll want to create a character to play. Examine the *Terms Used in Basic Roleplaying* section later in this chapter. When you have time, skim *Chapter 2: Characters* and *Chapter 5: System* and *Chapter 6: Combat* to get some familiarity with the game rules. If the setting you'll be playing in has powers of any sort, read *Chapter 4: Powers* for more information on those. As you can, become familiar with the rules. There's also a one-page summary of the game system on page 195.

The first eight chapters of this book are directed at players and gamemasters. *Chapter 9: Gamemastering* through *Chapter 12: Appendices* are specifically directed at the gamemaster alone, so if you are only a player, there's no need to read further and spoil your fun.

Responsibilities of the Gamemaster

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

To be a gamemaster, read all of the rules sections, and become familiar with the rest of the book. The gamemaster chapters provide guidelines for gamemastering and *Chapter 11: Encounters* includes a ready-to-use variety of nonplayer characters. Know the general procedures for combat and powers, but don't feel you need to memorize everything—most questions can be answered as they arise.

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

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

Length of Play

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

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

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

The Basic Roleplaying System

The Basic Roleplaying system was first created in 1978 for *RuneQuest*, a roleplaying game set in Greg Stafford's fantasy world of Glorantha. The basic mechanics, designed by Steve Perrin, Steve Henderson, and Ray Turney, were viewed as an easier and more intuitive set of game mechanics than those few other roleplaying game systems existing at that time. A second edition of *RuneQuest* was published in 1980. Chaosium published several other games based on the rules. The most influential and widely known is Sandy Petersen's *Call of Cthulhu*, adapting H.P. Lovecraft's world of cosmic horror in the first horror roleplaying game.

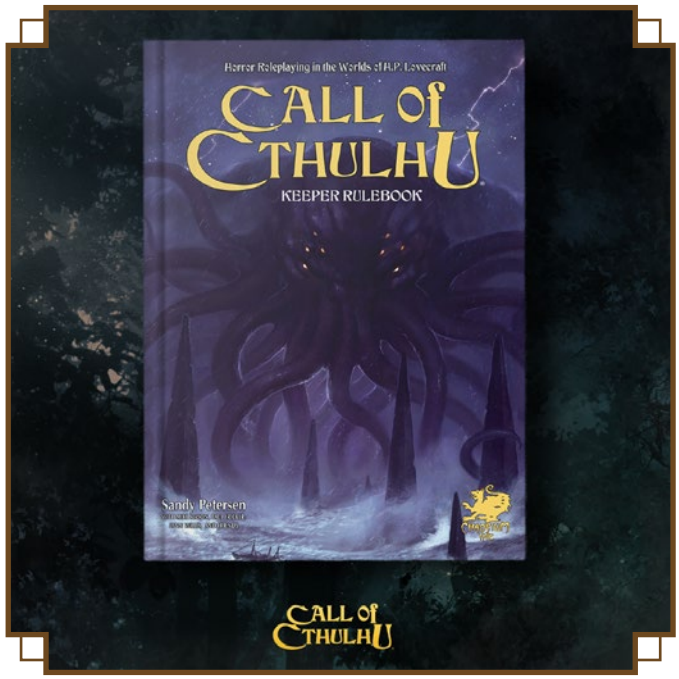
Worlds of Wonder contained three different games—*Fantasy World*, *Future World*, and *Superworld*—using Basic Roleplaying, fully compatible with one another. This was later followed by *Pendragon*, Greg Stafford's critically acclaimed game of Arthurian adventure, which used a modified version of Basic Roleplaying), then an expanded version of *Superworld*, and others.

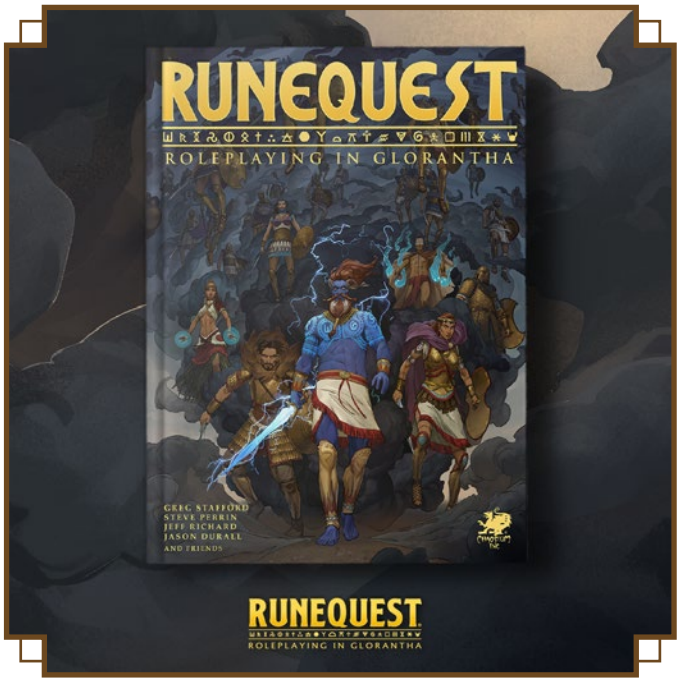
Furthermore, Basic Roleplaying has influenced many other game systems directly or indirectly, particularly in Europe, where many games are openly based on its system. One of the most famous of these is Äventyrsspel's *Drakar och Demoner (Demons and Dragons)*, whose creator had been an intern at Chaosium in its early days.

Through *Call of Cthulhu*, *RuneQuest*, and the many other games it is based on, Basic Roleplaying is still one of the more popular systems in gaming, and many of its innovations are standard in roleplaying games today.

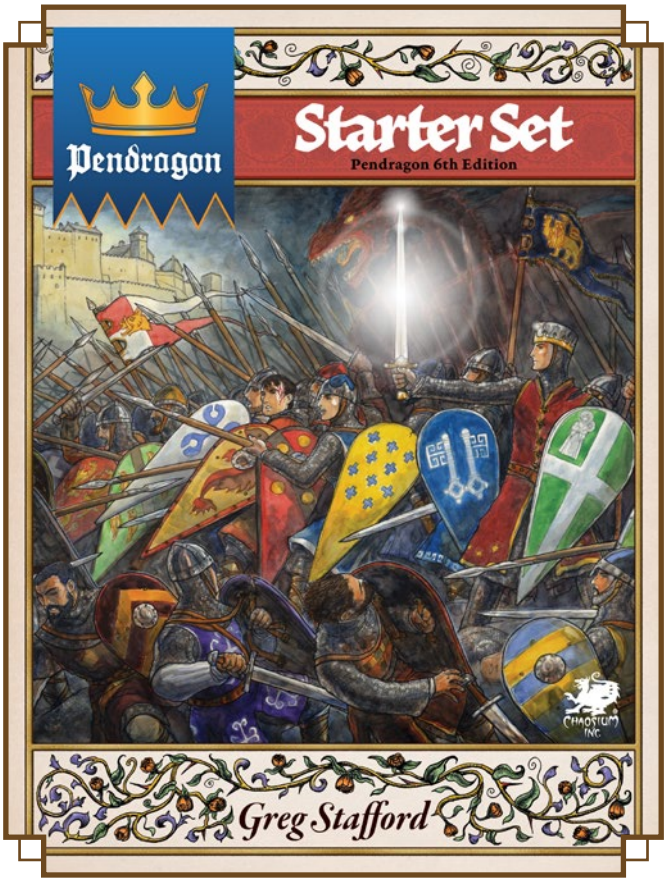
The rules were designed to be intuitive and easy to play. Character attributes follow a 3D6 curve and weapons use various dice types, but its other mechanics are even simpler. Virtually all rolls to determine success or failure of a task use percentile dice, the chance of success expressed as a percentage, an extremely easy concept for beginners and experienced players alike.

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





- The system is friendly to newcomers. It is easy to describe the basics of the game system and the percentile mechanic to newcomers.
- Players of other game systems coming to Basic Roleplaying find it to be much less mechanistic and less of a barrier to the actual act of roleplaying. Less time spent on game systems usually equals more time available for roleplaying and thinking "in character."
- Most of the information players need to know is present on their character sheets.
- Characters tend to evolve based on practicing the skills they use the most. You do something well, you learn from that, and you are more likely to be successful at it later. Characters do not arbitrarily improve based on abstract elements such as levels or experience points.



- Combat can be very quick and deadly, and often the deciding blow in a conflict is the one to land first.
- The system is remarkably modular: levels of complexity can be added or removed as needed, and the core system works equally well with considerable detail as it does with a minimal number of rules.
- The system's internal consistency allows for rules judgments to be made rapidly and with little searching through the rulebook for special cases.

This book represents a first for Basic Roleplaying—complete and unto itself. Previously, Basic Roleplaying has served as the core of many standalone games, usually with rich and deep world settings, and some of these different incarnations have had variant and sometimes contradictory rules.

Here, these different variations of the system are unified and made compatible with one another. Optional rules allow the gamemaster and players to suit the rules to their desired settings, or can even be used to expand gameplay for other games in the Basic Roleplaying family, or any of the many other games that work along a similar mechanic.

TERMS USED IN BASIC ROLEPLAYING

The following terms are used frequently in this book. Some are common in roleplaying games, and are provided as an aid to new and experienced gamers alike. Each is explained at length in relevant sections, marked by a page reference.

Ability: Something a character can do or feel, whether a skill, a passion, or some other factor rated on a 1–100 rating. Generally when you roll an ability successfully, you get an experience check (page 5).

Allegiance: An optional system measuring devotion to a spiritual being, principle, or deity, improved by performing favored actions (page 211).

Augment: Using one ability to modify the chance of success using another ability, such as when one skill provides additional support to another, or a passion can help improve the chance of a skill succeeding (page 38).

Base Chance: The default chance at succeeding with a skill a character has no training or experience in.

> ***For example**, on the character sheet, Hide (20%) means that even if your character has not invested any skill points in the Hide skill, they have a 20% natural ability in it (page 36).*

Base Range: The normal distance within which a missile weapon can hit a target (page 163).

Character: The role you assume in a game session, described in game mechanics by values such as characteristics and skill totals. Generally, characters have names and backgrounds determined by the player, with assistance and/or approval from the gamemaster. (see also **player character** and **nonplayer character**, page 5).

Characteristic: Your character's physical, mental, and spiritual attributes (Strength, Constitution, Size, Intelligence, Power, Dexterity, and Charisma), rated numerically on a scale (usually 3–18), with a human average being 10-11.

> ***For example**, if the initial maximum characteristic is 18, a STR 17 means your character is extremely strong, while a DEX 7 means they are a bit clumsy (page 21).*

Characteristic Roll: One of your character's characteristics multiplied by a number (Intelligence ×3, for example), expressed as a percentage, and rolled with percentile dice. A characteristic roll is usually ×5, but other multiples may be used.

> ***For example**, if your character's Intelligence characteristic is 14, they have a 42% chance at succeeding with a characteristic check with a multiple of ×3 (page 110).*

Combat Round: A 12-second (or equivalent) amount of time imposed during combat or dramatic activities, where the order that actions occur is important. This is game time, not actual time—the events of a few seconds of action may take several minutes to play out between the players and gamemaster (page 116).

Critical Success: This is the result of a skill check roll that is 1/20 (or 5%) of the regular chance of success. Generally, a critical success is rewarded with greater results, though in some cases a critical success is required for success at all.

> ***For example**, if the regular chance for success is 75%, any roll of 4 or under is a critical success (1/20 of 75% is 3.75, rounded up to 4) (page 110).*

D100: A percentile die roll, attained by rolling two 10-sided dice (D10s), with one representing the tens, and the other the ones. Some dice come already marked as 'tens' (00, 10, 20, etc.) and are always used as the first number in a D100 roll. A roll of 01 is the best possible result, while 100 (which usually reads as 00) is the worst.

> ***For example**, a roll of 60 (or 6) and 2 equals a result of 62 (page 5).*

Damage: A value representing injury, subtracted from a character's hit points. Weapons, unfortunate events, and other hazards inflict damage on characters (page 134).

Damage Modifier: A modifier to rolled damage due to above-average Strength and Size characteristics (page 20).

DEX Rank: Based on the Dexterity characteristic, this determines when your character can usually act during a combat round. Characters with higher DEX will generally act before characters with lower DEX (page 123).

Difficulty Modifier: The amount a skill's chance is adjusted by, based on the circumstances surrounding its use. These range from *Automatic* (no roll required), *Easy* (skill is doubled), *Average* (no modification to skill), and *Difficult* (skill is halved) to *Impossible* (no roll, or a 01% chance at the gamemaster's discretion) (page 113).

Experience Rolls: If you are successful with a roll for one or more of your character's abilities or characteristic resistance rolls (see below), you should mark your character sheet in the provided check box (sometimes this action is called an "experience check"), if appropriate. Later, between adventures or during down-time, you can determine if your character's ability has improved in that skill or if the characteristic has increased through successful use. Some skills cannot be improved by experience and must be improved through other means (page 119).

Fail: A roll of percentile dice above the required chance for success.

***For example**, a roll of 89 when the required chance was 56% indicates a failure (page 110).*

Fatal Wound: A wound that costs your character more hit points than they currently possess. Without intervention (medical or otherwise) death comes at the end of the following combat round (page 136).

Fatigue Points: An optional system, using your character's Strength and Constitution characteristic to determine how long they can endure strenuous physical activity before tiring (page 24).

Full Turn: A period consisting of 25 combat rounds, equaling five minutes of game world time (page 115).

Fumble: A roll of 99 and/or 00 when rolling percentile dice to determine success. Generally, when a fumble is indicated something bad happens above and beyond a simple failure (page 109).

Gamemaster (GM): The director, or guide for the game, who helps you create characters, comes up with the adventure, and represents the world outside your character, rolling dice for the nonplayer characters and the opposing forces (page 191).

Game Time: The time that elapses as a scenario or campaign unfolds as experienced by your characters. This is not usually the same as the real time you and the gamemaster spend playing (page 114).

Hit Location: An optional system for specifying where a successful attack lands on your character's body, or where their attacks hit a foe (page 126).

Hit Points: A measure of the relative health of your character, represented in a value derived from their Constitution and Size characteristics. Attackers inflict damage in hit points, subtracted from the target's total hit points. Usually when your character reaches 0 hit points, they are dead (page 20).

"In character" or "Out of character": The distinction in the chat between players and the gamemaster around the gaming table, representing the difference between real-world discussion and game discussion. Both achieve the same goal, but represent different styles or aspects of play, and can be used interchangeably in play. Some groups or players lean towards one or another—it's an element of preference. "In character" discussion is flavorful and immersive, while "out of character" discussion is essential to describe rules mechanics and to speed along play through unnecessary detail.

***For example**, in character, you might say 'Sir Wilfric asks the innkeeper "Could you perhaps allow us the night's stay for a promise of future payment!"' while out of character, you might say "I try to Persuade the innkeeper to let us stay a night without pay (page 48)."*

Magic Points: Another name for power points (see **power points**).

Major Wound: An injury causing enough damage to exceed half the character's normal hit point total in a single blow. Usually accompanied by a debilitating effect (page 134).

Minor Wound: Any single injury that is less than a major wound in severity (less than 1/2 normal hit points) (page 134).

Modifiers: Temporary additions or subtractions to your character's rating in an ability, usually from circumstances, environment, or equipment.

***For example**, trying to pick a lock with a bent paper clip is an example of substandard tools, for a –20% modifier. Using a standard lockpick does not modify the skill. Using a deluxe set of calibrated precision lockpicks and lockpicking equipment adds +20% to your character's skill rating (page 113).*

Move (MOV): The rate of movement your character can make during a single combat round. This measurement is a flexible one, but usually translates to one meter of unhurried movement per point of MOV (page 21).

Nonplayer Character (NPC): A character or creature in the game world that is played or otherwise represented by the gamemaster, instead of being played by you or another player (page 199).

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

***For example**, Stealth is usually opposed by Listen (page 113).*

Passion: An optional system where a strongly held belief towards a subject—such as Devotion, Fear, Hate, Love, Loyalty—is measured on a percentile basis. Passions are used to indicate or determine how your character feels about the subject and how strongly, and is often used to augment ability rolls. (see **augments** page 38).

Percentile Dice: Two D10s rolled together, with one designated as the tens figure, and the other as ones. Some dice are numbered in units of ten, i.e., 00, 10, 20, 30, etc. See also **D100** (page 4).

Player Character (PC): This is your character, usually created and almost always controlled by you, comprised of abilities and an identity you assume through roleplaying. Your character is your representation in the game world and enables you to interact with the setting (page 9).

Power: A generic term for magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or super abilities your character may possess (see *Chapter 4: Powers*).

Power Points: The amount of willpower or energy your character has, represented as a total based on their Power characteristic. These

are spent to use special powers or abilities and can be drained by other abilities. When your character reaches 0 power points, they fall unconscious. Power points can also be called **magic points** in appropriate genres (page 20).

Profession: Your character's job occupation, represented as a list of skills they have been trained to use (or have had the opportunity to learn). (page 22).

Rating: The chance of success for an ability, rated as value from 1–100 (sometimes higher).

***For example**, Demolitions 43% is a rating of 43, meaning a 43% chance of success when the skill is attempted during normal circumstances. (see also* **skill rating** *page 33).*

Resistance Roll: When your character wants to attempt an action being resisted by an inanimate object or force, the relevant characteristic (for example, Strength) is opposed to another appropriate characteristic (for example, the stuck door's Strength). The two numbers are cross-referenced on the resistance table (see below) to determine a chance of success, and one or both characters roll dice to see who succeeds. Equal characteristics mean a 50% chance of success. Resistance rolls can also be used when pitting one character against another character, such as an arm-wrestling match (Strength vs. Strength) (page 110).

Resistance Table: The table showing the ratio of characteristic versus characteristic. To use the resistance table, find the opposing force on the vertical column, the resisting force on the horizontal column, then cross-reference them to find the likelihood of success, expressed as a percentile chance (page 111).

Roll: A roll using D100 to determine whether an attempt at performing a skill, ability, or power was successful. The result of a skill roll is a **critical success**, **special success**, **success**, **failure**, or a **fumble**. Additional means of determining the quality of success are presented in optional rules (page 109).

Sanity: An optional system where your character's mental health is measured by their capacity to withstand horrific sights, events, and revelations. As Sanity gets lower, the grasp on reality diminishes. If your character loses too much Sanity at once, they can go temporarily or permanently insane (page 218).

Skill: An ability, training, field of knowledge, talent, specialty, or something your character knows something about (or is talented in), quantified as a skill level. Skills are used in skill rolls, where percentile dice are rolled against the skill's rating (page 33).

Skill Rating: The degree of competence your character has with a skill, expressed as a number from 00% (no skill whatsoever) to 100% or higher (world-class expert) (page 33).

Special Success: A roll of 1/5 of the required score for success indicates that your character performed exceptionally well and achieves a superior result than a traditional success. This is especially significant in combat.

***For example**, a character with 70% in a skill who rolls 14 or lower has achieved a special success (page 110).*

Success: The result of a percentage dice roll where your character performed the task adequately, and achieved an average quality of success. If the roll is very low, it may be a **special success** or **critical success**, as described above. If it is above the ability ranking, it is usually a **failure**. If it is very high, such as a 00, it might be a fumble.

OPTIONAL RULES

Over the years, various sub-systems were introduced into Basic Roleplaying games to cover situations or conditions suitable to the specific game, such as expanded combat systems for fantasy games, rules for insanity and research for horror games, rules for the use of vehicles and spaceships, rules governing grand passions and personality traits, different magic systems appropriate to the genre, etc. Core elements have even been changed or treated differently, sometimes even in different editions of the same game.

These variations appear here as optional rules, presented in boxes like this one, with suggestions about when to use them, and notes about how they affect play, and in some cases, about how they interact with other optional rules. Thus, the gamemaster can pick and choose optional rules as desired.

Before you begin play, you should decide what sorts of optional rules you want to use, especially those that apply to character creation. *Chapter 10: Settings* suggests what optional rules go well with particular settings, and additionally, a complete list is presented in *Chapter 9: Gamemastering*.

***For example**, if your character has a 70% in a skill, and rolls 70 or lower, they have succeeded (page 110).*

Materials Required to Play

As a player, you need little other than this book, a pencil, maybe some blank paper, and a set of gaming dice. Dice are available online in many games and hobby stores, and come in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes, quality, and prices. You will need at least one complete set, one of each, but more are useful. See below for more information on dice and dice-rolling methods. Some gaming groups use miniatures as a representation of the characters, so if this is true of your group, you might want to bring a miniature that resembles your character somewhat. Generally, though, you merely need to bring your creative energy to the game.

As a gamemaster, you need a little bit more than a player, but not much. You should have a copy of this rulebook, and more blank paper for your notes. It is a good idea to make copies of the character sheet provided on pages 16–17 or found online at chaosium.com.

Additionally, you should have an adventure prepared or at least an idea of what might happen in the game. This can either be one of your own creation or a ready-made adventure. Alternately, you can adapt an adventure from another game company for other game systems. You can prepare other materials depending on how much you like to prepare handouts or reference sheets. You will learn more about all of this in *Chapter 9: Gamemastering*.

Dice

Basic Roleplaying uses four-sided, six-sided, eight-sided, ten-sided, twelve-sided, and 20-sided dice (abbreviated as D4, D6, D8, D10, D12, and D20). Dice are generally rolled, and the results read as shown, and if multiple dice are rolled, they are added together. Thus, 3D6 means roll three six-sided dice, and add the results.

***For example,** a 3D6 roll resulting in 1, 4, and 6 would be a total of 11. Dice can also be added together in different denominations, such as 2D6+1D4, meaning roll two six-sided dice and a four-sided die, and add their totals together.*

Dice results are sometimes modified by adding or subtracting numbers to the initial roll, such as 1D6–1, meaning roll one six-sided die and subtract 1 from the total, meaning that the roll has a range of 0 through 5.

Dice totals can be multiplied, such as 1D10×10, meaning that the roll has a range of 10 to 100.

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

Percentile dice are two D10s, rolled together, with one die as the tens figure, and the other as ones.

***For example**, a roll of two D10s might yield a 7 and a 3, or 73%.*

A roll of 01% is considered ideal, while 100% (rolls of 0 and 0) is usually a failure and the least-desired roll. It is common to use dice of different colors for the tens and ones digits, though percentile dice are now easily available with the tens being denoted by 00, 10, 20, 30, etc. for convenience.

Dice rolling apps also take care of all of this and are commonly available.

HERE ARE THE MOST COMMON DICE:

- **D2:** This yields a result of 1 or 2. You can roll a D4 (or any other even-sided die) and divide it in half, with a coin toss (heads = 1, tails = 2), or take any die and roll it (odd result = 1, even result = 2).
- **D3:** Roll a D6 and divide it in half, rounding up.
- **D4:** A four-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 4. It is often used with damage bonuses.
- **D6:** The second most common die, this yields a result of 1 through 6. You are probably already familiar with dice like these.
- **D8:** An eight-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 8.
- **D10:** A ten-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 10, with the 0 face representing 10. It is most commonly used with another D10 as part of a percentile dice roll.
- **D12:** A 12-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 12. This dice type is not used very often.

MINIATURES

Roleplaying games were initially inspired by miniatures-based wargames and have long been linked with miniatures. A large part of the roleplaying hobby consists of collecting and painting miniatures, and they are often used when gaming is portrayed on television or in movies, as they are visually interesting onscreen.

Miniatures are useful when exact positioning and distances for movement or range are required. At its heart, *Basic Roleplaying* is more narrative in play. Even though early Basic Roleplaying games referred to and were presented in conjunction with miniatures, the game system is not intrinsically tied to the use of miniatures.

Though they are not required for use here, the optional rules section *Miniatures, Maps and Virtual Tabletops* (page 138) addresses the use of miniatures in play.

- **D20:** A 20-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 20. This dice type is rarely used outside of the optional hit location system.
- **D100:** Two ten-sided dice, rolled together with one die representing the tens value and another representing the ones value. This is the most common roll of the dice in BRP. Though usually a percentile roll, these dice are sometimes rolled for a basic result.

  ***For example,** the gamemaster might determine that each member of a group of bandits has D100 copper pieces in their possession. If the bandits are defeated, the gamemaster rolls the dice for each one.*

Some specialty dice sets even include rare types, such as D2, D3, etc. but are not necessary.

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SUMROW '22

CHARACTERS

Put simply, your **character** is **you** in the game world, the persona you play in the game. The character is the focus of all roleplaying games—an abstraction of physical and mental abilities, skills, and other descriptors. You interact with your gamemaster in that world through your character. Most characters controlled by players are **player characters** (PCs).

Your gamemaster describes the setting, the environment, and the encounters to the players. Your gamemaster has at their disposal a roster of other characters, called **nonplayer characters** (NPCs). Both player and nonplayer characters use the same rules, though generally nonplayer characters are less detailed than player characters, as NPCs rarely face the same variety of situations player characters do.

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

When a "character" is mentioned, the term applies to player characters and nonplayer characters.

POWER LEVEL

Throughout this chapter and elsewhere in the rules are references to the game's power level. This describes how reasonably competent the player and nonplayer characters are, and where on a scale from "realistic" to "mythical" gameplay will feel like.

There are four game power levels, described below.

Normal

Characters have no powers or very few, unreliable powers. Sometimes characters are defined by a single power, barely more than an extraordinary talent. This is the most suitable power level for horror or modern adventure games, where technology and wits are often the decisive factor in survival.

Heroic

Characters have a few strong powers or a wide range of mid- to low-level powers. This is suitable for games featuring inexperienced, costumed heroes or apprentice wizards in training, the mutated survivors of a radioactive apocalypse, vigilante heroes, or a high fantasy world of wizards and warriors. Some futuristic settings might be created using this power level, with citizens having many minor powers granted by genetic manipulation.

Epic

Characters are incredibly skilled or powered, such as arch-mages, or formidable supernatural beings. Sample games might be full of veteran costumed heroes or villains, or veteran supernatural heroes fighting the forces of darkness in the shadows of the modern world.

Superhuman

These characters have immense capabilities and are the mightiest of heroes. Games might feature extraordinarily powered costumed superheroes, galactic guardians, or even modern incarnations of great demigods.

Your gamemaster should make it clear to you and your fellow players what power level your game is, to set expectations and to guide the rest of character creation.

CREATING A CHARACTER

You first need a character. Following is a system for developing your character. This system creates reasonably competent characters. Suggestions are provided in each step for more powerful characters. You should have a blank character sheet handy, and maybe another sheet of paper for notes. At chaosium.com you can download digital versions.

When you get ready to create your character, your gamemaster and the other players should have already decided what sort of game you'll all play, whether it be a science fiction, fantasy, modern horror, historical intrigue, espionage, pulp action, techno-thriller, or any number of other genres.

Your gamemaster should be prepared to guide you and the other players through the character creation process, knowing what professions are allowed and appropriate to the game or campaign, and what level of competency the characters should exhibit. These issues are most important to **Step Seven** and may influence **Step Three**.

Step One: Name and Characteristics

Write your character's name at the top of the page. This should be appropriate to the setting and game being played. If no idea suggests itself yet, wait until later. You can write your own name on the character sheet as your gamemaster may need to keep track of which character belongs to whom.

- Choose your character's gender and write it in the correct space.
- Roll 3D6 for the characteristics Strength (STR), Constitution (CON), Power (POW), Dexterity (DEX), and Charisma (CHA). Enter the results in the appropriate places on your character sheet.
- Roll 2D6+6 for the Intelligence (INT) and Size (SIZ) characteristics.

These numbers provide the bare bones of your character, determining what characteristics the character is strong or weak in.

- If you wish, redistribute up to 3 points between your characteristics.
- No characteristic can begin at more than 21 points.
- If you aren't satisfied with the characteristics you have, and your gamemaster approves, you can start over.

If the campaign is using one or more types of powers, your gamemaster may allow you to increase your starting characteristics (see *Chapter Four: Powers*, particularly **Diminish/Enhance Characteristic** on page 96).

Choosing Characteristic Values (Option): Traditionally, characteristics are rolled in order, with up to 3 points redistributed. Instead, you may roll 3D6 seven times and choose where results go. In this case, SIZ and INT cannot be below 8.

Higher Starting Characteristics (Option): For a higher-powered game, roll 2D6+6 for all characteristics.

The Education (EDU) Characteristic (Option): Roll 2D6+6 for Education (EDU) for this characteristic, for characters from societies with formalized education. An EDU of 12 indicates a high school graduate-level education, with higher values indicating college or advanced degrees.

Cultural Modifiers (Option): Cultural modifiers emphasize characteristic differences between different species (such as elves or dwarves) or for different human cultures. Initial characteristics may be adjusted or limited at this point. See **Cultural Characteristic Modifiers (Option)** (page 32).

Non-Human Characters (Option): Non-human characters may use different dice rolls and modifiers to determine initial characteristics. See page 222 of *Chapter Eleven: Creatures*.

Point-Based Character Creation (Option): Usually, characteristics are rolled randomly. Instead, players can purchase characteristic points from a pool. See **Point-based Character Creation (Option)** (page 17).

Step Two: Powers

Read this carefully! If the game you're playing in involves magic, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or superpowers you may begin with some of these powers. Ask your gamemaster about it and refer to *Chapter Four: Powers* for more information. These systems require more explanation than is provided in this chapter.

If there are no powers in the campaign, ignore this step and proceed. If there are powers, the following types are available:

- **Magic (page 55):** Simple spellcasting with a wide variety of applications.
- **Mutations (page 65):** Strange genetic anomalies, some beneficial, some adverse.
- **Psychic Abilities (page 70):** Using the power of the mind to manipulate reality.
- **Sorcery (page 78):** A more baroque type of spellcasting, including elemental and demonic summoning.
- **Superpowers (page 90):** Mighty abilities that defy imagination.

More detail on each appears in their relevant sections.

Step Three: Age

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

- Based on the campaign level (described in **Step Six**), for every 10 full years added to the rolled starting age, modify professional skill points by +10 (Normal), +20 (Heroic), +30 (Epic), or +40 (Superhuman). Any fraction of years below 10 does not qualify for this skill bonus.
- For every year below 18, modify professional skill points by –10 (Normal), –20 (Heroic), –30 (Epic), or –40 (Superhuman).
- Your gamemaster may limit available professions to characters below 18 years of age.
- At age 50 and every full 10 years above, modify one of STR, CON, DEX, or CHA (your choice) by –1. At age 80 and every full 10 years above, modify **three** of these characteristics. See **Aging and Inaction (Option)** (page 120).
- For every year below the original rolled age above, modify any one characteristic other than EDU (your choice) by –1. Your gamemaster may require that you make SIZ one of these lowered characteristics. These points can be gained through play (experience), training, or gradually through natural means (gamemaster's discretion). See **Aging and Inaction (Option)** (page 120).

Your gamemaster may also choose to simply ignore these rules, based on the game's power level. This allows for elderly adventurers, child geniuses, and is generally more enjoyable for all players.

Education (EDU) (Option): If you're using the EDU characteristic, your character's starting age must be at least EDU+5 (representing time spent learning). Every full 10 years added to your character's starting age, adds +1 to your character's EDU characteristic. Be sure to increase the relevant skill points generated in **Step Six**.

Step Four: Characteristic Rolls

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

- Multiply STR×5 for your Effort roll.
- Multiply CON×5 for your Stamina roll.
- Multiply INT×5 for your Idea roll.
- Multiply POW×5 for your Luck roll.
- Multiply DEX×5 for your Agility roll.
- Multiply CHA×5 for your Charm roll.

Knowledge Roll (Option): Multiply EDU×5 for your Knowledge roll (if EDU is being used).

Step Five: Derived Characteristics

Now it's time for the derived characteristics: damage modifier, hit points, power points and experience bonus. If you're using optional systems, you should also determine your initial fatigue points and sanity points. Write the results on your character sheet.

- **Damage Modifier:** Add STR+SIZ and find the **damage modifier** corresponding to your character's total on the **Damage Modifier** table (page 20).

- **Hit Points:** Add CON+SIZ and divide by 2 (rounded up). Circle that number in the **Hit Points** box on your character sheet and write it below. This is your character's maximum hit points. If your character loses hit points, mark them off, and erase the marks as hit points are healed or otherwise restored.
- **Major Wound Level:** Your **major wound level** is 1/2 hit points, rounded up.
- **Power Points:** In the **Power Point** box, circle the number equal to POW and write the total on the line below. This is your character's maximum power points. These fuel magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, or superpowers. Mark power points off as they're spent and erase the marks as they're recovered or otherwise restored. The number written in the space, equal to your POW, is the value your power points return to with rest.
- **Experience Bonus:** Your character's experience bonus is equal to 1/2 their INT, rounded up.
- **Move (MOV):** Your character's MOV measures how fast during a combat round they can move. Human characters can normally move 10 units per round. A unit is a somewhat variable amount usually equaling 1 meter. See **Movement Rates** (page 116).

Skill Bonuses (Option): If using characteristic-based skill category bonuses (page 23), calculate the bonus for each using the **Skill Category Bonus** table (page 23). Write these values in the spaces for each category. This bonus adds to the base chance for every skill, if any. For each category:

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

Hit Points per Location (Option): With the optional hit location system (page 21), determine the number of hit points for each hit location. The head, abdomen, and each leg have 1/3 of your hit point total, the chest has 4/10, and each arm has 1/4 of the character's maximum hit point value. Round all fractions up.

Fatigue Points (Option): If fatigue is being used; add your character's STR+CON to get their fatigue point total. In play, as your character expends energy or perform rigorous physical activity, they will lose fatigue points. They recover rapidly through rest and other means and change frequently. See page 24.

Sanity (Option): If Sanity is being used; multiply your character's initial POW score by ×5 to get their current Sanity (SAN) total. Profession (see **Step Six**, below) may modify this number. In play, mark off these if your character loses sanity points. See page 24.

Step Six: Personality

Study your character's characteristics and imagine the sort of person you would like them to be. Choose one of the options below or roll 1D4 for a random result. These packages of skills are a quick way to develop your character—there will be more skills in the next step. Skills are defined on pages 37-52 and classes of weapons are described beginning on page 169.

PERSONALITY TYPES

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

Your gamemaster may have other personality types, or you can create your own, choosing 13 skills and adding 20 points to each skill rating (with your gamemaster's approval).

When distributing these skill points, add the bonus to the base chance for each skill, usually presented as a value in parentheses after the skill, such as Fast Talk (15%). Write that total after the skill.

***For example**, adding 20 skill points to Fast Talk (05%) yields a rating of 25% (5+20).*

Step Seven: Profession and Skills

To determine the starting skills for your character, turn to the professions list on page 26. Choose a profession there. Professions are described fully on pages 22–31. Your gamemaster may restrict available professions, so ask before making this choice. Some professions provide special advantages, such as the use of magic. Note these on the character sheet.

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

The campaign's power level (page 9) determines the initial skill point pool. Your gamemaster should have decided by now what kind of game they will run, and how powerful and competent player characters should be.

- **Normal:** Allot 250 points to professional skills. No skill should begin higher than 75%. If you are using the optional skill category bonus, the limit is still 75%, and you must spend any points above this on other skills. If a combination of bonuses increases the skill to more than 75% before this step, do not add any additional skill points.
- **Heroic:** Allot 325 points to professional skills. No skill should begin higher than 90%, with the same restrictions as above.
- **Epic:** Allot 400 points to professional skills. No skill should begin higher than 101%, with the same restrictions as above.
- **Superhuman:** Allot 500 points among professional skills, with no limit to skill ratings. See **Skill Ratings Over 100% (Option)** (page 37).

For an original profession (page 32), allot the power level's number of skill points, as above. Your gamemaster may have some restrictions on how these skill points can be spent.

Once all professional skill points have been allocated, multiply your character's INT×10 to determine their personal skill point pool. Spend

BASIC ROLEPLAYING

PERSONAL

NAME _____ PLAYER _____
CULTURE _____ GENDER _____
HANDEDNESS _____ HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____
PROFESSION _____ WEALTH _____
GODS/RELIGION _____
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES _____
_____ MOVE (MOV) _____
DESCRIPTION _____
_____ AGE _____

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	_____	EFFORT ROLL	_____%
CON	_____	STAMINA ROLL	_____%
SIZ	_____	DAMAGE MODIFIER	_____
INT	_____	IDEA ROLL	_____%
POW	_____ ☐	LUCK ROLL	_____%
DEX	_____	AGILITY ROLL	_____%
CHA	_____	CHARM ROLL	_____%
EDU	_____	KNOWLEDGE ROLL	_____%

HIT POINTS

HIT POINTS _____
MAJOR WOUND _____
DEAD _____ 00 01 02
03 04 05 06 07 08 09
10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29 30
31 32 33 34 35 36 37

SKILLS

COMMUNICATION _____%

Bargain (05) _____% ☐
Command (05) _____% ☐
Disguise (01) _____% ☐
Etiquette (05) _____% ☐
Fast Talk (05) _____% ☐
Language (INT/EDU×05 or 00)
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Perform (05) _____% ☐
Persuade (15) _____% ☐
Status (15 or various) _____% ☐
Teach (10) _____% ☐

MANIPULATION _____%

Art (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Craft (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Demolition (01) _____% ☐
Fine Manipulation (5) _____% ☐
Heavy Machine (01)
_____ _____% ☐
Repair (15) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Sleight of Hand (05) _____% ☐

MENTAL _____%

Appraise (15) _____% ☐
First Aid (30) _____% ☐
Gaming (INT+POW) _____% ☐
Knowledge (05 or 00)
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Literacy (00 or language) _____% ☐
Medicine (05) _____% ☐
Psychotherapy (01 or 00) _____% ☐
Science (01) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Strategy (01) _____% ☐
Technical (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐

PERCEPTION _____%

Insight (05) _____% ☐
Listen (25) _____% ☐
Navigate (10) _____% ☐
Research (25) _____% ☐
Sense (10) _____% ☐
Spot (25) _____% ☐
Track (10) _____% ☐

PHYSICAL _____%

Climb (40) _____% ☐
Drive (20 or 01) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Fly (DEX×04 or 1/2 DEX) _____% ☐
Hide (10) _____% ☐
Jump (25) _____% ☐
Pilot (01) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Projection (DEX×02) _____% ☐
Ride (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Stealth (10) _____% ☐
Swim (25) _____% ☐
Throw (25) _____% ☐

COMBAT _____%

Dodge (DEX×02) _____% ☐
Martial Arts (01) _____% ☐
See **WEAPONS** below for more Combat skills
_____(____) _____% ☐
_____(____) _____% ☐
_____(____) _____% ☐
_____(____) _____% ☐

EXPERIENCE BONUS _____%

WEAPONS

WEAPON TYPE	%	DAMAGE	RANGE	ATTACKS	LENGTH	HAND	HP	
								☐
								☐
								☐
								☐
								☐
								☐
Brawl (30)			touch	1	close	1h		☐
Grapple (25)			touch	1	close	2h		☐

ARMOR

ARMOR _____ ARMOR VALUE _____
_____ _____
SHIELD _____ % _____ DAMAGE _____ HP _____ ☐
COMBAT NOTES _____
_____
_____
_____

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING

CHARACTER POINTS

CAMPAIGN POWER LEVEL _____ CHARACTER POINTS _____

Character Failings	Points

POWER POINTS

POWER POINTS _____ BATTERY _____ UNCONSCIOUS _____

00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100			

FATIGUE

FATIGUE _____ EXHAUSTED (–_____)

00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100			

SANITY

SANITY _____ TEMPORARY INSANITY SCORE (TIS) _____

00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100			

POWERS

POWER	ENERGY TYPE	ACTIVE LEVELS	TOTAL LEVELS	RANGE	COST TO USE	DURATION	NOTES	CHARACTER POINT COST

ATTACK POWERS

ATTACK POWER	%	DAMAGE	RANGE	ENERGY TYPE	ENERGY COST	
						☐
						☐
						☐
						☐
						☐
						☐

POWER	ENERGY TYPE	LEVEL	%	ENERGY COST

Projection (DEX×02) ____% ☐ Throw ____% ☐ Brawl ____% ☐ Fly ____% ☐ Defense ____% Dodge (DEX×02) ____% ☐

NOTES

_____ REPUTATION _____ % ☐

PORTRAIT

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STEP 1: NAME & CHARACTERISTICS

- Write your character's name at the top of the page.
- Write your own name on the character sheet.
- Choose your character's gender and write it in the correct space.
- Roll 3D6 for the characteristics Strength (STR), Constitution (CON), Power (POW), Dexterity (DEX), and Charisma (CHA). Enter the results in the appropriate places on your character sheet.
- Roll 2D6+6 for the Intelligence (INT) and Size (SIZ) characteristics.
- Redistribute up to 3 points between your characteristics. No characteristic can begin at more than 21 points.

OPTIONS: Choosing Characteristic Values (page 10), Higher Starting Characteristics (page 10), Education (page 19), Cultural and Characters (page 32), Creatures as Player Characters (page 222), Point-based Character Creation (page 17).

STEP 2: MAGIC & POWERS

The following types of powers are available:

- Magic (page 55)
- Mutations (page 65)
- Psychic Abilities (page 70)
- Sorcery (page 78)
- Super Powers (page 90)

STEP 10: BACKGROUND & FINAL GROOMING

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

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

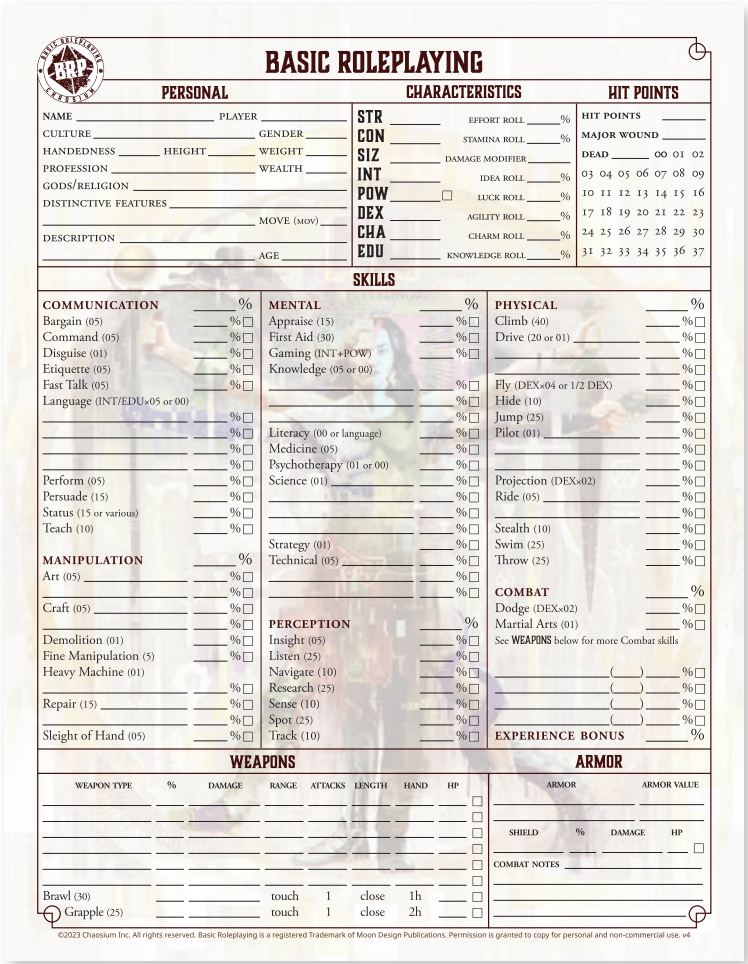
Where is your character from? Where did they go to school (if at all)? What is their relation with family? Any significant organizations? An interesting past? Significant religious or political beliefs?

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

STEP 9: ARMOR & EQUIPMENT

In immediate possession:

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



BASIC ROLEPLAYING

PERSONAL: NAME, PLAYER, CULTURE, GENDER, HANDEDNESS, HEIGHT, WEIGHT, PROFESSION, WEALTH, GODS/RELIGION, DISTINCTIVE FEATURES, MOVE (MOV), DESCRIPTION, AGE

CHARACTERISTICS: STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, CHA, EDU; EFFORT ROLL, STAMINA ROLL, DAMAGE MODIFIER, IDEA ROLL, LUCK ROLL, AGILITY ROLL, CHARM ROLL, KNOWLEDGE ROLL

HIT POINTS: HIT POINTS, MAJOR WOUND, DEAD 00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37

SKILLS

COMMUNICATION %: Bargain (05), Command (05), Disguise (01), Etiquette (05), Fast Talk (05), Language (INT/EDU×05 or 00), Perform (05), Persuade (15), Status (15 or various), Teach (10)

MANIPULATION %: Art (05), Craft (05), Demolition (01), Fine Manipulation (5), Heavy Machine (01), Repair (15), Sleight of Hand (05)

MENTAL %: Appraise (15), First Aid (30), Gaming (INT+POW), Knowledge (05 or 00), Literacy (00 or language), Medicine (05), Psychotherapy (01 or 00), Science (01), Strategy (01), Technical (05)

PERCEPTION %: Insight (05), Listen (25), Navigate (10), Research (25), Sense (10), Spot (25), Track (10)

PHYSICAL %: Climb (40), Drive (20 or 01), Fly (DEX×04 or 1/2 DEX), Hide (10), Jump (25), Pilot (01), Projection (DEX×02), Ride (05), Stealth (10), Swim (25), Throw (25)

COMBAT %: Dodge (DEX×02), Martial Arts (01); See WEAPONS below for more Combat skills

EXPERIENCE BONUS %

WEAPONS: WEAPON TYPE, %, DAMAGE, RANGE, ATTACKS, LENGTH, HAND, HP; Brawl (30) touch 1 close 1h; Grapple (25) touch 1 close 2h

ARMOR: ARMOR, ARMOR VALUE; SHIELD, %, DAMAGE, HP; COMBAT NOTES

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(Option) STEP 8: DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Determine number of distinctive features (right), then roll 1D10:

1	Hair	6	Bearing
2	Face Hair	7	Speech
3	Face Feature	8	Arm/Hands
4	Expression	9	Torso
5	Clothes	10	Legs/Feet

CHA	Distinctive Features
3 or less	4
4–7	3
8–9	2
10–11	1
12–14	2
15–16	3
17 and up	4

STEP 3: AGE & EXPERIENCE

The default age for characters is 17+1D6.

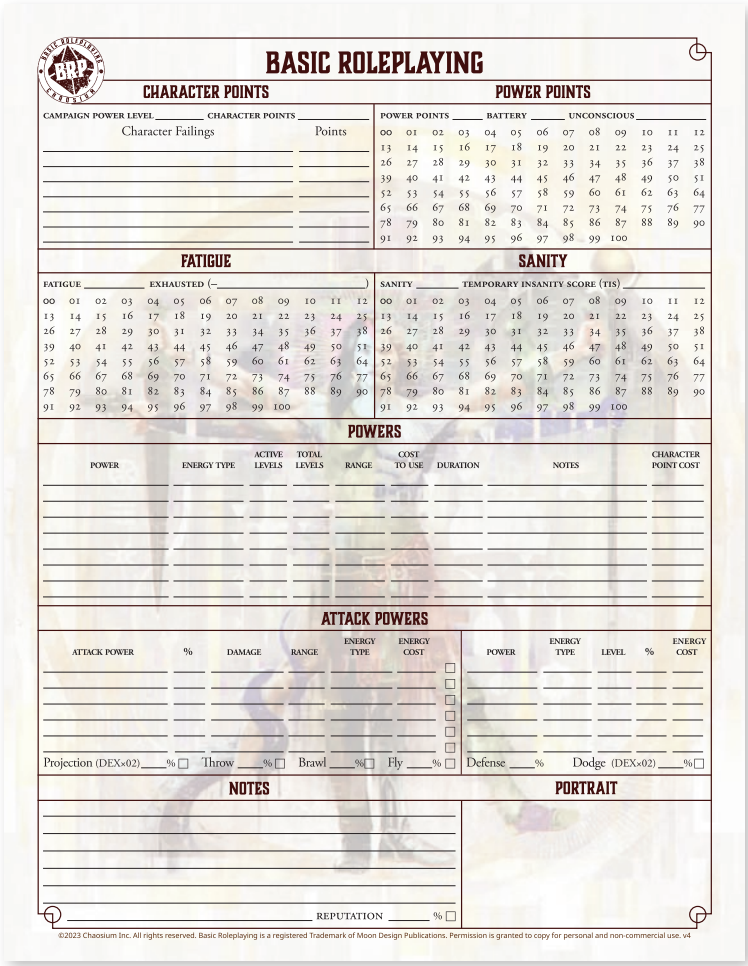
- Based on campaign level, for every full 10 years added modify professional skill points by +10 (Normal), +20 (Heroic), +30 (Epic), or +40 (Superhuman); a fraction of years below 10 does not qualify.
- Based on campaign level, for every year below 18 modify professional skill points by –10 (Normal), –20 (Heroic), –30 (Epic), or –40 (Superhuman).
- For every 10 years above 40 (starting at age 50), subtract 1 from one of the following (your choice): STR, CON, DEX, or CHA. For every 10 years above 70 (starting at age 80), subtract 1 from three of these characteristics.
- For every year below the minimum age, subtract 1 point from one characteristic (your choice). These can be gained through play (experience), training, or gradually through natural means.

OPTION: Education (page 19)

STEP 4: CHARACTERISTIC ROLLS

- **STR**×5 for Effort
- **CON**×5 for Stamina
- **INT**×5 for Idea
- **POW**×5 for Luck
- **DEX**×5 for Agility
- **CHA**×5 for Charm

OPTION: Know Roll (p. 19)



BASIC ROLEPLAYING

CHARACTER POINTS

CAMPAIGN POWER LEVEL _____ CHARACTER POINTS _____

Character Failings — Points

POWER POINTS

POWER POINTS _____ BATTERY _____ UNCONSCIOUS _____

00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38
39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51
52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64
65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77
78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90
91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

FATIGUE

FATIGUE _____ EXHAUSTED (–_____)

00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38
39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51
52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64
65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77
78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90
91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

SANITY

SANITY _____ TEMPORARY INSANITY SCORE (TIS) _____

00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38
39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51
52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64
65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77
78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90
91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

POWERS

POWER	ENERGY TYPE	ACTIVE LEVELS	TOTAL LEVELS	RANGE	COST TO USE	DURATION	NOTES	CHARACTER POINT COST

ATTACK POWERS

ATTACK POWER	%	DAMAGE	RANGE	ENERGY TYPE	ENERGY COST	POWER	ENERGY TYPE	LEVEL	%	ENERGY COST

Projection (DEX×02) ____% ☐ Throw ____% ☐ Brawl ____% ☐ Fly ____% ☐ Defense ____% Dodge (DEX×02) ____% ☐

NOTES

PORTRAIT

_____ REPUTATION _____ % ☐

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STEP 5: DERIVED CHARACTERISTICS

- **Damage Modifier:**
  STR + SIZ, consult table below; write on sheet
- **Hit Points:** CON+SIZ and divide by 2. Round up; write on sheet.
- Major Wound is ½ hit points. Round up; write on sheet.
- Circle number equal to POW in Power Point box; write in total.
- **Experience Bonus:** ½ INT, round up; write on sheet.
- Human MOV is 10; write on sheet.

OPTIONS: Skill Category Bonuses (page 22), Hit Points per Location (page 21), Fatigue Points and Sanity Points (page 24).

STEP 6: PERSONALITY TYPE OPTION

D4 result

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

STEP 7: SKILL POINT ALLOCATION

- **NORMAL GAME:** Distribute 250 points among professional skills; no skill begins higher than 75%. If existing bonuses increase a skill to 75% (or it begins at 75% or higher), do not add any additional skill points.
- **HEROIC GAME:** Distribute 325 points among professional skills; no skill begins higher than 90%, as above.
- **EPIC GAME:** Distribute 400 points among professional skills; no skill should begin higher than 101%, as above.
- **SUPERHUMAN GAME:** Distribute 500 points among professional skills, without restrictions.
- **OPTIONS:** The Education Characteristic (page 19), Cultural and Characters (page 32).

PERSONAL POINT POOL

Distribute INT×10 points among any skills desired. The total must not exceed the skill limit for game level set above.

OPTION: Increased Personal Skill Points (page 16).

DAMAGE MODIFIER

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

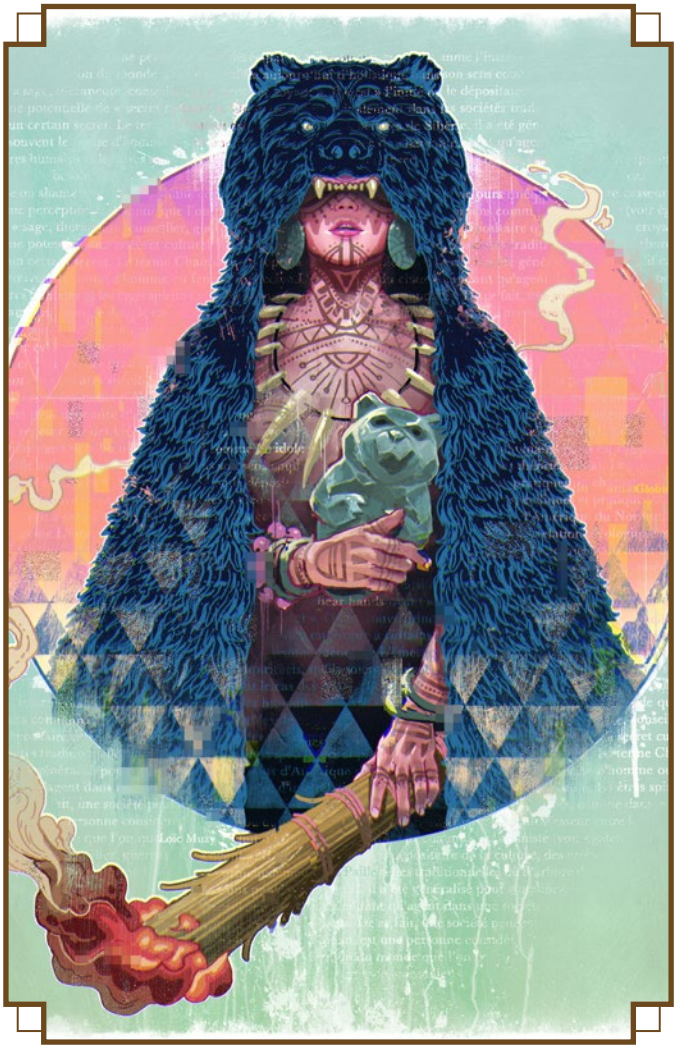
these skill points on any skills you like, with your gamemaster's approval. Add points spent on a skill to its base chance, profession bonuses (if any), professional skill point allocations, and skill category bonuses (if any).

The total must not exceed the skill limit for game type set above. Your gamemaster may impose a cap of 50% on personal skills that range too far outside a character's profession. This skill cap is higher based on the level of the campaign: 75% for heroic, 90% for epic, and 100% for superhuman. Skills that naturally exceed these numbers through prior bonuses can have no additional points spent on them.

Calculate the final rankings for all character skills from base chance, personality type, professional skill pool, personal skill pool, and the optional skill category bonuses (if used). You might want to shift some points around at this time but keep the professional skill points and personal skill points separate.

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

Cultural Skills (Option): For a game with significant differences between human cultures, your gamemaster may have this influence starting skills or beginning skills allowed. See **Culture and Characters** (page 32).



Increased Personal Skill Points (Option): The INT×10 personal skill point total may be increased to INT×15 for heroic characters, INT×20 for epic characters, or INT×25 for superhuman characters, as appropriate. This option is recommended for games where characters are tremendously competent and skilled beyond what their current profession would indicate.

Step Eight: Possessions

Most characters have some sort of possessions, whether gear or weapons. The front of the character sheet has a section for weapons, and the back a space for possessions. Your profession describe your character's beginning wealth level and the Status skill can provide guidelines for what sort of additional equipment that your character might be able to lay hands upon. It's not necessary to list every item your character owns, but merely those that might be important in play.

In most cases, your character has the following:

- A complete set (or sets) of clothing appropriate to their environment and setting.
- An amount of pocket money and personal savings based on their wealth level.
- A personal item showing some relation to their family or background. This can be an heirloom, keepsake, or some trinket with a strong emotional connection.
- Any trade tools or equipment suitable to their profession, if appropriate.
- Any weapon they have a skill of 50%+ in, if appropriate.
- Based on the setting, profession, wealth level, and Status, they may have a vehicle such as a horse, wagon, bicycle, automobile, personal flier, small space transport, or some other means of transportation. This is subject to your gamemaster's approval.
- No detailed rules for finances are provided: the suggested wealth for professions and the Status skill are the best guidelines for determining what items and funds they begin play owning or having access to. Your gamemaster should be able to help you describe this in an appropriate level of detail and may have additional restrictions or suggestions.

Step Nine: Size and Distinctive Features

This step is primarily cosmetic and is not entirely necessary.

You may now choose to determine your character's height and weight, based on SIZ. Generally, the SIZ range of 10–13 represents the human range of average weight and height. A person of SIZ 8 (normal minimum) is relatively small, and someone of SIZ 18 is exceedingly large. You can define this as you wish, either through exact numbers for height and weight, or with descriptions such as "Tall" or "Slender".

If using the Distinctive Features option see page 25. Note these features under your character's name on the character sheet.

Step Ten: Finishing Touches

This is the final step for various aspects of your character. If you couldn't think of a name beforehand in Step One, now is the time. Beyond that, you can come up with the rest of this section before play begins or as you get a feel for your character.

As desired, you should fill in all the blank spaces that describe the character, mentally and physically, and come up with some ideas about their background. In Step Nine you determined your character's distinctive features, so you should decide whether your character has other, less distinctive, features. What colors are their hair, skin, and eyes? How do they dress? Do they have any interesting mannerisms, or a motto or saying they use often? Do they have an interesting reputation?

If it is relevant, determine where your character is from. Where did they go to school (if at all)? What is their relationship with their family? Is the character a member of any significant organizations? Do they have an interesting past? Do they have any significant religious or

POINT-BASED CHARACTER CREATION (OPTION)

Standard character creation uses dice rolls to determine starting characteristics, but you and your gamemaster may choose to use a point-based system, offering more control over your character's creation. If so, the following adjustments are made to **Step One** (page 10).

- All characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, and CHA) begin at 10.
- You have 24 points to spend on characteristics. This is the equivalent of the 'normal' power level for a campaign. No initial characteristic can be raised to higher than 21.
- Each point of STR, CON, SIZ, or CHA costs 1 point.
- Each point of DEX, INT, and POW costs 3.
- You can choose to lower your starting characteristics below the starting value of 10, to a minimum of 3.
- For each point of STR, CON, SIZ, or CHA you reduce below 10, you get 1 point to spend on other characteristics.
- For every point of DEX, INT, and POW you reduce, you get 3 points back.
- Only with a gamemaster's permission can you raise or lower a starting characteristic beyond the range of 3–21. For higher power levels (epic and superhuman), the characteristic maximum should be ignored.
- For games with powers, you may apply any unused points from characteristic generation to your power budget. This is only with your gamemaster's permission, as it may result in you losing points overall.

If point-based characteristic generation is allowed, the next step for a game with powers would be the alternate **Step Two** described in *Chapter Four: Powers* on page 54. For a non-powered game, character creation should then skip to **Step Four** on the next page.

Higher Starting Characteristics (Option)

For higher-powered campaigns (with a roll of 2D6+6 instead of the normal 3D6), the starting point total for above is 36 points, equivalent to the heroic power level. Epic power level characters begin with 48 of characteristic points, and superhuman power level characters begin with 60 points. The normal characteristic maximums should not apply.

Education (Option)

If the EDU characteristic is being used, your gamemaster should assign a value to EDU based on your character's age (described in Step Three on page 14) and background. You can modify this with any points you choose. Each point of EDU costs 3 points.

Cultural Modifiers or Non-Human Characters (Option)

If your gamemaster is allowing cultural modifiers for starting characteristics, these modifiers should be applied to characteristics afterwards. If non-human characters with cultural modifiers to starting characteristics are available, your gamemaster should adjust your starting points and/or initial characteristics, as appropriate. *Chapter Eleven: Creatures* contains advice on allowing non-human characters.

political beliefs? If appropriate, you should work with your gamemaster to determine these issues before play begins, or at least do some thinking about them ahead of time. In play you can also flesh out other details of your character's background as necessary or leave these aspects undetermined if they are not relevant.

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

CHARACTERISTICS

Your character is measured and defined by a set of characteristics, values that represent their physical and mental capabilities. Higher characteristic numbers are usually better (though a high SIZ can work against you for stealth). Characteristic values indicate raw natural gifts you character has. Characteristic values can change over the course of play. Injuries or adverse conditions can decrease characteristics, while training, exertion, and conditioning can increase them.

- Physical characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ, and DEX) have a maximum of 21 for humans.
- Mental characteristics (INT, POW, CHA, and EDU) can usually be raised without limits.
- Under most conditions 3 is the lowest value for any characteristic other than SIZ or INT, which have a minimum value of 8.

If other races or species are allowed in the campaign, they may have higher or lower characteristic maximums. Magic, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or superpowers can also raise characteristics, without limit.

Strength (STR)

Strength (STR) measures brawn and raw muscle power. The Effort roll (STR×5) is its characteristic roll. STR helps determine how much a character can lift or carry, push or pull, or how tightly they can hang on to something. In combat, STR determines what kind of weapons a character can wield, as well as helping determine how much extra damage (if any) they inflict with any hit. STR can be

increased through exercise, while certain injuries and diseases can permanently reduce STR. A character with STR 0 is an invalid, unable to rise from their bed.

Constitution (CON)

Health, vigor, and vitality are all measured by Constitution. The Stamina roll (CON×5) is its characteristic roll. CON determines how well a character can resist fatigue, poison, disease, drowning, and other hardships, and is a factor in calculating hit points. CON can be increased through conditioning. Diseases, poisons, and some injuries can temporarily or permanently reduce CON. A character dies when their CON falls to 0 for whatever reason.

Size (SIZ)

Size defines height, weight, and bulk. There is no SIZ-associated characteristic roll; on the character sheet the space is used to note Damage Bonus. Resistance rolls using SIZ can determine whether a character can stand firm against resistance, see over an obstacle, or squeeze through a crack. A character's SIZ, as body mass, is an important factor in determining hit points and damage modifier (if any). Factors like gluttony or rigid diet can increase or decrease SIZ, at your gamemaster's discretion. Some powers may also affect SIZ. Severe injuries (like lost limbs) can also permanently decrease SIZ. A character dies if they lose more than half their SIZ (round up) due to starvation or extreme diet. A character reduced to SIZ 0 through magic or other influences simply disappears, wasting away to nothing. Your gamemaster should be the arbiter of any involuntary SIZ changes, as these are uncommon.

Intelligence (INT)

Representing reason, mental acuity, and wits, INT measures how well a character learns, remembers, and analyzes information. The Idea roll (INT×5) is its characteristic roll. INT is critical in determining initial skill values. Possibly the most important characteristic, INT has no fixed maximum and can conceivably rise indefinitely through study and mental exercise. Wounds to the head, prolonged exposure to harmful drugs, or certain types of diseases can reduce INT. A character with an INT 0 has been reduced to a vegetative state, unable to survive independently.

Power (POW)

The most intangible of characteristics, Power represents willpower, magical aptitude, and spiritual development. POW is essential to leadership, intuition, and magic. The Luck roll (POW×5) is its characteristic roll. POW serves as the determiner for initial power points (page 20) and initial Sanity points. (page 24). Like INT, human POW has no set maximum, and can rise indefinitely. Magical influences can reduce POW (temporarily or permanently) and some magic is fueled by the permanent sacrifice of points of POW. For powers (see *Chapter Four: Powers*), POW is probably the most important characteristic. POW is the suggested basis for initial power choices, so a character with higher POW will have more powers (or more levels in those powers). A character whose POW score reaches 0 has lost their soul and becomes catatonic without any will or life force.

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity score measures balance, agility, speed, and deftness. Characters rely upon DEX when reacting to an attack, climbing, performing delicate work, or moving stealthily. The Agility roll (DEX×5) is its characteristic roll. Injuries or nerve diseases can reduce DEX, while rigorous training can quicken reflexes and improve balance. A character with DEX 0 is utterly immobile.

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS (OPTION)

Some cultures might receive modifiers to basic characteristics, such as SIZ. This can be a potentially sensitive topic. Your gamemaster is encouraged to award such bonuses with caution, and to balance positive bonuses with negative ones, or to equalize play by giving all cultures an equivalent bonus, though maybe to different characteristics or attributes. It is emphatically not recommended to penalize INT, no matter what the apparent justification. No player should be penalized for choosing a particular culture. It is also recommended that this be used only for settings where such distinctions are commonly acceptable, such as in fantasy worlds where bloodlines are unique or in science-fiction settings where humanity has been shaped by genetic manipulation and has adapted to the galactic environment.

Charisma (CHA)

Charisma determines how likeable or attractive a character is to others, and is based as much on presence, personality, and demeanor as simple physical appearance. The Charm roll (CHA×5) forms its characteristic roll. Charisma is used to measure first impressions and indicates how eager others will be to associate with someone, through physical attraction or an appealing personality. Charisma can be raised through physical conditioning, cosmetic surgery, or careful application of grooming and etiquette. It could even be improved by a small amount by possession of particularly impressive gear. It can also be reduced through injury or disease. A character with a CHA 0 is either utterly odious, provoking disgust from all who encounter them, or has become so nondescript that they barely register.

CHARACTERISTIC ROLLS

Some challenges do not intuitively map to particular skills. Can a hunter stay awake in a blind all night waiting for their quarry? Can a hardened detective piece together the tantalizing clue hidden in the scraps of evidence? In these situations, your gamemaster can call for a characteristic roll: a D100 roll against an appropriate characteristic, multiplied by another number. Your gamemaster decides which multiplier to use based on the difficulty of the task. Standard characteristic rolls use a multiplier of ×5, though extremely difficult tasks may require a multiplier of ×2, or even be based on the characteristic itself as a percentage. For more details on task difficulty and modifier selection, see page 113 of *Chapter Five: System*.

Effort Roll (STR×5)

Most feats of strength involve matching STR against the SIZ of the lifted object on the resistance table (see *Chapter Five: System*, page 111). In cases when a SIZ rating is not available or is difficult to determine, use an Effort roll. Effort rolls can also be used as an easy way to determine things such as whether a character can pull themselves up onto a ledge. Are they worn out at the end of a long hike? An Effort roll is a quick way to decide.

Stamina Roll (CON×5)

Based upon CON, Stamina rolls measure endurance. Use a Stamina roll whenever physical or intestinal fortitude is in question. To list a few examples, a Stamina roll might determine whether a character can stay awake all night, or endure seasickness, ill-prepared food, or strong drink with no ill effects.

Idea Roll (INT×5)

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

Your gamemaster may also allow an Idea roll if you are stalled, getting you back on track by revealing a hidden meaning of some already uncovered clue, or letting them know that something 'doesn't quite seem right' about a particular person, place, or thing. This type of Idea roll should only be granted at your gamemaster's discretion and is not generally solicited by players.

Your gamemaster may also require an Idea roll if you wish to have your character think or behave in a manner that represents player knowledge vs. character knowledge. If a character is a primitive hunter encountering modern technology, for example, your gamemaster may require an Idea roll for them to be able to grasp basic concepts of the item, even if the player automatically knows what it is based on its description.

Luck Roll (POW×5)

Luck is the knack of being in the right place at the right time, having things work out despite the expectation, or the uncanny ability to escape a random peril unscathed. Does your character just happen to have that one special bit or equipment? Will a friendly passerby lend a hand if they are stranded by the side of the road? Does the hideous creature attack the character or a nearby nonplayer character? Does a character fall through a weak floor, or snag their clothes on a splintered plank and escape plummeting to death? Luck rolls can be used to answer all these questions. Successful Luck rolls can create fortunate coincidences under normal circumstances or save someone from certain doom in an emergency.

Agility Roll (DEX×5)

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

Charm Roll (CHA×5)

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

THE EDUCATION CHARACTERISTIC (OPTION)

The seven main characteristics serve for most games, regardless of setting, but Education (EDU), an optional eighth characteristic, can be used to help generate starting skill points. EDU works best in modern or futuristic settings but can be easily adapted to any campaign setting.

Education (EDU)

Education measures a character's grasp of general knowledge gained through a rounded educational system or some other broad learning method. It is not a substitute for specific knowledge about a field—instead it represents general knowledge of the world. Whether gained through formal study, training, or hard-won experience, EDU can also measure how many years a character has trained or studied to reach their current knowledge level.

EDU does not automatically correlate to 1 EDU point = 1 year in school. It can also represent general life knowledge as well as dedicated study. Not all years in school are educational, just as all time spent outside school does not mean nothing is learned. EDU can be readily adapted to most settings—its meaning is obvious in settings with standardized educational systems. In a medieval setting, it might represent tutoring or study in collegiums, lyceums, or monasteries, or extensive travel along exotic trade routes and to foreign ports.

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

Use of EDU should also be paired with the Knowledge roll (EDU×5).

THE KNOWLEDGE ROLL (EDU×5) (OPTION)

The Knowledge roll covers the facts and trivia that the average person knows as 'general knowledge.' Knowledge rolls can be used to recall different kinds of facts, depending on the setting and even the culture of a given character. A medieval peasant might use a Knowledge roll to remember the name of a noble lord or the details of the lives of saints, while a modern citizen of the USA would recall important presidents or remember what happens if bleach and ammonia mix. Knowledge rolls should rarely take the place of a more specialized Knowledge skill, and deal strictly with facts. Making good use of those facts is a function of INT.

DERIVED CHARACTERISTICS

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

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

Damage Modifier (STR+SIZ, see table)

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

A character adds their full damage modifier to all hits with brawling or melee weapons. In the case of a negative damage modifier, subtract the appropriate dice from any inflicted damage. If the total is 0 or less, the blow is too soft to inflict any harm. An attack never does negative damage, so if the modifier goes below 0, count it as 0.

Missile weapons don't allow a character to use their full damage modifier. If your character's damage modifier is positive, divide the results in half (round up) when using a thrown weapon or a bow. If the damage modifier is negative, keep the modifier as is. Self-propelled weapons (firearms, energy missile weapons, etc.) do not receive a damage modifier.

To calculate damage modifier, add the character's STR and SIZ, and find the result on the **Damage Modifier** table (following).

DAMAGE MODIFIER

STR+SIZ	Damage Modifier	STR+SIZ	Damage Modifier
2–12	–1D6	73–88	+4D6
13–16	–1D4	89–104	+5D6
17–24	None	105–120	+6D6
25–32	+1D4	121–136	+7D6
33–40	+1D6	137–152	+8D6
41–56	+2D6	152–168	+9D6
57–72	+3D6	Each +16	Additional +1D6

Experience Bonus (1/2 INT)

The smarter a character is, the faster they can learn, especially under stress. To determine their experience bonus, divide their INT by 2, rounding up. Add the experience bonus to the learning roll for each experience check your character makes to improve a skill or characteristic. Consult *Chapter Five: System* and **Skill Improvement** (page 118).

Hit Points (Average of CON and SIZ)

Hit points represent your character's capacity to withstand punishment and physical injury. When taking damage, subtract hit points from the current total. Calculate maximum hit points by adding your character's CON and SIZ scores, then divide the total by 2. Round all fractions up.

Your character loses consciousness when their hit points are reduced to 2 or less, and if their hit points reach 0, they die at the end of the following round. A character can lose more hit points than they have, so keep track of any negative value. Lost hit points heal naturally at a rate of 1D3 points per game week, though medical attention can speed recovery. See **Damage & Healing** (page 134) and **Healing Naturally** (page 136).

TOTAL HIT POINTS (OPTION)

For hardier player-characters able to survive quite a bit more damage, use CON+SIZ to determine hit points, without dividing by 2. This results in characters who can handle themselves well in combat, take injuries without much inconvenience, and makes major wounds (page 136) much less common. Injuries caused by special and critical successes are much less likely to kill characters outright. This optional system can easily be used with the hit points per location system (page 21), increasing the chances that characters will remain attached to their limbs, and vice versa.

To draw a major distinction between player characters and weaker "cannon fodder" nonplayer characters, your gamemaster might have only the player characters and important nonplayer characters use hit points equaling CON+SIZ, with all other nonplayer characters have hit points based on (CON+SIZ)/2. This gives a significant advantage to player-characters, and allows them to survive more than a few solid injuries. It also allows for player characters who can take on large numbers of nonplayer characters without significant fear of being killed by one critical blow.

Major Wounds (1/2 of HP)

Divide your character's hit point total in half, rounding up if necessary. This total is their major wound level. If your character takes this amount of damage from a single wound, they may suffer horrific side effects as well as simple hit point loss. See **Major Wounds** (page 134).

Power Points (Max = POW)

Power points (PP) represent your character's vital essence, their reserves of spiritual or life energy. Your character spends power points to cast or resist spells. Your character's maximum power points are usually equal to their POW characteristic. Generally, spent power points regenerate at a rate of 1 per hour of sleep or total rest, or 1 for every two hours of normal activity. See the **Power Point Recovery Rate** table for rates for higher POW scores. If your character is engaged in strenuous activity, they cannot regain power points. When your character's power point total falls to 0, they are completely exhausted, and faint until regaining at least 1 power point. One cannot have negative power points.

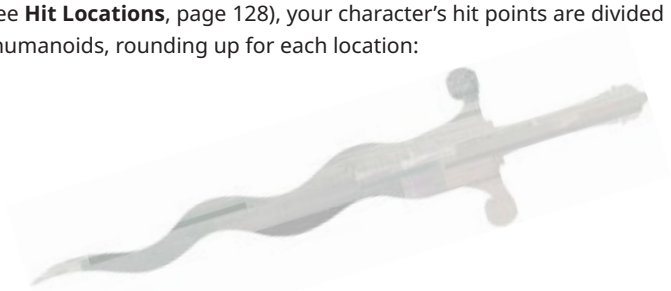
POWER POINT RECOVERY RATE

Max PP	Asleep	Awake
1–24	1 per hour	1 per 2 hours
25–48	2 per hour	1 per hour
49–72	3 per hour	1 per 40 minutes
73–96	4 per hour	1 per 30 minutes
97+	+1 per hour to the above	+1 per hour to the above

HIT POINTS BY HIT LOCATION (OPTION)

For more detailed combat, hit points are divided among your character's body parts. If an attack is successful, a D20 roll determines where the blow lands. If using the optional hit location system (see **Hit Locations**, page 128), your character's hit points are divided among their various hit locations. Use the following formula for humanoids, rounding up for each location:

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



The humanoid hit point spread is provided below.

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

The sum of your character's hit points by location exceeds their maximum hit points, but whenever a character is wounded, the rolled damage is subtracted from both that location's hit point total and your character's maximum hit points.

Damage exceeding a location's total hit points renders it useless. Damage equal to twice a location's hit point total crushes or severs it. See **Damage per Hit Location** (page 133).

***For example**, your character has 14 hit points, with 5 hit points in each leg, 5 hit points in the abdomen, 6 hit points in the chest, 4 hit points in each arm, and 5 hit points in their head. Even though their hit points in all locations total 34, your character will die if they suffer a total of 14 hit points of damage.*

The **Major Wound** system (page 134) is not easily compatible with the hit location system and should a gamemaster choose to use the optional hit locations and **Damage by Hit Location** systems (pages 21 and 133 respectively), the major wound system should be eliminated or adapted considerably, perhaps with the nature of the major wound being chosen by your gamemaster where applicable.

Unlike hit points or fatigue points (page 24), power points can climb above the maximum for brief times under certain conditions. As noted, if your character receives additional power points (usually through the use of a power), they can store up to twice their POW characteristic in extra power points. Any power points beyond that are lost. If your character uses any power points while over their normal maximum, these must come from the extra power points first. These extra power points are not renewed and do not regenerate as normal and dissipate entirely after a night's sleep or a suitable juncture determined by your gamemaster.

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

Movement (MOV)

All human and humanoid characters begin with a movement (MOV) attribute of 10. This measures how much distance your character can move in a combat round. A unit is a flexible distance, and can range from 1–5 meters, depending on how quickly your character is moving.

- A walk is 1 meter per MOV.
- A run is up to 5 meters per MOV.
- An average rate of movement in combat is 3 meters (yards) per unit, meaning that on average, your character moves 30 meters a combat round.

Movement rates are described further in **Movement Rates** (page 116).

OTHER KINDS OF POWER POINTS (OPTION)

Due to the variety of powers in *Chapter Four: Powers*, "power points" is used in place of other names like "temporary power" or "magic points.". If desired, your gamemaster can change the name to "energy points" or "magic points" or whatever is appropriate to the setting. If systems other than magic or sorcery are used, it is recommended to keep them called power points, to avoid confusion. It is advised not to use two different names for power points in the same game.

PROFESSIONS

In addition to being defined by characteristics, your character is also defined in terms of their **skills**. These are learned through life experience, often as part of education and a **profession**. A profession is a job or vocation your character is assumed to be a part of when their begins play (or was a part of before play began), guiding skill allocation. A profession is just where they start when play begins and is not a limit to what they can do and become. They can grow and change over the course of a campaign far beyond their profession.

Professions by Setting

Following is a listing of the more common professions, with notes about the settings in which they would be commonly encountered. These settings are described in *Chapter Ten: Settings*. Some profession titles and initial skill lists may not be suitable for each setting and should be adjusted by the players and gamemaster as required.

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

These lists are not exhaustive but represents the most suitable professions for player characters in each general setting. These professions can be expanded as desired, and even unlikely choices are possible. Our own modern world still has small pockets of tribespersons and shamans, for example, though they are hardly common.

Settings and Skills

You and your gamemaster should make sure the skills associated with a profession fit the game's setting. For inappropriate skills, substitute a different specialty if that makes it work, and if no other specialty is appropriate, choose another skill within the same category. See *Chapter Three: Skills* for more information on skill specialties and skill categories.

Professions A Through Z

Most of these professions are generic enough to be suitable for many settings or eras. Each includes a general description, a list of appropriate skills, and a suggested wealth level. Each setting in *Chapter Ten: Settings* suggests appropriate professions.

These professions are not exhaustive. Depending on the setting, your or your gamemaster may create additional professions, or adapt existing professions even more. Information on creating new professions or adapting existing ones is found in **Creating New Professions** (page 32).

Your gamemaster may limit your choices of profession or ask you to determine your profession randomly, but it is usually preferable to choose a profession, to prevent being forced to play a character you will not enjoy.

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

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

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

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

While the Status skill (page 51) describes the ways in which Status and wealth relate to one another, a brief description of each wealth level is on page 30.

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

SKILL CATEGORY BONUSES (OPTION)

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

- Primary characteristics add +1% for every point over 10 and subtract –1% for every point under 10.
- Secondary characteristics add +1% for every 2 points over 10 and subtract –1% for every 2 points under 10. Round down.
- Negative characteristics subtract –1% for every point over 10 and add +1% for every point under 10.

SKILL CATEGORY MODIFIERS

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

***For example**, your character has the following characteristics: STR 14, CON 13, INT 8, SIZ 12, POW 10, DEX 12, and CHA 8. Their skill category bonuses are:*

- ***Combat:** +3% (+2 for DEX, +2 for STR, –1 for INT),*
- ***Communication:** –3% (–2 for INT, 0 for POW, –1 for CHA),*
- ***Manipulation:** +3% (+2 for DEX, –1 for INT, +2 for STR),*
- ***Mental:** –2% (–2 from INT, 0 for POW, EDU is not used in this campaign),*
- ***Perception:** –1% (–2 for INT, 0 for POW, +1 for CON), Physical: +3% (+2 for DEX, +2 for STR, +1 for CON, –2 for SIZ).*

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

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SKILL CATEGORY BONUSES (OPTION)

SKILL BONUS TABLE

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

Simpler Skill Bonuses

If calculating skill category bonuses is too complicated, each category bonus can instead be defined as 1/2 of the primary characteristic (round up). This method results in higher initial skill chances and eliminates the chance of a category penalty. If desired, use the simple skill category modifiers from the following table.

SIMPLE SKILL CATEGORY MODIFIERS

Category	Primary
Combat skills	DEX/2
Communication skills	CHA/2
Manipulation skills	DEX/2
Mental skills	INT/2
Perception skills	POW/2
Physical skills	STR/2

Artist

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

- **Wealth:** Any, but usually Poor or Average.
- **Skills:** Any two Art skills, any Craft, Insight, one appropriate Knowledge skill, Language (Other), Language (Own), Listen, Research, Spot.

Assassin

As a coldblooded professional assassin, death is your trade. Whether you kill for money or some other cause, you are skilled in the termination of other living beings, usually in secrecy.

- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent. You may also have a wide range of weapons and false identities, as appropriate to setting.
- **Skills:** Dodge, Hide, Listen, Spot, Stealth, and five of the following as appropriate to setting: Brawl, Disguise, Drive, Electronics, Grapple, Firearm (any), Fine Manipulation, Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Ride, Throw, Track.

Athlete

Whether professional or amateur, state-sponsored or still in school, you excel in a style of sports or exercise, honing your body and resolve for solo or team athletic competition.

- **Wealth:** Poor through Wealthy, usually Average or Affluent.
- **Skills:** Climb, Dodge, Jump, Stealth, Throw and choose five of the following as appropriate to setting and sport: Brawl, First Aid, Grapple, Insight, Listen, Martial Arts, Spot, Ride, Swim.

Beggar

You survive by begging for money, food, and other necessities. You may call yourself a hobo, homeless, or a wandering vagabond. Perhaps you had a run of bad luck, are of a discriminated-against group, have a criminal past you cannot escape, or insanity or substance abuse drove you to this state.

- **Wealth:** Destitute, though some beggars are actually Poor and only pretend to be worse off.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Fast Talk, Hide, Insight, Knowledge (Region: local area), Listen, Persuade, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Stealth.

FATIGUE POINTS AND SANITY POINTS (OPTION)

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

Fatigue Points (Max = STR + CON)

Fatigue points (FP) measure your character's endurance, such as how long they can engage in strenuous activity before exhaustion sets in. Your character's maximum fatigue points are equal to their STR+CON. Your character expends 1 fatigue point per combat round of strenuous activity (melee combat, swimming, jogging, climbing, etc.). Sprinting or backbreaking labor costs 1 fatigue point per turn. Forced marches cost 1 fatigue point per hour. Unlike hit points and power points, your character can continue to act with negative fatigue points.

When your character drops below 0 fatigue points, they suffer a penalty of –1% per negative point of fatigue to all skill, characteristic, and resistance rolls. When your character's negative fatigue point total equals their base fatigue value (STR+CON), they are incapacitated by exhaustion, incapable of action. An exhausted character may fall unconscious (gamemaster discretion), and even if they remain awake, they cannot act until their fatigue point value regenerates to a positive number. Your character's encumbrance value (ENC) also affects their base fatigue value. See Encumbrance (page 118).

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

Simple Fatigue

For a simpler version of fatigue eliminates fatigue points altogether, your gamemaster may declare that after some massive endeavor or extreme physical hardship, your character is fatigued. They are either ready for action, or they are fatigued. Your gamemaster may allow a Stamina roll to escape being fatigued after a period of physical exertion.

Using this method, your character grow tired after spending CON×3 uninterrupted combat rounds in battle or difficult physical activity. After that, your character is automatically fatigued, and all skill rolls are *Difficult*.

After spending CON×4 uninterrupted combat rounds in battle or difficult physical activity, your character makes all their skills as if they were 1/4 the normal skill rating and must make a successful Stamina roll to do anything physical before the skill rating can even be attempted.

After CON×10 rounds of such activity, your character is utterly exhausted, and is barely able to lift their weapon, stand upright without something to lean on, etc. At this point, your character must make a *Difficult* Stamina roll to do any basic action, and your gamemaster may rule that any skill roll is *Impossible* or limited to your character's POW×1.

Sanity Points (Max = POW×5)

As described in Sanity (page 218 of *Chapter Ten: Settings*), sanity (SAN) points represent your character's mental and emotional fortitude, and their ability to withstand shock, terror, and cosmic awfulness. Your character's base SAN points equal their POW×5.

Whenever your character is exposed to a horrifying situation or mind-bending strangeness, they must roll D100 against their current SAN point total. If your character fails (or perhaps even if they succeed) they will lose sanity points.

A character who suffers sufficient SAN loss will likely go mad. Your character's Sanity Threshold (like a Major Wound Threshold) equals 1/5 of their current SAN. Losing this many SAN points in one game hour results in some form of indefinite insanity.

Sanity points do not naturally regenerate and can only be recovered under very specific circumstances. Characters can gain SAN beyond their base value, to a maximum of 99. Certain types of blasphemous knowledge can limit your character's maximum allowable SAN score.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES (OPTION)

Distinctive features are a way of describing notable features about your character. These are descriptive only and have no mechanical value. They serve to help make your player character seem more real. The further from average—higher or lower—your character's Charisma (CHA) characteristic, the greater number of distinctive features they have.

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

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

CHA	Number of Features
3 or less	4
4–7	3
8–9	2
10–11	1
12–14	2
15–16	3
17+	4

If your character's CHA is low (9 or lower), these features may be unpleasant, unattractive, or unusual looking. If your character's CHA is high (12+), the features are attractive or impressive-looking, even if the feature would be normally not one thought of as attractive. However, this is not restrictive, and appearance is not always indicative of actual charisma.

As you choose, picture your character in your mind, and imagine how they appear in the game's setting. You can also combine different features in interesting ways. Your gamemaster may veto certain distinctive features if they would be out of place, depending on the setting.

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

2—Facial Hair: Arched eyebrows, braided beard, bushy beard, curled and perfumed beard, enormous mustachios, eyebrows grown together, goatee, long beard, no eyebrows, sideburns, strange designs cut in close-trimmed beard, thick eyebrows, feature of your choice.

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

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

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

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

7—Speech: Accented, affected, aggressive, deep, demanding, drawling, faint, hesitant, high-pitched, imperious, musical, mumbling, nasal, raspy, sharp, sensual, shrill, slow, smooth, soft-spoken, strong, throaty, unintelligible, whining, speech characteristic of your choice.

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

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

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

Come up with distinctive features of your own if these are not sufficient. For games featuring non-human races, feel free to add new and unique features, or disallow inappropriate features.

A LIST OF PROFESSIONS

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

WEALTH

Ultimately, wealth represents what your character's economic status is at the start of play, and what they are accustomed to. Each level below describes the relative state of someone in that wealth level. Wealth is covered further in *Chapter Eight: Equipment*, as it determines what sort of possessions your character can initially own and acquire in play.

Destitute

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

Poor

While your character has some money and does not want for a place to sleep or food to eat. Their life is without much luxury. They do not have much free cash. With this level of wealth, their abode is humble and potentially in a poor or undesirable part of town. They are partly employed, unemployed, or work hard for meager wages.

Average

Your character has a comfortable income and lives without much difficulty, though major purchases must be weighed carefully. They have an average home or apartment somewhere and may have a reasonable amount of money in savings, though few would think them anything other than middle class or of average income. They can pay their bills and expenses, and can splurge occasionally on luxury items, but they are generally living a lifestyle common to most people in their culture and era.

Affluent

Your character is doing quite well and has a considerable income or stream of money with which they can live opulently and enjoy life. Living accommodations are very upscale, and your character does not need to think twice about making major purchases. They have a large amount of money saved and may live a life of excess and luxury without any consequences.

Wealthy

Your character has vast material wealth from a near-inexhaustible source. They can make purchases of considerable expense without a second thought, with a quality of life enviable to most. They have a great amount of money saved, and due to their level of wealth, are likely to have social and business opportunities far beyond those of any other income level.

Clerk

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

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

Computer Tech

You could be a corporate software engineer or an illicit hacker. Alternately, you could be working in any of the many fields of software development. Much of your life is spent interfaced with a computer, often connected to the world's information network. Lines of code, data, and other virtual assets are as real to you as the tools and materials of other craftsmen.

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

Crafter

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

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

Criminal

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

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

Detective

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

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

Doctor
You have made it your calling to treat the injured, infirm, sick, and otherwise unhealthy, using diagnostic skills and medical practices gained through extensive training and study. You may have taken an oath to help any who need it, no matter what they have done or who they are.
- **Wealth:** Average to Affluent.
- **Skills:** First Aid, Language (Own), Medicine, Persuade, Research, Spot, and choose four of the following as appropriate to setting: Insight, Language (Other), Psychotherapy, Science (any), Status.

Engineer
You build, repair, or maintain machines, work in construction, or are a mechanic dealing with technology appropriate to your era and setting, from simple stone architecture to highly advanced spaceship drive systems. Some engineers maintain and operate a large and complex vehicle of some sort, from a sailing ship to a space cruiser, while others are employed in the creation and maintenance of siege engines or architectural structures.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Craft (any), Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), Spot, Status, and five of the following, as appropriate to setting and concept: Art (usually Drafting), Drive, Heavy Machine, Knowledge (any), Pilot (any), Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Science (any), or Technical (Computer Use).

Entertainer
You use your performing talent to entertain audiences of all sizes, improvisational or scripted, in person or through broadcast transmission or prerecorded distribution.
- **Wealth:** Destitute to Wealthy, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Art (any), Disguise, Fast Talk, Fine Manipulation, Insight, Language (Other), Language (Own), Listen, Perform (any), Persuade.

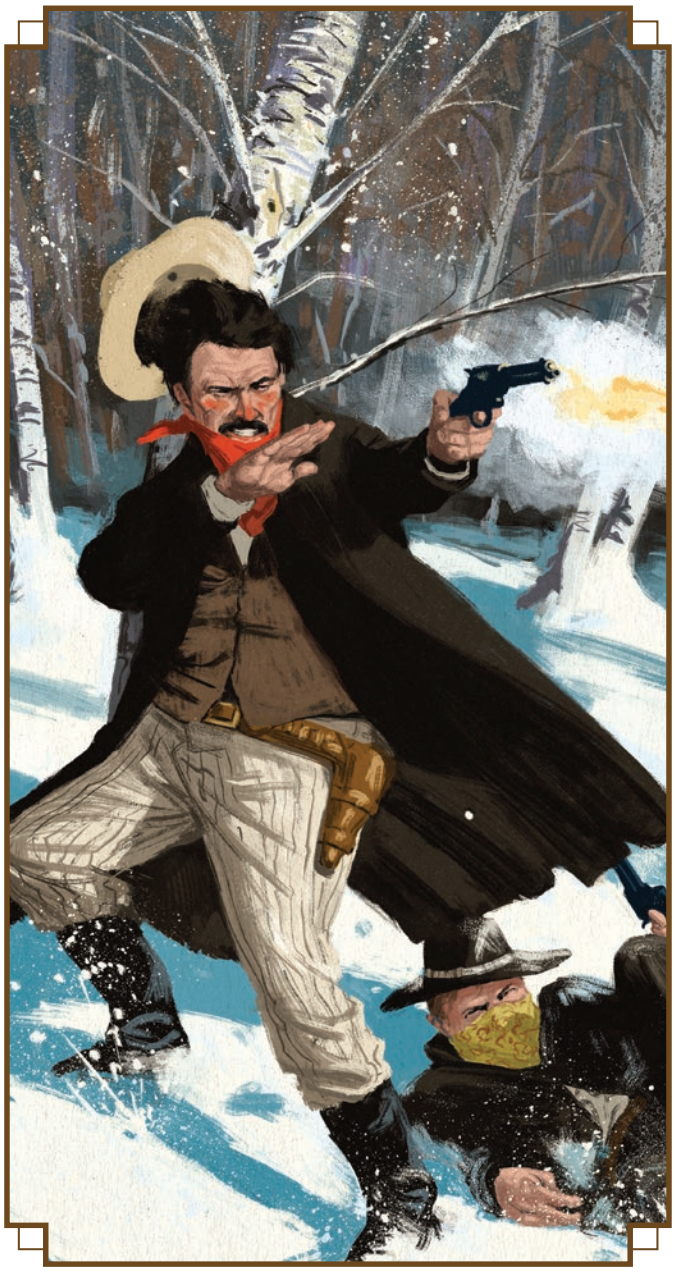
Explorer
You have made it your life's work to seek out the unknown corners of the world, go where none have gone before, and to bring back knowledge of what you have found, either for glory or in the name of discovery.
- **Wealth:** Affluent or Wealthy.
- **Skills:** Climb, Language (Other), Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Spot, and four of the following as appropriate to setting: Knowledge (Anthropology, Group, History, Natural World, or Region), Drive, Fast Talk, Firearm (Pistol, Revolver, or Rifle), Navigate, Pilot (Aircraft or Boat), Ride, Science (Geology), Swim, or Track.

Farmer
As a farmer you dwell in a rural or barely tamed area, coaxing a living out of the land through growing crops or tending animal herds. It is a hard life with long days of backbreaking labor, but nonetheless satisfying.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Craft (any), Knowledge (Natural History), Listen, Spot, and five of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Brawl, Drive, Firearm (Rifle or Shotgun), First Aid, Heavy Machine, Knowledge (Natural World), Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Science (Biology, Botany, or Geology), Track.

Gambler
You survive by the whim of chance, or by cheating fate in games of luck and skill. Inevitably, you travel around; drifting from one gambling arena to another, sometimes one step ahead of the law, hoping your luck won't dry up.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Brawl, Dodge, Fast Talk, Gaming, Insight, Knowledge (Accounting), Sleight of Hand, Persuade, Spot.

Herder
You make your living tending herd animals, riding the open range and taking care of the herds, finding strays and bringing them to market when it is time to sell.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Average, occasionally Affluent.
- **Skills:** Craft (usually knots), Firearm (Rifle), Knowledge (Natural World), Knowledge (Region: the Range), Listen, Navigate, Ride, Spot, Throw, Track.

Hunter
Whether for survival or for the thrill of the hunt, you specialize in tracking and either trapping or killing wild animals or other beings.
- **Wealth:** Poor or Average, unless a big game or sport hunter, then Wealthy.
- **Skills:** Climb, Hide, Listen, Navigate, Spot, Stealth, Track, and three of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Firearm (Rifle or Shotgun), Knowledge (Natural World or Region), Melee Weapon (usually Spear), Missile Weapon (any), Language (Other), Ride.



Journalist
Whether a columnist for a weekly paper, a web journalist, a photojournalist, a television anchor, or a gonzo commentator, you make a living from the coverage and analysis of events, to be broadcast or distributed in some other medium. This may come with some measure of fame or notoriety.
- **Wealth:** Average to Affluent.
- **Skills:** Fast Talk, Insight, Language (Own), Listen, Persuade, Research, Spot, and three of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Art (Photography), Craft (Photography), Disguise, Hide, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Status, Stealth, Technical (Computer Use).

Laborer
You are a blue-collar worker, whether on a factory line, in a warehouse, or simply heavy labor. Your muscle and ability to do repetitive tasks are more important than any brainpower you can muster.
- **Wealth:** Poor or Average.
- **Skills:** Climb, Craft (any), Drive, Brawl, Grapple, Heavy Machine, and four others, as appropriate to setting: Appraise, Fine Manipulation, Language (Other), Literacy, Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), Technical (Computer Use).

Lawkeeper
You have the authority and the jurisdiction to uphold and defend the law, ideally in defense of the common folk. Your enforcement of the law and legal code is supported by the power structure in your community.
- **Wealth:** Usually Average. Corrupt lawmen are sometimes Affluent.
- **Skills:** Brawl, Dodge, Fast Talk, Knowledge (Law), Listen, Spot, and four of the following, as appropriate to setting and concept: Drive, Firearms (any), First Aid, Grapple, Insight, Knowledge (Region or Group), Language (Other), Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Pilot (any), Ride, Status, Technical (Computer Use), Track.

Lawyer
You are trained in law and use the legal system to prosecute or defend, or you represent the legal interests of individuals, organizations, or governments. Though you have no authority above or beyond that of the common citizen, your inside knowledge of the legal system gives you considerable power within the legal system.
- **Wealth:** Destitute, Poor, Average, Affluent, Wealthy
- **Skills:** Bargain, Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Law), one other Knowledge skill, Language (Own), Perform (Oratory), Persuade, Research, Status.

Mechanic
A grease-monkey, you spend your time maintaining, repairing, and sometimes building machines, vehicles, or more complex constructions. You are good with tools, and able to easily decipher technical problems or issues.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Average, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Craft (Metalwork), Drive, Fine Manipulation, Heavy Machine, Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), Spot.

Merchant
You make a living in retail or wholesale, purchasing resources for less and selling for more. You might work in or own a shop, or you might be mobile: a traveling salesman, a wandering tinker, an adventuresome spice merchant, or an international sales representative.
- **Wealth:** Average to Wealthy, usually Affluent. Your gamemaster and player should determine whether the character owns their own shop or trade vessel.
- **Skills:** Appraise, Bargain, Fast Talk, Knowledge (Accounting), Knowledge (Business), Persuade, Research, Status, and any two other skills as specialties, as appropriate to setting and concept.

Noble
You were born into wealth and a ruling class. In a society that recognizes such social distinctions your status is often associated with ranks and titles, but even if such titles are meaningless you are still easily recognized as among the elite. You are accustomed to an elegant and extravagant lifestyle, and you know and are known to the wealthy and other highborn of society.
- **Wealth:** Affluent to Wealthy, usually Wealthy.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Drive, Etiquette, Language (Own), Language (Other), Literacy, and Status, plus any other three skills as hobbies or fields of interest.

Occultist
You are a student of obscure secrets, hidden lore, and magical power, believing in the influence and primacy of supernatural forces. If appropriate to the setting, your gamemaster may allow you to use powers (probably magic or sorcery) perhaps studied while a member of an occult organization or secret society.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Wealthy, usually Affluent.
- **Skills:** Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Anthropology), Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Occult), Language (Other), Language (Own), Research, and any two other skills as appropriate to setting, usually from the following: Art (any), Craft (any), Knowledge (Archaeology), Medicine, Science (any), or Status.
- **Special:** If magic is present in the setting, you may have magic powers. See *Chapter Four: Powers* for more information.

Pilot
Whether on land, on or below the water, in the skies, or through the deeps of space, you are trained in guiding and piloting a vessel of some sort, steering it for commercial, official, or military ends. Your job ranges from space fighter pilot to tramp steamer captain, depending on the setting.
- **Wealth:** Average to Affluent. If you own your own vessel, Affluent.
- **Skills:** Drive, Heavy Machine, Listen, Navigate, Pilot (any), Spot, plus any four of the following skills, as appropriate to setting: Bargain, Climb, Command, Craft (any), Knowledge (Region), Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical), Language (Other), Persuade, Science (Physics), Science (Astronomy), Technical (Computer Use).

Politician
You have been elected or appointed to a position of authority and make your living taking part in or directing government activities, whether city-wide or greater. You could be a medieval magistrate or a galactic senator, depending on the setting.
- **Wealth:** Affluent to Wealthy, usually Affluent.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Law), Persuade, Status, plus any three other skills as appropriate to the setting, usually from the following: Knowledge (Accounting, Group, History, or Region), Listen, Language (Other), Language (Own), Perform (Oratory), Research.

Priest
Your faith and belief in the divine have led you to the calling of the priesthood, and you spend your time preaching or in activities befitting the worship of your deity (or deities). You could be an ascetic monk or a televangelist, depending on the setting.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average, possibly Wealthy if you are the religious leader of a large group of worshipers, at your gamemaster's discretion.

- **Skills:** Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Philosophy), Knowledge (Religion), Language (Own), Perform (Ritual), Persuade, and two of the following: Knowledge (Occult), Language (Other), Listen, Literacy, Perform (Oratory), Research, Status, Teach.
- **Special:** Your affiliation with a faith or cult may grant you access to magical or supernatural powers. See *Chapter Four: Powers* for more information.

Sailor

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

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

Scholar

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

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

Scientist

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

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

Servant

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

- **Wealth:** Poor to Average, though sometimes servants have limited access to their employer's lifestyle of Affluent or Wealthy, at your gamemaster's approval.
- **Skills:** Craft (any), Etiquette, Hide, Language (Own), Listen, Stealth, and choose four of the following as personal specialties, as appropriate to the setting and concept: Bargain, Drive, First Aid, Insight, Knowledge (Accounting), Language (Other), Persuade.

Shaman

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

- **Wealth:** Poor or Average, at a tribal-level existence.
- **Skills:** Art (any), Insight, Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Occult), Language (Own), Listen, Perform (Rituals), Persuade, and two of the following as specialties, as appropriate to setting and concept: Craft (any), Fast Talk, First Aid, Hide, Knowledge (Anthropology), Medicine, Language (Other), Science (Pharmacy), or Status.
- **Special:** Depending on the setting, you may be able to use magic. See *Chapter Four: Powers* for more information.

Slave

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

- **Wealth:** Destitute to Poor, though sometimes slaves have limited access to their owner's lifestyle of Affluent or Wealthy, at your gamemaster's approval.
- **Skills:** Craft (any), Dodge, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Hide, Insight, Language (Other), Listen, Stealth, and one other skill as an occupational specialty.
- **Note:** This profession should be picked with sensitivity to the other players and gamemaster, and it is recommended that any character with this profession be escaped or emancipated when play begins.

Soldier

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

- **Wealth:** Poor or Average, but frequently given access to expensive or otherwise-prohibited equipment.
- **Skills:** Brawl, Climb, Dodge, First Aid, and six of the following, as appropriate to setting: Artillery, Command, Drive, Firearm (usually Rifle, but any), Grapple, Heavy Weapon (any), Hide, Language (Other), Listen, Jump, Medicine, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Navigate, Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Spot, Stealth, Throw

Spy

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

- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent, depending on the setting.
- **Skills:** Dodge, Fast Talk, Hide, Listen, Research, Spot, Stealth, and three of the following, as appropriate to setting: Art (Photography), Brawl, Disguise, Etiquette, Firearm (any), Grapple, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Language (Own), Martial Arts, Navigate, Pilot (any), Psychology, Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Swim, Technical (Computer Use), Throw, Track.

Student

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

- **Wealth:** Poor to Wealthy, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Language (Own), Research, and choose eight other skills as courses of study, as appropriate to the setting and concept. Common choices are from the following list: Art (any), Craft (any), First Aid, Insight, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Listen, Medicine, Repair (any), Perform, Persuade, Psychotherapy, Science (any), Technical (Computer Use), and one Physical skill (if involved in athletics).
- **Special:** Students of the arcane arts may have access to magic or sorcery, or you may be at a school to help you control your superpowers, mutations, or psychic abilities. See *Chapter Four: Powers* for more information.

Teacher
You are an instructor of one or more subjects, teaching groups or tutoring a single student. Whether employed by a university, a high school, or other educational institution, you instruct students in an academic setting towards some standard of achievement.
- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Status, Teach, and choose five other skills as areas of expertise, as appropriate to the setting and concept. Common choices are from the following list: Art (any), Craft (any), First Aid, Insight, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Listen, Medicine, Repair (any), Perform, Persuade, Psychotherapy, Science (any), Technical (Computer Use).

Technician
Specialized in maintaining, repairing, and utilizing complex machinery, computers, or other electronics, you are highly capable at dealing with engineered systems. You do not design these machines, though you possibly know them better than their creators did.
- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent.
- **Skills:** Fine Manipulation, Heavy Machine, Listen, Repair (any), Science (Physics), Research, Spot, Technical (Computer Use), and two other skills from the following list as a specialty, as appropriate to setting and concept: Craft (any), Drive, Pilot (any).

Thief
You take what you want, either to survive or because it appeals to you. You could be a lowly pickpocket, a infamous brigand, or a glamorous international jewel thief. You flaunt the law to steal, either armed, through clever deception, stealth, or some combination of all three.
- **Wealth:** Any, subject to gamemaster's approval.
- **Skills:** Appraise, Dodge, Fast Talk, Hide, Stealth, and five other skills from the following list, as appropriate to setting and concept: Bargain, Brawl, Climb, Disguise, Fine Manipulation, Firearm (Pistol, Revolver, or Shotgun), Grapple, Insight, Listen, Jump, Knowledge (Law), Persuade, Repair (Mechanical), or Spot.

Tribesperson
Hailing from a primitive culture, you are an accepted member of a tribe, and are unfamiliar with most of the elements of civilization. You survive through hunting or foraging, and your world is a small one: your village and the surrounding environment.
- **Wealth:** Destitute to Poor, at a tribal-level existence. Or you may be a noble of the tribe, with a higher wealth level, depending on your Status.
- **Skills:** Craft (any), Dodge, Grapple, Hide, Knowledge (Natural History), Spot, Throw, Track, and two of the following skills, as appropriate to setting: Brawl, Climb, First Aid, Listen, Jump, Knowledge (Occult), Melee Weapon (usually Spear or Club), Missile Weapon (Bow), Language (Other), Ride, Stealth, Swim.

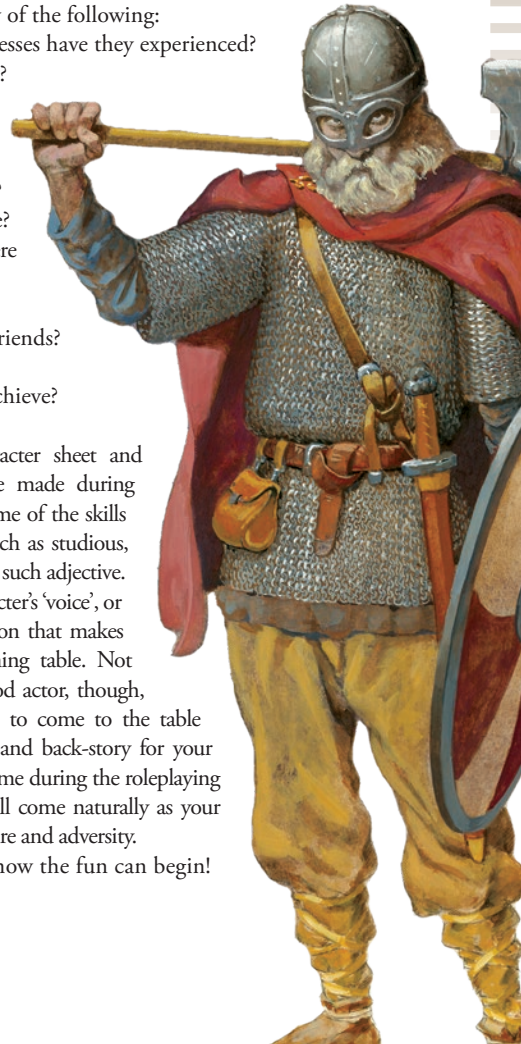
Warrior
You specialize in individual combat, surviving by your reflexes and your weapon skills. Perhaps you adhere to a code of honor like chivalry or bushido, or you are a mercenary or barbaric adventurer. Soldiers fight in groups or squads, while warriors look only to their own prowess.
- **Wealth:** Destitute to Average, usually Poor.
- **Skills:** Brawl, Dodge, Grapple, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), and five other skills from the following list as specialties, as appropriate to setting and concept: Climb, Firearm (any), Hide, Listen, Jump, Language (Other), Martial Arts, Ride, Spot, Stealth, Swim, Throw, Track.

Wizard
You understand and can use magic or sorcery. Through chant and gesture, you can produce magical effects, and you dedicate yourself to improving and increasing your repertoire of spells and your personal access to power points.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Wealthy, usually Affluent.
- **Skills:** Craft (any), Insight, Knowledge (Occult), two other Knowledge (any) skills, Language (Other), Listen, Perform (Rituals), Persuade, Research.
- **Special:** You can use magic or sorcery. Work with your gamemaster to determine your initial spells (see *Chapter Four: Powers*).

Writer
You write prose, poetry, scripts, or some other form. You are most comfortable communicating in writing, and your words have the power to entertain, inform, or persuade those who read them.
- **Wealth:** Poor to Wealthy, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Art (writing), Insight, Language (Own), Persuade, Research, and five other skills from the following list as specialties, as appropriate: Fast Talk, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Listen, Status, Technical (Computer Use).

FINISHING TOUCHES
At this point you're finished with character creation, assuming your game doesn't have magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or superpowers for your starting characters. If these are available, turn to *Chapter Four: Powers* and begin selecting those, with your gamemaster's assistance.

Background is often an important part of a character, but this is the least quantifiable in game rules. Try to come up with elements of experience or identity that drive your character, asking some simple questions such as any of the following:
- What tragedies and successes have they experienced?
- Where did they grow up?
- Who was the most influential person in their life?
- Who are their family? Are their parents still alive?
- Are they in love? Are or were they married? Children?
- Are they happy in life?
- Do they have many friends? How about enemies?
- What do they want to achieve?



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

The hard part is over—now the fun can begin!

CULTURE AND CHARACTERS (OPTION)

Many settings, particularly historical or fantasy, offer distinct and original cultures, usually with qualities common to their denizens. These qualities can be defined as races, cultures, or even all denizens of a planet. Your gamemaster may choose to develop cultural backgrounds appropriate to an original or adapted setting. Sometimes these can lead to stereotypes, and your gamemaster should consider these with care.

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

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

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

Appearance: One or more of the distinctive features (page 25) may be common to the culture or group, such as coloration or facial features.

Demeanor: If appropriate, personality traits (page 203) may be common to the culture or group. Not everyone is like this, however, and these can be ignored if desired.

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

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

Religions: What god or gods are worshiped commonly in this region? If Allegiances (page 211) play a part in the campaign, then religion should be included.

Arms and Armor: In historical or fantasy settings, medieval-style arms and armor is often quite different country-to-country, and armies of each land tend to train with different weapon styles. This is less distinctive as settings become more modern, though your gamemaster can use this information when equipping nonplayer characters.

Cultural Skills: Some skills may be commonly taught and used within this culture as a part of socialization and common education. At your gamemaster's discretion, these skills might gain a small bonus. If bonuses to skills are used, it is recommended that every culture gain equal bonuses, though to a different set of skills.

Items: This might include a significant possession common to someone from this culture, often of religious or having social significance. It does not have to be valuable, and characters from this culture are under no compulsion to retain possession of this item.

CREATING NEW PROFESSIONS

If this list of professions does not offer a profession you would like your character to be, you can create your own with your gamemaster's approval. Your gamemaster also might want to devise new professions for a particular setting.

First, describe the new profession to your gamemaster. Determine if this new profession is like another provided here. If it's nearly identical to an existing one, then you can alter a few of the required skills until the new profession matches your concept. You can also vary the wealth level according to the new profession.

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

If you wish to create an entirely new profession:

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

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

SKILLS

Your character must make many decisions, face many challenges, and accomplish many tasks during play. Most important actions are defined as **skills** your character can attempt. This section lists the most common skills, defines them, and relates them to tasks your character can attempt in play.

DEFINING SKILLS

A skill represents a specific set of knowledge and aptitude. Every skill is rated on a percentile scale from 0 to 100 (or higher). This is called a **skill rating**. The higher, the better.

The list of skills in this book is far from comprehensive: different games may demand additional skills, and the gamemaster is encouraged to create new skills as desired. Additionally, the gamemaster may wish to rename or reclassify skills, eliminating some, add new specialties (described below) or remove them, as appropriate.

Skill Specialties

Many skills are broad and require you to define a specialty, a more focused aspect of that skill. Art, for example, is a broad category, so it is divided into specialties such as Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Writing, etc. These are listed after the skill name in parentheses. Thus, Melee Weapon (Sword) and Melee Weapon (Spear) are considered two different skills. At the gamemaster's discretion, if your character lacks a skill rating in an appropriate specialty, you can use a related skill or specialty's rating halved (rounding up), to make skill rolls.

***For example**, your character can use half their skill rating in Science (Astronomy) to make skill rolls that would normally require Science (Physics) or Science (Mathematics), as these are related skills. However, this astronomical acumen is useless if the gamemaster calls for a Science (Biology) or Knowledge (History) skill roll.*

Using Skills

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

The difficulty of the task or other circumstantial modifiers can adjust a skill's rating up or down. The difficulty modifiers are *Automatic* (no roll required), *Easy* (the skill is doubled), *Average* (no modification to the skill), *Difficult* (the skill is halved), and *Impossible* (no roll, or a 01% chance at the gamemaster's discretion). See **Modifying Action Rolls** (page 113) for more information. If no modifier is indicated, assume the roll is at *Average* difficulty.

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

While many skills are oriented towards actions, they also indicate general knowledge of the kinds of tasks governed by that skill.

***For example**, a medieval warrior might use the Melee Weapon (Sword) skill instead of Appraise to judge a sword's quality. The Martial Arts skill might similarly be used to know about the different dojos in a city and who their senseis are.*

Secret or Concealed Skill Rolls

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

Some of the more obvious skill rolls that may be performed in secret, or without you being aware of the outcome, are as follows: Appraise, Art, Bargain, Command, Craft, Disguise, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Gaming, Hide, Insight, Knowledge, Language, Listen, Literacy, Medicine, Navigate, Perform, Persuade, Psychotherapy, Research, Science, Sense, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Status, Stealth, Strategy, Teach, Technical Skill, and Track. Other skills may also be performed secretly, depending on circumstances.

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

If the skill is successful, the gamemaster should tell you that your character has successfully used the appropriate skill and allow an experience check, if applicable (page 118). If the skill roll fails, the gamemaster should inform, misinform, or refrain from informing you (and your character) of the outcome, as appropriate.

SKILL CATEGORIES

Skills are divided into six skill categories:

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

Skill categories serve as general guides to the kinds of actions a skill can accomplish, as well as offering a framework for you and the gamemaster to create new skills. Skill categories tie your character's skill ratings to their most influential characteristic scores through category bonuses, an optional system (page 23).

New Skills

There are blank lines in the skills section of the character sheet. These are for new skills you or the gamemaster may create. For example, *Chapter Four: Powers* introduces an optional new skill called Projection, used in conjunction with many powers. You can suggest and define a new skill, but only the gamemaster can allow its use in your game.

Changing the Skill List

Just as easily as you and the gamemaster can create new skills, you can rename skills to fit a particular setting. For example, Fine Manipulation may be renamed Devise or Pick Lock for a medieval or fantasy environment. Your gamemaster may also choose to eliminate certain skills altogether if they do not fit their style of play. It is highly recommended that any such changes be determined before character creation and made clear, so you don't select skills that may be ruled out or changed by the gamemaster.

SKILL CATEGORY BONUSES

As described in Skill Category Bonuses (page 22), your character receives a bonus or penalty to skill categories based upon their characteristic scores. Apply the category bonus to every skill in that category, in addition to the listed base chance, if any, as listed in the skill description. See the **Skill Category Bonus** table (page 22) for the formulas used to calculate skill category bonuses.

BASE CHANCES

Most reasonably healthy and physically fit people can swing a club, climb a tree, or speak their native tongue. Every skill, therefore, has a base chance associated with it: your character is assumed to have this basic rating in the skill before any additional skill points are added. If skill category bonuses (see **Skill Category Bonuses** sidebar, page 22) are being used, add (or subtract) them from each skill's base chance.

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

ACTING WITHOUT SKILL

Sometimes your character must attempt an action using a skill without any skill rating (0%). If the gamemaster agrees that succeeding at the task is possible, make a roll using one of these options:

- **Skill Category Bonus:** If using the optional skill category system, use the skill category modifier as the base chance. Raw talent can sometimes overcome a lack of training. If successful and the skill can be improved by experience, an experience check should be made.
- **Wild Chance:** Try, but with only a 1% chance of success or a last-ditch 'Hail Mary' effort of POW×1 if blind luck can be a factor, with the gamemaster's approval. No experience check is allowed for this, as it is blind luck versus any sort of skill or natural talent.

Measuring Skill Ratings

Your character's skill ratings define their capabilities during play. But what does a given skill rating mean in more general terms? Use the following guidelines as a guide to proficiency. At certain skill ranks and in non-critical or non-dramatic circumstances, a roll may not even be required—under routine conditions, characters at a certain level of competence can regularly perform these skills without needing to roll for success, though *Automatic* success does not merit experience checks (page 118).

Skill Rating	Competency	Description
00–05%	Novice	A complete amateur with little hope of succeeding even at *Easy* tasks. You should roll each time your character attempts this skill, whether in a stress-filled situation or under ideal circumstances.
06–25%	Neophyte	Either a beginner or with a small amount of knowledge of the subject at hand. As they say, 'Knows enough to be dangerous.' Succeeds occasionally and may become overconfident as a result. Roll whenever your character attempts this skill, even if the task is *Easy*.
26–50%	Amateur	A little talent, some training, or hobby-level dabbling. Your character is barely qualified but can be entrusted with *Automatic* or *Easy* tasks. In non-stressful situations your character can perform routine activities using this skill without needing to roll.
51–75%	Professional	At 51%, your character can reliably make a living using the skill. They do not usually need to worry about failing *Easy* tasks and are experienced or proficient enough to serve as a leader or manager of others. A 51% is roughly equal to a bachelor's degree in a specific discipline. Most skills cannot be raised above 75% through education or training alone: your character must advance further through practical use. Your character can usually perform routine or even complex activities relating to the skill and you are only required to roll when there is an element of risk, or when the chance of failure is dramatic.
76–90%	Expert	Advanced expertise in the given field: your character has a reasonable chance to succeed even at Difficult tasks. Only dedicated professionals attain such mastery of a given skill, and those that do are respected and relied upon for their expertise. Skills in this rage correspond to an advanced degree (Masters or Ph.D.), or many years of experience. Most average characters cannot begin play with any skill higher than 75%. Your character should be able to perform complex and challenging actions relating to this skill under routine circumstances without rolling, assuming they take the time and have the proper facilities and/or equipment available.
91% or higher	Master	Few attain this level of mastery. Only the most difficult tasks are beyond their abilities, and their expertise has likely made these masters famous within their field and sometimes in the world at large. In routine situations your character can perform near miracles, and you will rarely need to roll the dice except at most difficult of tasks or in dire circumstances. If the optional Sanity rules are being used in a campaign, attaining a 91% rating in a skill instantly restores 2D6 SAN points, representing the self-confidence and discipline associated with mastering a skill (this is a one-time bonus). If your character begins with this skill rating or higher, there is no SAN gain.

SKILL LIST BY CATEGORY

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

COMBAT	Page	COMMUNICATION	Page	MANIPULATION	Page	MENTAL	Page
Artillery (various)	38	Bargain	39	Art (various)	37	Appraise	37
Brawl	39	Command	39	Craft (various)	40	First Aid	41
Energy Weapon (various)	40	Disguise	40	Demolition	40	Gaming	42
Firearm (various)	41	Etiquette (various)	41	Fine Manipulation	41	Knowledge (various)	45
Grapple	43	Fast Talk	41	Heavy Machine (various)	43	Literacy (optional)	46
Heavy Weapon (various)	43	Language (various)	45	Repair (various)	50	Medicine	47
Martial Arts	47	Perform	48	Slight of Hand	50	Psychotherapy	33
Melee Weapon (various)	47	Persuade	48			Science (various)	50
Missile Weapon (various)	47	Status	48			Strategy	51
Parry (various)	48	Teach	52			Technical Skill (various)	52
Shield	50						

PERCEPTION	Page	PHYSICAL	Page	PHYSICAL	Page
Insight	45	Climb	39	Projection	48
Listen	46	Dodge	33	Ride (various)	48
Navigate	48	Drive (various)	40	Stealth	51
Research	50	Fly	41	Swim	51
Sense	50	Hide	45	Throw	52
Spot	51	Jump	45		
Track	52	Pilot (various)	48		

ALPHABETICAL SKILL LIST

An alphabetized list of all skills in this section follows. Each entry lists the category of the skill, its base chance, and a page reference.

Skill	Category	Base %	Page
Appraise	Mental	15%	37
Art (various)	Manipulation	05%	37
Artillery (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	38
Bargain	Communication	05%	39
Brawl	Combat	25%	39
Climb	Physical	40%	39
Command	Communication	05%	39
Craft (various)	Manipulation	05%	40
Demolition	Manipulation	01%	40
Disguise	Communication	01%	40
Dodge	Physical	DEX×2	40
Drive (various)	Manipulation	20% or 01%	40
Energy Weapon (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	40
Etiquette (various)	Communication	05%	41
Fast Talk	Communication	05%	41
Fine Manipulation	Manipulation	05%	41
Firearm (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	41
First Aid	Mental	30%	41
Fly	Physical	DEXx4 or 1/2 DEX	41
Gaming	Knowledge	INT+POW	42
Grapple	Combat	25%	43
Heavy Machine (various)	Manipulation	01%	43
Heavy Weapon (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	43
Hide	Physical	10%	45
Insight	Perception	05%	45
Jump	Physical	25%	45
Knowledge (various)	Mental	05% or 00%	45
Language (varius)	Communication	INT (or EDU)×5 or 00%	45
Listen	Perception	25%	46
Literacy (optional)	Mental	00% or equal to Language	46
Martial Arts	Combat	01%	47
Medicine	Mental	05%	47
Melee Weapon (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	47
Missile Weapon (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	47
Navigate	Perception	10%	48
Parry (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	48

ALPHABETICAL SKILL LIST (CONTINUED)

Skill	Category	Base %	Page
Perform	Communication	05%	48
Persuade	Communication	15%	48
Pilot (various)	Physical	01%	48
Projection	Physical	DEX×2	48
Psychotherapy	Mental	01% or 00%	48
Repair (various)	Manipulation	15%	50
Research	Perception	25%	50
Ride (various)	Communication	05%	50
Science (various)	Mental	01%	50
Sense	Perception	10%	50
Shield	Combat	per shield	50
Sleight of Hand	Manipulation	05%	50
Spot	Perception	25%	51
Status	Communication	15% or various	51
Stealth	Physical	10%	51
Strategy	Mental	01%	51
Swim	Physical	25%	51
Teach	Communication	10%	52
Technical Skill (various)	Mental	05%	52
Throw	Physical	25%	52
Track	Perception	10%	52

Skill Ratings Above 100%

Your character's experience bonus (page 24) makes it possible to raise skill ratings above 100%. Skills higher than 100% use the standard systems to compute the chances of special or critical successes, as well as offering better odds of success at *Difficult* tasks or in the face of negative circumstantial modifiers. Additionally, if your character has a combat skill higher than 100%, they can take multiple attacks in a combat round, as described in **Attacks and Parries Over 100%** (page 131).

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

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

- **Skill Name:** The name of the skill.
- **Base Chance:** The skill rating all characters have in the skill, specialized by era if applicable.
- **Category:** The skill category the skill falls into, for purposes of general classification and optional category bonuses.
- **Description:** A brief description of the kinds of tasks that can be accomplished using the skill.
- **Specialties:** A listing of the skill's distinct specialties, if any. Not all skills with specialties have them elaborated upon in a bulleted list—only those that are more mechanical in nature, such as Combat skills, are detailed in this manner.
- **Effects:** The results of a skill roll, for each degree of success, where required. In brief, a skill result is a fumble (the worst possible result, usually a roll of 99 or 00), a failure (a roll above your skill rating), a success (below your skill rating), a special success (1/5 or less of your skill rating), or a critical success (1/20 of your skill rating). *Chapter Five: System* explains this in detail. See also the **Describing Results of Success** sidebar (page 38).
- **Setting Notes:** Additional information about the skill in different settings. If this entry is not present, the skill works unchanged in almost any setting.
- **System Notes:** Relevant rules or systems, if any.

Appraise

Base Chance: 15%
Category: Mental
Use this skill to estimate an object's worth, be it an old painting, a gemstone, a weapon, or a riding horse. Failure means they have no idea, while a fumble yields false information. A special or critical yields additional information.

Art (various)

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Manipulation
Use this skill to create a work of art in paint or sculpture, or to compose a story, poem, or musical work. A critical or special success yields a timeless classic of considerably more value and prestige, a failure is mediocre hackwork, and a fumble may harm the creator's reputation. You would use Perform (page 48) for acting, dancing, singing, or playing a musical instrument.

AUGMENTS AND COMPLEMENTARY SKILLS

Some skills are closely related to others, and expertise in one field can benefit another. With your gamemaster's permission, your character may temporarily add 1/5 of your rating in a **complementary skill** to your rating in another skill for skill rolls. Many complementary uses are noted in the skill descriptions that follow. You and the other players will doubtless devise more.

Only one skill may be complementary to another when used to assist any given roll. If multiple skills may be applicable or are used to try to get this this bonus, the benefits do not stack—the player and gamemaster should choose the highest bonus to use, or whichever is most appropriate to the situation at hand.

If the main skill roll is a success, your character receives an experience check only to the main skill, not to the complementary skill used.

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

An **augment** to a skill is similar but works in a slightly different fashion. If your gamemaster permits it, you can attempt a roll of one complementary skill to support , or augment, another primary skill roll.

- If the augmenting skill roll is successful, you may adjust the difficulty of the primary skill by one step, such as turning a *Difficult* roll into an *Average* one, or an *Average* task *Easy*.
- This cannot be done simultaneously with a complementary skill bonus, however, and only one degree of adjustment is possible.
- If the augment fails, the primary skill is adjusted by one step the opposite direction, such as a *Normal* skill becoming *Difficult* due to confusion or conflicting information.
- If successful with the augmenting skill roll, you may check it for experience as normal, as well as with the primary skill. If the primary roll fails, the augmenting skill does not receive an experience check.

You cannot augment a skill and use a complementary skill bonus simultaneously for the same skill roll.

DESCRIBING RESULTS OF SUCCESSES

Generally, the results of skill rolls are obvious, but if in doubt, use the following guidelines when determining outcomes:

- A **fumble** usually means that the opposite of the desired result has been achieved, providing misleading information, creating some sort of setback, or even putting the character at a disadvantage.
- **Failure** means that the desired result is not achieved.
- A normal **success** means that a reasonable and average goal has been achieved. The gamemaster is the ultimate arbiter of the results, but the effect should be obvious.
- A **special success** has double the effectiveness of a regular success and/or provides additional information about the subject.
- A **critical success** has triple the effectiveness of a regular success, and/or provides considerable information about the subject.

As noted above, skills where outcomes are very specific and where detail is required, have retained the defined result.

Specialties: Calligraphy, Composing, Conceptual Art, Digital Art, Drawing, Painting, Photography, Poetry, Sculpture, Sketching, Songwriting, Writing, etc.

Setting Notes: Art is universal, though it may have era- or setting-specific specialties.

Artillery (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty

Category: Combat

Use this skill to fire massive field pieces and heavy vehicular weapons, essentially any weapon too large for a single person to move or maneuver, such as a cannon, trebuchet, or ballista.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to types. See **Weapon Classes** (page 169) in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for artillery types.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Missile Weapon Fumbles** table (page 128) for specific effects.

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

System Notes: Many large weapons require a crew to operate; attempting to use one alone is a *Difficult* action or may be *Impossible*. It may take multiple rounds or even turns to load and prepare a weapon system between shots. Many large weapons employ automatic fire or shoot explosive ordinance. See **Autofire** (page 142) and **Explosions** (page 147). All shots go somewhere; the gamemaster should decide where missed explosive or energy shots impact.

Bargain
Base Chance: 05%
Category: Communication
Use this skill to haggle over prices, and whenever opposing opinions meet in negotiation and compromise. Use opposed skill rolls to decide important deals, and simple skill rolls for trivial attempts (saving money on equipment or lodgings, for example). Bargaining is about compromise: use Fast Talk or Persuade to resolve arguments that are absolutely won or lost. A fumble might mean turn a merchant into an enemy, success means you get a deal, and better results yield higher discounts or more favorable conditions for your side.

Brawl
Base Chance: 25%
Category: Combat
Use this skill for unarmed combat: kicks, punches, head butts, etc.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Natural Weapon Attack and Parry Fumbles** table (page 128).

System Notes: Brawling can be used to parry (**Parry**, page 125) but a successful parry inflicts minimum weapon damage on the parrying arm or leg, as appropriate. Using Brawl against a foe that has grappled your character (**Grapple**, page 43) is *Easy*. Used in conjunction with Martial Arts (page 47) and with the Natural Weapon and Unarmed Combat powers from *Chapter Four: Powers*.

Climb
Base Chance: 40%
Category: Physical
Use this skill to climb up or down walls, trees, cliffs, or any other surface. Ample hand and footholds are assumed to be present: modify the difficulty based on conditions or the surface being climbed. Fumbling means you fall hard (see **Falling**, page 148), failing means you're stuck or you fall (gamemaster choice, based on circumstances), and superior successes let you climb faster and farther.

System Notes: Generally, climbing is at 1/5 the MOV rate, and animals with natural climbing ability can move at their full MOV rate. Climbing ladders is *Automatic*. Very tall ladders or trees is *Easy*. Climbing without using your character's feet is *Difficult*. For extended climbs, the gamemaster should call for a skill roll once every minute, or 10 meters of climbing. Your character can take no other action while climbing, and all actions taken while climbing are *Difficult*, with any fumble causing a fall.

Command
Base Chance: 05%
Category: Communication
Use this skill to inspire, direct, and coordinate subordinates, guiding them in complex tasks and improving the effectiveness of the group. Military officers, noblemen, politicians, and business executives are made or broken based on their ability to manage and lead. Personality, a strong voice, and an iron will are invaluable tools of command. A fumble incites insurrection, failing is uninspiring and confusing, and success allows you to add 1/5 your Command skill as a complementary skill bonus to all your subordinates for each round you command them, so long as they follow your orders. Roll every round in combat, or every turn in mass combat.

System Notes: Used primarily in combat, though it can extend to corporate negotiations, etc. Artillery, Heavy Weapon, Melee Weapon, Missile Weapon, and Strategy are the most appropriate skills to receive this benefit.

Craft (various)

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Manipulation
Use this skill to construct or make things, from a chair to a meal to a house. Specialized tools are often required for this skill, and it takes time and raw materials. This skill can also be used to identify how an object was made, and possibly identify the crafter who made it. A fumble destroys the material and yields nothing useful, success means it works, and a better quality of success yields a finer, sturdier, or more valuable version of the thing being made, perhaps with additional qualities like a +10% or +20% to its efficacy when used, higher hit points, etc. This is about with function and practicality: fashioning objects solely for aesthetically purposes falls under Art (page 37).

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

System Notes: Using Craft without the proper tools is *Difficult*. See *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for more information about making, modifying, or repairing equipment. Possession of a fine item of clothing or gear may even increase CHA while the item is worn or displayed.

Demolition

Base Chance: 01%
Category: Manipulation
Use this skill to store, transport, set, and detonate explosives, from kegs of gunpowder to dynamite, Molotov cocktails, advanced plastic explosives, and anti-matter bombs. Anyone can simply set off a bomb: this is to achieve a specific effect with the explosion; collapse a building safely, destroy a bridge, or blow the door of a safe without harming the contents. Demolition also covers knowledge of appropriate accessories for explosives, including primer cord, fuses, and detonators. Use Science (Chemistry) (page 50) to produce explosive compounds or Technical Skill (page 52) to fashion other explosives. A fumble blows things up in your face, a failure means the desired effect is not achieved (a misfire or dud), and superior successes yield more impressive results, whether more damage, less collateral damage, special effects like Knockback (page 149), additional area of effect, etc.

System Notes: With a skill rating of 60%+, normal uses of this skill automatically succeed. Unstable explosives (sweaty dynamite) may call for a Demolition every round they are being handled or used. Demolishing a massive structure (bridge, dam, bunker, or building) is *Difficult* unless your character has access to blueprints or plans of the target. Trying to use this skill without appropriate tools (fuses, etc.), or using explosives outside your character's normal field of expertise may be *Difficult* or even *Impossible*. Some types of explosives such as grenades might be used without this skill. See *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for explosives and their effects.

Disguise

Base Chance: 01%
Category: Communication
Use this skill to employ posture, costume, voice, and other tricks to appear as a different person, or a different kind of person. Dim light, theatrical makeup, and significant facial alterations (a haircut or wig, false beards or a quick shave) can add up to a +20% bonus, at the gamemaster's discretion. Onlookers who scrutinize your disguised character or engage them in conversation can make and opposed Spot or Insight skill check against your character's Disguise roll to see through the ruse. Your disguised character can use their Fast Talk skill for the opposed check if they engage the onlooker in conversation, distracting them from close scrutiny. A fumble is blatantly obvious, a failure doesn't fool anyone who gives a second look, and superior successes may even add a complementary bonus to Communication rolls against those being fooled, or makes detection more difficult.

System Notes: Using this skill to impersonate a particular kind of person (soldier, policeman, etc.) is a normal action. Impersonating someone vastly different (different species, someone much taller or shorter, member of the opposite gender) or a specific well-known person (a noble, a celebrity, etc.), or attempting a disguise without appropriate clothing or props is *Difficult*. The gamemaster may assign additional penalties for cultural or language barriers, or if multiple *Difficult* conditions apply. Too much of a stretch may simply be *Impossible*.

Dodge

Base Chance: DEX×2
Category: Physical
The best defense in combat, as any combatant knows, is to not be there. Dodge allows your character to evade incoming attacks, using agility to avoid or minimize injury.

Effects: A successful Dodge roll modifies the result of a successful attack, turning it into a failure. A special result for a Dodge roll modifies an attack two steps (a special success becomes a failure), and a critical success on a Dodge roll modifies a successful attack three steps (a critical attack becomes a failure). See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Natural Weapons Attack and Parry Fumbles** table (page 128) for specific effects. A successful Dodge roll cannot reduce an incoming attack's success lower than failure.

System Notes: As described in Dodge (page 125), your character may either Dodge or Parry in a combat round but cannot do both. If your character is attacked by many foes, they may make multiple Dodge attempts in a round, but each roll after the first is made at a cumulative –30% penalty to the skill rating. Some missile attacks are *Difficult* or *Impossible* to dodge (see **Dodging Missile Weapons**, page 131).

Drive (various)

Base Chance: 20% or 01% (see below)
Category: Manipulation
Use Drive to steer, maneuver, and control a ground vehicle, whether pulled by animals or powered by an engine. For common vehicles, the base chance is 20%, for unknown/uncommon vehicles, it's 01%. A fumble when driving normally means the vehicle may not start, or a collision or crash. Success means your character gets where they're going, or is able to correct a bad condition (like a slide or spin), and superior successes mean more distance covered in less time, less fuel used, or some other benefit.

Specialties: Automobile, Bicycle, Carriage or Cart, Chariot, Dogsled, Motorcycle, Truck, Sleigh, etc.

Setting Notes: Adjust the base chance by the user's familiarity where appropriate, but when in doubt, assume that base principles apply.

System Notes: Most day-to-day driving is an *Automatic* task—a Drive roll only under adverse conditions or for extraordinary driving (speeding through a busy downtown area, chasing another vehicle, etc.). To tail another vehicle without being noticed, use an opposed Drive check vs. the other driver's Spot. To resolve vehicle chases, see **Chases** (page 142).

Energy Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty
Category: Combat
Use this to fire any kind of hand-held directed energy or beam weapon (lasers, blasters, disruptors, etc.).

Specialties: Energy Pistol, Energy Rifle, etc. Specialties are equivalent to types. See **Weapon Classes** (page 169) in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for firearm types.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Missile Weapon Fumble** table (page 128) for specific effects. Energy weapons usually impale (page 129).

Setting Notes: Energy weapons usually only appear in futuristic settings. Anyone from a culture without them must make a *Difficult* Idea roll to figure out how to use one, and perhaps only after seeing it used. Failures or fumbles can be disastrous, to the weapon or the user! A military background may be required to learn this skill.

System Notes: Some energy weapons have a minimum STR and DEX requirement to use the weapon, as per the weapons tables in *Chapter Eight: Equipment.* Energy weapons do not use damage modifiers but can be used for aimed attacks (page 140). They cannot be dodged, though target movement and orientation can impose penalties to the shot, as described in **Dodging Missile Weapons** (page 131). Blocking energy shots with the Shield skill is *Difficult*.

Etiquette (various)

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Communication
Most cultures, castes, or groups have social rules and codes of behavior. Proper dress, modes of speech, specific behaviors, body language, or even trials by combat can all play a part in a group's etiquette. Use this skill whenever your character needs to behave appropriately, whether attending a Victorian dinner party, an important job interview, or joining an organized crime family. Etiquette rolls might gain an audience with an important nonplayer character or impress others with your knowledge of their social mores. A fumble represents a disastrous faux pas, a fail does not impress, and success or better yields superior results and improves one's reception.

Specialty: By group. To learn the manners of a second group, learn a second Etiquette skill with that specialty.

System Notes: The gamemaster should only call for Etiquette rolls in important circumstances: for example, the first time interacting with an important group, a significant occasion, or when trying to advance status within the group.

Fast Talk

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Communication
The preferred weapon of salesmen, spies, or confidence men, use this skill to convince a target quickly of something they may not believe, or convince them to make a rapid decision against their better judgment. Use this to bluff one's way past a doorman or make a hard sell go quickly. Fast Talk is quick to use, and usually temporary: a few minutes and a successful Idea roll later, and the target may come to their senses. To truly change someone's mind, use the Bargain or Persuade skills (pages 41 and 50). A fumble usually draws hostility, failing gets you nowhere, and success or better has improved effectiveness, or even convinces someone permanently of your position.

System Notes: Good roleplaying and/or an effective argument might make a Fast Talk attempt *Easy*, just as poor roleplaying and/or a flimsy argument might make it *Difficult*. Trying to Fast Talk a target after a first attempt at Bargain, Fast Talk, or Persuade fails is *Difficult*.

Fine Manipulation

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Manipulation
A measure of steadiness and hand-eye coordination, this skill covers any careful use of the hands and fingers. Use it when picking locks, disarming a trap, tying or untying knots, and disassembling mechanical devices. A fumble bungles things, perhaps breaking or jamming the item being manipulated. Superior successes take less time, make it easy in the future, show no signs of tampering, or some other similar benefit.

System Notes: Using this skill without appropriate tools, where required, is *Difficult*.

Firearm (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty
Category: Combat
This skill measures accuracy with firearms, and provides familiarity with handling, maintenance, and basic repairs.

Specialties: Machine Gun, Pistol, Revolver, Rifle, Shotgun, Submachine Gun. Specialties are equivalent to types. See **Weapon Classes** (page 169) in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for firearm types.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Missile Weapon Fumbles** table (page 128) for specific effects. Firearms usually impale (see *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for details).

Setting Notes: Any character unfamiliar with firearms must make a *Difficult* Idea roll to figure out how to use one if they have not seen it in use. Failures or fumbles can be disastrous, to the weapon or the user!

System Notes: Some firearms have a minimum STR and DEX requirement, as per the weapons tables in *Chapter Eight: Equipment*. Firearms do not use damage modifiers, and can be used for aimed attacks (page 140).

First Aid

Base Chance: 30%
Category: Mental
Use this skill to stop bleeding, bandage wounds and treat minor burns, set a broken limb, resuscitate someone who's drowning, or revive an unconscious person. It extends to triage and rudimentary medical care but has little effect on poisons, diseases, or subtle physical ailments: these must be treated with the Medicine skill, though your gamemaster may allow a *Difficult* roll for emergency treatment of poison or disease. First Aid takes a full combat round and cannot normally be performed while in combat. If interrupted, the attempt must be restarted.

Effects: First Aid has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** The patient takes 1 general hit point of damage, and their condition remains unchanged.
- **Failure:** No effect, and no further First Aid attempts may be made.
- **Success:** One of the following (player choice):
  - Heal 1D3 hit points to a single wound or injury.
  - A character at 0 or negative hit points in this or the previous round, can be restored to life if their hit point total is brought to 1+.
  - Reviving an unconscious character.
  - Stopping bleeding damage from a bleeding special success (page 128) or any other ongoing damage to a hit location (see **Hit Points per Hit Location**, page 21).
- **Special:** As above but healing 2D3 hit points.
- **Critical:** As above but healing 3+1D3 hit points.

System Notes: Keep track of individual injuries, as First Aid can be used on each injury, potentially healing it up to the amount of hit points the injury inflicted. Only one attempt may be made per wound. Hazardous or unsanitary conditions may make rolls *Difficult*. Your character may add 1/2 of their Medicine skill rating and 1/5 of their Science (Pharmacy) skill rating as a temporary bonus to First Aid rolls. Modern medical equipment (painkillers, bandages, or medicine) may add up to a +20% bonus to skill ratings, while futuristic medical technology (artificial spray skin, medical scanners, nanotech healers) can make all First Aid rolls *Easy*.

Fly

Base Chance: DEX×4 or 1/2 DEX (see below)
Category: Physical
For beings with wings, the appropriate gear (antigravity belt, rocket boots, etc.), or flight powers, use this skill to maneuver in the air without a vehicle. Use Fly to perform aerial maneuvers or acrobatics

GRAPPLE EFFECTS

An attacker with a hold on their target can attempt any of the following effects, one per round, beginning the round after the Grapple takes hold. Some effects can only be used if the attacker has grabbed a specific body part (see below). As some effects involve specific hit locations, the gamemaster may need to interpret results.

- **Change Hold (Any):** Match DEX vs. DEX on the resistance table. If successful, the attacker shifts hold to a different hit location of choice. If unsuccessful, the target can take an action, though the attacker still has a hold on the original location.
- **Disarm Target (Arm):** The attacker matches STR+SIZ vs. the target's STR on the resistance table. If the attacker succeeds, the target drops anything in that hand, and the arm remains immobilized. If unsuccessful, the target hangs on to the held item(s), though their arm remains immobilized. The attacker retains the hold.
- **Grab a Second Location (Arm/Leg):** The attacker tries to grab and hold another hit location of their choice. Match the attacker's DEX vs. the target's DEX+SIZ on the resistance table. If the attacker wins, they grab the second location and keep the already held limb trapped. If unsuccessful, the target immediately matches their STR vs. the attacker's STR on the resistance table to break all holds. The attacker can hold as many locations as they have hands.
- **Immobilize Limb (Arm/Leg):** Match the attacker's STR vs. the target's STR on the resistance table. If the attacker wins, no action can be taken with that limb until the hold is broken. If unsuccessful, the target can take an action, though the attacker still has a hold on the limb.
- **Injure The Target (Head/Chest/Abdomen):** The attacker elbows, gouges, or squeezes, inflicting 1D3 points of damage plus their damage modifier to the target (general or to the held hit location). The target may immediately match their STR vs. the attacker's STR on the resistance table to break the hold.
- **Immobilize Target (Head/Chest/Abdomen):** Match the attacker's STR vs. the target's STR on the resistance table. If the attacker wins, the target can take no action at all until the hold is broken. If unsuccessful, the target can still take actions, though the attacker still has a hold.
- **Knockdown Target (Head/Chest/Abdomen):** The attacker automatically overbears the target, dragging both characters prone. The target must make an Agility roll or suffer 1 point of general damage (or to a random hit location).
- **Strangle Target (Head):** The target must make a CON×1% roll each round or suffer 1D3 hit points of damage to their general hit points. The target may immediately match their STR vs. the attacker's character's STR on the resistance table to break the hold. Once the attacker begins strangling, they do not need to make further Grapple rolls each round to maintain the hold. The target must attempt to break free (see **Choking**, **Drowning**, and **Asphyxiation**, page 145).
- **Throw Target (Special):** Match the attacker's STR+DEX against the target's SIZ+DEX on the resistance table. Throwing a target releases any hold. If the attacker is successful, the target is thrown 1D6 meters, is automatically knocked down, and must make an Agility roll or suffer 1D6 points of general damage (or to a random hit location). A roll of DEX×1% allows them to land on their feet without taking damage. If the roll is unsuccessful, the target is not thrown and may take an action, though the attacker retains a hold. A throw may be attempted with any limb held, but a successful roll with the head simply inflicts 1D6 points general damage (or to the head hit location) and does not result in a throw

without losing control, outmaneuver a foe in aerial combat, or fly in poor weather conditions. Base chance is DEX×4 for winged creatures; 1/2 DEX for all others. For jet packs, hang-gliders, etc. use the Pilot skill (page 48). See **Aerial Combat** (page 140) and **Chases** (page 142) for more information.

Effects: Fly has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** Stall and perhaps even fall. Winged characters must make a successful Stamina roll or suffer 1D3–1 points of damage from a sprain or strain. A device stalls or fails and cannot keep your character aloft. The flyer falls one round per altitude level above the ground. Make a *Difficult* Fly roll to stay aloft—failing means a crash (see **Falling**, page 148).
- **Failure:** Off course or drops to an undesirable altitude. Goes nowhere.
- **Success:** Completes the desired maneuver or holds position in a chase
- **Special:** Completes the desired maneuver and gains a +10% bonus to the next Dodge, Fly or attack roll made in aerial combat.
- **Critical:** Completes the desired maneuver and gains a bonus of +25% to the next Dodge, Fly or attack roll made in aerial combat.

System Notes: Short, uneventful flights under normal or moderate conditions are *Automatic*. See **Weather Conditions** (page 156) for modifiers to flight. Stamina rolls are required for long-range flights, with the characteristic multiplier decreasing by one every four hours or fraction thereof spent in the air. Normal flight does not expend fatigue points (page 24), while maneuvering or stressful flight is a strenuous activity. Flying while wearing armor or heavy gear incurs a penalty equal to your character's current ENC total (see **Encumbrance**, page 118). A flying character carrying a heavy object must match their STR against the SIZ of the carried object on the resistance table (page 111) to stay aloft.

Gaming

Base Chance: INT+POW%

Category: Knowledge

Use this skill while playing games, from chess or backgammon to gambling contests involving cards, dice, or other random or strategic elements. Gamblers make their living using this skill, but to most others it is merely a source of entertainment. A fumble cleans you out and

potentially puts you into debt, failure means you lose the round, success yields a minor win, and superior successes reap greater benefits and perhaps even improves one's status.

System Notes: Use this to resolve games where skill and strategy play some part, with other players making an opposed roll (page 113). To cheat, use Sleight of Hand or Fast Talk, opposed by Observe or Insight. Utterly random outcomes use Luck rolls.

Grapple

Base Chance: 25%
Category: Combat
Use this skill for wrestling or any fighting where the goal is to subdue a target without causing harm. Usually this is non-lethal, but it can be used to deliver real harm.

Effects: Grappling has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** Roll on the **Natural Weapons Fumble** table (page 128).
- **Failure:** The target eludes being held, or an attempted escape fails.
- **Success:** The target is grappled, attacker can apply one grapple effect (see **Grapple Effects**, page 42) next round if the hold is maintained.
- **Special:** The attacker automatically succeeds in their next Grapple roll to maintain the hold and gains a +3 characteristic bonus on any resistance rolls for grapple effects made this round.
- **Critical:** The attacker automatically succeeds in their next Grapple roll to maintain the hold, and the target's characteristics are halved in any resistance rolls for grapple effects during the remainder of that combat round.

System Notes: The attacker must make a Grapple successfully to establish a hold on the target. Successful attacks grab a random hit location (if that system is used). Grapples can be parried with the Grapple skill: if the defender parries with a weapon or shield, the attacker automatically grabs the weapon arm or shield arm if the Grapple roll is successful. Once a hold is established, the attacker must make a successful Grapple roll each round to maintain the hold. Taking any action other than one of the grapple effects breaks the hold. Once held, the target can attack their attacker if they have a limb free, using Brawl or any small weapon (knives or handguns). If both hands are free, the target can attempt to Grapple back.

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

Heavy Machine (various)

Base Chance: 01%
Category: Manipulation
Use this skill to operate any machine larger than a person and any wheeled vehicle heavier than a moving van, such as a forklift, tank, bulldozer, crane, locomotive, or operate the engines on a large seagoing vessel. Heavy Machine also covers basic care and preventative maintenance, though once a heavy machine fails, a Repair skill is required to fix it. For aircraft, use the Pilot skill. A fumble results in a crash, engine troubles, and/or property damage, while failure means the machine doesn't do the desired task. Successes and superior successes indicate greater effectiveness.

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

System Notes: Generally, heavy machines are unable to participate in chases, but certain kinds of machines can be used as weapons, doing 3D6 to 6D6 damage, based on the size of the device. Using this skill outside normal performance is *Difficult*, as is operation and maintenance in extreme conditions.

Heavy Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty
Category: Combat
Use this skill to operate explosive weapons or large direct-fire weapons that push the limits of portability, such as includes bazookas, rocket launchers, heavy machine guns, tripod-mounted laser cannons, and others. Use the Artillery skill for heavier ordnance such as cannons, siege engines, or vehicle- or pintle-mounted weapons.

Specialties: Heavy weapons fall between traditional weapons and artillery and are often used to deliver explosives. Specialties are by weapon type, and include Bazooka, Flamethrower, Mini Gun, Rocket Launcher, etc. See **Artillery** and **Explosives** (pages 179 and 181) in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for more details.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Missile Weapon Fumbles** table (page 128) for specific effects. Heavy weapons usually impale or knockback (pages 130 or 130).

System Notes: Most heavy weapons employ automatic fire, or shoot explosive ordinance. See **Autofire** (page 142) and **Explosions** (page 147). All missed shots go somewhere; the gamemaster should decide where missed explosive shots impact.

KNOWLEDGE SPECIALTIES

These specialties are not comprehensive and can be expanded as needed. Some specialties have subspecialties, specific focuses on a single subject within that field. Write them like this: *Knowledge (Group/Templars)* or *Knowledge (Templars)*, as desired.

Academic Lore (Ancient Eras Only): In eras when the whole of written knowledge can be contained in a single library, this represents how 'learned' one is. Use it like a Knowledge roll (page 19) for nearly any area of knowledge.
Accounting: Use it for analyzing bookkeeping, financial analysis (debt, bankruptcy, wealth, net worth, etc.), and to identify financial irregularities (strange spending, embezzlement, or odd windfalls).
Anthropology: The study of cultures, including customs, art, and behavior. Use it to identify a person or artifact's native culture or to determine a culture's social mores and behaviors.
Archaeology: The study of ancient and vanished cultures. Use it to identify an artifact from a dead culture, spot a fake, or conduct an excavation and make reasonable inferences about the history of a site or region.
Art History: The study of art from various eras and places, including style, famous artists, and specific works. Use it to identify the origin of a piece of art, spot a fake, or attribute a work to a known master.
Blasphemous Lore: The study of horrific occult secrets and ancient evils. The more of this knowledge one has, the less their grasp on sanity (see **Sanity**, page 218). Blasphemous Lore skill begins at 0%, not 05%, and cannot be increased with experience.
Business: The study of entrepreneurial practices, guild regulations, corporate laws, and management techniques for a commercial enterprise. Use it to identify major players in a field or market, predict economic trends, and turn a profit.
Espionage: Knowledge of spy organizations, famous or notorious spies and agents; methodology, notable figures, organizations, tactics, etc. Use it to know about agencies and their modus operandi. Codebreaking is handled with Science (Cryptography) (page 50).
Folklore: Knowledge of the customs, stories, lyrics, tall tales, and legends of a particular people or region. Use this skill to identify or remember elements of a folk tale or fable, whether rustic or supernatural.
Group/Subspecialty: General information about a particular culture, nationality, group, club, or social class. Use this skill to identify a member of that group, know 'who's who' within that group, and remember social customs and mores of the group.
History: The study of past events and eras. Use this skill to remember the significance of any place, person, event, or object, or to correctly guess when an object or document was made.
Law: The study of legal practice and precedent. Use this skill to judge the legality of a proposed action, find legal precedents, free oneself from trouble with the authorities, or build a case for or against a criminal.
Linguistics: The study of language itself, from the foundations of grammar and vocabulary to how societies shape languages. Use this skill to identify unknown languages or puzzle out a few words or grasp a basic meaning, although this skill is no substitute for the appropriate Language skill.
Literature: The study of significant prose, poetry, and essays, usually from a single culture. Use this skill to properly identify a quote or allusion to a specific work, identify when and where an unknown fragment might have been written, attribute a mysterious work to a known author, spot a literary fake, or quote ominously appropriate passages from famous works of literature.
Natural World: Knowledge of the environment, weather patterns, flora, fauna, and natural history of an area, primarily from a practical sense rather than a scientific background.
Occult: Knowledge of magic, obscure legends, and so-called 'secret history' that covers everything from arcane philosophies to modern conspiracy theories. Use this skill to realize the significance of alchemical or astrological symbols, identify which magical tradition created a ritual workspace, know the names of powerful spirits, or identify the secret factions conspiring to manipulate a situation.
Philosophy: The study of existence and its meaning, from basic logic to existentialism, nihilism, and beyond. Use this skill to remember the precepts of a particular philosophy, identify the philosophical leanings of an author or speaker's argument, and to engage in philosophical debate.
Politics: The study and knowledge of political systems or other means of governance imposed upon or elected by the citizenry. Use this skill to understand the major power blocs in an area, how to influence the political structure, and how citizens will react to political change or influence.
Region/Subspecialty: General information about a specific city, region, or nation, including important people, local landmarks, and regional history. Use this skill to find cheap lodgings in a bustling city, remember the best roadside inn in the province, understand local politics, or find specific merchants or tradesmen.
Religion/Subspecialty: Details of the mythos, liturgy, and practices of a specific religion. Use this skill to avoid violating taboos, recall the laws and obligations of a faith, successfully debate points of theology, identify regalia or religious texts, sort orthodoxy from heresy, or properly lead a religious ceremony.
Streetwise: Knowledge of the shadier segments of a society, from the protocols of the poor to the ways of the criminal underworld. Use this skill to find a safehouse, identify a fence for stolen goods, or know who to ask for other semi-legal or illegal favors.

Hide
Base Chance: 10%
Category: Physical
The art of concealing an object or oneself from view. Your character should use this skill to escape during pursuit, keep an object from easy detection, or avoid surveillance. A fumble draws immediate attention, failure means that Spot roll to find the hider becomes *Easy*, a success requires a Spot roll to be found, and superior successes either make the Spot roll *Difficult* or *Impossible*.

System Notes: Hide checks are opposed by the Spot of an observer or searcher. Adequate cover is essential; hiding in scant cover is *Difficult*, and a total lack of cover (wide open, broad daylight) makes it *Impossible*. Special clothing or gear (face paint, camouflaged clothing, etc.) can add a bonus of up to +20%, depending on its quality. Environmental conditions may offer additional bonuses. Someone hiding should keep as still as possible; moving while using Hide is *Difficult*, and moving more than a meter in a combat round requires both Hide and Stealth rolls. Hide is only effective against visual and aural detection; advanced sensors may find a hiding character by body heat, or a keen nose might find them using the Sense skill.

Insight
Base Chance: 05%
Category: Perception
Use this skill to evaluate another person's character, emotional state, and motives based on body language, speech patterns, and other intangible factors. Insight allows a gambler to sense a bluff, or a detective to sniff out a lie. A fumble provides misleading information, failure yields nothing, success lets you know what the target might be thinking, and superior successes reveal to you their innermost thoughts (within reason).

System Notes: This skill can be opposed by Etiquette, Fast Talk, or even Persuade. Using this skill on close friends, family members, or spouses is *Easy*. If using the **Personality Traits** system (page 203), Insight can determine the strength of those traits personality traits in general terms (such as "Very selfish", for example).

Jump
Base Chance: 25%
Category: Physical
Use this skill to leap for height or distance, jump over obstacles. Under normal circumstances, a reasonably fit human can jump their height horizontally and half their height vertically from a standing position, and roughly three meters horizontally with a running start. A fumble results in a fall (1D6 general hit point damage or to a hit location), a success results in a jump as described above, a special success increases the amount by 50%, and a critical success doubles it. Jump can also reduce falling damage by 1D6 per level of success (normal success by –1D6, special by –2D6, critical by –3D6).

System Notes: A standing jump requires 1 DEX rank. A running jump uses the same DEX rank as normal running movement. Performing flashy or showy jumps (somersaults, flips, etc.) is *Difficult*.

Knowledge (various)
Base Chance: 05% or 00% (see below)
Category: Mental
This skill represents experience or academic study of a branch of knowledge. Use a Knowledge skill to remember pertinent facts, to analyze or identify clues, make logical suppositions, and recall impressive trivia. For more scientific ones, see Science (page 50). A fumble results in misleading and inaccurate falsehoods, and successes yield more useful and detailed information.

Specialties: Accounting, Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Law, Occult, Religion, etc. (see nearby list) The gamemaster should determine whether the Knowledge skill has a base chance of 05% for specialties that are common, or 00% for those requiring research and study to even have a rudimentary understanding of.

Setting Notes: In fantasy and historical settings, only a small subset of specialties exist. As settings grow more modern, specialties increase.

System Notes: The optional EDU characteristic and Knowledge roll (page 19) cover most common knowledge—specialized information is represented by an appropriate specialty of a Knowledge skill.

Language (various)
Base Chance: INT×5 (or EDUx5) or 00% (see below)
Category: Communication
The ability to communicate verbally in a language, either one's native language or another. Other languages can be learned at home, school, church, in the workplace, or on the streets, depending on culture and upbringing. Most characters begin knowing their own language at INT×5. Bilingual characters must have spent skill points on another language skill. Day-to-day conversation in one's own Language is *Automatic* and does not require a skill roll. Skill rolls are only required when communicating difficult concepts or in difficult and unusual situations, such as translating. This skill covers verbal communication—reading and writing use Literacy (page 46). A fumble means disastrous misunderstanding, while successes yield smooth and sometimes eloquent communication.

Specialties: Per language. Each specialty applies to a single language; if you wish for your character to learn an additional language, they must build up an additional Language skill.

System Notes: If the EDU optional rule is used, choose the higher of INT×5 or EDU×5 for the base chance. Understanding obscure dialects or ancient varieties of a language is *Difficult*. Complex or long documents or conversations with several salient points might require multiple language rolls to understand, one for each point. See the **Language Fluency** table (page 46) for details about how skill rating impacts communication and fluency.

LANGUAGE FLUENCY

Skill Rating	Fluency
01–05	Knows only a few dozen words, can count to 10. May only communicate simple ideas. Complex communication (Bargain, Persuade, etc.) is out of the question. For example, "Food. Please sell me."
6–25	Gets across simple requests, enough to be understood and survive day to day. Complex communication (Bargain, Persuade, etc.) are *Difficult*. For example, "How much moneys for this leg of lamb?"
26–50	Assured communication. The speaker can speak better than a child, getting most ideas across. Communication skills are not restricted, but certain actions may still be *Difficult*. For example, "How much? But this lamb was much cheaper yesterday!"
51–75	Allows speaker to tell stories, sagas, songs, etc. Idioms and jokes become accessible. Can pass for native. Complex communications are now rolled at the speaker's full skill ranking. For example, "Look at this cut! The lamb was rotten before it was butchered and is clearly not even worth the sweat of the laborer who carried it here."
76–00	The language of poets, philosophers, scientists, and diplomats. Not only can the speaker pass for native, but they can also mimic one or more local dialects. Jargon and obscure forms of speech come easily. For example, "Surely the assessment of this specimen of provender could be reevaluated in light of its advanced state of decomposition."

Listen

Base Chance: 25%
Category: Perception

Use this skill to hear, interpret, and understand sounds, whether murmurs behind a closed door, furtive whispers, stealthy footfalls, and snapped twigs. Use this skill to see if a noise wakes a sleeping character, or to see if they can recognize a specific sound or voice. The normal range for hearing a human voice speaking at a polite volume is 15 meters—louder voices carry farther, and quieter ones have a shorter range. A fumble means a misunderstanding or complete ignorance of a sound, while successes yield awareness and information about its source.

System Notes: Listen is both active and passive skill: your character can attempt to Listen for suspicious noises, or the gamemaster can call for Listen rolls when appropriate. Oppose Listen with Stealth to resolve attempts to sneak past a wary or unwary listener. The gamemaster may choose to make Listen rolls secretly and inform you of the result, to avoid giving anything away if the roll fails.

Literacy (various)

Base Chance: 00% or equal to Language (Own/Other) (see below)
Category: Mental

The ability to read and write is taken for granted in the modern era: in previous ages, reading and writing were products of elite education and signs of distinction or status. In modern societies, the base chance for Literacy is equal to a character's base Language (Own) or (Other) unless otherwise desired. A fumble means a disastrous misunderstanding, failure means meaning is lost, successes yield critical information or nuances, even renown for work produced.

Specialties: By language. Each specialty applies to single written language; additional languages are separate Literacy specialties. In modern societies, Literacy always equal to your Language skill.

System Notes: Understanding obscure dialects or ancient varieties of a written language is *Difficult*. Complex or long documents (such as books) with multiple salient points might require multiple Literacy rolls, one for each point.

Martial Arts

Base Chance: 01%
Category: Combat

This represents study and mastery of a specific fighting style. Use this skill to make specific moves and strikes that cause maximum damage to the target. Martial Arts is always used in combination with another skill: Brawl, Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons, or Grapple, as appropriate. This skill is not necessary to make those attacks—it represents a greater level of training that allows greater effectiveness.

Specialties: By martial arts tradition: boxing, capoeira, escrima, fencing, jeet kun do, karate, kenjutsu, kickboxing, kung fu, kyujutsu, pugilism, savate, etc. The gamemaster may limit the types of combat skills that can be paired with a Martial Arts, such as only allowing Missile Weapons (Bow) with kyujutsu, for example.

Effects: Martial Arts is not rolled separately when making an attack. Roll against the primary skill and compare the result to the Martial Arts skill. Results have these effects:

- **Fumble:** Use the appropriate fumble result (see the attack and fumble tables in *Chapter Six: Combat*).
- **Failure:** If the rolled result is above the Martial Arts skill rating but still equal to or below the combat skill, the attack hits normally. Attacks rolled above the combat skill miss, regardless of the Martial Arts skill rating.
- **Success:** If the rolled result is less than or equal to both Martial Arts and the combat skill, roll for base damage twice and total the result. Your character's damage modifier is never doubled.
- **Special:** As above. For a special success, the additional base damage roll is added to the effects of the combat skill's special result, if any.
- **Critical:** As above. If the combat roll is a critical success, the target's armor protection (natural or worn) is ignored, and the additional base damage roll is added to the effects of the combat skill's special result, if any.

System Notes: The Martial Arts skill works in conjunction with one other combat skill, and usually with a narrow range of specialties for that skill. This power can be used in conjunction with the Natural Weaponry mutation (page 69) and the Unarmed Combat power (page 107).

If multiple attacks are made in a round, the attacker must allocate the Martial Arts skill accordingly, dividing it as desired between the multiple attacks, or applying it only to a single attack.

***For example**, if your character has Brawl 120% and Martial Arts 46%, and is making two attacks at 60% in around, you must choose to divide the Martial Arts skill between these two attacks (23% each, or some combination equaling 46%), or choose to have it apply to only one of the attacks.*

Due to its relative power, the gamemaster may rule that the initial skill rating in this skill be limited, that increases to this skill may be limited to training rather than normal experience, that training may be incredibly difficult to obtain, or all three of these conditions.

Medicine

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Mental

Use this skill to diagnose and treat serious injuries, treat diseases, counter poisonings, and make general health recommendations, as well as perform surgery and advise long-term care for chronic health conditions.

Effects: Medicine has specific results:

- **Fumble:** The patient takes 1 general hit point (for injuries) while treating injuries, or loses characteristic point (for poisons or illness), and their condition remains unchanged.
- **Failure:** The patient's condition does not change, and a second attempt can only be performed on the next day.
- **Success:** Pick one of the following effects (player choice):
  - Any effect of a successful First Aid roll (page 41).
  - The patient's healing rate doubles from 1D3 to 2D3 hit points per week.
  - Ongoing characteristic or hit point damage from poison or disease is halted.
  - A poisoned or diseased character is stabilized and recovers 1D3–1 hit points or characteristic points per week. This result can only be picked once per week of treatment.
- **Special:** As above, but an injury is healed by 2D3 hit points, or 1D3 characteristic points are recovered.
- **Critical:** As above, but a wound or injury is healed by 1D3+3 hit points, or 1D3+1 characteristic points are recovered.

System Notes: Each use of Medicine applies to a single malady: once it has been treated and is completely cured, additional successful Medicine rolls have no effect. Other wounds or maladies, however, can be treated. Unsafe or unsanitary conditions may make Medicine rolls *Difficult*. Special equipment or medicine may add up to +20% to the skill rating, while futuristic medical technology (artificial spray skin, medical scanners, nanotech healers) make Medicine rolls *Easy*. Treating common and non-life-threatening ailments is *Automatic*.

Melee Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty
Category: Combat

Use this skill to wield a particular type of weapon in hand-to-hand combat, whether attacking or parrying.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon classes. See **Weapon Classes** (page 169) of *Chapter Eight: Equipment*. Each specialty applies to weapons from that category of weapon only: but the gamemaster may allow use of a similar weapon class as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Melee Weapon Attack Fumbles** and the **Melee Weapon Parry Fumbles** tables (page 128 in *Chapter Six: Combat* for specific effects.

System Notes: Your character can attempt more than one parry per round, but each roll after the first is made at a cumulative –30%. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character can wield a weapon from a related or similar weapon category, with the roll being *Difficult*.

Missile Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty
Category: Combat

Use this to wield any hand-held self-propelled missile weapon such as bows, crossbows, throwing axes, spears, throwing stars, javelins, blowguns, spear guns, or even boomerangs. For grenades, use Throw (page 52).

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon classes. See **Weapon Classes** (page 169) of *Chapter Eight: Equipment*. Each specialty applies to weapons from that category of weapon only: but the gamemaster may allow use of a similar weapon class as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Missile Weapon Fumble** table (page 128) for specific effects. Arrows and pointed weapons usually impale (page 129). If you wish to know where a missed missile weapon attack goes, see the Throw skill (page 52).

System Notes: All missile weapons have a minimum STR and DEX required to use the weapon, as listed in *Chapter Eight: Equipment.* Typically, the attacker's damage modifier is halved for missile weapons, and for entirely self-propelled weapons (blowguns, crossbows, etc.), the damage modifier is not applied. Missile Weapon can be used for aimed attacks (page 140).

Navigate

Base Chance: 10%
Category: Perception
Use this skill to find the way to a destination whether with a compass, sea charts, the stars, or simply using perception, memory, and intuition as a guide. A fumble means one is hopelessly lost and subsequent roll by anyone to become un-lost is *Difficult*. Failure means delays and a slowed rate of travel, while successes mean finding one's way effectively and even making better-than-expected progress.

System Notes: Attempt a Navigate skill roll every four hours of an ongoing journey. Use of a map or compass may improve the skill ranking by up to +20%. Navigating in a featureless landscape (at sea, in darkness or bad weather, in a desert, or in dense jungle) without instruments or maps is *Difficult*. Advanced navigational aids (global position service technology, etc.) or familiarity with the area make Navigate attempts *Easy*.

Parry

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty
Category: Combat
Use this skill to deflect an incoming attack if not addressed with another skill. This skill is covered in detail in **Parry** (page 125) and the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127). The gamemaster may rule that a particular attack cannot be parried, such as from a vastly larger attacker (double or more the defender's SIZ, for example) or when the attacker is using an area or sweep attack.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon or shield classes. See **Weapon Classes** (page 169) of *Chapter Eight: Equipment*. Each specialty applies to weapons or shields from that category of weapon only: but the gamemaster may allow use of a similar weapon class as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Melee Weapon Parry Fumbles** tables (page 128) in *Chapter Six: Combat* for specific effects.

System Notes: More than one parry may be attempted per round, but each after the first is at a cumulative –30%. This skill may be ignored in favor of using the primary weapon or shield skill, if desired. At the gamemaster's discretion, one can parry with a weapon or shield from a related or similar category, with the roll being *Difficult*.

Perform (various)

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Communication
Use this skill to perform music, whether acting, dancing, playing an instrument, singing, or some other forms of artistic expression using performance. A fumble is a humiliation, failure is uninspiring, while successes yield positive attention, cheers, and perhaps critical acclaim and financial rewards. If recorded and distributed, it may continue to inspire and earn far after the original performance.

Specialties: Act, Conduct Orchestra, Dance, Juggle, Orate, Play Instrument (subspeciality), Recite, Ritual, Sing, etc.

System Notes: Successful use of Perform (Ritual) may augment a magic power or provide additional benefits, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Persuade

Base Chance: 15%
Category: Communication
Use this skill to convince someone that a particular idea or belief is right, correct, or otherwise acceptable , regardless of their original opinion (if any) whether through Socratic logic, structured debate, fiery oratory, empathy, or brute intimidation. Listeners may be convinced to take action or grant a request. Like Fast Talk, truth is irrelevant. Unlike Fast Talk, the effects of successful persuasion last indefinitely, until another Persuade roll or dramatic experience shifts the subject's opinion. A fumble means the subject may become hostile, embracing the opposite of the desired opinion. Failure is unconvincing. Success sways their opinion, and superior successes yield even better results.

System Notes: Using Persuade across a language barrier (if both speakers have lower than 50% in the language) is *Difficult*, as is convincing someone of something that runs counter to their personality or core beliefs. The gamemaster may reward effective arguments or good roleplaying with a bonus of up to +20%. Depending on circumstances, Persuade could take minutes, hours, or even days, and extended efforts may take multiple rolls to complete.

Pilot (various)

Base Chance: 01%
Category: Physical
Use this skill to steer, maneuver, and control a vehicle through the air, on or under the water, or in space. Larger vehicles may require multiple pilots, and a roll should be made every four hours when not in combat, and once per round during combat or when performing vehicular maneuvers.

Specialties: Airplane, Airship, Balloon, Boat, Helicopter, Hovercraft, Jet Aircraft, Jetpack, Starship, Submarine, etc. At the gamemaster's discretion, a pilot may pilot a vessel with a similar specialty as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: Most day-to-day piloting is *Automatic*—roll only under adverse conditions or for extraordinary situations. A fumble almost inevitably causes an engine to stall or even crash, failing means the destination is not reached in the desired timeframe, success gets where one desires, and superior successes yield more expert piloting and results. See **Aerial Combat** (page 140) and **Chases** (page 142) for more information, and the **Chase Trouble** table (page 145) for mishaps.

Projection

Base Chance: DEX×2%
Category: Physical
This optional skill is used by power-using characters to target power-based attacks. It is described in *Chapter Four: Powers* (page 93) and only used in games with appropriate powers.

Psychotherapy

Base Chance: 01%
Category: Mental
Use this skill to evaluate and treat mental illness or trauma, particularly restoring lost points of Sanity (page 219). In practical terms, Psychotherapy can be used to prescribe drugs and medications, which over time can suspend, treat, and even reverse debilitating psychoses or mental illnesses. Medication and intensive questioning can probe the depths of a damaged psyche and bring back hope from terror and despair. See **Sanity** (page 218) for more information.

STATUS SKILL, SOCIAL STATUS, & CHARACTER WEALTH

As described in Creating a Character (page 9) and Character Professions (page 22), Status can have a dramatically affect social standing and wealth. Below are three tables that assign a social rank and average wealth based on Status, with a maximum wealth for that Status. As one earns Status, their position and fortune will likely improve. Your gamemaster should revise these tables or create new ones, as desired.

PREHISTORIC STATUS

Status	Social Rank	Wealth Rating	Maximum Wealth
01–15	Slave (Lower Class)	Poor	Poor
16–95	Tribesperson (Middle Class)	Poor	Average
96–00	Nobility (Upper Class)	Affluent	Wealthy

ANCIENT/DARK AGE/MEDIEVAL/IMPERIAL STATUS

Status	Social Rank	Wealth Rating	Maximum Wealth
01–39	Lower Class	Destitute	Destitute
40–43	Lower Middle Class	Poor	Average
44–47	Middle Class	Average	Average
48–49	Upper Middle Class	Average	Average
50–75	Upper Class	Affluent	Affluent
76–95	Nobility	Affluent	Wealthy
96–00	Monarchy	Wealthy	Wealthy

VICTORIAN/WESTERN/PULP/MODERN STATUS

Status	Social Rank	Wealth Rating	Wealth Cap
01–14	Lower Class	Destitute	Poor
15–29	Lower Class	Poor	Average
30–39	Lower Middle Class	Average	Affluent
40–75	Middle Class	Average	Affluent
76–95	Upper Middle Class	Affluent	Wealthy
96–00	Upper Class	Wealthy	Wealthy

Status may also affect the initial equipment your character begins with. At the gamemaster's discretion, you may make Status rolls to determine if your character begins with better gear than their wealth level and profession indicate. See Starting Equipment in *Chapter 8: Equipment* (page 158). Status rolls made before play are not eligible for experience checks.

Effects: Psychotherapy has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** One of the following occurs (gamemaster choice):
  - The patient must make a new Sanity roll, for a loss of 1/1D3 SAN.
  - Increase the POW rating of one of the patient's indefinite insanities by +1.
  - The patient trades one indefinite insanity for another: a phobia might lessen, but at the cost of an addiction to mood-stabilizing drugs.
- **Failure:** The treatment has no effect. The patient remains the same.
- **Success:** The treatment takes hold, with one of the following effects:
  - After a month of treatment, the patient regains 1D3–1 points of SAN. This skill cannot increase the patient's SAN above POW×5 minus any appropriate penalties for knowledge of blasphemous or unspeakable horror. See **Maximum Sanity** (page 218) for details.
  - The source of an indefinite insanity is properly diagnosed.
  - Once the source of an indefinite insanity has been diagnosed, its POW can be reduced by –1 after one month of treatment. Separate rolls must be made for each mental illness treated.
- **Special:** As above, but the SAN gain is 1D3 or POW reduction is –2.
- **Critical:** As above, but the SAN gain is 1D3+1 or POW reduction is –1D3+1.

System Notes: This skill is primarily for games where Sanity (page 218) is used. Treatment requires four to five hours of therapy per month per indefinite insanity. At the gamemaster's discretion, Psychotherapy may be used to manipulate a personality trait (page 203) much as if it were a SAN score, shifting it positively or negatively by the same number of points.

Repair (various)
Base Chance: 15%
Category: Manipulation
Equipment and other objects get damaged or stop working. Use Repair to fix them or make slight modifications and adaptations.

Specialties: Electrical, Electronic, Engineering, Hydroelectric, Mechanical, Structural, Quantum, etc.

Effects: A fumble damages the item further and could even hurt the one making the repair attempt ((1D3 hit points for either, for example) and makes further repairs **Difficult**. Failure accomplishes nothing, success restores 1D3 hit points and the item becomes usable again or returns to working order. Superior successes yield similar benefits, perhaps using the First Aid skill (page 41) and the gamemaster's judgement as a guide. A critical may even improve the item in some small way, such as adding to its total hit point, armor points, or adding a slight bonus when it is utilized.

Research
Base Chance: 25%
Category: Perception
Use this skill to locate and identify potential sources of information in a library, archive, or network. Successful rolls yield the desired information from books, documents, articles, databanks, archives, or websites, with superior successes granting additional or more specific information. Despite the wide range of types of resources, the principles are the same. An attempt at this skill takes four hours normally, though electronic methods are much faster. A fumble leads to a disastrous misunderstanding and results in faulty information. Failure wastes time without any solid results or provides the barest minimum of information after a twice the normal amount of time.

System Notes: The gamemaster is advised to make a failed Research roll take longer, give slightly misleading or complicated information, raise some sort of alarm or unwanted attention, or some other setback than simply not yielding any results. Failure is rarely enjoyable in games, and for mysteries, inaccessible clues are a dramatic dead-end.

Ride (various)
Base Chance: 05%
Category: Communication
Use this skill to ride, handling, and care for of a specific kind of living animal. With Ride your character can steer a mount through special maneuvers or rough terrain, coax it to top speed, or to keep control if it rears or stumbles. A fumble causes a loss of control of the mount, perhaps resulting in being thrown to the ground for 1D6 hit points of damage (general or to a random hit location). A successful Jump roll subtracts 1D6 from the damage total, while the mount gallops away at top speed. Failure causes the animal to balk, and successes yield it performing as desired or even exceeding expectations. Superior successes may yield bonuses to combat actions while mounted.

Specialties: By animal type. See *Chapter 11: Creatures* for example mounts. At the gamemaster's discretion, a similar type of animal may be ridden as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

System Notes: Resolve races between the same breeds of animals using opposed Ride checks. Combat and Ride skills must be 50%+ to fight normally in mounted combat (page 152). If the Ride skill is less than 50%, a Ride check is required every round to keep control of the mount. If the combat skill is less than 50%, all attacks are *Difficult*. Even if both skills are higher than 50%, use the lower of the two skill ratings for attacks and parries. If the mount falls, collapses, or dies, treat the rider as if they have been thrown. See **Mounted Combat** (page 150) for more information.

Science (various)
Base Chance: 01%
Category: Mental
Use this skill to know scientific information and principles from a particular field, and to observe phenomena and draw data-based conclusions. Related information includes the history of the science, familiarity with the equipment and methodology, and an awareness of significant figures and schools of thought in that specialty.

Specialties: Astronomy, Behavioral Science, Biology, Botany, Chemistry (or Alchemy), Cryptography, Genetics, Geology, Mathematics, Meteorology, Natural History, Pharmacology, Physics, Planetology, Psychology, Quantum Mechanics, Xenobiology, Zoology, etc. At the gamemaster's discretion, skill with a related specialty may be rolled as if *Difficult*, though a successful roll does not yield an experience check or the chance to begin a new skill with that specialty.

System Notes: Many Science specialties require specialized equipment, measuring instruments, computers, or even a laboratory. Science rolls can take anywhere from 30 minutes to weeks or months, at the gamemaster's discretion: four hours for an experiment is a good average. Attempting a Science roll without sufficient time or equipment is either *Difficult* or *Impossible*.

Sense
Base Chance: 10%
Category: Perception
The skill primarily governs taste, touch, and smell; but can extend to some of the less commonly known other senses (physical orientation, gravity, pressure and balance, temperature, etc.). Use it to notice or identify a particular type of stimulus that is not sight (Spot) or sound (Listen), such as finding an item in the dark by touch, identifying a mysterious odor or faint taste, feeling a hairline fracture, etc. At the gamemaster's discretion, this might even extend to a "sixth sense" or intuition. A fumble is disastrously misleading or reveals complete ignorance of the stimulus, failure is simple failure to notice, and various degrees of success yield more accurate perception.

System Notes: Like Listen and Spot, Sense is both active and passive: you can request your character to make a Sense roll, or the gamemaster can call for a roll in appropriate situations. Strong or familiar stimuli are *Easy* rolls to Sense, while faint or unfamiliar ones is *Difficult*.

Shield
Base Chance: As per shield type
Category: Combat
Use this skill to block incoming attacks with a shield or other appropriate implement. All shield blocks follow the same rules for parrying: see **Shields** (page 132) and **Parry** (page 125). One can attack with a shield, treating this skill as if it were a Melee Weapon skill. Damage ratings are given for shields in the weapons lists (page 178). Shields do crushing special results, can cause knockbacks (page 130), and can be used for aimed attacks (page 142).

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) and the **Melee Weapon Parry Fumbles** table (page 128).

System Notes: Shield blocks are parries. A character may make more than one shield roll in a round, but each additional roll incurs a –30% penalty to the shield or parry skill rating. Large shields can provide cover against missile or even firearms attack (page 132 for more information).

Sleight of Hand
Base Chance: 05%
Category: Manipulation
Use this skill to manipulate small objects (dice, cards, coins, wallets, letters, etc.) in a misleading manner or without attracting attention, such as when picking pockets, cheating at cards, or performing stage magic. A

fumble is glaringly obvious: whether the item is dropped, or the would-be thief is caught with their hand in the target's pocket. Failure means nothing is accomplished, and a unsuspecting target succeeding in an Idea roll may realize that they are being duped.

System Notes: The skill is opposed by Spot where appropriate. Once an object has been palmed or taken, use Hide to hide it from a concerted search.

Spot

Base Chance: 25%
Category: Perception
Use this skill to search a room for potentially important details, find a hidden compartment, notice a fleeting detail, recognize a disguised foe, or spot enemies lying in ambush. A fumble is a hugely distracting misperception or mistaken impression, and different degrees of success yield more useful and pertinent information.

System Notes: Spot is both an active and a passive skill: your character can make a Spot roll to actively search or examine, or the gamemaster can call for a Spot roll to see if your character notices a fleeting detail. Hiding or deliberate concealment requires an opposed Spot vs. Hide test to resolve. Spot is also often opposed vs. Disguise or Sleight of Hand. In complete darkness, Spot is *Impossible*, and low light or thick fog makes it *Difficult*.

Status

Base Chance: 15%
Category: Communication
Status is a measure of reputation, professional credentials, social class, prosperity, fame, and even personal honor. Use this skill to influence others by throwing weight around, such as convincing a bank to make a cash loan or forgive a debt, intimidating a nonplayer character to grant a favor, convincing a vendor to settle for an I.O.U., or pressuring authorities into keeping a matter quiet. A fumble is a faux pas of the greatest magnitude, causing shame, drawing unwanted attention, and has the absolute reverse of the desired effect. Successes yield the sought-after results or even additional favors and consideration. Status is not wealth, however, and while they are often connected, they are not intrinsically tied to one another.

Specialties: Each specialty represents a single social class, profession, social group, or area of influence.

System Notes: Status only operates within a given area, by specialty, and using it outside the area of influence is *Difficult*. Status is not improved with experience, training, or other improvement. The gamemaster should offer Status as a reward for loyal service, daring deeds, or extraordinary merit between scenarios. One point per adventure is reasonable, with extraordinary deeds or achievements increasing the gain to 1D3, 1D4, or possibly even 1D6 points. Similarly, failure, scandals, misdemeanors, and social improprieties can lower Status. Status can be used to impress, but also to serve as a means of determining renown. Your character rolls against another's Status to identify them, and a nonplayer character may roll against your character's Status to determine what, if anything, they know about the character.

Stealth

Base Chance: 10%
Category: Physical
Use this skill to sneak through an area without drawing attention. No cover is required, but a light tread, confidence and discipline are both called for. To avoid being seen while immobile, use Hide. A fumble draws unwanted attention, a failure means that no progress is made, and the character is obvious to anyone who looks, while successes offer successive degrees of concealment.

System Notes: Stealth assumes slow movement. Moving farther than 1/2 one's MOV in a combat round is *Difficult*. Environmental factors (ambient noise, thick carpets, creaky floors, etc.) or gear (soft-soled shoes, noisy armor, bulky equipment, etc.) can modify Stealth rolls, at the gamemaster's discretion. Stealth is opposed by Spot or Listen, as appropriate.

Strategy

Base Chance: 01%
Category: Mental
Use this skill to guide forces in battle, from a small squad to a massive army or fleet, organize and coordinate logistics for an army, plan and execute a large scale military enterprise, and determine what another strategist might be thinking. This skill also assumes a basic knowledge of military history and tactics, and significant figures therein. .A fumble represents a military disaster and might lead to utter defeat, while various degrees of success yield strategic advantages and may mean bonuses to morale and combat effectiveness.

System Notes: Massive military engagements should be resolved in abstract, with an opposed Strategy roll between the opposing leaders influencing the outcome (multiple rolls may be required for larger or longer engagements). Using Strategy in unfavorable conditions (outnumbered, poorly supplied, etc.) is *Difficult*. This skill is often used alongside Command: Strategy represents the plan, Command is how clear it is conveyed to those who must execute it.

Swim

Base Chance: 25%
Category: Physical
Use this skill to move through or under water. Generally, Swim rolls should only be used for dangerous or stressful situations. Floating, dog

paddling, and treading water under normal conditions are *Automatic*. A fumble means that you begin drowning (see **Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation**, page 145). Once your character begins to drown, only a *Difficult* Swim roll or outside assistance can get them back to the surface to breathe again. Success means normal maneuvering in the water, while superior successes mean additional speed and maneuverability.

System Notes: In calm waters, Swim rolls are only needed once per turn. Swimming in rough waters requires a Swim check each round. Swimming while carrying something requires an Effort roll or a STR resistance roll, depending on the situation. Specialized equipment (floats, swim fins, etc.) offers modifiers of up to +20%. Actively swimming costs 1 fatigue point per turn. Resolve races in the water as opposed Swim rolls, costing 1 fatigue point per round. Subtract any ENC a swimmer has from their Swim rating. If their ENC exceeds their STR, they sink and must shed weight or drown. Armored characters have a penalty applied to Swim (see **Armor**, page 130). To remove armor in water, make a Swim roll once per combat round per point of the highest value of the armor (maximum roll if random armor values are used). Natural armor or armor conferred by a power has no penalty in water.

In underwater melee combat an attacker uses the lower of their combat or Swim skill ratings to resolve attacks, and trying to Dodge is *Difficult*. Only impaling weapons are useful—all others do 1D3–1 points of damage per hit. Water resistance also adds 3 points of armor value to any target. See **Underwater Combat** (page 155) for more information.

Teach

Base Chance: 10%
Category: Communication
Use this skill whenever your character attempts to train or teach information or technique to another, using lecture, exercise, or physical sparring. A fumble is retrograde and causes students to perhaps lose 1D2 skill points if they do not make an Idea roll to recognize the shoddy teaching, while success teaches as per the normal rules for training (page 119) and superior successes improve skill training to 1D6 (special) and 1D6+2 (critical).

System Notes: To teach a particular skill, the teacher must have twice the student's skill rating, or a skill rating of 50% (whichever is lower). See **Skill Training** (page 119) for more detail.

Technical Skill (various)

Base Chance: 05%
Category: Mental
Use this skill to operate and maintain advanced technological devices such as computer systems, robots, or other high devices. It can also be used to modify devices to improve their performance or use them for a new purpose outside their parameters. A fumble potentially breaks the device or jams it in some way, while successes and superior successes causes the mechanism to perform as designed, or beyond expectations.

Specialties: Clockwork, Computers, Cybernetics, Electronics, Robotics, Sensors, Siege Engines, Traps, etc.

Setting Notes: The Technical skill in fantasy or historical settings covers traps, clockwork or geared devices, siege engines, etc.

Throw

Base Chance: 25%
Category: Physical
Use this skill to hit a target with a thrown object, or to throw a weapon otherwise not balanced for throwing (such as throwing a greatsword or shield). This covers improvised thrown objects, grenades, sticks of dynamite, weapons not usually thrown, or non-weapons. Lassos are also covered by this skill, as well as catching items. If the weapon is made to be thrown, use Missile Weapon (page 47).

Effects: Throw has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** The object is dropped or lost. In combat, use the **Missile Weapon Fumbles** table (page 128).
- **Failure:** The object misses and goes 1D6 meters in a random direction.
- **Success:** The object lands where intended. Roll damage normally, if any.
- **Special:** The object lands where intended and does the special damage type as appropriate to its shape (see **Special Successes**, page 127).
- **Critical:** The object lands where intended to exceptional results, ignoring armor and doing critical damage, if appropriate.

System Notes: Add 1/2 damage modifier (round up) to a thrown weapon's base damage. Most items can be thrown the thrower's STR in meters, and range beyond that is *Difficult*. Thrown objects can be aimed (page 140).

Track

Base Chance: 10%
Category: Perception
Use this skill to identify tracks or follow a trail—whether person, vehicle, or animal—over the ground, through brush, snow, and across broken ground. A fumble loses the trail and perhaps the tracker themselves. Various degrees of success yield better results, including potentially being able to assess information about the subject being trailed or predict accurately where they are going.

System Notes: A Track roll takes 1D3 minutes, and an extended tracking attempt may require multiple rolls. Depending on the environment, the roll may be *Difficult* (a rainy night) or *Easy* (a bright snowy day). If a trail is lost, finding it again is *Difficult*. Trying to conceal one's tracks is an opposed Track roll. Advanced equipment may add up to +20% to the skill rating.

POWERS

Characters may have extraordinary powers above and beyond their skills. While *Chapter 2: Characters* provides guidelines for creating characters without powers, this chapter covers those with powers. Several power sets are presented here. Some are not immediately compatible with one another, while others are easily used together.

POWER SETS

Included here are five power sets: magic spells, mutations, sorcery, psychic abilities, and superpowers:

- **Magic:** Spells are cast like skills, using percentile rolls to determine success. Spells can be made more powerful in various ways, usually by spending more power points. A magician usually has a small number of spells they use frequently.
- **Mutations:** Modifications or special abilities that accentuate or expand capabilities beyond human norms, like an extra limb, toxins, or a heightened sense of smell. Unlike other power sets, some mutations are not beneficial and are even hindrances.
- **Psychic Abilities:** Strange powers of the mind, manifest through mental strength and force of will. Psychic abilities are usually resolved as resistance rolls with your INT or POW vs. an opposing characteristic. A psychic may have a few or many abilities they're relatively powerful in.
- **Sorcery:** This type of magic consists of short magical incantations that cause a supernatural effect. Sorcery automatically works except when successfully resisted and can have different levels of effectiveness. A sorcerer can change the spells they memorize day-to-day, picking desired ones from a larger repertoire. Seeking new spells is a part of playing a sorcerer.
- **Superpowers:** These powers are almost always expansions of existing skills, new abilities, or allow your character to exceed their natural limits (characteristics, etc.) significantly. Superpower use is often resolved with resistance rolls, though some superpowers are automatic. Superpowers and super-powered characters may take on advantages or disadvantages.

Opposed Powers of Different Types

Though these power sets use different fundamental mechanics they can coexist within the same game. Superhero settings can have magicians, mutants, psychics, and sorcerers, for example. Usually, these can coexist without difficulty, but the most critical question is when they come into conflict or must be compared against one another. When using these powers in the same game, consider these principles:

- **Can You Use the Resistance Table?** Whenever possible, can any conflicts between powers be handled by resistance rolls? For resistance rolls, POW usually drives magic, sorcery, and psychic powers; CON is linked to most mutations; and superpowers use

THE SCOPE OF THESE RULES

These powers are adapted from prior Chaosium, Inc. games (see the bibliography in *Chapter 12: Appendix*). They are not all-encompassing: expansion and customization is encouraged. These are a foundation with which you can create additional new powers or adapt them freely from other sources such as movies, books, or even other roleplaying games. More easily, you can import powers from other Basic Roleplaying games, such as the magic systems from *Call of Cthulhu* or *RuneQuest*, if you wish!

several characteristics. In some cases, the power's levels are all you need for a resistance roll.

- **Can You Find an Equivalent Rule?** If the power isn't based on a characteristic, you may find an equivalent value as a piece of equipment in *Chapter 8: Equipment*, or a spot rule from *Chapter 7: Spot Rules*. If so, use one of those.
- **What's More Fun?** Which is better for game play; do different powers work together, even when from different sets, or are they completely different and do not interact?

HOW DO CHARACTERS GET POWERS?

The most important questions to ask during character creation are:

- How did the characters get these powers?
- What kind of powers, and how many?
- How *powerful* are these powers?
- Are there any limitations, and if so, what are they?

Your gamemaster should answer these questions during the character creation process outlined in *Chapter 2: Characters.* Power creation can be done after that section is complete, though decisions made about powers and opportunities for increases to characteristics and skills may necessitate refiguring of those values.

Selecting Powers in Character Creation

Ideally, the decision about powers is decided before character creation, so players can determine their powers right after **Step One** in **Creating a Character** in *Chapter 2: Characters*. Use this process to determine your character's powers, expanding and replacing **Step Two** (page 10).

Step Two (Powers)

What is the game's power level? You and your gamemaster should discuss this and agree to it, which leads to shared expectations and satisfaction between everyone. These are the usual power levels:

- **Normal:** Characters have no, one, or a few minor powers, sometimes barely more than an extraordinary talent. This power level is the most suitable for horror or modern adventure settings, where technology and wits are often the decisive factor in survival.
- **Heroic:** Characters have a few strong powers or a wide range of mid- to low-level powers. This level of power is best for games about young superheroes or apprentice wizards, mutated survivors of a radioactive apocalypse, historical vigilante heroes, or a high fantasy world of wizards and warriors. In vastly advanced civilizations or eras, normal citizens may have this power level, with many incredible abilities granted by genetic manipulation or now-unknown scientific principles.
- **Epic:** Characters are at the level of costumed superheroes, arch-mages, or formidable supernatural beings. Games like this are high-stakes, often with the fate of the world in the balance, and epic-level characters are well-suited for these challenges.
- **Superhuman:** These characters are primal beings or the mightiest of heroes. Games at this power level might feature the upper echelon of costumed superheroes, galactic guardians, modern incarnations of great demigods, or all of them fighting side-by-side.

Each power set covers the powers available to a starting character at each power level.

Mixing Power, Characteristic, and Skill Levels

A game's power level does not necessarily define the starting skill point pools described in Step Seven of character creation (page 11). You can mix and match skill levels and power levels as desired.

***For example**, superhero characters may have tremendous power, but normal starting skill points, or vice versa.*

Doing so lets you customize game as you like to suit your preferred play style.

Powered Characters vs. Non-Powered Characters

Should all the characters in a game have powers, or is it all right if some do and some don't? This depends on the players and your desired play style—some players may feel cheated if their characters don't have equal abilities from the start, while others enjoy the challenge and differences between characters.

These rules assume that every player has access to the same resources to create their character. Not everyone wants to play the same type of character with the same power set, though. Following are a few options to help balance powered and non-powered characters, characters with different power sets, or those with different power levels:

- **Skills vs. Powers:** Vary the power levels of skills vs. powers, such as lowering the power level of the powered character by one step or raising the skill level any non-powered characters by one step, as appropriate.

  ***For example**, powered characters in a Heroic level game begin at a Normal level for powers and skills, while everyone else has Heroic level skill pools.*

  That said, it is almost impossible to balance all the potential combinations. The most important thing is to make certain that all the players are happy and things seem fair.
- **Obvious vs. Intrinsic Powers:** Many powers are subtle, and could be defined as just exceptional knacks, or superlative ability or training. Many powers can be explained as the natural result of heightened training, special capabilities, intense mastery, or exceptional mental or physical discipline.
- **Equipment:** You can substitute physical items for powers. *Chapter 8: Equipment* covers the creation of weapons, armor, vehicles, and other pieces of gear that may have their own powers and skills, with rules as to how they may be purchased like powers. Characters may have other advantages such as secret bases, vast wealth, armies of loyal followers, or other resources. Some guidelines are in the equipment section, though these sorts of advantages are best handled between you and your gamemaster.

With any one or more of these methods in use, a seemingly non-powered character should be able to be created alongside a character that obviously possesses an array of powers. For example, a super archer character may personally have few powers, but instead an array of technological trick arrows that simulate superpowers.

Characters With More Than One Type of Power

More than one power set may be available to characters, whether starting or more experienced.

***For example**, your character may be a super-powered telepathic mutant, or use both magic and sorcery, or perhaps even use all five types of powers presented in this chapter.*

However, your gamemaster should have the final say as to whether your character can begin with more than one power set.

Following are guidelines for beginning with more than one power set, by power level.

Normal Power Level

Your character begins with:

- One power set at the Normal power level

Heroic Power Level

Your character begins with (pick one of the following):

- One power set at the Heroic power level
- Two power sets at the Normal power level

Epic Power Level

Your character begins with (pick one of the following):

- One power set at the Epic power level
- One power set at the Heroic power level and one power set at the Normal power level
- Three power sets at the Normal power level

Superhuman Power Level

Your character begins with (pick one of the following):

- One power set at the Superhuman power level
- One power set at the Epic power level and one power set at the Normal power level
- One power set at the Heroic power level and two power sets at the Normal power level
- Two power sets at the Heroic power level
- Four power sets at the Normal power level

As is often the case, having multiple power sets may not be as useful as a single higher-level power set. The more powers and skills your character uses often spreads them thin and may result in slower advancement. And no matter how many of these power sets your character may use, they all draw from the same pool of power points—your character does not keep a different power point pool for each power. In some cases, such as an item that stores power points, your character may not even be able to access those power points to use different types of powers.

***For example**, a technological battery that stores power points might not work for spells or for psychic powers… or does it?*

MAGIC

Characters who use magic spells are called magicians, and these rules refer to them as such. Magicians use chants and gestures to produce immediate magic effects. Magic is quick and easy, drawing from the magician's POW and using it for resistance rolls, where required.

How Magic Works

Magic is treated like any other skill: each spell a magician knows is a different skill, with a percentage chance for success. The magician spends power points (based on their POW) to fuel spells. When a magician casts a spell, they spend the relevant power points, and percentile dice are rolled. If successful, the spell takes effect. If the roll fails, 1 power point is lost and nothing happens.

Like skills, a spell can have an additional effect with a special or critical roll. See **Magic Spell Success Levels** (page 59) for guidance about each level of success.

Most of the time, the magician can attempt to cast the spell again on the next round if they have enough power points remaining.

Magic can be learned from an instructor and improved through experience. If using **Skill Category Bonuses** (pages 23), spells are Mental skills and that modifier is applied.

Costs of Magic

Magic spellcasting always has a cost. Magic spells can also be cast in increments, called levels. Generally, each level costs 1 power point to cast. Some spells cost more than 1 power point per level. If a magician is reduced to 0 power points, they fall unconscious. The normal rules for power points apply to any power points lost through casting spells.

Even if the roll to cast a spell is a failure, the spell costs 1 power point. If the roll fumbles, the spell costs the same amount as if it was a success (costing the number of levels in the spell).

Power points regenerate as per the **Power Point Recovery Rate** table (page 20). Usually, this is 1 per hour if sleeping and 1 per 2 hours if awake and active.

Casting Time

Only one spell can be cast per combat round, but a magician can cast several levels of the same spell together in the same attempt. Spells each cost 1 DEX rank to cast per level of the spell and are considered as attack actions if cast in combat.

***For example**, if a magician with DEX 15 wants to cast a spell in a combat round, the spell is cast at the DEX rank –1 per level of the spell. Thus, a level 1 spell is cast at DEX rank 14 (15–1=14).*

A magic spell with more levels is cast later in the round. *Chapter 6: Combat* (page 123) covers spell casting times, and the following sections describe magic spell levels in more detail.

Spell Level

Each spell has a level that determines how powerful it is. By default, a spell is level 1, costing 1+ power points to cast. A spell can be made even more powerful by buying additional levels (and power points). The effect of additional levels are provided in each spell's description.

Adding more levels takes longer than casting the spell at level 1. Each level of a spell lowers the magician's DEX rank by –1 for the combat round.

***For example**, a magician with DEX 15 casting a Fire spell at level 2 does so at DEX rank 13 (15–2=13) rather than the normal DEX rank 14.*

There is a limit to how many levels can be added to a spell, equal to ½ your character's INT (rounded up).

***For example**, a magician with INT 15 is limited to spells of levels 1 through 8. If the additional time to cast lowers their DEX rank to below 0, the spell is cast in the next round, subtracting the number below 0 from their normal DEX rank in that next round.*

This likely only occurs if a magician's DEX rank is low or has been lowered due to other activities in the combat round.

Overcoming POW

When a spell affects a living target, the caster must often overcome the target's POW or power points in a resistance roll. Each spell description designates which is used. For power points, use the value before spending points on the spell. This is not required if the target is willing to accept the spell's effects, and beneficial spells such as Heal or Enhancement do not require a resistance roll unless the recipient actively does not wish to be aided. In these cases, use a resistance roll. An unconscious or otherwise debilitated target automatically fails a resistance roll using POW or power points. **Spells such as Blast, Fire, Frost, Lightning, and Wouning do not require resistance rolls to have an effect.**

Combining Spells

Two low-level spells of the same type cannot be combined to make a higher-level spell.

***For example**, a magician cannot combine two Protection 2 spells to make a Protection 4 spell.*

If two or more spells of unequal levels are applied to the same person, place, or thing at the same time, only the higher-level spell takes effect, though all the power points to cast those spells are still spent. If the

THE MAGICIAN'S FAMILIAR

Base Range: The magician's POW in meters.

A magician may have a familiar, a special animal or creature with an magical connection to the magician. A familiar aids in magic and provides other useful abilities. To gain a familiar, a magician must first capture or befriend the appropriate animal. See *Chapter 11: Creatures* for examples, or you and your gamemaster can devise a new creature, as desired. The creature's SIZ cannot be more than ¼ the magician's POW, rounded up. ***For example,*** *a magician with POW 16 is limited to creatures of SIZ 4 or lower. All magicians are taught the ritual of binding a familiar, though your gamemaster may require an untutored magician to seek the knowledge out in some grimoire or from a mentor.*

Once the creature is captured, the magician must live closely to it for three months. During this time, they cannot be apart for more than one day. Each day of these three months is spent in ritual preparation, establishing a supernatural rapport with the creature. At the end of this process, the magician must spend 1 point of permanent POW and defeat the creature in a POW vs. POW resistance roll (using the POW value before the point is spent). This is known as binding. When the ritual is completed, all the magician's current power points are expended, but now they have an unbreakable magic link with the creature. If the resistance roll fails, the creature can never be taken for a familiar, and the POW point is lost.

A successfully-bound familiar is unfailingly loyal to the magician and never willingly betrays them. The magician always senses where their familiar is (and vice versa) unless they are somehow magically shielded from each other.

While the familiar is within range (the magician's POW in meters), the magician can:

- Drain the familiar of some or all power points to use instead of the magician's own. If the creature is reduced to 0 power points, it falls unconscious.
- Drain the familiar of some or all fatigue points, using them instead of the magician's own. If the creature is reduced to a negative fatigue point value equal to its normal total, it falls unconscious.
- See through the familiar's eyes and use its other senses for one combat round, including use of any special detection (night vision, etc.) that the familiar possesses. This costs 1 power point to activate per full turn (5 minutes) and can be spent as needed.
- Use their own INT or POW instead of the familiar's to defend the familiar against magical attacks while it is in range. If the familiar is outside the magician's range, its natural INT or POW are used instead.
- Send telepathic messages or commands to the familiar. It will obey these, even if placing itself in danger or certain death. This costs 1 power point per command
- Speak through the creature's mouth, if possible. The voice that emerges sounds like the magician's, but as if imitating the familiar. For example, a cat emits a voice like the familiar's magician owner speaking in a mewling 'catlike' voice. This requires the magician to make a successful Idea roll to successfully convey the information through their familiar in this manner—failure means that the familiar is unable to speak that round or make legible sounds. This ability costs 1 power point per sentence expressed (your gamemaster should determine what constitutes a sentence).

The familiar can freely leave the magician's range but does not leave the magician if it does so—it has simply passed beyond the range the magician can take advantage of any of the abilities listed above. When the magician wishes, the familiar instinctively returns to their side as quickly as it can.

Familiars sometimes assume recognizable aspects of their owner's mannerisms and appearance, at your or your gamemaster's discretion. These can be drawn from **Distinctive Features** (page 25), **Personality Traits** (page 203), or even the results of major wounds. If a magician can make a *Difficult* Idea roll while examining a familiar, and if the owner is known to the magician, they can determine to whom the familiar is bound to. ***For example,*** *a magician's cat familiar has taken on a slight limp, as the magician was injured with a major wound in the same limb that never healed. A rival of the magician, seeing a limping cat, may make a* Difficult *Idea roll. If successful, the second magician recognizes the animal as the first magician's familiar.*

A magician can only have one familiar active at any one time. If the magician attempts to turn another magician's familiar into their own, they must perform all of the above preparations, and then defeat the combined total of the original owner's POW plus the familiar's POW in a POW vs. POW resistance roll to seize command of the familiar. If successful, the familiar changes owners. The original owner immediately knows that the familiar is lost.

A magician can instantly free a familiar from service but does not regain the POW spent. If a familiar is killed, the magician immediately loses all the benefits of the familiar, takes 1D6 points of sympathetic hit point damage and may lose 1D6 SAN (if sanity is being used). The point of POW spent to bind the familiar is lost. If the familiar dies naturally through old age, the magician regains the spent POW point.

THE WIZARD'S STAFF

A magician may wish to craft a staff or have one made for them. This can be expensive but serves as a sign of magical prowess. A magician with a staff is referred to as a wizard. It isn't essential for spellcasting, but it is a useful tool and focus that most magicians aspire to have—a sign of authority, skill, and mastery.

The term 'staff' describes a length of wood or some other substance, around two meters long, wielded in one or both hands. A staff may, however, be quite different in size, shape, and appearance. It can be smaller (a wand or scepter), shaped like something else (an amulet, ring, or other jewelry), or can even be a weapon. However, it cannot be a living being. A traditional wizard's staff is treated as a normal staff (page 172), though other forms likely have different attributes. Work with your gamemaster to determine a non-traditional staff's attributes. The time required to make a staff of any non-wood substance is doubled (see below).

The cost to make a staff is usually prohibitively expensive for all but the most experienced and successful of magicians, and your gamemaster should set the physical price accordingly in their setting (it is the equivalent of buying a new car, as a point of reference). The process of manufacturing a wizard's staff requires six months, and while it is generally known to most magicians, your gamemaster may require your character to make a successful Research or appropriate Knowledge roll. At your gamemaster's discretion, the staff may require special elements, such as expensive and rare items or substances. Or it may be composed of cheap and relatively common components. All of this depends on the magician's personal style.

While the staff is being constructed by the most skilled artisans, your character cannot do any other task because they must oversee each step of the construction process, becoming familiar with every aspect of the staff until it is like an extension of their own mind. The final ritual to be enacted over the staff costs your character a point of permanent POW, subtracted from their total. There is no roll to be made, but the POW point does not regenerate.

The staff acts as a reservoir of power points for your character. It can store power points up to your character's current POW at the time of the making of the staff (minus the permanent point of POW sacrificed). For example, if your character has POW 17 and makes a wizard's staff, the staff can store 16 power points at any time (17– 1=16). The wizard chooses when to use the staff's power points to power a magic spell, but cannot remove power points to replenish their own supply, or move any power points into the staff. The staff is essentially a living being in its own right, and regains spent power points at the same rate as a player character of equivalent POW. However, if reduced to 0 power points it will wither and die: never to store power points again.

Some wizards learn to fight using their staves, while others would never dream of risking these powerful spellcasting tools in such dangerous activity. However, in combat, a wizard's staff is a powerful weapon. A wizard's staff has 20 hit points (if it is not a staff, increase its hit point total by 5) and does damage as a normal staff (see *Chapter 8: Equipment*, or below, for more details). If it strikes a target successfully, it will do an additional 1D6 points of damage if its current power point total successfully overcomes the target's current power points in a resistance roll. This extra damage costs 1 power point whenever this ability is used, though the point is subtracted after the resistance roll. This is not an automatic feature, and must be specified by the wizard, but does not require any action or take any additional time to activate. If the staff is broken in combat, it becomes useless and dies, so to speak, and cannot be used for storing power points again.

A staff can be enchanted with magic spells such as Countermagic and Protection if the magician wishes, though at your gamemaster's discretion, it will not allow other powers (psychic abilities, sorcery, etc.) to affect it. A wizard must be in physical contact with their staff in order to use it.

A wizard can own and use any number of staves, and will sometimes disguise them cleverly, to avoid announcing their true function to enemies or even allies.

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc
Quarterstaff	Staff	25	1D8+dm+1D6*	1	Crushing	All	2H	20	Yes	9/9	–	Cheap	1.5

*On a successful strike, roll the staff's power points vs. the target's power points. If successful, it does an extra 1D6 damage, at the cost of 1 power point from the wielder.

durations overlap, the lower-level spell takes effect for the remainder of its duration once the higher-level spell has expired, if it has not expired already. At no time do two or more of the same spells apply to the same subject at the same time.

Memorization of Magic

A magician must commit spells to memory to use them and can memorize a number of spells equal to half their INT (round up). For example, a magician with INT 15 can memorize eight spells at a time (15×½=7.5, rounded to 8). Any other spells the magician wishes to carry and have available must be carried in their grimoire, a type of spellbook used by magicians. It takes 1 hour for a magician to memorize a spell, and if their INT is already full, one or more spells currently memorized must be forgotten. Memorizing a magic spell is called **readying it**, while forgetting it is called **dismissing it**. Dismissing a spell also takes 1 hour. Spells remain memorized until dismissed, even if the magician sleeps or is rendered unconscious by force or some other means.

Grimoires

A magician can cast a spell directly from their grimoire, but this takes one combat round per level of spell effect desired. A magician can use another character's grimoire if they can read it (with a successful Language roll) and can make a successful roll of INT×1 for each spell they attempt to use. If they fail either roll, they cannot understand the other magician's grimoire, with its occult codes, unfamiliar symbology, and idiosyncratic style of organization. After such a failure, the magician can get no other knowledge out of the grimoire. If their Language skill in the relevant language increases through training or experience, they can attempt to read the spellbook again. Once a spell is successfully read, it can be re-read (and potentially memorized) without rolling, though it must be cast normally.

Some magicians can be illiterate, with non-textual means of transcribing a spell, whether through pictographs, tattoos, occult symbols on great stone columns, or another means. Your gamemaster should work out how accessible these alternate methods are to the magician and others.

Initial Spells by Power Level

A magician automatically knows how to ready, memorize, and dismiss spells, and can freely add any currently memorized spells to their grimoire at any time (or can transcribe any currently memorized spells to a new grimoire if the original is destroyed or lost). The magician can spend skill points from **Step Three** of character creation (page 10), and **Step Seven** (page 11) if they have an appropriate profession (Occultist, Priest, Shaman, or Wizard) for spells.

Following are the starting spells by game power level:

- **Normal:** A magician knows four spells of their choice, with a beginning skill equal to INT×1.
- **Heroic:** A magician knows six spells at INT×1.
- **Epic:** A magician knows eight spells at INT×1. If desired, the magician begins with a familiar (the POW cost is assumed in the past, so no need to adjust).
- **Superhuman:** A magician begins with 10 spells at INT×1, a wizard's staff (page 57) already constructed (its power points are based on their current POW score—the sacrifice of POW is assumed, no need to adjust), and a familiar of their choosing (as above).

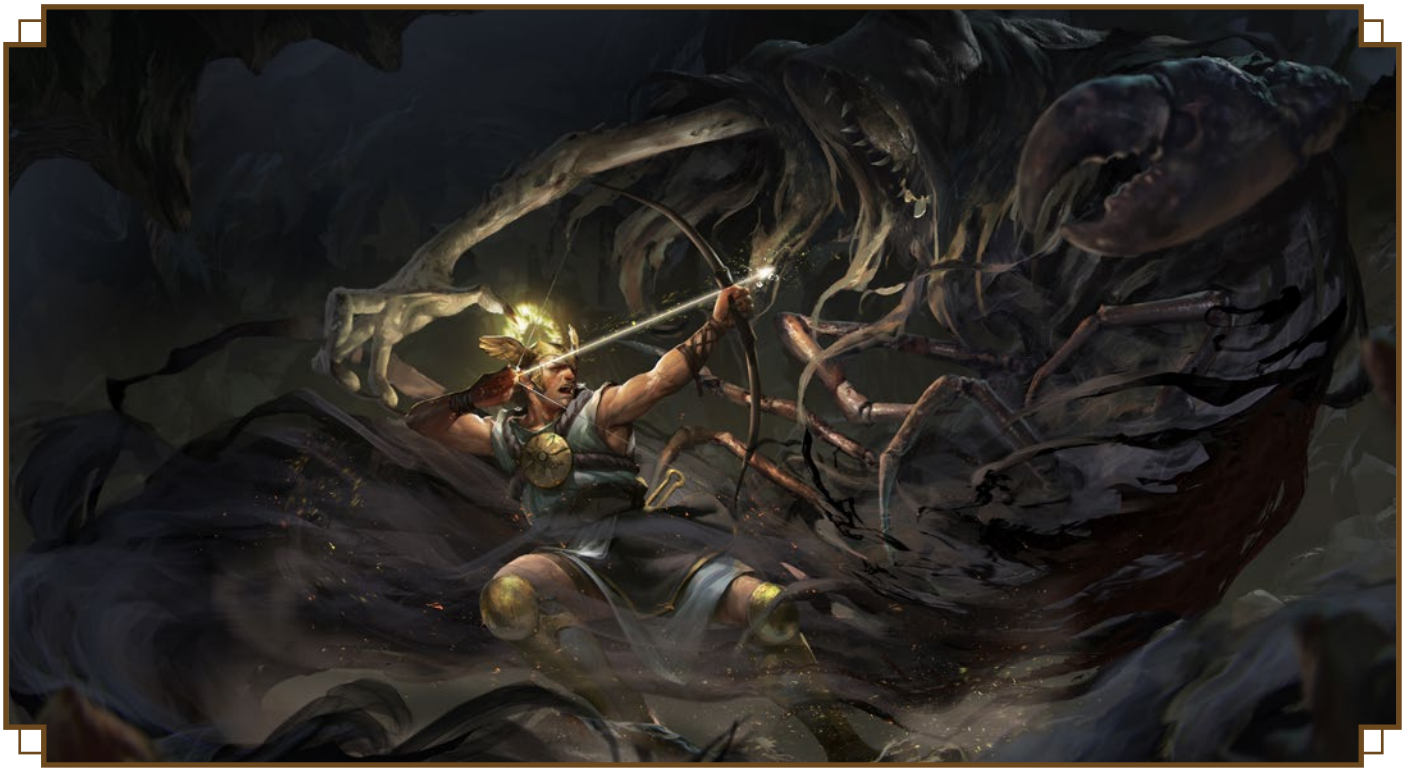
The normal restrictions for having spells in memory apply, and all known spells are available in the magician's grimoire.

Gaining POW

A magician must have a high POW, as they spend power points for spells and POW helps with spell resistance rolls. Fortunately, a magician can increase their POW in several ways.

Any time a magician overcomes the magical resistance of a target of equal or greater POW, their POW has been exercised successfully and may increase. This includes situations when the magician's defensive (passive) POW resists an attacker's (active) POW if that POW was higher than their POW. Overcoming or resisting a target of lower POW does not provide a chance for improvement. Only POW resistance rolls qualify, not those opposing power points vs. power points.

When successful in a POW resistance roll against an equal or higher POW, place an experience check next to the POW characteristic. When



checking for experience, the magician's POW may increase (see **POW Increases**, page 121). Each successful improvement improves POW by 1D3–1 points. As with other experience checks, this only applies once per adventure, not for each spell resisted.

Gaining New Spells

A magician can get new spells by seeking them out, discovering them, and buying or otherwise attaining physical copies of other grimoires, scrolls, etc., then transferring the spell into their own grimoire. Alternately, a magician can take one game month per spell to study the principles of any desired spell, assuming they have some sort of references. At the end of this month, a successful roll of INT+POW means that the spell is learned and in the magician's grimoire. It begins at a rating of INT×1.

If trying to invent a new spell, discuss it with the gamemaster. The magician must spend six months researching it, attempting a roll of INT+POW each month. Failure adds another month to the overall time. After six successful rolls, the spell is known at a skill rating of INT×1.

Use of Spells by Non-magicians

Non-magicians (those without formal training) may be able to learn and cast spells. They do not know how to create or read a grimoire, does not know how to ready or dismiss spells, and simply knows the spell(s) they were taught. A non-magician can know up to ¼ their INT (rounded down) in spell levels. These spells begin at an INT×1 skill rating and take an amount of time equal to 30 minus the non-magician's INT in weeks to learn. Non-magicians cannot research or create new spells.

Becoming a Magician

If a character does not begin play as a magician or lacks access to magic spells and wishes to learn them, they must first find a wizard (a highly-skilled magician) to teach them. The apprenticeship to become a magician is a full-time job, and takes an amount of time equal to 30 minus the character's INT in months of uninterrupted study, during which time they learn their initial roster of spells, prepares a grimoire, and increases the number of magic spells they can hold in INT from ¼ INT (the limit for a non-magician) to ½ INT. The wizard may charge for their services as described in **Skill Improvement** (page 121). At the end of this apprenticeship, the character emerges as a magician, with skill ratings in four spells equal to INT×1, having constructed a grimoire of their own, and possessing knowledge of how to bind a familiar and make a wizard's staff.

Magic Spell Success Levels

As each spell uses a roll to determine success or failure, success levels can also measure the quality of the magic spell roll. However, unlike skills, magic spells are not cut-and-dried in how their effects should be applied based on the result of the roll. Many magic spells have effects that are either "on" or "off", with no difference between a critical, special success, and a normal success. Your gamemaster should consider the spell's nature and potential effects when deciding these outcomes. Following are guides to success levels and how they might apply to magic spells:

- **Fumble:** All power points intended to be spent on the spell are lost. Additionally, the magician cannot attempt use of this spell for one combat round after the round the spell failed in. If the spell involves doing damage, the magician should make a Luck roll: success indicates that the spell just fizzled and does not work, while failure indicates that the spell struck an unintended target (an innocent bystander, an ally, valuable equipment, etc.) causing collateral damage and potentially complicating the situation.
- **Failure:** The spell doesn't work but causes no harm or complications. One power point is spent, but the spell has no useful effect.
- **Success:** The spell works as described and the requisite power points are expended.

MAGIC SPELL SUMMARY

Following are the most known magic spells. Each spell's cost per level is given in parentheses, and each spell's effect lasts for the duration of the spell.

- **Blast (3):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of magical damage per level.
- **Change (1):** Transforms 3 SIZ points of an item or being per level.
- **Conjure (type) Elemental (1):** Summons or dismisses an elemental of a specific type.
- **Control (3):** Allows control over a target's mind, requires a resistance roll.
- **Countermagic (1):** Reflects incoming spells back at the magician.
- **Dark (1):** Fills an area with darkness.
- **Diminish (1):** Reduces one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.
- **Dispel (1):** Eliminates existing spell effects, may banish supernatural beings.
- **Dull (1):** Reduces a weapon's attack chance and damage.
- **Enhance (1):** Increases one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.
- **Fire (3):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of fire damage per level.
- **Frost (3):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of frost damage per level.
- **Heal (3):** Heals 1D6 points of damage per level.
- **Illusion (1):** Creates 3 SIZ points of an illusion per level.
- **Invisibility (1):** Each level makes 3 SIZ points of an object or person invisible.
- **Lift (1):** Lifts 3 SIZ points of an object or person per level.
- **Light (1):** Fills an area with light.
- **Lightning (3):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of lightning damage per level.
- **Perception (1):** Allows the magician to detect one thing within range.
- **Protection (1):** Adds 1 point of armor value per level against physical attacks.
- **Resistance (1):** Reduces damage from heat and/or cold by 1 point per level.
- **Seal (1):** Joins two inanimate objects together.
- **Sharpen (1):** Increases a weapon's attack chance and damage.
- **Speak to Mind (1):** Allows mental communication between the magician and a target.
- **Teleport (1):** Teleports 3 SIZ points per level anywhere within range.
- **Unseal (1):** Separates two connected objects.
- **Vision (1):** Allows the magician to see what is happening elsewhere, or in the past.
- **Wall (1):** Creates a barrier to protect your character.
- **Ward (1):** Defines an area protected by Blast and Countermagic.
- **Wounding (3):** Causes 1D6 points of damage per level.

- **Special:** The spell works with increased effectiveness. If it does damage, the spell does special damage, as if it were an attack (see *Chapter 6: Combat*). If one of the special success damage types (crushing, entangling, impaling, knockback, or slashing) is appropriate, your gamemaster should incorporate it into the spell's effectiveness.

  ***For example**, a special success roll for a Lightning spell might cause knockback.*

  At your gamemaster's discretion, another aspect of the spell (range, influence, etc.) may enjoy 150% effect. Alternately, if the spell requires a resistance roll, increase the spell's level by ×1.5.
- **Critical:** The spell works perfectly. If it causes damage, it ignores any armor the target possesses and does the maximum possible damage. If it does not normally cause damage, your gamemaster should determine an appropriate aspect (or aspects) of the spell and double its effectiveness. Alternately, if the spell involves a resistance roll, your gamemaster may temporarily double the power's level or the relevant characteristic for the resistance roll.

These outcomes may require additional interpretation, or your gamemaster can just use the results of dice rolls without any adjustment for degrees of success. This should be applied fairly and consistently, and the players should be told whether detailed success levels are being used.

Magic Spells

Following are a variety of basic spells. These are defined in the following manner:

- **Name:** The common name of the spell. You may choose to call it something more flavorful, if desired.
- **Range:** The maximum effective range for any spell is 100 meters unless otherwise specified. If it directly affects a target (living or otherwise), the target must be within line of sight.
- **Duration:** Spells usually occur instantly in the Powers Phase of the combat round they are cast in (page 123). They usually last for a single combat round, 10 combat rounds, or for 15 minutes, as indicated in each spell description.
- **Power Point Cost per Level:** The power costs this number of power points to cast per level.

Blast

Range: 100 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 3

Use this spell to attack a single target with a beam of magic energy. The target takes 1D6 damage per level. Under most circumstances, non-magical armor absorbs the damage, and this spell can be dodged. If Blast is parried with a shield, the shield takes the damage, with any remainder going to the target.

Countermagic may stop Blast, but Protection does not work. Resistance does not work against Blast.

Change

Range: 30 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to change a targeted being or object into a variety of shapes from the same relative type (animal to animal, vegetable to vegetable, mineral to mineral, etc.). Each level affects 3 SIZ of the target if the magician can overcome the target's POW in a resistance roll. If the target is willing (or the magician themself), no resistance roll is required. To target something larger than 3 SIZ, use enough levels to affect the creature or object's full SIZ. The targeted being is then transformed into a creature or object of that exact SIZ. The new shape has the outward attributes and limitations of the shape (including natural abilities, if any), but characteristics remain unchanged. Whenever applicable, the target's characteristics and skills are used, or the base rating in a newly acquired skill (such as Fly).

Chapter 11: Creatures describes a variety of sample creatures. Either use the standard writeup or customize one if it is used regularly. If estimating a creature's capabilities, assume that large claws do 1D6 plus damage modifier, and a bite or horn will do 1D3 plus damage modifier.

If the target has already taken hit point damage before the spell is cast, the new form appears in a similarly wounded state. Similarly, any power points, fatigue, or other conditions existing on the target are not affected, as appropriate.

In addition to the number of SIZ points this spell can affect, additional levels can be used to affect more than one object (for example, casting one spell to affect two or more beings, provided enough SIZ is covered), or extending the duration of the spell by 15 minutes. When the spell is cast, the magician should specify how additional levels of the spell are being used.

Conjure (type) Elemental

Range: 12 meters
Duration: 10 combat rounds
Power Point Cost per Level: 1 per point of elemental POW

This spell conjures or dismisses a specific type of elemental, chosen when the spell is taken. For the duration of the spell, the elemental must be directed by the magician's full attention. Each point of POW the elemental possesses costs 1 power point.

The following elementals are described in *Chapter 11: Creatures*.

- **Air:** Called sylphs, they usually appear as beautiful, near-transparent humanoids, either naked or clad in diaphanous clothing. They have transparent wings, either feathered or like those of an insect. They usually glide aboveground.
- **Earth:** Called gnomes, they are usually thick-bodied humanoid beings made of earth and rock, frequently male, with mossy beards and roots that cross their bodies like veins.
- **Fire:** Called salamanders, they usually appear as hairless humanoids wreathed in fire, with darkened skin glowing in cracks from within. Alternately, they appear as reptiles or serpents.
- **Water:** Called undines, and often appear as beautiful mermaids, half-fish and half-human, pale green and blue. When they appear on land, their fishtails are replaced with human legs.

Elementals may appear in entirely different forms, and other types may exist.

Control

Range: 100 meters
Duration: 10 combat rounds
Power Point Cost per Level: 3

Use this spell to control the thoughts and/or actions of one intelligent being. The magician must succeed in a POW vs. POW resistance roll against the target. Each level of the spell allows the magician to control one being. This spell cannot be used on unintelligent animals. Each attack is independent with a POW vs. POW roll made against each target. The magician must concentrate on the spell, using no other spells or doing anything more than moving slowly and speaking briefly, or the target will simply stand idle. The magician must make an Idea roll if distracted,

The magician controls the movements and speech of the target(s). The target cannot speak or perform any voluntary action other than those specified, but if the magician wishes, the target can speak freely or have a limited range of free actions. Having more than one target do

different things requires an Idea roll each combat round to maintain coordination between different targets. If the magician is forced to fight or concentrates on any other activity, the target(s) collapses into sleep. Once control is lost, a collapsed target will revive and regain control with a roll of CON×1. The roll may be attempted once each combat round after collapsing.

If the target is commanded to perform an action it would normally find objectionable, a *Difficult* Idea lets it resist. Success means that the target balks and does not follow the order for one combat round, standing still or otherwise idling. Failure means the target performs the action as required. The action can be commanded again in the following round, with a new Idea roll. If the action commanded is wholly objectionable, such as murder of an ally, the Idea roll is unmodified. If the command is suicidal, the Idea roll is *Easy*. If the result of the Idea roll is a special success, the target breaks free from the Control spell in an obvious fashion. If the result of the Idea roll is a critical success, the target breaks free unbeknownst to the spell's caster.

When the Control spell is done, the target may make an Idea roll. If successful, they remember every detail of actions taken under the spell's influence. They do not necessarily remember who the spellcaster was, unless it is obvious.

Countermagic

Range: 100 meters
Duration: 5 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to create a magical shield around the magician or any desired subject they wish to keep magic from affecting. Any incoming spell must have its level overcome the level of the Countermagic on the resistance table. If the attacking spell's resistance roll succeeds, the spell penetrates the Countermagic, but must still overcome the POW of the target, if required. If it does not require a resistance roll, it acts as if no Countermagic spell was cast. If the Countermagic spell succeeds on the resistance table, the incoming spell has rebounded on the original caster. If that caster has Countermagic on themself, the spell must overcome that Countermagic to have an effect. Any spell failing to penetrate two Countermagic spells dissipates and is no more. Countermagic protects the target and anything they are carrying, within reason (if in doubt, use the character's STR as a guideline as to how much they can carry).

If the character or object to receive the Countermagic already has a Protection spell, the Countermagic is not effective unless its level overcomes the level(s) of Protection on the resistance table. If successful, both spells take effect. Countermagic is effective vs. Blast and Lightning, but not against Fire or Frost.

Dark

Range: 100 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to dampen all light within a circle 3 meters in radius plus 3 meters per level. This darkness is absolute, and light cannot shine through it. The spell must be cast on an object; it does not hang in mid-air. The affected area is in total darkness to anyone seeing in the normal range of visible light, even if a torch or other light source is active within the spell's radius. Dark can be cast on an object that Light has previously been cast upon. Each level of Dark cancels a single level of Light.

Diminish

Range: Touch
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to overcome the target's POW with a resistance roll and reduce their STR, CON, SIZ or DEX by –1 per level of the spell. Pick which of the target's characteristics will be affected before the spell is cast. Subsequent casts can reduce the same characteristic or affect a different characteristic. This spell affects any attributes derived from these characteristics, such as hit points, power points, characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc. Characteristics cannot be reduced below 1, and points of Diminish more than that have no further effect.

Dispel

Range: 100 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this power to rid oneself (or another target) of detrimental or positive effects of a spell. Like Countermagic, it must overcome the level of the spell on the resistance table. Dispel must be directed at a particular spell in effect on the target. Identify the spell's effects to be eliminated (if numerous magic effects are in place, the gamemaster decides which are affected). If the target is protected by Countermagic, it must get through the Countermagic to affect the target. If the Dispel is intended to be effective against multiple spells, the spell's level is rolled against each of them on the resistance table. In the case of multiple targets, the caster must either specify whether the Dispel is intended to work against a single spell or all of them. If multiple spells are to be dispelled, the one with the highest levels is checked first against the Dispel power on the resistance table. Any effects that are not dispelled remain, and any failure to Dispel a spell means that the Dispel spell ceases working and cannot be pitted against further spells.

Dispel can also be used against someone as they cast another spell, to prevent the spell from being cast. This is handled in the Statement of Intent phase of combat. With a successful Luck roll, a magician who can act in the round, but has not already done so, can abandon their intended action and attempt to use Dispel against a spell as it is cast. Dispel can be used as a held action. To interrupt a spell from being cast, the magician must cast equal or higher levels in Dispel or the Dispel doesn't work.

Dispel can also be used to banish or destroy lesser summoned creatures (elementals or minor demons) or a possessor (for example, a being that has seized control over a host's body using the Control spell). In these cases, the Dispel's levels are compared against the creature's own POW characteristic. If the creature's POW is overcome on the resistance table, it departs as quickly as possible. If it is a possessing being, the creature flees the host body immediately. If multiple appropriate beings are within the range of the spell, you must clarify which one is being targeted, or all of them are targeted, with the highest POW being the one attempted first. If the Dispel succeeds on the first, it then moves to the second, etc. If it fails, it does not have further effect on any remaining beings.

Dull

Range: 100 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to reduce the attack chance of a weapon by –5% and its damage by –1 point. More than one level can either reduce the attack chance more (to –10%, –15%, etc.) or reduce damage by –2, –3, etc., or it can be distributed equally among several weapons up the level of the spell and within range. If a weapon leaves the range, it is no longer affected. Damage cannot be reduced below 1 point, and a roll of 01% always hits, regardless of modifiers.

Enhance
Range: Touch
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to overcome the target's POW in a resistance roll and add +1 to one of the target's STR, CON, SIZ or DEX per level of the spell. Pick which of the target's characteristics will be affected before the spell is cast. Subsequent castings can increase the same characteristic or affect a different characteristic. This will temporarily affect other attributes derived from these characteristics, such as hit points, power points, characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc. Hit points and power points above the target's normal range are lost.

Fire
Range: 100 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 3
Use this spell to create a pillar of fire doing 1D6 fire damage to everything in a circle 1 meter in diameter. Multiple levels may be used to set up several fires instead of one large fire or can combine the effects.

A target can attempt to dodge out of the affected area. The spell's damage is absorbed by armor, Protection, and Resistance spells, but Countermagic has no effect. The spell lasts only one combat round unless cast on or consuming something flammable. If so, the blaze continues, damaging anyone or anything within it at the rate of 1D4 points per combat round (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148).

Levels of this spell can be used to cancel levels of Frost on the resistance table, but Fire has no effect against other forms of supernatural cold.

Frost
Range: 100 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 3
Use this spell to create a pillar of intense cold doing 1D6 cold damage per level to everything in a circle 1 meter in diameter. Multiple levels may be used to set up several frosted areas instead of one large one, or can combine the effects.

A target can attempt to dodge out of the affected area. The spell's damage is absorbed by armor, Protection, and Resistance spells, but Countermagic has no effect. The spell lasts only one combat round unless something brittle is frozen. In this case, the brittle item may shatter (see **Cold and Exposure**, page 146).

Levels of this spell can be used to cancel levels of Fire on the resistance table, but Frost has no effect against other forms of supernatural flame.

Heal
Range: Touch
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 3
This spell heals 1D6 hit points of damage per level. Restoring a character to a positive hit point total with Heal can restore them to life if successfully cast by the end of the round following that in which the victim suffered the mortal wound. Any limbs severed or lost through a major wound or use of the hit location system are still severed or lost, though the hit points are still restored. Heal has no effect on disease, poison, or radiation, though it can restore lost hit points caused by them.

Illusion
Range: 30 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to create up to 3 SIZ points per level of an object's appearance. This is visual only, with no sound, scent, touch, or taste. If touched, it remains but is insubstantial. Illusions can be used to mislead or terrify opponents, or entrap them, disguising walls, concealing traps, etc. The illusion is immobile unless the caster concentrates on the illusion to the exclusion of all else. Those witnessing an illusion may attempt to detect the falsehood in one of several manners, depending on the circumstances:

- If the illusion should have sound, a successful Idea roll reveals it. If the illusion does not need sound, a *Difficult* Spot roll is required to see through it. If some form of sound accompanies the illusion, a *Difficult* Listen or Sense roll is required to notice it is not real.
- If the viewer suspects it is an illusion and attempts to disbelieve it, roll the magician's POW vs. the viewer's INT on the resistance table.

Invisibility
Range: Touch
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to turn 3 SIZ per level of an object or another being invisible. Items or living beings cannot be turned partially invisible, though components can if the object consists of more than one "piece".

The magician must concentrate on the spell and must do no more than walk or speak to maintain the invisibility. Fighting, taking injury, using another power, performing some athletic maneuver, or similar distractions break the effects and end the spell. Any attacks against an invisible character or object are at 1/5 the attacker's skill rating. Any parries are equally difficult, requiring a successful Listen, Sense, or Spot roll to even make the attempt. This power does not stop sound or other sensory clues from the target, and successful use of a Listen, Sense, or Spot skill reduces the penalty of attacks to *Difficult* instead of 1/5.

An invisible character can move, attack, flee, or stand still while the spell is active. Invisibility can be dispelled by the magician at any time, though starting it again requires another casting.

Lift
Range: 100 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to lift 3 SIZ per level of an object or being and move it through the air. This spell can be cast on oneself, using it to fly. The target of the spell is moved up to 24 meters per combat round. Each level of the spell above the minimum necessary to move the SIZ add +6 meters movement per combat round. No resistance roll is required for weight equal to or below the number of SIZ affected by the spell (for example, casting Lift 4 allows your character to manipulate up to 12 points of SIZ without needing to make a roll on the resistance table). If the target does not wish to be lifted (or is held by or connected to something), the magician must overcome its POW or SIZ with a resistance roll (gamemaster choice).

The spell may also be used to slow a falling object that is otherwise too large for the level of the spell. For each level less than needed, the object is slowed as if it were falling that difference times 3 meters, up to a 12-meter reduction.

The spell may also move an object such as cart or sledge along the ground. In this case, each level of the spell can affect 6 SIZ of the targeted object or character. This spell can also be used to throw an object already lifted, with a *Difficult* roll of the caster's Throw skill.

Light
Range: 100 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to illuminate a circle 3 meters per level in radius. This light is around the brightness of a torch or small light bulb. The spell must be cast on an object; it does not hang in mid-air. Light can be cast on an object that has had Dark previously cast upon it, canceling both spells on a level-for-level basis.

Lightning
Range: 60 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 3
Use this spell to throw a lightning bolt doing 1D6 damage per level directly to the hit points of the desired target (usually a living being). If cast, the spell will hit if not dodged or parried. If two targets are equally close, the Lightning strikes the target wearing or wielding the most metal. Countermagic protects against the spell, and other insulation may protect the character (gamemaster's discretion). When used on a metallic object, Lightning has a chance equal to the magician's POW multiplied by its level of traveling (and jumping) along any connected or nearby metallic surface to strike any other characters touching the metal surface for ½ damage. Additionally, it can "fry" any electronic equipment it targets, using the magician's POW against the item's hit points in a resistance roll.

A target can dodge or parry Lightning with a shield. Dodging lightning is *Difficult* if wearing metal armor, and if Lightning is parried successfully with a non-metallic shield, the shield takes the damage, with any remainder carrying over to the target. Parrying Lightning with a metallic shield is useless, as the Lightning conducts through the shield and to the target.

Perception
Range: 60 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to point out the direction of the nearest example of one type of thing (specified by the caster when the spell is cast), such as the nearest trap, secret door, gold, magic, stairway, unfamiliar thoughts, etc. within range. Additional levels let the caster seek out more than one thing at the same time. The gamemaster can determine if similar things are close enough to count.

***For example**, Perception 2 can find the closest two traps, or it may find the closest trap and the closest secret door.*

Protection
Range: 100 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to add +1 point per level to the target's armor points (even if no armor is worn). Any Countermagic cast upon on the target must overcome the Protection spell on the resistance table. If successful, both spells remain on the target and in effect. At your gamemaster's discretion, this spell can also provide protection against damage types not normally blocked by armor.

Resistance
Range: Touch
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to gain 1 point of resistance per level against damage taken from extremes of temperature or the environment, such as Fire or Frost spells. If the protected character is hit by more than one such attack, each damage roll is reduced by the level of the effect.

Seal
Range: Touch
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1
Use this spell to bond the edges of any two inanimate objects which are at rest and fitted to one another, such as a door in a door frame, a lid on a box, or a knife in a sheath. The two objects become joined as

PROTECTION AND RESISTANCE

Protection and Resistance apparently serve the same purpose: keeping your character from taking damage, but they do differ.

- **Protection** is like armor and is subtracted from any physical damage taken, but it is not effective against environmental extremes.
- **Resistance** lowers the amount of damage taken by environmental extremes (heat, cold), but is not effective against attacks or physical damage.

Some attacks, such as a flaming sword or a falling flaming roof beam, may be affected by both spells at once, with Protection reducing the points of damage from the blade itself, and Resistance reducing the extra damage from the flames.

if they were one object and cannot be separated while the spell is in effect. The objects can be battered open or destroyed, their hit points and other values combined, when applicable. Seal adds +20 hit points to the combined hit point total of the two items.

Each level adds either 15 minutes to the duration of the spell or adds +20 additional hit points to the hit points of the sealed objects. The caster may split levels between these two benefits, deciding how before casting the spell.

Sharpen

Range: 100 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to add +5% to the attack chance and +1 damage to any weapon (including blunt weapons and missile weapons) it is successfully applied to, up to the maximum damage possible using that weapon. Additional levels can either add multiples of +5% and +1 point of damage to the weapon (+10% and +2 damage, +15% and +3 damage, etc.), or can be distributed equally among several weapons, up to the level of the spell and within range.

***For example**, Sharpen 6 can be used to add +5% and +1 damage to all six bullets in a revolver.*

The damage bonus is only applied to the weapon's natural range of damage, with the user's damage modifier (if applicable) applied separately, unmodified by the spell.

Speak to Mind

Range: 100 meters
Duration: 10 combat rounds
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to speak to one other mind per level, whether intelligent or not. Only surface conversation or feelings are transmitted, and the target may need to make an Idea roll to understand if not traditionally intelligent. Language is not a barrier to this spell, however. Multiple targets of the spell cannot communicate to each other using this spell, though casting Speak to Mind 1 on a target, lets them communicate with one other mind.

Teleport

Range: 1,000 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use Teleport to instantaneously teleport 3 SIZ per level from its current location to another place within range. Only complete objects can be teleported—it is impossible to teleport a part of a living being away. If an object is not directly affixed to another object, it can be teleported.

***For example**, a gun can be teleported out of a target's holster, but not the engine block out of a car.*

Additional levels above the target's SIZ can be used to increase the range by an additional +1,000 meters. If the target of the spell is affixed to something or is a living being that does not wish to be transported, the caster must overcome the item's hit points (or armor value) vs. their POW on the resistance table. For a living target, the target's POW is the opposing force. A willing target (such as oneself) does not require a resistance roll.

A fumble may send the item or person being teleported into a solid object, perhaps even underground. The caster should attempt a Luck roll if a fumble has been rolled. If the Luck roll is successful, no damage or ill effects are taken, and the teleported character or object narrowly escapes a grim fate. If the roll fails, the unlucky target immediately takes 3D6 points of damage and suffers an injury from the **Major Wound** table (page 135), modified as appropriate.

Attempting to Teleport a foe or item into a solid structure allows the target the same chances as described above (a Luck roll). It costs 3 power points per level to consciously teleport something or someone into a solid structure or object (plus a 0/1D3 Sanity roll, see page 218). If the subject of the teleportation into a solid substance is another item, your gamemaster decides what happens. A living being becoming fused with a solid item is usually traumatic, and the target must find some means of extricating themselves from the item or structure (such as another Teleport spell). Failure to do so can cause any Major Wound (as above) to have permanent effect.

Unseal

Range: Touch
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to open unlocked doors or boxes and cause weapons to fly out of their sheaths and drop to the ground. It will not undo a locked container, or some object that has been fastened shut. It can be cast to cancel Seal if the level of Unseal overcomes the level of Seal on the resistance table.

Vision

Range: 100/10 meters
Duration: 10 combat rounds
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to see what is happening in any area within 100 meters of a familiar area, or within 10 meters of an unfamiliar area. This gives full vision and hearing, as if in that area, allowing that point of view to have any mobility they possess, while within the spell's range. A caster physically near an area within the 10-meter range can cast it into that area, regardless of familiarity.

Each additional level allows viewing of a place or events that have transpired for up to +1 additional day. When viewing an area, the caster's perception of time is unaltered—10 combat rounds of the spell take 10 combat rounds to view—but can be ended at any time by the caster.

This spell may also be used to touch an item and receive a vision of its previous user or owner. Each additional level used gives another use or another mental image. When casting, designate how to allocate extra levels. Furthermore, each level of this spell allows a cumulative 10% chance of learning the activating word for a magical device. This spell can only be attempted once for any single object until the spell's skill ranking is increased by at least +5%.

While using the Vision spell, the caster may not use any other spell or the Vision spell's effects end.

Wall

Range: 12 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to form a wall-like barrier out of the ground, formed from one particular type of available material that would normally be able to be sculpted into such a wall, such as earth, snow, ice, stone, metal, wood, concrete, gravel, sand, etc. The wall usually appears immediately before the caster to protect them against attacks or attackers, though it can appear anywhere within range. When created, the barrier is 1 square meter per level of the spell. These square meters can be distributed as desired along the dimensions of width, height, and length.

***For example**, casting Wall 9 and spending 9 power points lets the caster create a wall 3 meters high, 1 meter thick, and 3 meters long or 1 meter high, 1 meter thick, and 9 meters long.*

This wall can be shaped in whatever simple form desired, such as a straight or curved wall, a half-sphere, etc.

Regardless of the substance it is made of, a Wall has 30 hit points. Each additional level above and beyond those defining its size adds +30 hit points to its hit point total, though an attacker generally only needs to destroy one or two 1-meter segments to create adequate space to move through it. At the end of the spell's duration, the Wall dissolves, crumbles, melts, retracts into the earth, or gradually disappears, as appropriate.

If desired, the Wall's 30 hit point value can be based on the guidelines in the **Armor Values of Substances** and **Object SIZ Examples** tables (pages 189 and 190).

Ward

Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent
Power Point Cost per Level: 3

Use Ward to form a protective square of up to nine square meters around the person or object needing guarding or protection. The Ward is defined by four objects (called the wards) enchanted in a preliminary ritual to gain the effect. These wards do not gain any magical enhancement other than being attuned to one another for the purpose of the spell. Ward acts as a combination of Countermagic and Blast. Any power points passing through the region defined by Ward (in either direction) must overcome Countermagic 1. Any object crossing the line from either direction receives Blast 1. Each extra level adds +3 meters to any dimension of the area defined by the ward, or another level of Countermagic and Blast. The spell must be successfully cast to set up the wards and successfully cast again to take them down without harming the caster. The spell's effects last until the wards are moved by the original caster, or destroyed, or the spell is dispelled.

Only the caster may move the ward objects without disturbing the spell. However, Dispel may be cast upon them. Physically interfering with the objects sets off the Countermagic and Blast capabilities, as if the Ward was triggered. If some other means of manipulating the objects is attempted, each ward has 30 hit points and acts as if it had Seal cast upon it.

Wounding

Range: Touch
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost per Level: 3

Use this spell to cause 1D6 points of magic damage per level directly to the target. Wounding requires a successful Brawl roll to touch the target in combat, or an Agility roll if not in combat. Either roll becomes *Easy* if the target is unsuspecting. Armor does not protect against this damage, though any Protection subtracts from the spell's damage. The Brawl attack does not do any damage, regardless of what powers or weapons are being used, and it may be parried, dodged, or blocked as per a normal Brawl attack.

MUTATIONS

Mutations occur through exposure to radioactivity, chemical exposure, medical experimentation, strange environmental conditions, genetic quirks, or other means. They can appear at birth, manifest later, or develop otherwise. Characters with mutations are usually called **mutants**. Some animals may have mutations (see *Chapter 11: Creatures,* page 221).

Some mutations are disadvantages, causing unfortunate and unwelcome conditions. These negative qualities are called **adverse mutations**, while positive ones are **beneficial mutations**. In some methods of character generation, mutations are randomly assigned, and are not chosen by the player.

Few mutations act like skills, though they are often assigned a potency (POT) rating to allow for resistance rolls and comparison of intensity. Mutations do not have levels, but some are defined as either **minor** or **major**, less intense or more powerful versions.

Starting Mutations

When determining your character's starting mutations, a major mutation is the equivalent of two minor mutations and two minor mutations are worth one major mutation. Each mutation begins as a minor mutation, and if you pick or randomly roll the same result twice, it becomes a major mutation. Each mutation's description defines the minor and major versions. All references to CON are for your character's initial CON, before the effects of any mutations are applied. Following are the suggested number of mutations by power level:

- **Normal:** Your gamemaster may allow you to pick instead of rolling, but otherwise roll D100 twice on the **Random Mutations** table (page 66). Each mutation is minor, but if you get the same result twice it is major. Make a Luck roll if the mutation is adverse. If successful, roll again for another mutation. If the mutation rolled is adverse once more, repeat the process until you either fail a Luck roll or gain a beneficial mutation.
- **Heroic:** Choose mutations equal to ¼ your character's CON (round up), with a minimum of 2. Major mutations count as two picks, and you can pick two major mutations only if your gamemaster allows it. You can take adverse mutations to increase the number of beneficial choices at a rate of 1 to 1 (picking one minor adverse mutation lets you pick one minor beneficial mutation, two minor adverse mutations equal a major beneficial mutation, etc.). Your gamemaster must approve taking more than four adverse mutations, and you cannot take more adverse mutations than ¼ your CON.
- **Epic:** Pick minor mutations (or pick a mutation twice) up to ½ your character's CON (round up) as you see fit. Guidance for taking adverse mutations is as above, limited to ½ CON (round up).
- **Superhuman:** Pick mutations equal to CON, with a limit of up to ½ CON (round up) in adverse mutations. Major mutations are highly recommended. Your gamemaster may allow you to take a mutation at above major quality (for three picks) and work with you to determine its effects if they are not obvious.

Gaining New Mutations

Mutations, unlike skills or magic powers, are not learned or gained through adventuring. However, mutation is change, and a world with mutations is full of ways to promote that. Here are some of the ways mutations may appear or evolve in play:

- **Mutagenic Exposure:** Prolonged or deliberate exposure to a mutagen, a substance or condition that can cause or increase mutation. Usually scientific in nature (chemicals, radiation, etc.) it could be through magic. Your gamemaster should determine if this causes a minor mutation, then pick or roll on the **Random Mutations** table (page 66). This is usually a minor mutation, though mutation(s) can be major.
- **Evolution:** An existing adverse mutation, once exposed to a mutagen, may increase or decrease. Increase an already-existing mutation from minor to major, or vice versa. An adverse minor mutation can be eliminated entirely. This is only one step, but under the right circumstances, a major adverse mutation may become no mutation.
- **Transformation:** Some mutations become absolute and total transformations. In a "perfect storm" of mutagenic conditions, the mutant may enter a chrysalis state (a cocoon or equivalent) and emerge with all mutations transformed into other mutations. Your gamemaster must approve this, and it should take time (the mutant's CON in days, for example). In this time, the mutant can switch any mutations for new ones, as if in character creation.

- **Increase in CON:** An increase in CON (see **Increasing Characteristics**, page 120) increases mutation potential: for each point of CON increased, pick or randomly determine a new minor mutation, upgrade a mutation, or downgrade an existing mutation by one level. A decrease in CON does not require loss of mutations.

Mutations

Following is a list of standard mutations. Those labeled **(Adverse)** are disadvantageous, and those labeled **(Minor)** have only minor versions.

Adaptability

Use this to instantly adjust to a particular extreme condition, chosen when this mutation is selected. Alternately, the mutant can survive the specific condition but does not actually adapt to it (essentially ignoring it). Minor mutations are immunity to radiation, can breathe both air and water, can digest metal and/or stone, etc. Major mutations include immunity to extreme heat, cold, or radiation; survival in a vacuum; etc. In a resistance roll against the condition, the relevant characteristic is doubled.

Allergy

(Adverse) This causes hypersensitivity to a particular substance, plant, or animal of a type picked during character creation. Contact with this substance causes an unpleasant and extreme reaction (nausea, weakness, blindness, etc.). For a minor mutation, subtract –20% from all skill ratings while in contact with the allergen, and for 15 minutes

RANDOM MUTATIONS

Roll D100 to determine mutations (or pick, at the gamemaster's discretion). Adverse conditions are marked with an asterisk*.

Result	Mutation	Description
01–03	Adaptability	Survival in unusual environments.
04–05	Allergy*	Skills reduced by contact to an allergen.
06–09	Biped (Quadruped)*	If two-legged, forced to walk four-legged.
10–12	Camouflage	Skin has a concealing texture or color.
13–15	Coloration	Unusual coloration (minor only).
16–19	Congenital Disease*	Suffers from a debilitating disease.
20–22	Decreased Characteristic*	Characteristic decreased.
23–25	Disease Carrier*	Carries (but is immune to) an infectious disease.
26–29	Group Intelligence	Part of a hive mind.
30	Hands	Has extra hands or prehensile limb.
31–33	Hardy	Resistant to damage.
34–35	Hybrid	Has an animalistic trait.
36–37	Imitation	Imitates an animal's natural trait.
38–44	Increased Characteristic	Characteristic increased.
45–48	Keen Sense	Has one or more sharp senses.
49–50	Luminescence	Emits a light from body.
51–53	Metabolic Improvement	Has a beneficial but unusual metabolism.
54–57	Metabolic Weakness*	Has a disadvantageous and unusual metabolism.
58–60	Natural Armor	Has natural armor (scales, horn, hide, etc.).
61–65	Natural Weaponry	Has natural weapon (spine, claw, teeth, etc.).
66–67	Pain Sensitivity*	Low resistance to pain.
68	Pheromone	Emits chemicals that can affect others.
69–70	Reduced Sense*	Impaired or missing primary sense.
71–72	Regeneration	Able to heal rapidly.
73–74	Sensitivity	Has an unusual affinity for a substance.
75–76	Speech (Mimicry)	Can imitate animal noises or speak clearly.
77–81	Structural Improvement	Has an unusual and beneficial body form.
82–86	Structural Weakness*	Has an unusual and disadvantageous body form.
87–89	Venom	Emits a natural poison.
90	Wings	Has wings and can glide or fly.
91–00	Gamemaster or Player Choice	Pick or roll again.

afterwards. For a major mutation, suffer 1D6 hit points damage when exposed to the allergen once per 15 minutes. Armor does not protect against it, and all skill ratings are at –40% while exposed and for 15 minutes after.

Biped (Quadruped)

(Adverse) Your character's musculature or skeletal structure requires a quadrupedal (four-legged) stance rather than a bipedal (two-legged) one. The minor version allows standing upright for brief periods (equal to CON in combat rounds), before reverting to a four-legged stance. With the major mutation, a successful Agility roll is required for each combat round upright. Other characteristics and attributes are unaffected, as is the ability to use some types of equipment, unless affected by the mutation (gamemaster discretion).

A being normally quadrupedal with this mutation has the musculature and skeletal structure to walk upright, whether all the time or occasionally dropping to quadrupedal stance. For inappropriate creatures (for example, fish or snakes), use Structural Improvement or Structural Weakness (page 70) instead.

Camouflage

Use this unnatural coloration, exterior form, or ability to change color to hide from enemies or imitate an object or other type of being. The minor mutation represents alternate coloration or an unusual skin texture, and the major version allows changing color and/or skin texture to match the environment, like a chameleon.

***For example**, a hairless mutant with stony skin could curl up and resemble a rock or might have bark-like skin and imitate a tree.*

The minor version of this mutation provides +20% to Hide, and +40% for the major version.

Coloration

(Minor) The mutant's skin is an unnatural color or colors, often strikingly so. It may glisten like gold, be tiger-striped, or be one solid color. If normally covered with scales, carapace, fur, hair, or some other substance, that has an unusual and unnatural color.

Congenital Disease

(Adverse) The mutant suffers from an incurable and possibly painful non-contagious ailment. It may have hemophilia, deformed bones, cancer, or diminished lung capacity. Such mutants usually have shortened lifespans. As a minor mutation, one characteristic (usually CON) is reduced by 1D6 points. As a major mutation, two characteristics (usually CON and another of your choice) are reduced by 1D6 points. Any modifiers or derived attributes using those characteristics are similarly modified.

Decreased Characteristic

(Adverse) For a minor mutation, first determine which characteristic is decreased through mutation. Roll a D10 and refer to the following chart:

CHARACTERISTIC CHANGE

Result	Attribute
1	STR
2	CON
3	SIZ
4	INT
5	POW
6	DEX
7	CHA
8	Both STR and SIZ.
9	Roll twice, using a D8 instead of a D10.
0	Roll three times, using a D8 instead of a D10.

Roll a D6 to determine how much the characteristic is altered by:

Result	Reduction
1–3	–1D6
4–5	–2D6
6	–3D6

No characteristic can be reduced to less than 1, so ignore any reduction beyond 1. For a major mutation, the characteristic reduction is doubled. Any bonuses or derived attributes using those characteristics are similarly modified.

Disease Carrier

(Adverse) The mutant carries a disease with a potency (POT) of 2D10 but is immune to it. The disease may be promulgated by touch or another mode of transmission (proximity, breath, saliva, blood, etc.), with a range of CON if not touch. Anyone exposed must make a resistance roll of their CON vs. the disease's POT or contracts the disease. As a major mutation, the POT is 4D10, or is two separate diseases, each with its own POT and vector of transmission. See **Disease** (page 146).

Group Intelligence

This power is rare for humans and picked only with your gamemaster's approval. A mutant with this mutation is either the dominant member of a group of similar linked creatures, or the group itself.

Creatures with group intelligence often live in colonies and share the same mind. The experience of one of the group's creatures is simultaneously experienced by the other members of its colony. At the minor version, the group intelligence is short distance (CON in meters) and is limited to vague sensations or behavioral imperatives. The major version allows for a strong link (telepathic in nature) allowing full communication over an unlimited distance. Often, species with Group Intelligence dwell together and have particular castes specialized for individual roles.

Hands

The minor version of this mutation provides monkey-like feet; prehensile lips, tongue, or a snout; or a long prehensile tail. The major version provides two such groupings of limbs (prehensile feet and a tail), or an extra set of such organs (two tails, two extra arms, long antennae, etc.). Determine if this allows additional actions in a combat round (see **Two Weapons**, page 155). If using hit locations, the new limb(s) are equivalent to an arm or leg, as appropriate.

Hardy

This mutation allows the mutant to withstand considerable damage before falling unconscious. As a minor mutation, it reduces damage from a particular type of injury (choose something like fire, falling, cutting weapons, etc.) to half rolled damage (round down). As a major mutation, in addition to the resistance to a particular type of damage, the mutant can be reduced to 0 or negative hit points and remains able to act unhindered, until they reach negative hit points equal to their CON. Beyond that, the mutant dies unless healed in the next five minutes to 1 or more hit points.

Hybrid

Such a mutant is a generic hybrid with the traits of two or more different types of animals. They might have lobster-like claws, a tiger head, or anything else imaginable. As a minor mutation, the mutant has a few defining elements clearly marking them as a hybrid, and as a major mutation, they are more animal than human, and may find it impossible to blend in amongst humans. Generally, characteristics and skills are relatively unaffected, though such a mutant may have claws (1D6 slashing damage), a pointed beak or teeth (1D4 impaling damage). At your gamemaster's discretion, the major version of this mutation includes the Natural Weaponry minor mutation (below) at no cost to CON. This can be improved to a major mutation normally.

Imitation

The mutant can imitate a natural trait of an animal species such as web-spinning, wall-crawling, leaping, egg-laying, amphibiousness, etc. (unless the ability is better covered by another mutation). Describe it like a specialty, such as 'Imitation (Amphibious)'. The minor version confers the ability to imitate the trait with a successful Luck roll, or the trait adds +20% as bonus to a relevant skill (or skills). As a major mutation, the mutant is not merely imitating the trait but possesses it, as well as any biological or anatomical structures required to use it. Any relevant skills receive a temporary bonus of +40%, and the applicable characteristic is based directly off the mutant's CON where appropriate.

Increased Characteristic

Use the **Characteristic Change** table (page 67) but the results are positive rather than negative. For a minor mutation, use the results from the chart; for a major mutation, the characteristic increases are doubled. Any bonuses or derived attributes using those characteristics are similarly modified.

Keen Sense

One primary sense (choose) is heightened, raising any corresponding skills by +20% for a minor mutation and +40% for a major mutation (see below). This mutation may have a physical aspect such as enlarged or unusually shaped sensory organs (eyes, ears, nose, etc.). If using **Distinctive Features** (page 25), any visible mutation should be described. Following are the senses affected:

- **Hearing:** The minor version doubles the effective range of the Listen skill, and the major version quadruples it. Normal hearing range is 15 meters, assuming no obstacles or interference. Add +20% to Listen for a minor mutation and +40% if major.
- **Smell/Taste:** The Sense skill can detect the taste or scent of something a normal human is unable to, such as a tasteless poison. Add +20% to Sense for a minor mutation and +40% if major.
- **Touch:** The Sense skill can detect subtle changes in texture through fingertips or other body parts. The major version allows "sight" with exposed skin, letting the mutant act in darkness as if in normal daylight, ignoring any penalties from darkness with a successful Sense skill roll. Add +20% to Sense for a minor mutation and +40% if major.
- **Vision:** The minor version doubles the effective range of the Spot skill, and the major version quadruples it. It also increases the distance at which the mutant can perform skills at, allowing them to Appraise or Search at any distance within sight. Add +20% to Spot for a minor mutation and +40% if major.

This mutation comes with heightened (harmful) sensitivity of the relevant sense. If the mutation is minor, your character must make an Idea roll to avoid being stunned for a round if exposed to an intense form of the sensation (headlights shone on a mutant with keen vision, for example). If the mutation is major, the Idea roll is *Difficult*.

Luminescence

The mutant can generate a type of light from their body, either faintly glowing or in the form of a beam of light from their eyes or some other body part. The major version permits the mutant to emit a harsh beam of light, able to temporarily blind an opponent if it is shone into their eyes with a successful Agility roll: the target can Dodge to avoid the light. The light's color, intensity, and any ability to control or alter the light are determined when the mutation is determined. It cannot be overly complex, though potentially could be something like a wisp or ghostlike image. Anything more sophisticated than a small ball of light requires an Idea roll per combat round to manifest and control properly.

Metabolic Improvement

The mutant has an unusual but advantageous metabolic condition, developed and defined with your gamemaster's approval. It can be a greatly extended lifespan, unusual sleep habits (needs little sleep), a minimal or unusual appetite, abnormal growth (perhaps your character is only a few years old, but has grown at an accelerated rate), altered perceptions, the ability to hibernate, or something else. The minor mutation provides an unusual but not significant advantage, while the major version of this mutation is a tremendous asset.

Metabolic Weakness

(Adverse) As with Metabolic Improvement, this represents an unusual metabolic condition, ranging from inconvenient to debilitating, developed with your gamemaster's approval. It could be a shortened lifespan, unusual sleep habits (needs a lot more sleep), a ravenous or unusual appetite (difficult to find foodstuffs), or abnormal growth (perhaps shrinking instead of growing, or aging backwards). The minor version is an inconvenience while the major version is a serious hindrance.

Natural Armor

The mutant has an unnaturally tough hide, scales, shell, carapace, or some hardened skin giving protection. The minor mutation offers 3-point armor, and the major version is 6-point armor. Any armor worn is added onto this, though the major mutation requires armor to be very loose or customized. The minor version of the mutation can be disguised, while the major version cannot be easily concealed. If random armor values are being used, use 1D3 for the minor mutation, and 1D3+3 for the major mutation. This natural armor primarily protects against physical damage, though it may also work against additional forms of damage, as determined by the gamemaster.

Natural Weaponry

The mutant has a type of natural weaponry (claws, teeth, spines, horns, etc.). As minor mutation adds +1D6 damage to Brawl damage. If it is a projectile weapon (spines, projecting acid, etc.) it does 1D6 damage with range equal to the mutant's DEX in meters. As a major mutation, the damage is +2D6 (2D6 for projectiles, and range is doubled). You and your gamemaster should determine whether it's concealable. Use an equivalent weapon from *Chapter 8: Equipment* for special success type, length, armor points, etc. The weapon's hit points (for parrying purposes) are considered to be their own, with no additional hit points added.

The mutant can parry with their natural weapon(s), if appropriate, using the Brawl skill. Damage bonuses usually apply. If the natural weapon is used in missile combat, use Throw or Projection to launch it, or a new specialization of the Missile Weapon skill. At your gamemaster's discretion, the benefits from this mutation stack with any conferred with the Martial Arts skill.

Pain Sensitivity

(Adverse) Regardless of their CON characteristic, this mutation gives the mutant a very low tolerance for pain. The minor mutation requires a successful Stamina roll to avoid being blinded with agony as if stunned (page 154) whenever impacted significantly. When taking damage, make a resistance roll of the amount of damage vs. their CON. If the roll fails, the mutant is knocked unconscious for 1D6 combat rounds or until woken up. The major mutation includes that weakness and makes the mutant particularly susceptible to a particular form of attack. Choose a type of damage (fire, edged weapons, gunfire, cold, etc.) that they are particularly vulnerable to. Whenever they take damage from that source, the damage (after armor) is doubled.

Pheromone

The mutant produces complex pheromones that affect the emotions or behavior of other beings. These chemicals may have a distinctive odor or none at all. The effect might be rage, fear, sorrow, nausea, lust, etc. As a minor mutation, these pheromones elicit one type of emotional or behavioral response (your choice), with a potency (POT) of 2D6 (rolled each time the mutation is used). The targeted creature or creatures must succeed on a resistance roll of their INT vs. the POT of the pheromone or succumb to its effect. The greater mutation allows the choice of which emotion or behavior is to be evoked each full turn (5 minutes). The greater mutation has an increased potency (POT) of 4D6. In either case, the range is the mutant's CON in meters. If personality traits or passions are being used, add +20% (minor) or +40% to a relevant trait if the mutation is successful.

Reduced Sense

(Adverse) This mutation reduces or eliminates one or more senses, affecting any skills linked to those senses. For the minor mutation, pick one sense. See **Keen Sense** (prior) for skills linked to each sense. The

minor mutation impairs the sense considerably, but it still functions. Any uses of the skill are *Difficult*. The major mutation removes the sense entirely. Skills linked to that sense are at 0% and cannot be improved unless the mutation is removed. Other senses (and skills) must accommodate and overcome this mutation.

Regeneration

The mutant heals rapidly, regaining 1 hit point every minute at the minor version, or 1 hit point each combat round in the powers phase for the major mutation. Regeneration cannot bring the mutant back from the dead but heals damage that would normally require hospitalization. Regeneration also heals the effects of any major wound, though the effects only take place once all hit points from the injury have been restored. When this mutation is picked, determine one type of injury (fire, acid, drowning, etc.) the mutant cannot heal from.

Sensitivity

The mutant is attuned to a certain item or substance—animal, vegetable, mineral, energy type, etc.—which it can detect automatically at a distance. This must be natural to the game setting (it can't be "magic" in a no-magic setting), and it doesn't work on a specific form of object or being.

***For example**, it could be silver, but not silver coins.*

The minor mutation detects the substance within CON in meters, and the major mutation the range is CON in miles. If more than one example of the substance is in range, make an Idea roll to distinguish aspects such as the intensity/amount/size and its relative distance. If looking for a very specific example, the Idea roll becomes *Difficult*.

Speech (Mimicry)

This mutation grants the ability to communicate verbally. It may be low-grade telepathy, or a simple facility for language learning. The mutant may be able to speak animal languages or might have a knack for human languages. Alternately, they can imitate sounds with great accuracy, including voices, machinery, vehicles, explosions, etc. The minor mutation allows imitation of any animal noise; gains a +20% to any Speak Language attempts; and can use vocal mimicry to add a +20% bonus to Disguise attempts. Additionally, the mutant has a starting value of INT×2 (plus skill category bonus) in one animal 'language'. As a major mutation, add +40 to Speak Language and Disguise attempts, and the mutant can imitate a wide variety of mechanical and environmental sounds with facility. They also speak two animal 'languages' at INT×2 (plus skill category bonus), and can imitate any other language at INT×1 starting skill, assuming they can spend an hour or so in close proximity with someone speaking that language. Your gamemaster should determine what animals have a rudimentary 'language' (dolphins, whales, chimpanzees, etc.) and if there is any overlap.

Structural Improvement

The mutant has an advantageous evolution in their skeletal structure, whether an exoskeleton (potentially adding to their natural armor), extra legs or heads, larger or smaller body parts, or new parts such as wings, horns, or spines. Work with your gamemaster to determine the nature of the mutation and its effects. For the minor version, add 2D6 to one affected characteristic, or trade those points to armor points or MOV points on a 1 for 1 basis. POW cannot be altered by this mutation. A successful Disguise roll is required to conceal this mutation. For the major mutation, roll 4D6 and distribute the points as desired (excluding POW). The major mutation is impossible to conceal, and the mutant may have difficulty finding clothing, armor, or worn equipment.

Structural Weakness

(Adverse) This mutation causes a genetic abnormality in the skeletal structure, inconvenient and hindering normal life, whether malformed, disproportioned, or even have additional appendages such as ten extra legs that slow movement. Work with your gamemaster to determine the nature of the mutation and its effects. For the minor version of this mutation, subtract 2D6 from one affected characteristic, or use these points to lower MOV on a 1 for 1 basis. POW cannot be reduced. A successful Disguise roll is required to conceal this mutation. For the major mutation, subtract 4D6 points from STR, DEX, CON, SIZ, or CHA, dividing points as desired. No characteristic can be reduced to below 1. The major mutation is impossible to conceal, and the mutant may have difficulty finding clothing, armor, or worn equipment.

Venom

The mutant manufactures a type of venom within their body and can inject it with sting, bite, spine, or claw, or it may coat their body. Alternately, it might be a gas they exude, projected spittle, or might take effect only if the mutant is bitten. If projected, make a successful Throw or Projection skill roll; if it is dealt hand-to-hand, use Brawl. The minor mutation has potency (POT) 2D6 (roll each time the mutation is used), and the major mutation has POT 4D6. This poison may cause paralysis, sleep, attribute reduction, blindness, or another effect (gamemaster's approval). A resistance roll determines if the poison has any effect (see **Poisons**, page 151). A ranged venom attack has a range equal to CON in meters.

Wings

This mutation provides functional wings—batlike, birdlike, insectile, etc.—or even a gaseous internal organ that makes the mutant bulbous and lighter than air. With the minor mutation, flight is equal to MOV in meters per combat round, or any slower speed, including hovering. With the major mutation, the speed is MOV×2. Carry anything else while flying depends upon STR, with a maximum of STR in SIZ (or ENC) carried. The mutant has a starting Fly skill at DEX×2 (plus skill category modifier, if used) for the minor mutation, and DEX×4 for major (plus skill category modifier, if used).

PSYCHIC ABILITIES

These strange powers allow their users to see into the thoughts of others, manipulate their minds, overcome human limitations and use their willpower to affect the physical world, and even to see beyond the barriers of time and space. Some, though, are nothing more than intensely focused skills, or unusual knacks developed in a rarely used part of the brain.

Characters with psychic abilities are called **psychics**, and this section refers to them as such.

How Psychic Abilities Work

Psychic abilities work like skills, though not everyone can have them. They are rated and rolled like skills. Sometimes, in addition to a successful roll on D100, the psychic must also succeed in a resistance roll. This may be the target's POW if they do not want to be influenced, their INT if the psychic ability can be 'outsmarted', or even the SIZ of an object being lifted telekinetically. If there is no opposing force, a successful psychic ability roll simply works.

Cost of Psychic Abilities

Most psychic abilities use power points. A psychic reduced to 0 power points is unconscious and cannot use any psychic abilities. Unless specified in the power's description, the cost is spent regardless of success or failure, with the following conditions or exceptions:

- If the cost of a psychic ability is lower than 1 point per combat round (such as a single power point being spent across several combat rounds), it does not cost anything until the outcome of the psychic ability skill roll is determined.
- An ability costing more than 1 power point to use costs only 1 point if the roll to use it is a failure.
- If the psychic ability roll is a fumble, the full power points to be spent are lost.

Increasing Psychic Abilities

Like skills, psychic abilities increase with experience. Whenever a successful psychic ability roll is made in combat or when in danger, mark the psychic ability for an experience check later. Psychic abilities can be increase through training and research (see **Skill Training**, page 119).

Using Psychic Abilities

Using a psychic ability against an opponent requires a resistance roll of POW vs. POW or current power points vs. current power points, based on the psychic ability. If the target is willing, there is no need for a resistance roll—success is automatic if the skill roll is successful, and the power points are spent. An unconscious target automatically loses the resistance roll.

Instantaneous psychic abilities can be performed during the powers phase of a combat round, using the psychic's INT rank to determine who goes first. Abilities that take longer than an instant must be announced, and the skill rolled on the DEX rank. The psychic ability itself occurs during the powers phase of the next round.

Psychic Ability Success Levels

Some psychic abilities are either successful or unsuccessful, but most, like skills, allow for different levels of success. Rather than determine outcomes per ability, the following guidelines are suggested:

- **Fumble:** Spectacular failure, costing all intended power points. Make a successful Idea roll to avoid being stunned for the rest of the combat round.
- **Failure:** No effect, costing 1 power point.
- **Success:** The desired effect is achieved (though a resistance roll may be required), costing requisite power points.
- **Special Success:** Success, plus one of the following effects, as appropriate, chosen by the gamemaster: half power point cost (minimum 1), double range, double duration, damage doubled, superior quality of information, psychic's characteristic value is multiplied by 1.5 (round up) for the duration.
- **Critical Success:** A perfect success, plus one of the following effects, as appropriate, chosen by the gamemaster: power point cost is only 1, triple range; triple duration, damaged doubled with no protection allowed, exceptional quality of information provided, psychic's characteristic value is doubled for the duration.

Your gamemaster may allow you to pick special or critical effects, where appropriate.

Starting Psychic Abilities

Psychics often develop their abilities in secrecy, sometimes with a mentor or within a clandestine organization or tradition. The campaign's setting may have more of an influence than the power level but use the following guidelines for each game power level. For any starting skill ratings, spend skill points from your personal skill point pool to improve them.

- **Normal:** Two psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to their POW×1.
- **Heroic:** Four psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to their POW×1.
- **Epic:** Six psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to their POW×1.
- **Superhuman:** Ten psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to their POW×1.

PSYCHIC ABILITIES SUMMARY

Each ability costs a minimum of 1 power point to use, with additional power points spent for longer duration or enhanced effect. Range is usually a multiple of POW.

- **Astral Projection:** Leave physical body and travel in psychic form.
- **Aura Detection:** Perceive the aura emanated by a living being.
- **Clairvoyance:** Project awareness into another place.
- **Cryokinesis:** Create an area of intense cold on an area, object, or target.
- **Danger Sense:** Detect danger from other characters or situations.
- **Dead Calm:** Resist mental shock or delay the effects of sanity loss.
- **Divination:** Ask a higher power for guidance and insight.
- **Eidetic Memory:** Perfect and total recall of previous experiences.
- **Emotion Control:** Affect the emotional state of a target or targets.
- **Empathy:** Detect the inner feelings of a target or targets.
- **Intuition:** Detect a certain person or class of item.
- **Levitation:** Floating movement above the ground.
- **Mind Blast:** A psychic attack against a target.
- **Mind Control:** Controlling the physical body and will of a target.
- **Mind Shield:** A protection against psychic interference and attacks.
- **Precognition:** A brief glimpse into the future.
- **Psychometry:** 'Read' past emotions associated with an object or place.
- **Pyrokinesis:** Heat an area, object, or target to extreme temperatures.
- **Sensitivity:** Detect psychic emanations or supernatural beings in an area.
- **Telekinesis:** Manipulate and move objects mentally.
- **Telepathy:** Read minds or speak mind-to-mind with a target.

In settings where psychic abilities are weaponized (in government or corporate environments), skill points can come from the professional skill pool in addition to the personal skill pool. Add the Mental skill category modifier if that optional system is used.

Gaining New Psychic Abilities

When a psychic's POW has increased beyond its starting value, they can learn a new psychic ability through one of the following methods:

- **Training:** A new psychic ability may emerge through intense training, usually with a mentor who has that psychic ability at 75%+. The time required is weeks equal to the psychic's POW minus 30. At the end of this period, the psychic must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW and make a Luck roll, If successful, the new ability is rated at POW×1 (after the subtraction). If they fail, they can try again after another period of training and the POW sacrifice.

- **Involuntarily:** A new psychic ability may suddenly develop, without conscious choice. Speak to your gamemaster and describe the ability you'd like to learn. If your gamemaster agrees, they will provide an opportunity in play where your psychic is put in a stressful situation or opportunity, whether exposure to a mutagen, an intense personal trauma, a flashback, etc. You must then sacrifice 2 permanent points of POW and receive the new psychic ability, rated at your POW x5 (after the subtraction).

As with starting abilities, the Mental skill category modifier, if any, is added to the starting ability rating.

Increasing POW

POW and power points drive most psychic abilities. These are frequently exercised in POW-based resistance rolls. Whenever a psychic succeeds in a resistance roll vs. a POW higher than their own, put an experience check next to the POW characteristic. See **Increasing Characteristics** (page 120) for more information.

PSYCHIC ABILITIES

Following is a list of psychic abilities.

Astral Projection

Range: POW×10 kilometers
Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 to activate, 1 per full turn to keep active

The psychic can leave their body and travel in the physical world in their astral form, an invisible, intangible projection of the self. The astral body has the same attributes as the normal body, though in astral form the psychic cannot use any skills to affect the material world. They can see and interact with other astral characters as if they were each in the real world and can do battle as normal. Astral characters can use any magic, psychic, or similar abilities on targets in the physical world, at the gamemaster's discretion. Some physical protection may protect beings in astral form, depending on the setting. An astral form moves at the psychic's normal MOV rate, though they can drift, float, or walk as desired. Alternately, if familiar with a location and within range, they can fly there with blinding speed, arriving almost instantaneously.

This ability can be stopped at any time, at which point the astral form returns instantaneously back to the psychic's body. While using astral form, the psychic's physical body is comatose. A psychic who runs out of power points while in astral form, begins to lose hit points at a rate of 1 per full turn. If someone interacts with the psychic's body while they are in astral form and out of sight of the body, a successful Idea roll is required to notice.

Those in astral form may enter **astral space**, a non-physical space that is entirely spiritual in nature and may or may not coincide with the physical world. Psychics can enter astral space by spending 1 additional power point while in astral form. In some settings, ghosts and other powerful supernatural beings may inhabit astral space.

A psychic in astral form may engage in psychic combat. See **Psychic Combat** (page 73).

Aura Detection

Range: POW in meters
Duration: 1 combat round per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 to activate, 1 per combat round to keep active

Every living being emits an aura, naked to the human eye, that can reveal information about the soul, origin, and current condition. A psychic can see the aura of another living being and interpret that aura. Once an aura has been detected, an Idea roll can determine whether the being is…:

- …healthy or diseased (and the severity of any disease).
- …benevolent or evil, and how much so.
- …full of power points, overcharged, low, or depleted.
- …relative power on a "much stronger, stronger, equal to, weaker, much weaker" scale vs. the psychic.

Auras are usually mixes of several different colors, with strong colors indicating extremes. A successful Spot roll may detect subtle changes or minor elements of an aura, such as deception. A character possessed by another being (like a ghost or demon) displays the aura of the supernatural being rather than their own. This power may also reveal the presence of any supernatural forces at work on the subject (curses, blessings, or magic items in their possession).

Once used, the ability can be active as long as desired, and be ended instantaneously. It can function while using normal Perception skills and may provide a +20% bonus to any Perception attempts against a living being.

Mind Shield (page 76) works against Aura Detection.

Clairvoyance

Range: 10×POW in kilometers
Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 to activate, 1 per full turn to keep active

The psychic can project their full awareness into another area, experiencing that area as if present there. The ability is *Difficult* if the psychic has never been to the target location. This awareness is limited to the senses—the psychic has not physically gone anywhere, nor has their soul, such as with Astral Projection. The information is current—it does not allow sight into the past, future, another dimension, or timeline. The psychic cannot interact with the environment being visited, though they can attempt Communication-, Mental-, and Perception-based skills or some psychic abilities (such as Psychometry) for more information. The gamemaster should determine whether anyone can sense the psychic's presence, and how. The psychic cannot use any other psychic ability while using Clairvoyance or the viewing ends. At the end of the duration, the psychic's senses return, or they may end the ability immediately beforehand.

Cryokinesis

Range: POW in meters
Duration: Instantaneous or 1 full turn
Power Point Cost: 3 power points per 1D6 in damage or per 3 points of SIZ

The psychic can create an intense cold around a single being or object within range. This does damage to living beings by pitting their current power points vs. the target's CON as a resistance roll. If you are successful, the target takes 1D6 points of damage per 3 power points spent on Cryokinesis (the point cost must be declared before the attack). Additionally, any environmental effects are also applied. If the target has some protection such as winter wear, this may serve as limited armor against the damage. Cryokinesis can also be used to cover an item or section of floor with ice, to freeze a liquid, or to make an item brittle and easier to shatter. Whenever the target's SIZ is applicable, the power affects 1 SIZ point per power point spent. Any ice remaining from this power lasts for 1 full turn in normal weather; though it only delivers damage when it is first used.

Danger Sense

Range: POW in meters
Duration: Instantaneous or 1 combat round
Power Point Cost: 0 power points if passive, 1 power point to activate, 1 per combat round to keep active

The psychic can sense immediate threats from the nearby vicinity—such as a sniper, sneak attack, or trap—in an area they are in or entering.

This psychic ability takes the form of a neck-hairs sort of tingle, or a sudden hunch, or even a vision. Your gamemaster always rolls secretly for this power's outcome. A special success gains an impression of the exact direction a threat is coming from, and a critical success provides further insight into the nature of the threat, such as the type of trap or identity of the attacker.

It can be used actively or passively, with different conditions for each mode:

- When used actively, the psychic spends 1 power point to scan another character or area to determine if danger is present. The chance of success is equal to the ability's chance, and if successful the gamemaster tells the player what information is gleaned.
- When used passively, the psychic does not need to spend any power points to activate it, though the ability is rolled as if *Difficult*. The gamemaster informs the player if their Danger Sense worked and what it detected.

Further Danger Sense attempts (whether the initial was passive or active) cost 1 power point per additional combat round. If Danger Sense is used successfully in a combat round, the psychic cannot be ambushed, surprised, or flanked, and can parry or dodge as appropriate without penalty until their DEX rank in the next combat round.

PSYCHIC COMBAT

Psychics in astral form may attack one another in psychic combat. Like physical combat, psychic combat can injure or incapacitate a foe, though in astral form it is more difficult to kill a foe. For psychic combat to occur, both combatants must be in astral form.

To initiate psychic combat, the astral forms must be within POW meters of one another. If these values are different, use the higher POW characteristic as the range. The speed of movement within astral form generally means that each combatant agrees to participate in psychic combat. If they are not, or one chooses to flee, see **Chases on Foot** (page 143), using POW as the astral forms' MOV rate. If required, use each character's normal Perception skills.

Once combat has been initiated, the outcome is determined with resistance rolls. The attacking character goes first. Use INT instead of DEX to determine in what order the psychic combat will occur.

To attack in psychic combat, the attacker matches their current power points against the defender's current power point total. Both characters make a power point vs. power point resistance roll.

- If both succeed, attacker and defender each lose 1D3 power points.
- If only one character succeeds, the other character loses 1D3 power points.
- If neither character succeeds, no result occurs that combat round.

Once initiated, psychic combat cannot be disengaged until both combatants agree to stop fighting (usually when one character surrenders), or when one combatant has been incapacitated by being reduced to 0 power points, at which point the psychic is immediately returned to their body, unconscious and out of astral form. If the power points lost in a round exceed the psychic's current power points (taking them below 0), the excess points are subtracted from current hit points. Psychic combat can be portrayed appropriately to the setting, but the mechanics are the same.

The winner of a psychic combat may immediately continue to attack the loser to try to kill them. The attacker must use a successful Astral Projection roll to get within POW meters of the unconscious loser of the previous psychic combat and continue the attack. No break is allowed between the initial combat and this lethal continuation.

In this case, the attacker pits their power points against the unconscious character's POW (rather than power points). The procedure is identical to normal psychic combat described above, with the following exceptions:

- If both psychics succeed, each loses 1D3 hit points.
- If only one psychic succeeds, the other loses 1D3 hit points.
- If neither psychic succeeds, the combat ends.

The unconscious psychic must continue the combat until the attacker chooses to end it. If either psychic reaches 0 hit points, the psychic combat is over. A psychic falls unconscious and loses the ability to be in astral form at 0 power points (returning to their body), and a psychic with 0 hit points is dead. If the combat ends with a psychic losing hit points but not dying, lost hit points return at the normal rate.

With a successful Idea roll, a psychic in psychic combat may use other types of powers. As with Astral Projection, a psychic indulged in psychic combat is absent from their body. Some creatures (angels, demons, aliens, etc.) may be able to initiate psychic combat in alternate planes of existence, or even the normal physical world.

The passage of time during psychic combat is equivalent to normal combat rounds in the physical world. If required, such as a situation where combat is ensuing in the physical world simultaneously with the astral plane, any psychic combatants should have their INT ranks compared alongside DEX rankings.

Note that the ability to psychically kill a 'defenseless' foe is extremely powerful. Your gamemaster may wish to ignore this, limit it, or substitute it with possession or a loss of SAN.

Dead Calm

Range: Self
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost: 1 power point or more if used to delay sanity point loss
The psychic is never rattled, using Dead Calm reflexively when confronted with a force that would stun or otherwise incapacitate them through mental shock. When a shock or psychic attack happens, they can perform this as a reaction, like a parry. If successful, they ignore the stun and can act as normal.

Additionally, Dead Calm delays the effects of sanity point loss (see **Sanity**, page 218). To delay the negative effects of sanity point loss, make a Dead Calm roll. If unsuccessful, the effects are suffered as normal. If successful, the psychic can spend any desired number of power points and match them vs. the lost sanity points as a resistance roll. If successful, the effects of the sanity point loss are delayed for full turns equal to the psychic's POW characteristic. At the end of this time, the sanity point loss and its effects are suffered. Until that time the psychic can act normally, even making plans against their impending sanity breakdown. This delayed sanity point loss cannot be avoided or lessened by any means.

See **Sanity** (page 218) for more information. If the sanity system is not used in the game, this aspect of the Dead Calm psychic ability has no function.

Divination

Range: Self
Duration: 10 hours to perform (–1 hour per additional power point spent), actual vision is instantaneous
Power Point Cost: 10 power points (+1 per hour of preparation reduced)
The psychic can commune with a higher force, whether a deity or some spiritual entity, to gain insight into a situation or question, or to receive information about the course of future events. Divination takes time—each attempt requires 10 hours of meditation, ritual preparation, burning of incense, consumption of sacred foods, fasting, flagellation, etc. as appropriate. The Divination roll is made at the end of the duration, the power points spent regardless of success or failure.

You may spend additional power points on a Divination attempt, with each additional power point above the normal cost lowering the preparation time by 1 hour (minimum 1 hour).

***For example**, the normal cost is 10 power points, and it takes 10 hours. Spending 15 power points will reduce the time to 5 hours (10–5=5).*

A psychic who expends their last power point immediately collapses and if the roll was successful, awakens later with the results of the Divination in their memory, experienced as if in a dream.

When this psychic ability is used successfully, the psychic must announce what the question or subject of the Divination is. The more explicit, the more specific the answer. Following are suggested results for the roll, which your gamemaster should roll secretly:

- **Fumble:** Information is misleading or impossible to understand. The psychic believes this information is correct.
- **Failure:** Vision is murky, difficult to interpret, possibly even contradictory. The psychic is aware they have failed.
- **Success:** An insight that provides one answer, a short hint or suggestion that feels right.
- **Special Success:** A solid and clear answer, with a sense of absolute certainty about it.
- **Critical Success:** Thorough information, a clear and immediate instruction, perhaps even provided by an encounter with the force being questioned (a god, entity, etc.).

Based on the setting and nature of the entity, ritual preparations may increase the chance by +5–20%. **Allegiance** (page 211) can be used to augment Divination rolls.

Eidetic Memory

Range: Self
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost: 1 power point or more
The psychic can recall information from previous experiences with meticulous attention to detail. A successful roll allows recall of all information about anything they have witnessed or read, up to their POW in years. Additional power points can be spent to increase the number of years: multiply the number of power points spent by the psychic's POW for the total years, up to their moment of birth. A successful Eidetic Memory roll lets the psychic attempt other based rolls as if present at that time, though this is strictly memory, and they cannot alter past events. The ability is instantaneous, though use of Perception-based skills to investigate memories may take additional time, though no additional power points or roll are required.

Emotion Control

Range: POW×10 meters
Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 INT to activate, 1 per full turn to keep active
The psychic can control the emotional state of one or more sentient beings, with a successful use of Emotion Control manipulating 3 points of INT in a selected being. Each additional point spent increases the affected INT by +3, and the psychic must spend enough power points to match or go over the target's INT (thus, the cost is 1/3 the target's INT, rounded up). To use Emotion Control, overcome the target's current power points vs. the psychic's current power points in a resistance table roll (the cost is paid after the resistance roll is made). If successful, the

psychic controls the target's emotional state and can introduce or sustain a desired emotion (love, trust, hatred, fear, lust, calm, etc.). Special or critical successes may increase the duration or intensity. A fumble triggers the emotional state within the caster!

Once successful, Emotion Control remains active at a cost of 1 power point per additional combat round. If the target remains within range and does not break free (see below), the target continues to feel the chosen emotion.

The target must be able to naturally feel the intended emotional state (robots or aliens may be immune). The target cannot be forced to act in a suicidal fashion and is not mind controlled. Instead, the ability sways their actions or reactions, rather than forcing them into unwanted activity. The target may attempt an Idea roll to recognize the influence.

To control two or more targets, each is handled as a separate Emotion Control roll and POW vs. INT resistance roll. Power point costs are figured separately.

A target that has been successfully controlled can attempt to break the control with a new resistance roll at the beginning of each subsequent full turn. Each full turn after being controlled, the target can make a resistance roll of their INT vs. your character's current power points (now instead of POW). Success means the target breaks free and can act accordingly. Once a target has broken free, a successful Idea roll reveals the attempt to influence them. With a special success, they will recognize the person responsible. Similarly, the psychic must make an Idea roll to recognize when a target has broken free if it is not obvious.

Mind Shield (page 76) works against this ability.

Empathy

Range: POW in meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost: 1 power point

The psychic can read a target's emotional state to determine their innermost emotional state. The psychic must be able to see the target or sense them with another psychic ability. If the power roll is successful, a resistance roll of POW vs. the target's POW yields insight into their emotional state. Success reveals the dominant state of emotion the target is currently experiencing. A special success reveals the origin of the emotional state (the cause, the person responsible, etc.), and a critical success reveals what the target plans to do about that emotional state. Failure yields nothing, while a fumble provides false or misleading information. With a successful Idea roll, the target recognizes that their feelings have been revealed to someone, and with a successful INT×1 roll, discerns the source of the spying.

Mind Shield (page 76) works against this ability.

Intuition

Range: 100 meters per power point spent
Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 to activate

The psychic can make intuitive leaps beyond the bounds of normal perception. With a successful roll, the psychic can specify one type of thing they are looking for, such as a trap, lost item, secret door, valuable item, hidden safe, concealed weapon, or even the concealed thoughts of another character. Your gamemaster will then provide the direction to the nearest example of such an item (or type of thing) within range. Additional power points can be spent to increase the range, by 100 meters per additional power point spent.

If desired, Intuition can be used as a passive ability, with your gamemaster rolling secretly and allowing hints or guesses to help guide the course of the adventure. When used in this passive manner, no power points are expended.

Note: This is potentially a disruptive power for some types of games, and your gamemaster may choose to disallow it.

Levitation

Range: POW in meters
Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 SIZ points

The psychic can lift 3 SIZ points per power point spent, whether their own body or another living being. Levitation does not require a resistance roll—a successful roll lifts the weight to the height of the psychic. Levitation is a relaxing form of movement, and direction and speed can be adjusted as instinctively as while walking. Levitation can be used to cross chasms or other similar obstacles, up to the power points spent in meters horizontally, and can bypass hazardous terrain (see **Slippery or Unstable Surfaces**, page 153). While levitating, the psychic can continue to remain lifted indefinitely, provided they have enough power points available. Levitation does not require conscious thought to maintain, though if attacked mentally or physically, the psychic must make an Idea roll to keep afloat. Failure means the ability ends and the lifted subject drops to the ground, but gradually enough to avoid falling damage.

An unwilling target must make a resistance roll of their current power points vs. the psychic's current power points. Similarly, moving a Levitating target in an undesired direction requires a resistance roll of POW vs. POW to determine the outcome of the struggle. Levitation can be released at any time, though the fall does not cause damage. An unwilling target that defeats the psychic in a POW vs. POW roll is released.

To move inanimate objects or to forcefully move living creatures, use Telekinesis (page 78).

Mind Blast

Range: POW in meters
Duration: Until target recovers
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 POW affected

The psychic can make a mental attack, stunning the target. This attack does not cause damage, but overwhelms the opponent, potentially putting them at a disadvantage. If the power roll is successful, make a resistance roll of the psychic's current power points vs. the target's current power points. Each use of the power costs 1/3 the target's POW (rounded up) paid after the resistance roll is made. Success stuns the target for 1D6 combat rounds. Stunned characters can recover normally, as described in that section (see **Stunning or Subduing**, page 154). On a special success, the target is knocked unconscious for 1D6 full turns. For a critical success, the duration is 1D6 hours.

Whether the Mind Blast succeeded or failed, the target realizes they were attacked. A successful Idea roll reveals who attacked if it is not obvious.

Mind Control

Range: POW in meters
Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 points of target's POW (round up) +1 point per additional combat round

The psychic can dominate the actions and free will of another intelligent being. If the power roll is successful, the psychic must win a power point vs. power point roll against the target. This costs 1 power point per 3 points of the target's POW (round up), paid after the resistance roll is made. If successful, the psychic gains control of the target's movement and speech, though the psychic gains no insight into the target's mind or physical state. This control is complete, though once per combat round, the dominated target may attempt POW×1 roll to ignore or hesitate at the control if an action is contrary to their will. Once control has been established, the psychic can continue to control the target by spending 1 power point per combat round.

To have the target do anything other than lie down and fall asleep, the psychic must concentrate, using no other psychic abilities, doing nothing

more than moving slowly and speaking briefly to others. If interrupted, the psychic must make a successful Luck roll (*Difficult* if injured) or the target is automatically released. A mind-controlled target can attempt to break the control with a new resistance roll on their DEX rank each combat round by succeeding in a POW vs. POW roll against their controller. Success means that they break free and can act at the beginning of the next combat round. With a successful Idea roll, they know they were controlled. A special or critical success restores memories of actions taken while controlled and reveals the identity of their controller. If the Idea roll fails, they have no idea they were mind-controlled.

Mind Control cannot be used on animals or those without living brains and psychic processes, such as a zombie, robot, or ghost. Controlling an alien or creature with vastly different mental structure may be *Difficult*.

Mind Shield

Range: Self
Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 power point or more to activate

To use Mind Shield against psychic attacks, the psychic must make a successful roll and declare how many power points they are going to spend. Each point of Mind Shield is used as a resistance roll vs. the power points spent in a psychic attack or influence. Mind Shield can be used prior to any threat, or can be used like a parry attempt, raised as a reaction to an incoming influence. Keep Mind Shield active for another full turn by spending power points when the previous use is about to expire.

Mind Shield also works against passive psychic abilities such as Empathy or psychic detection that might detect the psychic, but it must already be in effect to avoid notice. If sanity (page 218) is being used, each point of Mind Shield already actively protects against 1 sanity point loss per horrific encounter, applied when a loss to SAN is being determined.

For influences other than psychic abilities, each point in Mind Shield temporarily increases the psychic's POW by 3 for resistance rolls. Mind Shield is especially useful against Emotion Control, Mind Blast, and Mind Control.

Precognition

Range: Self
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost: 1 power point to activate plus 1 power point per step in time (see the **Time Step** table, below)

The psychic gains a brief, intuitive glimpse into the future. The farther into the future, the more points it costs.

TIME STEP

Power Points	Time Step
1	One combat round
2	Ten combat rounds
3	One full turn
4	One hour
5	One day
6	One week
7	One month
8	One year
9	Ten years
10	100 years
11+	Etc.

Precognition can be used actively or passively. In either case, your gamemaster rolls for the ability and announces the results (if any) to you. The results are as follows:

- **Fumble:** A clear and coherent vision that is completely inaccurate and misleading.
- **Failure:** An incomprehensible or contradictory flash of insight that does little other than provide an uneasy feeling about a situation and the knowledge that the attempt has failed.
- **Success:** A glimpse into the future up to the time step specified, providing a strong impression of what is to come.
- **Special:** A view of the future in considerable detail, providing an intuitive sense as to how things will transpire. A successful Idea roll provides guidance as to what actions must be done (if any) to bring about or avoid that outcome.
- **Critical:** A crystal-clear vision of the future including the series of events that immediately precede it, with a clear idea of how to prevent or ensure that outcome.

Active Precognition lets the psychic spend as many power points to see as far into the future as they want, then the gamemaster rolls and announces the results, as above. Once the points are spent, the psychic must make a successful Idea roll to interpret the vision, if there is anything vague or confusing about it.

With passive Precognition, your gamemaster secretly rolls for the ability, and if successful, provides a glimpse into the future. In this case, the player may not know the dice are being rolled at all. There is no power point cost for passive use of this psychic ability, and your gamemaster may wish to have some aspect of the environment or situation prompt a precognitive glimpse into the future, perhaps as a dramatic or narrative tool.

Note: Precognition inevitably implies predestination and may require considerable effort on behalf of your gamemaster to bring about effectively. Its role is entirely subject to your gamemaster's preference, and they should carefully consider its use and impact on gameplay before allowing it, perhaps even adding some long- or short-term drawbacks, such as sanity or fatigue point cost (see pages 218 and 24).

Psychometry

Range: Self
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per SIZ point of object, plus 1 point per time step (page 76)

Objects and environments are psychic sponges, absorbing charged emotions and impressions from those who use and inhabit them, or events that transpired involving them. Psychometry allows a psychic to examine an inanimate item or place and sense the absorbed emotions. This power is only for inanimate objects.

For objects, make a Psychometry roll and spend the power points equivalent to the SIZ of the item (minimum 1, see **Object SIZ Examples**, page 190) plus power points equivalent to the last time the item was used (see the **Time Step** table in Precognition, opposite). A successful Idea roll allows identification of the user of an object if it is someone the psychic has met. For someone they have not met but know of (picture, television, etc.), the Idea roll is *Difficult*. The psychic sees one instance of its previous use, or more if they are relatively identical. A psychic can also use Psychometry to determine any special activating code or term used for a device, from a combination for a lock to the magic word that allows a magic wand to be used. This can be attempted only once for each item.

For an area, choose some subset of that area to gain an impression and use the SIZ guidelines as above.

***For example**, rather than try to use Psychometry on an entire car (SIZ 60), use it on a car seat (which is human-sized, roughly SIZ 8).*

Failure means the psychic cannot try again on the specific item or place until their skill with Psychometry has increased.

Your gamemaster may use this ability passively, rolling secretly when the psychic handles an object or enters an area of note, and announcing a sudden flash of insight about a place or thing. Passive gamemaster-promoted use of the psychic ability does not cost any power points.

Note: Psychometry is extremely powerful and can potentially derail a mystery, providing information beyond what your gamemaster wishes. Thus, your gamemaster may choose to disallow this psychic ability. Additionally, it is up to your gamemaster's discretion whether Psychometry will work on a corpse.

Pyrokinesis

Range: POW in meters
Duration: Instantaneous, or 1 combat round
Power Point Cost: 3 power points per 1D6 damage or 3 SIZ points

Pyrokinesis creates intense heat, filling an area with flame, potentially igniting an object, even providing light or warmth. It can be shaped and otherwise manipulated. The area affected is equal to 3 SIZ per 3 power points. Successful use against a living being inflicts 1D6 points of damage per 3 power points used. Additional power points increase damage (6 points = 2D6 damage, etc.) If the target has some protection such as insulating clothing, this may serve as armor against the damage. Damage is instantaneous, though the heat lingers for an additional combat round or longer.

Pyrokinesis can melt items, matching the power points spent vs. the object's SIZ in a resistance roll. Any appropriate environmental effects are also applied, where relevant (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148). Your gamemaster may choose to modify the number of power points required for substances based on their melting points.

Pyrokinesis can also snuff out flame by draining the oxygen it requires, cancelling a volume of flame SIZ on a point-by-point basis.

Sensitivity

Range: Self
Duration: Instantaneous
Power Point Cost: 1 power point

This psychic awareness allows the psychic to recognize some supernatural or spiritual aspects of an object or area or to detect the presence of supernatural beings or spirits nearby. Negative emotional, spiritual, or supernatural aspects create foreboding and unease, and positive aspects foster a sense of peace and harmony. If the impressions are coming from an object within the psychic's immediate vicinity (1/3 POW in meters), an Idea roll identifies that object. Sensitivity also informs whether other psychic abilities are being used or have recently been used in the area, or even if someone nearby has recently used psychic abilities in an extreme fashion.

Your gamemaster may wish to use the ability passively, rolling secretly and announcing any sudden flash of Sensitivity. In these cases, it costs no power points to use.

Note: Sensitivity can potentially derail mystery-based plots, and your gamemaster may choose to disallow it entirely. In some settings, this may be the sole psychic ability present.

Telekinesis

Range: POW in meters
Duration: 1 combat round
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 SIZ each combat round

The psychic can lift objects and move them with their mind. Every power point spent affects 3 SIZ points. To use the power, determine the SIZ of the object to be moved and divide its SIZ by 3 (round up). If the Telekinesis is successful, the psychic can pick up the object and move it in the air or along the ground at normal MOV speed. The object must stay within range of the psychic. Every point spent above the SIZ extends the range it can be thrown by another 15 meters, or increases the speed to double (triple, etc.) normal MOV. If something has wheels and/or is dragged across level ground, each point affects 6 SIZ. Once an item is held with Telekinesis, the psychic can hold it indefinitely if they spend the power points to keep it aloft. If knocked unconscious or dealt a major wound, the item falls to the ground. If distracted, attacked, or attempting a complex task, make a successful Idea roll to maintain the hold.

If using Telekinesis to pick up an unwilling target, the psychic must defeat them in a POW vs. SIZ resistance roll. No roll is required for a willing target. Telekinesis cannot lift the psychic themselves: to do that, use Levitation.

To use Telekinesis to hit someone with an object, make a Throw roll once an object is held aloft. Objects thrown at other characters do 1D6 points of damage per 10 points of SIZ, or the object's normal damage if it is a missile weapon. The damage modifier is based on the psychic's POW+INT (instead of STR+SIZ) on the **Damage Modifier** table (page 20). To catch an item with Telekinesis, make a successful *Difficult* Throw or Agility roll (pick) and spend enough power points to handle the item.

Additionally, Telekinesis can be used as armor against physical attacks, each point providing 1 point of armor.

Telepathy

Range: 10×POW in kilometers
Duration: 1 combat round per power point spent
Power Point Cost: 1 power point to activate or 1 power point per 3 POW

A psychic can read a target's mind by making a successful Telepathy roll then defeating them in a POW vs. POW resistance roll. If successful, the psychic must then spend 1 power point per 3 points of the target's POW (divide POW by three, round up). At this point, they have access to the target's memories and active thoughts through the rest of the combat round until the psychic's next DEX rank. The resistance roll must be made successfully each round desired. No resistance roll is required with a willing target, and only 1 point is required to use the ability.

Once a telepathic link is made, choose one of the following actions:

- Speak mind-to-mind as equals.
- Pass along a simple or complex message, even sharing a memory or image of something.
- Read surface thoughts and feelings.
- Implant a false memory or create a sensory impression that lasts until the target succeeds in a *Difficult* Idea roll or the end of the ability's duration.

  ***For example**, a psychic might create a false memory of them giving someone a $100 bill or make them think that a playing card is that $100 bill.*

- Dig for buried memories or suppressed information in the target's subconscious. A specific memory may take 1D3 combat rounds, and 1D3+3 rounds for a suppressed or traumatic memory. The target will experience this memory anew, as if remembering it vividly.

Once Telepathy has been established, continue it by spending 1 additional power point each combat round.

The psychic can attempt to affect more than one target at a time. To do so, make each Telepathy roll separately and pay the requisite power points, but also a successful Idea roll to coordinate the multiple simultaneous communications. The actions taken within the minds do not need to be the same.

The psychic can end the connection immediately. Each combat round after the one in which the telepathic link is established, the target can make a new POW vs. POW resistance roll. Success means the telepathic connection ends. With a successful Idea roll, they know that they were in telepathic contact. A special or critical success reveals the identity of the psychic. If the Idea roll fails, the target has no idea they had telepathic contact, only that it was some strange mental phase.

SORCERY

Sorcery imposes supernatural effects on the physical world through complex occult formulas, formalized as spells. A character who uses sorcery is a **sorcerer**. When a sorcerer says the required words to activate a sorcery spell and spends the required power points, the specific type of magic energy is released and has the desired effect.

Unlike **Magic** (page 55), sorcery spells always happen. Rarely is a roll required to activate the spell, and there is no need for any special targeting. Usually, sorcery only fails if the target cannot be overcome with a resistance roll.

Who Can Use Sorcery?

A sorcerer's POW characteristic influences the frequency and potency of the sorcery they can cast. To be able to cast sorcery spells, a sorcerer must have POW 16+. A sorcerer with POW 15 or lower cannot use sorcery, but they can still use enchanted items and other sorcerers can still cast useful spells on them. Often, their power points are a resource for other sorcerers to aid their own spellcasting.

Starting Sorcery Spells

A sorcerer begins knowing how to inscribe sorcery spells they know into their grimoire (page 58), and they know how to ready or dismiss a spell (page 80). Additionally, they already possess a grimoire tailored to their tastes. They know spells depending on the following power levels, and all known spells are inscribed in their grimoires:

- **Normal:** Up to ½ INT (round up) in levels of spells known.
- **Heroic:** Up to INT in levels of spells known.
- **Epic:** Up to INT×2 in levels of spells known and/or marked in their grimoire.
- **Superhuman:** Up to INT×4 in levels of spells known and/or marked in their grimoire.

A sorcerer can keep up to their INT in spell levels stored in their mind at any time, so any beyond this are in their grimoire, available but not ready.

Power Points and Sorcery

After casting spells, a sorcerer grows tired, having spent their energy into the sorcery, fueling it. Power points are spent to cast sorcery and return naturally (see page 20). A sorcerer cannot spend more power points than they possess, nor can their power points regenerate above their POW. Power points over POW can be spent but do not regenerate (page 20).

Some powerful spells may require a sorcerer to spend permanent points of POW as well as power points. Other spells require special herbs, potions, words, or other components. Your gamemaster may rule that additional requirements are necessary, or none at all. If a powerful spell demands sacrifice of POW and power points, the sorcerer's power points regenerate only to the new POW. If a sorcerer's POW increases, their power points regenerate to the new value.

RELIABILITY OF SORCERY

Some guidelines about how sorcery works:

- Spells and sorcerous items do not generally require rolls to activate.
- Some additional roll may be required—such as Language to read a spell, or a weapon attack to strike a person with a magic item—but the sorcerer does not need to make a roll to make the spell itself happen.
- Spells take effect automatically, though some require resistance rolls or some other condition.
- A sorcerous item works for whomever holds it, so long as they have the capability to do so (STR, DEX, etc.).

Sorcery Spell Limitations

A sorcerer's INT is the limit to the maximum number of spell levels they have immediate access to. Spells are cast from spells in memory. To cast a spell not in memory, dismiss some other spell to make room.

A human can remember levels of individual spells up to or equal to their INT. Bound demons and elementals also count against this limit. Enchanted items are independent of the INT limit, and do not count against this total. At your gamemaster's discretion, some cultures with an affinity for magic may have additional capacity for spell memorization.

Think of a sorcerer's mind like a shelf: spells sit on that shelf. A sorcerer's INT determines how many items they can have on the shelf at one time. To learn new sorcery while at the INT limit, one must dismiss a spell from memory, essentially taking one thing off the shelf to make room for another.

List all the spells in a sorcerer's grimoire in the **Powers** section on the character sheet and indicate if the spell is 'In Memory'.

Once a spell is dismissed, it must be reacquired from a grimoire. A grimoire is a collection that contains spells and sorcerous information. Traditionally, a grimoire is a book or series of books, but it can be a scroll (or scrolls), a computer file, a recording, or almost any means of storing information. Work with your gamemaster for more unusual formats. When your sorcerer character learns a new spell, it can automatically be put into their grimoire.

A sorcerer who loses their grimoire can automatically re-record any spells they currently have in memory and may be able to recall other spells the grimoire contained. Once per day, a sorcerer can attempt to roll INT×l or lower. Success means that the sorcerer recalls one spell, or some other bit of lore that was in the lost grimoire (your choice). Failure means no useful information is recalled at that time, and another attempt must wait until the next day.

When Can Sorcery Be Used?

Spells usually take one combat round to cast. Sorcery in memory is available for use in the Powers phase of the combat round (page 123). Sorcery that is not in memory can be readied through different means but is generally not usable during physical combat.

Learning Sorcery

Sorcerers learn spells in one of four ways: scholarly research, studying a grimoire, being taught, or accepting the gift of sorcery from a powerful supernatural force.

Scholarly Research

This option requires a library in a language (or languages) the sorcerer can read. Your gamemaster should determine the **library rating**, a multiplier from ×1–3; the higher, the better the sources. They then determine the language(s) of the library's resources. A sorcerer then attempts to either find a new spell or recreate one that may exist somewhere in the library.

Your gamemaster rolls 1D10 secretly to determine the number of weeks needed to attempt to learn the spell, subtracting –1 week for each 50% in relevant language(s) the sorcerer knows to a minimum of 1 week. When the required time has passed, roll D100: success is equal to or less than the sorcerer's INT multiplied by the library's rating.

If the roll is successful, the spell is learned and inscribed in the sorcerer's personal grimoire. A failed roll means that the sorcerer must spend another 1D10 weeks (modified as above) before they can attempt another INT×(library rating) roll.

If the goal is an invocation or summoning of a particular deity, a temple to that deity is likely to contain the proper information. Research in a temple is the same as in a library, but access may be even more restricted. Your gamemaster should determine what access a sorcerer may have, and such a request may involve some form of service to the temple.

Studying a Grimoire

A grimoire is a collection of spells, lore, formulas, and rituals. Though these rules refer to a grimoire as a type of book, a grimoire might be a scroll, a staff carved with runes, or some other sort of record, perhaps protected with a code, written in a secret language, or obscured through some other means.

Every sorcerer automatically owns a grimoire inscribed with the spell(s) they know. Traditionally, the grimoire is automatically updated whenever a new spell or other information is learned. No roll is required to do so, and it is assumed to always be successful.

Grimoires allow a character to know more sorcery than their INT allows, ensuring that sorcery is available even when it is not in memory. Grimoires have no maximum or minimum size. Nothing limits a grimoire's capacity. A sorcerer can start a new or duplicate grimoire at any time. An empty grimoire is just a book with blank pages, ready to be filled with sorcery spells. The only expense is the cost of the actual physical object of the grimoire—the fancier, the more expensive.

Grimoires can be written in a variety of languages, including magical languages. Your gamemaster should determine the language of any other grimoire if one is introduced. A sorcerer must be able to read the writing to learn from the grimoire. A sorcerer with a skill rating of less than INT×5 in the language the grimoire is written in must make a successful Language roll whenever the grimoire is used.

Other grimoires can come into a sorcerer's possession through several ways and are often prized possessions. A grimoire for sale may be a musty tome that has survived the death of its owner, or it may be a bundle of cheap spiral notebooks scrawled with tiny handwriting and disturbing pictures. Or it could even be a meticulously organized data file, complete with audio files to assist in pronouncing the difficult passages of the spell, copiously annotated.

The spells and summonings in a grimoire may be set down incompletely or deliberately incorrect and may include subtle traps to guard against thieves. References, measurements, and wordings of the spell description are likely to be allusive and baffling. Learning from an old grimoire is often tedious and difficult: the older the grimoire, the more involved the process is likely to be.

To learn a spell from another person's grimoire, a sorcerer can attempt a roll of equal to or lower than their INT×l for every three game weeks of study. With a successful roll, the spell is in memory and ready to be cast (and has been transferred to the sorcerer's own grimoire).

Being Taught

Learning a spell from a teacher may be quicker than creating it or deciphering it from a grimoire.

- The teacher must know the spell and be able to cast it successfully.
- A sorcerer can learn one spell at a time.
- The student must attempt a roll of their INT×1. Success means that the spell is in memory and ready to cast. The spell can then be transcribed to the student's grimoire.

Accepting Sorcery as a Gift

A powerful supernatural entity like a god, angel, demon, etc. may grant the ability to use a spell through one of the following methods:

- The supernatural being might simply place the spell into the sorcerer's memory (eliminating another spell to make room, if necessary), as if the sorcerer had learned the spell. They can then write the spell down in their grimoire.
- The spell might be on a scroll, in a book, a shard of some precious metal, a data file, or a banner bearing the words of the spell. It can be learned if it can be read.
- The spell may be imbued into an enchanted object of some sort.
- The spell may not even be taught to the sorcerer, but instead, they can call upon the supernatural entity and ask it to cast the spell on their behalf.

A gift of sorcery may come with strings attached, known or unknown, and should be accepted cautiously.

Readying and Dismissing Sorcery

As noted previously, a sorcerer cannot automatically cast any spell they know—spells must be in memory before being cast. You should note on your character's sheet what spells are in memory and which spells are in their grimoire, perhaps keeping these lists separate from each other to prevent confusion. The *Basic Roleplaying* character sheet has adequate space for powers, so the front is the best place for 'ready' spells, and the back can serve as the grimoire. Alternately, cards or another method can be used to keep them distinct.

To ready a spell, the grimoire should be available, and the relevant spell must exist in that grimoire. Bringing a spell into memory is called **readying** a spell. Removing a spell from memory is called **dismissing** a spell. This is done as often as desired: sorcerers often choose their spells based their immediate plans.

> ***For example**, a sorcerer planning to cast some major spell (like a demon summoning) would ready spells like Brazier of Power, Chain of Being, Refutation, Bolster the Soul, and Witch Sight, along with the Summon Demon spell. If out adventuring, other spells such as Inescapable Bonds, Cloak of Night, Heal, Muddle, Sorcerous Armor, Undo Sorcery, and a weapon enhancement may be more appropriate.*

Reading and comprehending a spell in the grimoire takes one combat round for each point of the spell to be readied. For spells that vary in points, the number of combat rounds needed always equals the maximum value known.

> ***For example**, it takes four combat rounds to read Hammer of the Gods (4) from the grimoire and have it ready to cast.*

If a spell requires 20 power points to cast, then a sorcerer needs 20 combat rounds to ready it.

Dismissing a spell is much easier. It is instantaneous and can be done at the same time as readying another spell. A demon or elemental can also be dismissed just as quickly, releasing it from service and allowing it to control its own fate. How the creature reacts is up to its nature, the way it was treated, and the relative balance of power between it and its former master.

Spells in Play

If a single number or fixed cost is given for a sorcery spell, the effect always costs that many power points. If the power point cost varies, select the strength of the spell by choosing a number from the given range.

Unless noted, spells successfully cast take effect automatically (see **Other Planes**, page 81, for exceptions). Once a sorcery spell is cast, it cannot be recalled.

Some spells are not necessarily detectable by observers, while others are obviously the product of sorcery. A sorcerer will always recognize the effects of a spell they know when it is cast, regardless of who is casting it and what cosmetic elements it has been described with.

Generally, demons, elementals, and other supernatural creatures cannot use sorcery, though sorcery affects them. Demons have their own special abilities that only they possess.

If numerous spells are being cast during an encounter, you might want to use a piece of scratch paper to note spell names, the rounds cast, and spell strengths. Remember to mark off the power points that power the spells.

Casting a Spell

A spell affects a single person, entity, area, or thing. Since casting takes only one combat round, separate uses of the same spell can strike additional target(s) in later combat rounds.

Spells are cast on the powers phase of a combat round, in order of a sorcerer's INT. The spell takes effect in INT order of the Powers phase of the next combat round.

After a sorcerer begins casting a spell, they can do nothing else during that combat round. In case of a distraction (being attacked, taking damage, a loud noise or surprise, significant movement, etc.) make an Idea roll to resist being distracted. If the roll is successful, the spell is cast without incident. If the roll fails, the spell is not cast, and the power points are lost. Extreme distractions might make the Idea roll *Difficult*.

Duration

A spell's duration equals the sorcerer's POW in combat rounds.

> ***For example**, a sorcerer with POW 19 casts Hell's Razor. The spell takes one round to cast, then takes effect in the Powers phase of the next round. It lasts for 18 more combat rounds and expires in the Powers phase of the 20th round.*

Once cast, a spell needs no maintenance, and continues in effect whether the target moves out of range.

A sorcerer can extend the duration of any spell by casting it again at any time: the duration extends, but the effect does not intensify. They can choose to end the effects of a spell prematurely: most spells allow this automatically, but others might take more than an instant to cancel. Unless specified otherwise, any ongoing effects of the spell end the moment the sorcerer chooses.

How to Become a Better Sorcerer

How does a sorcerer become more powerful? Here are three ways to increase POW:

- **Exercising Power:** A sorcerer that has successfully defeated an opponent of equal or greater POW in a POW vs. POW resistance roll can check the box next to the POW on their character sheet. When checking for experience, see **POW Increases** (page 121).
- **Sorcerous Heritage:** At your gamemaster's discretion, when creating a sorcerer, trade 2 points from other characteristics for 1 point of POW, deliberately sacrificing aspects of themselves in exchange for greater prowess with sorcery. Each trade requires a successful Luck roll based on their original POW. Missing a Luck roll ends the chance of any further trades. A result of 00 is always a miss. This

SPOT RULES FOR SORCERY

These spot rules may be of use when dealing with sorcery.

Characteristic Effects

Despite a standardized spell list, sorcery is both individual and idiosyncratic. Choose any sounds, gestures, foci, lights, smells, or other characteristics to describe a particular sorcerer's spellcasting.

Enchanted Weapons

When a weapon affected by a spell is given over to another character, or dropped and picked up by another character, the effect is unbroken until the spell expires.

Maximum Attack Damage

Sorcery spells on weapons usually augment their average attack damages, but do not increase the maximum damage possible for the attack. The effect of the spell is to boost the average damage done with the attack. ***For example,*** *a normal broadsword does 1D8+1 damage. The rolled damage is 7. With Hell's Razor 4, the minimum damage is 6 points (1 on a 1D8, +1, and +4 for the spell). The damage can never be more than 9 points, since 9 is the maximum damage that can be rolled for a broadsword attack. Hell's Razor 4 ensures that each hit does between 6 and 9 points of damage. The damage is 1D8+1+4 but does not do more than 9 points of damage, plus the damage modifier.* The spell does not change the damage modifier or the chance to hit. In case of a special or critical success, each damage roll is treated separately, with the same restrictions.

Other Planes

Spells have the following effects when cast on beings from other planes (such as demons) or on planes other than where they originated:

- Spells usually work, but not always. If the spell fails for some reason, the power points spent are lost.
- Spells cast with the intention of enhancing entities from other planes, such as casting Sorcerous Armor on a demon or elemental, never work. The power points spent are lost.
- Spells learned on one plane and then cast on another plane may cost double the power points and have ½ the normal duration and effect (round up if necessary). Sorcery spells are no longer automatically assumed to succeed—every time a sorcerer casts a spell on another plane, they must make a successful *Difficult* Luck roll. If this roll fails, the spell does not work, and the power points spent are lost. This is at your gamemaster's discretion.
- Demons and elementals do not cast spells. Instead, they have abilities, which are spell-like in function. In some cases, these may be identical to a sorcery spell's description, though they are intrinsic powers and do not need to be readied and do not have any INT limitations.

Resistance Table Procedure

If a spell compares a sorcerer and target's power points or POW on the resistance table, compare the current points, including those needed to cast the spell (the power points or POW are subtracted from the current total once the spell's effects have been determined and the resistance roll is completed).

Resistant Targets

If a target does not resist, a sorcerer may transfer the effects of most spells by touch. If a target resists, resolve the issue comparing a sorcerer and target's current power points vs. power points on the resistance table.

Spells Cast on an Object or Person?

Spells cast on an object influence that object only. For example, if Hell's Razor is cast on one sword, it does not increase the damage done by a sword held in the other hand. Two weapons need two spell castings.

The object affected by the spell is independent of the sorcerer, as well. ***For example,*** *a sword with Hell's Razor cast upon it and used by another person gets the spell's benefits for the remaining duration.* Talons of the Beast is the only weapon-enhancing spell that can be cast on a person.

Spells per Object

Only one spell can be cast on a single object at a time. For example, if Unbreakable Bulwark is cast on a shield, it cannot have Sorcerous Armor on it at the same time. If Sorcery's Sharp Flame is cast on a weapon, then it cannot have Hell's Razor on it simultaneously. An additional spell cast on an object has no effect and is dissipated, though the power points spent are lost.

Spells per Person

Any number of compatible spells may be cast on a person, at your gamemaster's discretion. If multiple power types (magic spells, mutations, superpowers, etc.) are in effect, your gamemaster should determine if the effects can be stacked and what aspects will be affected.

method is not compatible with point-based characteristic generation.

- **Gift of the Gods:** During play, a sorcerer may bargain for or plead for a gift of POW from a favorable deity. This is entirely up to the gamemaster and may require promises of service from the sorcerer, good roleplaying, or successful Communication rolls. The grant is never more than 1D3 POW. For each point granted, the recipient must immediately undertake some dangerous task or attempt some dangerous deed that furthers the deity's agenda.

Sorcery Spell List

The following list of spells is not exhaustive but represents the most useful spells for adventuring. You and your gamemaster may choose to create additional spells or modify these are you see fit.

Each spell description contains the following:

- **Name & Levels:** A generic title for the spell. Create more evocative names as desired. The number in parentheses is how many **levels** the spell has. A range means that the spell's level is variable, and players can choose how many levels of the spell the sorcerer has in memory and can cast. As noted previously, a spell's level is also the number of power points it takes to cast.
- **Range:** This is either Self (caster only), Touch (caster or anyone or anything they can touch), Sight (anything in the physical line of sight, not relayed by mechanical devices like cameras), or some other definition of distance.

A description of the spell's actual effects in the world, with any game effects defined where needed.

Bird's Vision (1)

Range: Sight

The sorcerer can control one bird's field of vision and see through its vantage point. The bird (or birdlike creature) chosen for this spell must be within eyesight. Once cast, if the bird is lost from view, the spell continues and lasts for its duration. If no bird is present when the spell is cast, it simply does not work. Your gamemaster should announce beforehand if there is nothing to cast the spell on.

Bolster the Soul (1–3)

Range: Touch

The target's POW is increased by +3 per level of the spell, adding 3, 6, or 9 to POW for the duration. This does not increase power points or contribute to training or any permanent determination using POW. While in effect, the increase to POW does increase the Luck roll and aids in any POW vs. POW resistance rolls, including binding rolls for summoned demons (the point of POW spent to bind a demon must be real, not the temporary POW conferred by the spell).

When casting Bolster the Soul 3 for the maximum increase of +9 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the spell becomes permanent, and those points are permanently added to the POW of the target. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character anymore, and they become unable to have it cast upon them again. They must also subtract 9 points permanently from other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, this adds +1D8 allegiance to whatever force represents randomness and/or change.

Bounty of the Sea (4)

Range: Sight

This spell causes a sudden torrent in a room or within a small portion of open space. The water continues to cascade into the area for the duration. By its end, enough water has fallen from nowhere to fill an average room. Once the spell ends, the water stays and behaves naturally, draining or remaining as appropriate. If the sorcerer is far from a natural body of water, they must make a successful Luck roll before the spell can take effect. This spell is a prerequisite to be able to summon water elementals with the Summon Elemental spell. This spell can be negated by a casting of the Gift of the Earth spell on the same area. This spell can also be cancelled by a 4-point Undo Sorcery spell, but any water already summoned into the area by the spell does not disappear.

Brazier of Power (4)

Range: Touch

The sorcerer can create a reservoir of personal power points to draw upon when summoning more powerful entities or casting many spells. Brazier of Power is incompatible with Chain of Being, and if one is cast on a target, the other will have no effect. Traditionally, the focus for the reservoir is a large brazier, but it could be any sturdy, solid place or thing. If the focus is moved or destroyed, the attunement is lost, and a new focus must be established from scratch.

The first time Brazier of Power is cast, the sorcerer must sacrifice 4 power points and 1 permanent point of POW to attune the focus. Once successful, the sorcerer can store any remaining power points in the focus. The focus accepts new power points at any time up to the maximum of a sorcerer's POW when the focus was created (after the sacrifice).

> ***For example**, if a sorcerer's POW was 17 after the spell was complete (down 1 point from the original 18), they can store up to 17 power points in the Brazier of Power at any time. Whenever the sorcerer wishes, they may sacrifice the stored power points in the Brazier of Power, along with any they have regenerated. The power points in the focus are always the first spent.*

The sorcerer must be in physical contact with the brazier to draw power points from it. Only its creator can use the power points directly. However, if they have another means of transferring power points to another character, power points must first be drawn from the sorcerer, then from the brazier. To make a focus of greater capacity, a sorcerer must cast the spell again upon the same item, sacrificing another point of POW and the necessary power points. In this fashion, a Brazier of Power can become an immense reservoir of power points. Many serious sorcerers use Braziers of Power in their lairs or sanctuaries.

Breath of Life (l)

Range: Touch

The sorcerer can breathe normally if they are underwater or in a similar medium. If suddenly immersed, a successful Agility roll may be required to get the spell off beforehand. The sorcerer can also speak normally while underwater.

Chain of Being (4)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

This spell allows up to eight individuals to pool their power points into a single shared resource, a useful practice when summoning or binding a demon or elemental or casting some mighty spell beyond the reach of a single sorcerer's power points. The participants must be linked by touch; usually holding hands in a circle. The circle must be maintained while the power points are being spent on any casting. Only a single casting of Chain of Being is needed per summoning. Only one participant in the spell needs to know this spell for it to work, and the 4 power points spent to cast the spell must come from that sorcerer.

Any power points spent beyond those 4 points are drawn as uniformly as possible from each participant, starting with the caster. If a participant accidentally drops to 0 power points, the chain is broken, the spell ends, and the power points are lost.

This spell is incompatible with Brazier of Power. If the summoned

SORCERY SPELL SUMMARY

Following are the sorcery spells from this section, categorized by types, with the range of spell levels in parentheses. Each spell costs 1 power point per level, and each spell's effect lasts for the duration of the spell (usually a sorcerer's POW in combat rounds).

Augmentation Spells

Cloak of Night (1–4): Adds +20% per level to Hide.
Leap (1–4): Adds +20% per level to Jump.
Sureness (1–4): Adds +20% per level to Stealth.

Characteristic Spells

Bolster the Soul (1–3): Adds 3 points per level to POW.
Inhuman Plasticity (1–3): Adds 3 points per level to SIZ.
Lightning Speed (1–3): Adds 1 point per level to MOV.
Relentless Vitality (1–3): Adds 3 points per level to CON.
Suppleness of the Serpent (1–3): Adds 3 points per level to DEX.
Titan's Strength (1–3): Adds 3 points per level to STR.
Unearthly Beauty (1–3): Adds 3 points per level to CHA.
Wisdom of the Sage (1–3): Adds 3 points per level to INT.

Combat Spells

Hammer of the Gods (1–4): Adds 1 point damage per level to blunt weapons.
Hell's Razor (1–4): Adds 1 point damage per level to cutting weapons.
Sorcery's Sharp Flame (1–4): Adds 1 point damage per level to impaling weapons.
Sorcerous Armor (1–4): Adds 1 point of armor per level.
Talons of the Beast (1–4): Adds 1 point damage per level to unarmed or brawling weapons.
Unbreakable Bulwark (1–4): Adds 1 point of armor per level to shields.

Enhancement Spells

Make Fast (1): Glues together two inanimate objects.
Make Whole (3): Repairs a broken item.
Midnight (1): Creates an area of darkness.
Moonrise (1): Creates a floating globe of light.

Elemental Spells

Bounty of the Sea (4): Fills an area with water.
Fires of the Sun (4): Fills an area with flame.
Gift of the Earth (4): Fills an area with dirt.
Wings of the Sky (4): Fills an area with wind.

Manipulative Spells

Curse of Sorcery (4): Causes target to suffer a disfiguring feature.
Fury (1): Enrages target, speeding their attacks.
Inescapable Bonds (3): Immobilizes target, requires a resistance roll.
Liken Shape (4): Assume the image of another person.
Muddle (1): Disorients target.
Pox (1): Reduces target's power points, requires a resistance roll.

Occult Spells

Brazier of Power (4): Creates a reservoir of power points.
Chain of Being (4): Creates a pool of power points.
Undo Sorcery (1–4): Cancels various sorcery spells.
Ward (3): Creates a magical alarm.

Summoning Spells

Summon Demon (1): Summons a demon.
Summon Elemental (1): Summons an elemental.

Utility Spells

Bird's Vision (1): Controls a bird and sees through its eyes.
Breath of Life (1): Provides breathable air underwater or elsewhere.
Farsight (1): Doubles range at which something can be seen.
Heal (2): Restores lost hit points.
Keen Ear (1): Carries spoken words across great distances.
Refutation (1-4): Protects against Undo Sorcery.
Vermin's Vision (1): Controls vermin and sees through its eyes.
Witch Sight (3): Determines target's POW.

entity (demon, elemental, etc.) is bound, the participants hold it in common, and must agree upon the action or actions it takes. If they cannot agree after it is bound, the summoned creature does nothing. If its service needs to be negotiated or bargained for, only the sorcerer needs to make these skill attempts or offer the terms.

Cloak of Night (1–4)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.
Each level increases the target's Hide skill by +20%, cumulative, for the duration.

Curse of Sorcery (4)

Range: Touch
With a successful POW vs. POW resistance roll, the sorcerer can endow part of the target's body with some gruesome or demonic quality of their choice, such as being extra warm to the touch, slimy, always wet, scaly, extra hairy, warty, multicolor, etc. With a second successful POW vs. POW roll, the targeted body part takes on the appropriate physical appearance of a tentacle, a crab leg, a bird's wing, an insect feeler, etc. though the appearance is solely cosmetic—no bonuses or abilities are conferred by this curse. If the affected body area is visible, it may cause a loss of 1D3 points of CHA while the spell is in effect. The spell's effect

ends when the caster dies. This spell can only be cast once upon a single target while it is in effect, though it can be repeated if the duration has ended. Casting this spell may cause the sorcerer to gain allegiance points (page 211) for any force emphasizing cruelty or chaos, and any such disfigurement likely becomes a distinctive feature (page 25).

Farsight (1)

Range: Sight

The sorcerer can see something or everything twice as close as it is. While active, each additional casting cumulatively doubles the closeness, allowing for greater magnification.

Fires of the Sun (4)

Range: Sight

A mass of floating fire appears and hangs in any position within line of sight of the sorcerer. The fire burns without fuel for the spell's duration. The churning flame measures about three meters across, and is hot enough to ignite adjacent materials, doing 1D6+2 fire damage per round. This spell must be known before fire elementals can be summoned or invoked with the Summon Elemental spell. This spell can be negated by the Wings of the Sky spell cast on the area it affects. A 4-point Undo Sorcery will dispel this spell; if so, any flame present falls to the ground and behave naturally (smoldering, perhaps catching twigs and brush afire, etc.).

Fury (1)

Range: Touch

This spell induces a furious, berserk rage in the target, making them fight recklessly and with savage abandon. If the target is unwilling, make a current power point vs. current power point resistance roll. If successful, the recipient of the spell (self or another) fights unceasingly for the duration any target of their choice. The target of the spell can make one additional attack each round (beyond any skill restrictions), performed on the last DEX rank of the round. The spell does not add to the attack skill rank or increase damage done.

This spell lowers the target's instinct for self-preservation and reduces their skill ratings for any dodges or parries by 30%, in addition to any other modifiers such as for additional actions. The furious character ignores any unconsciousness stemming from a major wound (page 134). A fatal wound is still fatal, but they attack until the end of the round of death, striking blows even if technically dead, finally keeling over on DEX rank 1. During this fury, the target only can act in ways related to immediate combat (no magic, no healing, etc.).

Gift of the Earth (4)

Range: Sight

This spell causes a mass of dust, soil, and sand to suddenly appear and accumulate quickly in a small room or small area of open space. When the spell ends, the spell will have transmitted more than 60 cubic meters of new earth, enough to fill an ordinary room. This spell must be known before earth elementals can be summoned or invoked using the Summon Elemental spell. The use of Undo Sorcery 4 defeats this spell, though any earth that has already arrived will remain. The Bounty of the Sea spell negates Gift of the Earth if cast on the same area. If out on a body of water, in the sky, or in space, a successful Luck roll is needed for the spell to work.

Hammer of the Gods (1–4)

Range: Touch

This spell can be cast on a single blunt weapon, like a staff, club, mace, hammer, etc. The effects only apply to blows from blunt weapons; if cast on an edged or pointed weapon, it has no effect or only applies to blunt use of the weapon, such as striking with the hilt. Each level increases the damage roll by +1, up to the maximum damage possible using that weapon. This does not change the wielder's damage modifier (rolled separately).

Heal (2)

Range: Touch

This immediately heals 1D3 hit points, up to the target's maximum hit points. It can be cast once per wound. Additionally, it can be used to treat a wound that has already been treated by First Aid and is often used in tandem with First Aid by healers.

Hell's Razor (1–4)

Range: Touch

This spell can be cast on a single slashing weapon with a cutting edge or edges, such as swords, axes, etc. The effects only apply to blows from edged weapons; if cast on a blunt or impaling weapon, it has no effect unless used in a slashing fashion. Each level increases the damage roll by +1, up to the maximum damage possible using that weapon. This does not change the wielder's damage modifier (rolled separately).

Inescapable Bonds (3)

Range: Touch

Any living thing this spell is cast upon is seized and held as if bound by invisible chains. The person or thing held cannot significantly move any limb, finger, tentacle, tongue, etc., while the spell is in effect. This only affects living beings, aliens, or animals, with no effect on undead, robots, or vehicles. The target can attempt to break free once per combat round by succeeding in a resistance roll of their STR vs. the sorcerer's current power points. If successful, the Inescapable Bonds are broken. If unsuccessful, the target can try again next round. A 3-point Undo Sorcery spell cancels Inescapable Bonds.

Inhuman Plasticity (1–3)
Range: Touch
The target's SIZ is increased or decreased by +3 points per level, adding or subtracting 3, 6, or 9 points to SIZ for the spell's duration. This can also temporarily increase or decrease damage modifier and hit points. See the rules for **Big and Little Targets** (page 142) if relevant. Any hit points lost while this spell is in effect are first removed from the temporary hit points. This spell may affect the target's MOV. The minimum allowable SIZ is 1, so any further points are ignored. The target's clothes and armor (but not weapons) also change SIZ for the duration.

When casting Inhuman Plasticity 3 for the maximum increase or decrease of 9 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the effect becomes permanent, and those points are permanently added or subtracted from the target's SIZ as the spell was cast. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character anymore, and they become unable to have it cast upon them again. They must also subtract 9 points permanently from other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, this adds +1D8 allegiance to whatever force represents randomness and/or change.

This spell can also be cast on insects, birds, and other nonhumans.

Keen Ear (1)
Range: Sight
This spell allows two speakers to whisper to each other anywhere within line-of-sight: intervening walls, boulders, forests, etc. negate the spell. Specify the second party to the conversation when the spell is cast. Anyone standing near one of the two involved parties hears only that portion of the conversation. The involved characters hear each other perfectly well, however. Communication, Perception, or language skill rolls might be required where relevant. This spell can be used against enemies, with no resistance roll to prevent its effects.

Leap (1–4)
Range: Touch
Each level increases the target's Jump skill by +20%, cumulative, for the duration. The distance a sorcerer can jump (see **Jump**, page 45) also increases by +1 meter for each level.

Lightning Speed (1–3)
Range: Touch
The target's MOV is increased by +1 per level of the spell while the spell is in effect. The spell can be cast on another species, such as a horse. Lightning Speed does not affect DEX.

When casting Lightning Speed 3 for the maximum increase of +3 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the effect becomes permanent, and those points are permanently added to the target's MOV. However, after that, the spell does not affect the target anymore, and they become unable to have it cast upon them again. They must also subtract 9 points permanently from other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, add +1D8 allegiance to whatever force represents randomness and/or change.

Liken Shape (4)
Range: Touch
The target assumes the appearance of another human or natural creature, taking on the new shape and corresponding attacks for the spell's duration, but must retain their original SIZ as well as any applicable characteristics. Essentially, this spell allows a change of physical appearance and the ability to use physical characteristics.

> ***For example**, a sorcerer becoming a canary will be improbably large, but has a correspondingly powerful beak attack (due to their human-sized damage modifier). A sorcerer using Liken Shape to transform into a bear will be quite small and weak, as far as bears go.*

Your gamemaster should determine what aspects of a being's abilities are natural and can be assumed with the spell, but those without a physical attack (claws, teeth) or with a magic origin (stony gaze, etc.) cannot be duplicated by the spell. This can vary by setting, such as high fantasy setting having dragon's breath be magical and a gritty fantasy setting having dragon saliva be acidic and flammable.

The spell lets the sorcerer transform into another living being they have seen at least briefly. Based on their familiarity with the subject, subterfuge-related skills involving the disguise may be *Easy*. The spell is negated if the disguised character has physical contact from an actual creature of the species being imitated, or the original human being duplicated touches the character.

Make Fast (1)
Range: Touch
This spell causes one specific item, hand-sized or smaller, to stick to one other thing. They cannot be separated by any normal means short of destruction of one or both items. This spell does not work on living or dead flesh, or on enchanted or otherwise magic items.

Make Whole (3)
Range: Touch
This spell mends a broken item of size and bulk up to SIZ 50 (see **Object SIZ Examples**, page 190). The item should be comprised mostly of the same material or a limited number of materials (a brick wall works; a car is too complex). Your gamemaster should determine if an item is too complex or composed of too many types of material for the spell to work. The duration is longer than normal, lasting for 1D6 hours. Furthermore, if the sorcerer makes a successful Luck roll immediately after casting the spell, the effect is permanent, and the item is restored as if new. This spell does not work on living tissue or on supernatural creatures, magic items, or other types of magic enchantments. Undo Sorcery 3 ends this spell.

Midnight (1)
Range: Sight
This spell creates an irregular cloud of absolute darkness in an area roughly that of a small room, about four meters per side. Normal vision does not work within this area until the spell ends. Otherwise, there is no other effect. If the caster wishes, they can move the darkness about by grasping it. Only the caster can move it in this manner. Undo Sorcery 1 removes this spell.

Moonrise (1)
Range: Touch
This spell causes a ball of light a half-meter across to appear and float in the air, glowing enough to brightly light a room. If the caster wishes, they can grasp the ball of light and move it about. Only the caster can move it in this manner. Undo Sorcery 1 cancels this spell.

Muddle (1)
Range: Sight
This spell disorients the target enough that they cannot cast spells or carry out coordinated plans if the sorcerer succeeds in a current power point vs. current power point resistance roll. However, the target can defend themselves and move by their own volition. If the caster succeeds in a *Difficult* Luck roll, they can momentarily convince the target of

something as if using the Fast Talk skill. The command or misinformation must be spoken aloud, and the target must be able to understand the language being spoken. The target can attempt to break it once each combat round if they can make a successful Idea roll (identifying the sorcerer's influence). If the Idea roll is successful, the target can attempt a new current power point vs. current power point resistance roll to break free. If they are still under the spell's influence, a new Idea roll must be made each round until free from the spell.

Pox (1)

Range: Sight

This spell attacks the target's power points, weakening them magically by overcoming the target with a successful current power point vs. current power point resistance roll. If successful, the target loses 1D6 power points; those lost points will regenerate normally. At 0 power points, a target immediately falls unconscious and cannot act. If the resistance roll is successful, the spell has no effect and the target's power points are not lost.

Refutation (1–4)

Range: Self

The sorcerer can defend themselves against the Undo Sorcery spell. Refutation can be cast in the same round as Undo Sorcery during the Powers phase and activates at the beginning of the next round. The sorcerer should make a resistance roll of Refutation against any levels of Undo Sorcery being cast. If Refutation wins, any power points spent in Undo Sorcery are lost and the spell has no effect. If Undo Sorcery wins, Refutation has no effect, its power points are lost, and Undo Sorcery works as if unaffected. If Undo Sorcery can attack more than one sorcery spell, choose the type of spell to negate (see the spell type groups, page 83), but the caster cannot specify the precise spell.

Relentless Vitality (1–3)

Range: Touch

The target's CON is increased by +3 points per level, thus adding 3, 6, or 9 to CON for the spell's duration. Increasing CON temporarily also increases hit points and aids in fighting off certain poisons, diseases, etc., and increases the Stamina roll. This also affects fatigue points and characteristic bonuses, if used.

Damage taken while this spell is in effect is first removed from these extra hit points. It is impossible to die while Relentless Vitality is cast upon a target, but a target with 0 or negative hit points is unconscious and cannot act. Further attacks against the character continue to accrue negative hit points and may result in the loss of limbs or other major wounds. Once the spell's duration ends, however, the character dies immediately if successful measures were not taken to restore their health to a positive hit point total. The effects of major wounds or lost limbs are still in effect, unless otherwise treated successfully.

When casting Relentless Vitality 3 for the maximum increase of +9 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent, and those points are permanently added to the target's CON. However, after that, the spell cannot affect them anymore, and they are unable to have it cast upon them again. They must now subtract 9 points permanently from other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, this adds +1D8 allegiance to whatever force represents randomness and/or change.

Sorcery's Sharp Flame (1–4)

Range: Touch

This spell may be cast upon a single impaling weapon, and only impaling weapons (see page 130). It has no effect if cast upon another type of weapon. Each level increases the damage roll result by +1, up to

the maximum rolled damage possible. The wielder's damage modifier is rolled separately and is unaffected by this spell. This spell does not work for bows, slings, or guns, but does work on arrows, sling stones, and bullets. If the modified roll results in the maximum damage for the weapon, the tip of the weapon has become red-hot and can ignite a flammable target, causing 1D6 fire damage as a result (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148).

Sorcerous Armor (1–4)

Range: Touch

Sorcerous Armor counts as magical armor added to the target's total armor value (or the levels added to a random armor roll, up to the maximum value of the armor). It acts as normal armor in all other ways.

Suppleness of the Serpent (1–3)

Range: Touch

The target's DEX is increased by +3 points per level, thus adding 3, 6, or 9 points to DEX for the spell's duration. Additionally, each level also increases the target's Dodge by +6% temporarily. Increasing DEX also temporarily increases the Agility roll, and skill category modifiers, if used.

When casting Suppleness of the Serpent 3 for the maximum increase of +9 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the effect becomes permanent, and those points are permanently added to the target's DEX. However, after that, the spell cannot affect them anymore, and they are unable to have it cast upon them again. They must now permanently subtract 9 points from their other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, this adds +1D8 allegiance to whatever force represents randomness and/or change.

Summon Demon (1)

Range: Self, Sight

This spell opens a channel of communication to the other planes (or hidden places within this plane, as appropriate), allowing communication with a demonic entity and the ability to bring it forth into the sorcerer's home plane. Usually, demons have both a general name and a true name. The demon is summoned under the former; the latter is closely guarded, as it gives power over the demon (see page 234 for sample lesser and greater demons). The spell is relatively short but relaying the requirements of the demon to be summoned, and the negotiation with that entity takes 1D8 hours to do correctly. Summoning a demon costs 9 power points (in total), paid when the demon appears.

Alternately, at the end of the 1D8 hours of specifying the demon, the sorcerer may attempt to bind it into their service. Binding a demon costs the summoner 1 point of permanent POW, or 3 points of permanent POW to permanently bind the demon into an object. To attempt to bind a demon, roll the summoner's POW (before the permanent POW is spent) vs. the demon's POW in a resistance roll. If successful, the sorcerer now owns the demon.

When a demon is bound, a sorcerer can control its actions. If the roll fails, the demon escapes and will never again deal with that sorcerer. Typically, a sorcerer is limited to their INT in D6s of demon POW, counting against the sorcery spell limit.

***For example**, a POW 3D8 demon counts as 3 levels of INT that a sorcerer cannot fill with sorcery spells.*

Several types of bindings exist. A demon can be bound into the flesh, appearing as it does in its home plane; or it can be bound into an object or place. An ordinary binding lasts as long as a sorcerer lives or until they dismiss the demon. Permanently binding a demon creates a unique item or place with demonic powers and qualities that last long after a sorcerer dies, or until the object or place is destroyed. A bound demon responds only to its binder. If the demon is bound in an object, that object appears and functions as ordinary to anyone except the binder. If the binding object is broken, the demon dies.

Following are some general rules regarding demons:

- A bound demon counts against a sorcerer's INT limit of memory, even if the demon is sent to another universe.
- A demon might be bound within an amulet, a ring, a wall of stone, a sword, etc. It retains only its abilities, its INT and POW, and other characteristics necessary to its abilities or skills. In all other aspects, the demon and the object into which it is bound are equivalent. The demon cannot move from the object until it is dismissed.
- Once bound, a demon surrenders its true name to its summoner.
- If the demon's true name is known to the sorcerer, they can dismiss it, and then summon that same demon again to bind it once more. The demon is now a known quantity and its dice of POW do not count against the memory INT limit.
- A sorcerer that knows a demon's true name can keep it bound, send it to its home plane, then call it back. This takes one combat round. In this way, a demon that is already bound and on another plane can reappear in a matter of seconds. Holding a demon in this way counts against the INT limit to memory. The demon appears through some focusing object touched by a sorcerer (summoner's choice as to what the item is) and seems to emerge from it. The focusing object must be visibly marked with some sigil or item to specify its nature.

The sorcerer that binds a demon can dismiss it at any time. This eliminates the binding, takes 1D6 minutes, and costs no power points. The demon slowly evaporates in steam, smoke, and flame, and disappears. The binder retains knowledge of the demon's true name, but the demon is removed from the INT limit to memory. A dismissed bound demon departs the object in which it has been bound. If it is later summoned again, it appears in its natural form and is not bound into the object. However, it can be bound again into the same object, place, or shape.

There are four ways to break an ordinary binding:

- The summoner can dismiss the demon.
- Killing the demon frees it.
- Killing the sorcerer who bound the demon.
- Learning the demon's true name and successfully rebinding it.

A permanent binding cannot be destroyed except by destroying the object the demon is bound into. A bound demon that has been mistreated or whose needs have been neglected may be persuaded to reveal its true name to a second person. It will seek to be dismissed by that second person in exchange for some negotiated task. Since it may be immortal, a demon can afford patience. It will not casually give its true name to someone if it does not suspect that it will achieve its freedom.

Summon Elemental (1)

Range: Self

This spell opens a channel of communication to various elemental planes of existence or allows speech to elemental spirits in the sorcerer's home plane. Though the spell itself is relatively short, listing the requirements for the desired elemental requires 1D8 combat rounds. Additionally, the sorcerer must know the spell linked with the particular element desired—Bounty of the Sea, Flames of the Sun, Gift of the Earth, and Wings of the Sky. Knowing these spells is enough: they do not need to be cast at this time. After the Summon Elemental spell has been cast, the elemental arrives 1D6 combat rounds later, ready to carry out a single task required of it. Generally, elementals are more pleasant than demons, and not nearly as tricky or hostile. An elemental can be bound, though this may incur the wrath of any other elemental spirits. Sample types of

four primary elementals are in **Summoned Creatures** (page 233), and more types can exist.

Sureness (1–4)
Range: Touch
Each level increases the target's Stealth skill by +20%, cumulatively, for the spell's duration.

Talons of the Beast (1–4)
Range: Touch
Each level increases the damage roll by +1 for a single weapon that augments an attacker's hand (brass knuckles, cestus), or it increases the damage with Brawl or Grapple. Talons of the Beast does not increase the damage above the maximum. The wielder's damage modifier is rolled separately and is unaffected by this spell. The spell needs to be cast on a single target and cannot be stacked—a target with this spell cast on them receives no bonus to any inappropriate hand weapons they wield. If also cast on an appropriate hand weapon the target is wielding, the bonus is not applied twice.

Titan's Strength (1–3)
Range: Touch
The target's STR characteristic is increased by +3 points per level of the spell, adding 3, 6, or 9 points to STR for the duration. This increase can also temporarily increase the target's damage modifier and Effort roll.

If a sorcerer casts Titan's Strength 3 for the maximum increase of +9 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the effects become permanent, and those points are permanently added to the target's STR. However, after that, the spell does not affect the target anymore, and they become unable to have it cast upon them again. They must also subtract 9 points permanently from other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, this adds +1D8 allegiance to whatever force represents randomness and/or change.

Unearthly Beauty (1–3)
Range: Touch
The target's CHA characteristic is increased by +3 points per level, thus adding 3, 6, or 9 points to CHA for the spell's duration. This increase can also temporarily increase the character's distinctive features and Charm roll.

When Unearthly Beauty 3 is cast for the maximum increase of +9 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the effects become permanent, and those points are permanently added to the target's CHA. However, after that, the spell does not affect the target anymore, and it cannot be cast upon them again. They must also subtract 9 points permanently from other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, this adds +1D8 allegiance to whatever force represents randomness and/or change.

Unbreakable Bulwark (1–4)
Range: Touch
This spell adds +1 per level to the armor protection value of shields and any objects used as shields. Each casting of the spell must be on a single shield or shield-like item, including items being used as improvised shields.

Undo Sorcery (1–4)
Range: Touch
Each level of Undo Sorcery cast on another spell or spell-affected item negates one level of that spell. If the levels of Undo Sorcery are lower than the spell it is cast upon, the levels of Undo Sorcery are subtracted from the ongoing spell, weakening it but otherwise allowing it to remain in effect.

Vermin's Vision (1)
Range: Touch, Sight, etc.
The sorcerer can share in and control the vision of one rat, mouse, or similar vermin, chosen from within eyesight. If the target animal is lost from view, the spell continues for the rest of its duration, and can be extended with subsequent castings of the same spell. If no vermin are present when the spell is cast, it does not work. Your gamemaster should announce beforehand when there are no vermin within eyesight.

SUMMONING A DEMON

First, prepare a magical circle or specially defined area on the ground (an octagon, pentacle, etc.) to contain the demon to be summoned. Some demons require special items or preparations to be summoned. Knowing the spell gives access to this knowledge, but your gamemaster may require a roll of Knowledge (Occult) or Research to discover any special requirements. These may involve expensive or hard-to-find items, depending on the setting. Different demons require different costs of POW and/or power points to deal with and to bind—this varies by the type and strength of the demon.

Once these preparations are in place, the sorcerer can cast the Summon Demon spell, calling forth the exact demon they want. The demon appears within the next 1D8 hours. Summoning a powerful demon takes the sacrifice of many power points, more than most individuals have available, likely requiring additional power points from sources such as the Chain of Being or Brazier of Power spells. If there are not enough power points available to 'pay' for the demon, it disappears.

Whether the demon appears or not, the sorcerer loses the time and power points for the spell. When the demon arrives, the sorcerer can negotiate with it for one service or try to bind it to them so that it is always available.

A demon bound to the sorcerer's will can appear in its true form. This is not recommended in some settings, but in other settings it may be useful to have a ferocious-looking demon on hand.

The demon can be bound within a piece of jewelry, a weapon, etc. However, an object-bound demon does not have full characteristics, which can be as advantageous as it is a disadvantage. When using the abilities of a demon bound into an item, it appears as if the sorcerer is the one with the power.

The sorcerer can also tell the demon to return to its own home plane, whispering its true name to compel obedience. Then it can be recalled whenever desired, as it is compelled to obey. This re-summons takes the demon one combat round. When it returns, it appears to erupt from an item of the sorcerer's choice and is ready to be commanded.

Ward (3)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

As this spell is cast, the sorcerer must walk and define a line of 15 meters or less in length, or a circle of 15 meters or less in diameter. Afterwards, the sorcerer will become automatically aware the first time any enemy crosses the line or enters the circle. Once the spell is cast, it is ready to go but does not actually activate until the line is crossed. No further effort is required to maintain the spell, and for a little-traveled path or area, it might take years before anyone sets it off and alerts the caster. Spells like Witch Sight or other means of detecting sorcery or magic can identify a Ward. Undo Sorcery 3 eliminates a Ward.

Wings of the Sky (4)

Range: Sight

This spell causes a turbulent mass of air to suddenly appear in a small room or small open area for the duration of the spell. It has a wind force of STR 2D6+6; those caught in it must succeed in a *Difficult* Agility roll to remain standing. This spell must be known before air elementals can be summoned or invoked using the Summon Elemental spell. Undo Sorcery 4 can negate this spell, but any air that has arrived will remain. Fires of the Sun cancels this spell if cast upon the same area.

Wisdom of the Sage (1–3)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

The target's current INT is increased by +3 points per level, as well as modifying any relevant characteristic rolls or other applicable attributes.

When Wisdom of the Sage 3 is cast for the maximum increase of +9 points, roll D100. On a result of 00, the effect becomes permanent, and those points are permanently added to the target's INT. However, after that, the spell does not affect the target anymore, and it cannot be cast on them again. The target must permanently subtract 9 points from their other characteristics, in any combination, adjusting any values calculated from those characteristics. If allegiance is used, such a dramatic rearrangement is worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Witch Sight (3)

Range: Self, 100 meters of sight

The sorcerer learns the approximate strength of a target's POW compared to theirs, defined as: much stronger (more than double the caster's pow); stronger (up to double); equal (within one or two points); weaker (down to half); or much weaker (less than half).

The spell can be canceled by or shielded against by Undo Sorcery. While in effect, the sorcerer can see emanations from any invisible beings, elementals, and spirits, and can follow or trace where sorcerous entities have recently passed. Your gamemaster should determine if this can detect characters made invisible through technology or another type of power (magic, psychic abilities, mutations, superpowers, etc.). The spell may also detect beings of extremely high allegiance to a particular force.

Witch Sight is almost always used in summoning demons or elementals. If using the Summon Demon spell with Witch Sight cast, your gamemaster should roll the number of D8s specified for the demon's POW and announce that number. Without using Witch Sight, a sorcerer risks summoning an unbindable demon.

Similarly, if an artifact or magic item has an intelligent being like a demon or an elemental bound within it, Witch Sight allows the possessor to mentally converse with the being in the object, providing it is able and willing. This process takes a full day of studying the artifact and requires a successful roll of POW×1 or less but does not require Witch Sight to be cast until the actual moment when communication is desired. Your gamemaster should announce whether the POW×1 roll is successful. They do not need to announce ahead of time if the being inside the artifact is able to or willing to communicate, or if a particular language skill is required to communicate successfully.

INVOKING A GOD

Sorcery, with its emphasis on elementals and demon summoning, is often connected to the gods. In theory, anyone can call upon the gods and godlike entities and expect to be heard, since they are so mighty and since their abilities are so capacious. They can't be summoned directly, because being summoned by a mortal is considered an insult. A god's POW is likely to be far beyond what any mortal can command. A sorcerer may need to make successful rolls in Knowledge (Occult) or Knowledge (Religion) to know the exact rituals for a particular god or make a successful Research roll to discover the information in an appropriate library.

A sorcerer can respectfully beg a deity to appear once the proper rituals and preparations (if any) are completed. If they have any allegiance to that entity (page 211), a sorcerer has a 1% chance of getting a response. If a sorcerer is a champion of that god, they have a *Difficult* Luck chance of a response. The gamemaster should determine what the response is. This may require successful rolls in skills such as Bargain, Fast Talk, or Persuade, and may involve an agreement to perform a service in return. When considering what the sorcerer can offer it of value, remember that while the god has vast powers and may read minds, it likely has need of mortal agents.

SUPERPOWERS

Superpowers are extraordinary abilities granted by various causes: radioactivity, freak accidents, experimentation, training, genetic legacies, super-science, etc. Characters with superpowers are described as **superheroes**, but these powers are not limited to people in tights and capes. These abilities can be used for aliens, robots, demigods, misunderstood monsters, anime heroes, mystic knights, or other incredible beings.

Superpower Origins

How did the superhero get these powers? Are superpowers common in the setting, or a one-in-a-million occurrence? Are superpowers intrinsic, or do they depend on some item or substance? Ask your gamemaster what context powers have in the setting. Does society worship and respect superheroes, or are they feared, hunted, or even outlawed?

When devising a character with superpowers, consider what sorts of superpowers they have. Do all your characters have themed powers, based on a unifying concept (an element, a color, an origin, etc.), or are you all distinct? How does your character view these superpowers? Do they help in normal life, or prevent it entirely?

Your gamemaster should be working with the players, providing answers, and helping shape your character's creation process. Not all these questions need to be explored fully, or even answered at all, but they should help you devise a good background for your character's powers and their source, as well as helping set the stage for how powers fit into the game setting.

How Superpowers Work

Superpowers are measured in **levels**. Each level costs a different amount of POW and represents increased effectiveness. Superpowers are often based on characteristics (STR, DEX, SIZ, INT, etc.), or the power's level itself is the relevant factor. Some powers must have their level exceed a characteristic to succeed, while others use resistance rolls pitting the related characteristic against an opposed characteristic.

Superpowers that need to be directed at the target either use Brawl, Throw, or Projection (page 93). Other powers that are less straightforward operate similarly, often using an existing skill in a way not possible for normal humans. A few powers are unique, either having an automatic effect once successfully used, or adding to existing skills and characteristics.

Starting Superpowers: the Character Point Budget

After determining initial characteristics, determine your character's initial **character point budget**, based on your character's as-of-yet-unmodified characteristics (STR, DEX, INT, etc., as follows:

- **Normal:** Highest characteristic ×½ (round up).
- **Heroic:** Unmodified.
- **Epic:** Highest characteristic ×2.
- **Superhuman:** Add all characteristics together.

Alternatively, your gamemaster may simply determine that initial character point budget is something like 10 for a lower-powered game, 20 for a heroic game, 35 for an epic game, and 75+ for the superhuman power level. This can be modified through character failings or power modifiers (see the relevant sections below).

Buying Powers

Examine the list of powers (page 94), and their descriptions. Power titles are generic—rename them as desired, with your gamemaster's approval. Consider what you want your character to be able to do and try to find the most direct superpower or combination of superpowers to achieve that goal. Your gamemaster can help you clarify what superpower does what, and what higher levels of each superpower can do.

The descriptions should help you determine how many levels of each desired superpower you'll need. Some superpowers may have special requirements based on your characteristics—pay special attention to these. Determine how strong you would like the superpower to be and purchase accordingly.

Extra Energy is probably the most useful superpower if you want your character to use superpowers more than a few times a day. Buy as many levels of it as you need.

Character Failings and Power Modifiers

After choosing your basic superpowers and determining how much of your budget they cost, you may want to increase your available points. There are two ways of doing this: **character failings** and **power modifiers**. Each has a different purpose, but both serve to personalize your superhero character. Character failings are problems your character faces, inherent flaws in their background or social existence, while power modifiers alter or limit a specific power.

Character Failings

A character failing is a cultural, physical, or social disadvantage your character suffers. This causes them problems in their daily life, but in return, extra points go into the character point budget to spend as desired. Your character can only take up to ½ their starting character point budget (round up) in character failings. This limit prevents your character from becoming unplayable—overburdened and hindered by an overabundance of disadvantages. If, however, for some reason you have taken additional character failings beyond the limit, your character can still suffer the in-game penalties but receives no additional points.

See page the **Benefits from Character Failings** table (below) for sample character failings. Your gamemaster may add more to this list, or may introduce new and unique character failings, with the gamemaster's approval.

Power Modifiers

Power modifiers are worth extra character point budget points by altering a superpower when they make it less effective in some way, voluntarily limiting some aspect of its use. By assigning power modifiers to specific superpowers, you can gain more points to buy new superpowers, or buy more levels in superpowers. Not all power modifiers are limitations, however. Some modifiers are positive and make powers more expensive.

See the **Power Modifiers** table (page 92) for more information. Each reward is associated with a single superpower: a modifier that affects all your character's superpowers should be applied separately to each power. Not every power modifier is appropriate for every power, and your gamemaster may veto any unlikely or inappropriate combination.

No superpower can earn more character point budget points than ½ its initial cost (round down) through power modifiers.

Other Disadvantages

If you would like to assign an additional disadvantage to your character in return for additional points, your gamemaster should examine the disadvantage and determine if it is worthwhile for a character point budget bonus, and if so, how many points it is worth. Is it seriously limiting or merely inconvenient? Will it cause your character real trouble? How much trouble? Will the disadvantage cause the other characters difficulty?

Your gamemaster should be willing to negotiate with you for new suggested disadvantages. Similarly, you should accept it if your gamemaster says no. If so, come up with an alternative solution. One option is to put the disadvantage 'on hold' and see if it can be worked in, with the points awarded when it becomes effective. Note the disadvantage initially, but it is not significant until your gamemaster allows it. At that time, your character gets the extra character budget points.

Allocating Superpower Levels

All superpowers have effects defined in levels, bought with the character point budget. A single level gives the base damage, range, and other attributes, and any other effects listed, and additional levels of a power will increase one or more of these attributes, as described. **Power Modifiers** (page 92) allow further customization of powers. Usually, one level of a damage-dealing power means it does 1D6 damage, two levels deal 2D6 damage, three levels 3D6, etc. Only a few powers break this paradigm.

BENEFITS FROM CHARACTER FAILINGS

Character Failing	Character Point Budget Reward
Super identity must be activated to use powers.	+1 point
Super identity must be activated in an obvious and preventable manner, such as an activating word or gesture, a visible item or outfit, etc.	+1 point
Super identity is always on, making normal life difficult or impossible.	+5 points
Physical frailty, impairment, or disability, or a debilitating medical condition. Determine skill or characteristic penalties based on major wounds (page 134).	+1 point for partial problem, +3 points for constant problem
Psycho-social frailty, a major phobia, social disorder, or some other compulsion.	+1 point each (+3 points maximum, higher with gamemaster's approval)
Bad or self-destructive habit, vice, etc.	+1–3 points, depending on severity
Dependent family member, significant other, friend, or ally that requires regular attention and is potentially endangered due to the relationship.	+1 points for infrequent minor involvement, +3 points for frequent significant involvement
Responsibility to an organization or group that influences or restricts freedom and requires regular attention.	+1 point for infrequent minor involvement, +3 points for frequent significant involvement
Member of socially disadvantaged group or other organization that regularly causes inconvenience.	+1 point for infrequent minor inconvenience, +3 points for frequent significant inconvenience
Actively hunted by some individual or organization for legitimate or illegitimate reasons.	+1–3 points, depending on size and power of group, level of threat it presents, and frequency of appearance
Special weakness to some substance or class of item that inflicts damage when exposed to it within 15 meters. The character cannot have a power providing resistance to this item or condition. Choose damage and rarity of substance below:	
1D6 points damage per combat round	+1 point
2D6 points damage per combat round	+2 points
Each additional +D6 per combat round	+1 additional point per additional D6 damage
Item is very common (fire, sunlight, water, steel, etc.)	+2 points
Other type of power than the one the character has (magic vs. super, etc.), if used	+2 points
1D6 points temporary characteristic point loss per combat round while in 5-meter range	+1 point per D6 characteristic reduction
Item is very rare (meteoric rocks, rare metals, special radiation, etc.)	−1 point to above modifier
Special added damage from certain attacks (cold, fire, sound, radiation, etc.) taken per attack. Choose added damage below:	
+1D6 damage	+1 point
+2D6 damage	+2 points
+3D6 damage	+3 points
+4D6 damage	+4 points
Each additional +D6	+1 additional point per additional D6 damage

Unused Budget Points

If you have any remaining points of your character point budget, they are not lost and are kept in a bank of points to use when improving your character (see **Character Point Budget Awards**, below). You can store any number of points in your character point budget, though it can never go below 0. If a new level in a power costs more than you have in your character point budget, either take (or increase) a character failing or power modifier, or wait until you have enough points.

Improving Superpowers

Superpowers are handled differently than skill and characteristic experience. They do not improve as normal skills (the Projection skill is an exception) and follow different methods of advancement.

- **Characteristic Improvement:** When experience is determined, any successful characteristic improvement roll can be assigned to any other characteristic that can be improved by experience instead, in full or divided between multiple characteristics. See **Increasing Characteristics** (page 120) for more information. These characteristic points can also be turned into an equivalent amount of character power budget points (see **Super Characteristic**, page 104) instead of being used to improve a characteristic.
- **Training:** Your character can spend the time between adventures training in a power (assuming a suitable trainer or facility is available). The trainer must have the desired power at a higher level or some equivalent, appropriate knowledge. See **Increasing Characteristics** (page 120). At the conclusion of the training, roll as if a characteristic of your choice is being improved (usually 1D3–1), and turn those points into character power budget points, as above.
- **Character Point Budget Awards:** Your gamemaster may choose instead to reward character power budget points at the completion of an adventure or resolution of a major plot. Suggested amounts are from 1 or 2 points for a minor or average adventure, to 5 to 10 points for a major victory, adjusted by the game's power level. These points can be spent immediately or stored for later use.
- **New Character Failings or Power Modifiers:** You can also gain additional points by taking on new character failings or power modifiers, often driven by events in the game or by emergent threats. Your gamemaster may limit the maximum number of points gained this way, or approve any elements based on outside forces (nonplayer characters, organizations, etc.).

Other methods of adding budget points may be suggested by your gamemaster, as appropriate.

Gaining New Superpowers

You may wish to add a new superpower to your character after they are created. This uses the same method of improving an existing power (above). The gamemaster may require you to justify the new power, such as its manifestation based on an event in the game or a particular adventure. It might be a side effect of an existing power, or latent and now emerged. Alternatively, your character may need to find an instructor with the power, or some other means to learn it.

Your gamemaster may allow you to completely redo your character's powers, perhaps due to an incident causing their evolution into an almost new character. This might involve a new identity, a new costume, or some other radical reimagining of the character. In this case, you should discuss how you and your gamemaster want to handle it.

Losing Superpowers

Sometimes, you or your gamemaster may wish to permanently strip your character of a power. This should be extremely rare and caused by extraordinary circumstances, and generally only with your tacit approval. When this happens, the points spent on the powers are returned to your character's character point budget, and they must lose any character

POWER MODIFIERS

Modifier	Budget Reward
Power effective only under certain conditions (underwater, night, timed, etc.)	+5 points
Power ineffective against certain objects:	
Common items (color, plant, mineral, etc.)	+1 point per level
Other power sets (magic vs. super, etc.)	+1 point per level
Uncommon items (rare element, special radiation, etc.)	+1 point per level
Power has a limited number of uses per day (minimum 1)	+ (10 minus number of uses)
Power has different attributes than described:	
Ranged power is touch only	+1 point per level
Single target power has range (15 meters)	Doubles base cost of power
Power costs power points or fatigue points to use where normally it has no cost	+1 point per power point or fatigue point cost
Power point cost is doubled	+1 point per power point cost per round
Power point cost is halved	Doubles base cost of power
Power which usually only costs power points to activate now costs every combat round	+1 point per power point cost per round
Power which normally has no power point cost now costs power points each combat round	+1 point per power point cost per round
Power costs power points + fatigue points, or power points + sanity points	+1 point per power point cost per round +1 point per fatigue or sanity point cost per round
Energy from power is dissipated involuntarily:	
Under special circumstances (rainstorm, underground, in presence of holy items, etc.)	+ 1 point per power point cost per round
Under common circumstances (daylight, moonlight, etc.)	+ 2 points per power point cost per round
Power cannot improve through experience or any other means	+1 point per level

THE PROJECTION SKILL (OPTION)

This optional skill is used by superheroes to 'fire' or direct a superpower at a target. It can be increased in character generation if the character has superpowers and is subject to the power level limitations. If using skill category modifiers (page 23), the Physical skill bonus applies to Projection.

Projection

Base Chance: DEX×2 **Category:** Physical

Use this skill to direct powered attacks at a target using powers such as Energy Projection, Snare Projection, and others. Choose how your character emits this power—hands, eyes, or from a device. When the power is used, on a fumble the power points are lost, consult the **Missile Weapon Attack Fumbles** table (page 128) for additional guidance (interpreted as necessary). Failure goes wide of the target: roll 1D4 to see if the projection falls in front, behind, to the right, or to the left of the target. Make a Luck roll to avoid collateral damage such as striking an innocent bystander, an ally, or causing structural damage. Success strikes the target, and a special success hits it with additional precision and may do additional damage or have an increased effect. A critical, as always, is perfectly executed to maximum effect. If a combat power, use the guidance for special and critical successes.

System Notes: Your character's damage modifier is never included in any projected superpower. Line of sight is required for Projection. Modifiers that apply to missile or ranged attacks also apply. Projection may be used for aimed attacks (page 140). Projection can be dodged, like a missile weapon, though the Dodge roll may be *Difficult* (see **Dodging Missile Weapons**, page 131).

failings or power modifiers that depended upon the power(s). Depending on the reason and method the powers are lost, you may spend them later for new powers.

Losing Character Failings or Power Modifiers

You may spend budget points to 'buy off' any character failings or power modifiers you do not wish your character to have any more. This should only be done with your gamemaster's permission, especially where this might affect elements in the campaign.

Similarly, if your character is unlikely to suffer the conditions of a particular character failing or power modifier, your gamemaster may require you to make up the deficit in character point budget points by taking on a new and equal character failing or power modifier or remove those points from any surplus in your current character point budget (perhaps subtracting them from future rewards).

Powers and Success Levels

Unlike skills, the use of superpowers is always clear to interpret. Many have effects that are either 'on' or 'off', with no difference between a critical, special, or normal success. The guidelines below can help your gamemaster when deciding superpower skill roll outcomes.

- **Fumble:** The power points are lost, and the character cannot use this superpower for one combat round after the round of the fumble. If the superpower usually does damage, make a Luck roll. Success means the power just doesn't work. Failure means that the superpower struck an unintended target (innocent bystander, valuable equipment, etc.) causing collateral damage and potentially complicating the situation. Some superpowers may have additional consequences for fumbles.
- **Failure:** The power either succeeds and misses or it doesn't work at all. It doesn't cause any harm or complications. The power points are lost.
- **Success:** The superpower works as described and the power points are spent.
- **Special:** The superpower works with increased effectiveness. If a special success damage type (crushing, entangling, impaling, knockback, or slashing) is appropriate, incorporate it into the result. At your gamemaster's discretion, another aspect of the power (range, influence, etc.) may have doubled effect. Alternatively, if the power involves a resistance roll, increase the superpower's level by half again or the characteristic (round up) for the resistance roll. The gamemaster should pick an appropriate characteristic for the resistance roll.
- **Critical:** The superpower works perfectly. If it usually causes damage, it ignores any armor the target possesses and has the effect of a special success (above). If it does not normally cause damage, your gamemaster should determine an appropriate aspect (or aspects) of the superpower and double its effectiveness. Alternatively, if a resistance roll is required, double the superpower's level or the gamemaster chosen characteristic for the resistance roll.

These outcomes may require additional interpretation, or your gamemaster is free to simply use the results of dice rolls without any adjustment for degrees of success.

Each power in this section is described in the following manner:

- **Base Range:** 'Self' is internal to the superhero, 'Touch' indicates close range, and '15 meters' is the default range. Many ranged superpowers gain additional range with additional levels.
- **Duration:** 'Instantaneous' superpowers work immediately on the DEX (or strike) rank they are used. Other superpowers work for one or more combat rounds, from the moment they're used until the end of the specified combat round. 'Always on' means that the power is active until deactivated. These powers automatically reactivate whenever desired.
- **Character Point Cost:** The cost per level.
- **Power Point Cost:** The number of power points the superpower costs to activate and/or keep active.

A description of the superpower and its effects. This description refers to other game systems the superpower interacts with or relies upon.

As noted prior, these powers have generic titles: you may change the name of the power to match your character concept, with your gamemaster's permission. If so, note the original title of the power for ease of reference.

Absorption

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: None

Each level absorbs 1 point of damage from one type of energy (see **Energy Types**, page 95) and stores it in the superhero's own power point supply or into some 'battery' or device. The power point capacity

of the superhero and/or battery must have enough space for the power points, or the excess damage affects the superhero.

When selecting this power, define the type of energy it absorbs (see **Energy Types**, page 95) such as 'Absorption (Electric)'. The energy type must be something that can cause damage under normal circumstances and not something normally harmless. The damage absorbed is removed from actual damage taken—any armor (or the Armor superpower) reduces the damage before Absorption can affect it.

Energy absorbed with this power cannot be taken out of an external battery and shifted into a superhero's normal power points, or vice versa, unless the battery also has Absorption. For a weak energy type that could conceivably cause damage over the long term, such as a roaring campfire for heat, generally a weak source generates1 point of energy per combat round, a mild source generates of 1D6 points, a moderate source 2D6, a strong one 3D6, etc.

Adaptation

Base Range: Self
Duration: 1 full turn
Character Point Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per SIZ to activate, then 1 power point per full turn

Each level allows survival in one other environment, such as underwater or a vacuum. At your gamemaster's discretion, Adaptation against one environment may offer limited or full protection against related environments (survival in a vacuum might offer some protection against intense cold). Gear is usually protected from the adverse effects of the environment, if appropriate. Write it like this: 'Adaptation (Environment)'.

For each level of this power, pick one environment from the following list:

- Cold
- Corrosive
- Heat
- High Gravity
- High Pressure
- Low Gravity
- Radiation
- Underwater
- Vacuum

The superpower allows the character to live comfortably in these extreme environments but does not offer special defense against attacks using these conditions, such as with Energy Control, though the gamemaster may rule that an appropriate Adaptation provides half its levels in protection. Otherwise, use the Armor, Protection, or Resistance superpowers.

Adverse environments are described in *Chapter 7: Spot Rules*. If uncertain, assume that a minor hazardous environment inflicts 1 hit

SUPERPOWER SUMMARY

These are the superpowers in this section.

Absorption: Absorb energy from an attack and turn it into power points.
Adaptation: Each level allows survival in one hostile environment.
Alternate Form: Each level provides one alternate body to switch into.
Armor: Each level provides 1 point of protection against a specific energy type.
Barrier: Each level creates a 1-meter-square section of protective wall.
Defense: Lowers the chance to be hit by –1% per level.
Density Control: Each level adds or subtracts 1 point of density (SIZ).
Diminish/Enhance Characteristic: Lowers or increases a characteristic by 1D6 per level.
Drain: Each level drains 1 hit point, power point, fatigue point, or sanity point from a target.
Energy Control: Allows creation of and control over a specific energy type.
Energy Projection: Allows projection of a focused beam of damaging energy.
Extra Energy: Each level provides +10 additional power points.
Extra Hit Points: Each level provides +1 additional hit point.
Flight: Each level allows self-powered flight for 1 SIZ point.
Force Field: Each level offers 10 points of protection against a specific type of energy.
Intangibility: Allows movement through solid objects.
Invisibility: Each level turns 1 SIZ point invisible.
Leap: Adds to the normal jumping distance, horizontally and vertically.
Protection: Each level reduces the level of an attacking energy type.
Regeneration: Each level returns 1 lost hit point per combat round.
Resistance: Each level resists 1 point of damage from a single energy type.
Sidekick: A loyal associated character.
Size Change: Each level adds or subtracts 1 point of SIZ.
Snare Projection: Each level is 1 STR and/or SIZ of a net, web, rope, or other confining snare.
Stretching: Stretch body into different sizes and shapes.
Super Characteristic: Extra points in STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, CHA, or EDU.
Super Movement: Each type involves a unique method of movement.
Super Sense: Each type improves an existing sense or adds an extraordinary aspect to the sense.
Super Skill: Each level adds +20% to a specific skill.
Super Speed: Each level adds an additional action or movement each combat round.
Teleport: Each level allows instantaneous teleportation of 1 SIZ point of an object or target.
Transfer: Each level allows transfer of 1 hit point, power point, fatigue point, or sanity point to a target.
Unarmed Combat: Increases ability in unarmed combat.
Weather Control: Alters or creates weather in an area.

point of damage per combat round, a mildly harmful one causes 1D6 hit points damage per combat round, a moderately hazardous one 2D6 hit points per round, extremely dangerous 3D6, etc. Some environments may require a combination of two or more types of Adaptation to survive, such as underwater (underwater, high pressure), outer space (cold, radiation, vacuum), or on the sun (heat, radiation, high gravity).

Alternate Form

Base Range: Self
Duration: Instantaneous
Character Point Cost: 20 per form
Power Point Cost: None

Each level provides one alternate body to switch into, usually one more suitable for adventure. This body replaces the character's natural body and can represent transformation (such as a werewolf) or an outright switching of places (a superhero body). This transformation is instantaneous or nearly so, being completed within a single combat round.

Ideally, when this power is created, make a copy of your character sheet before superpowers are purchased. This is the template for the alternate form. Follow these steps:

- Powers for the new form(s) come out of the character point budget if they are not intrinsic to the new shape. The new form(s) can have any applicable character failings or power modifiers. Your gamemaster may also allow a separate character point budget unique to the alternate form, which you can add to from your own budget.
- For supernatural forms, work with your gamemaster to determine any inherent powers the new form comes with, and what might need to be purchased.
- If the new form resembles an animal, consult *Chapter 11: Creatures* for appropriate powers or abilities. Copy a sample animal's writeup for convenience. Natural attributes such as claws, bite, or thick fur armor are part of the shape and do not need to be purchased.
- Any unmodified characteristics or skills of the new form(s) are assumed to be identical to the original character. However, the new form makes its own set of experience checks, which do not affect the original's characteristics or skills.
- Determine any special gear or garments the alternate form(s) should arrive already equipped with.
- Determine what happens to the original or alternate form(s) when it's not in use.
- Useful things to consider from a narrative point are whether the alternate form has consciousness while away, or if it is unaware of the passage of time and events concerning the current form? Do the forms differ in personality and goals, or are they essentially the same character? Do they even know about each other?

Alternate Form costs nothing to use. When rendered unconscious in

ENERGY TYPES

Many superpowers refer to a wide range of energy types, classified in terms that may or may not be suitable for different settings. Many make no sense scientifically and violate basic physical laws and are best suited for fantastic or superhero settings.

Energy types are classified specifically for powers—a character with Energy Control (Heat) cannot duplicate its effects with Energy Control (Cold) though they may have both powers separately and use them together. Similarly, rather than working against all energy types, Absorption has a specific type of energy it is proof against.

When purchasing superpowers, it is advised to purchase levels of the same superpower but focused on different energy types, so Absorption can work against heat and cold attacks if it is purchased once for each. These energy types also provide guidelines when they interact with the environment and equipment. *Chapter 8: Equipment* covers equipment in more detail with examples of gear that replicates certain powers. *For example, a thermal suit may provide Resistance (Cold) 1 but provides no protection against other damage types such as gravity, darkness, kinetic, psychic, or electricity.*

All major energy types are summarized below for reference, as well as any opposing energy type.

- **Cold:** Freezing temperatures, from radiant cold to snow, hail, or ice. The opposite is heat.
- **Darkness:** This represents darkness as an element that violates the laws of physics. Darkness energy behaves almost exactly like light does—it can form beams or rays, and can fill an area, ridding it of light. Darkness and light are opposites.
- **Electric:** Any galvanic current, whether lightning or regular household current. Most energy storage devices (batteries) store electricity.
- **Gravity:** Both the force and the ability to manipulate it. This can be an alteration of normal gravity or generating it where it barely exists, such as in deep space.
- **Heat:** Radiant heat up to intense fire that becomes plasma. Heat and cold are opposites.
- **Kinetic:** Any physical force, from a punch, gunshot, sword-blow, to the impact of a fall. Kinetic energy is the most common, as it is the easiest to generate.
- **Light:** Whether ambient or laser, this covers all light and extends into ultraviolet and infrared spectrums. Light and darkness are opposites.
- **Magnetic:** The force that attracts or repulses metallic objects or substances.
- **Radiation:** A general term for any atomic, nuclear, fusion, beta, gamma, microwave, cosmic, or other type of radiation.
- **Sound:** Sound waves, from inaudible to deafening. Though the Silence power cancels sound, it is not a distinct energy type.
- **Wind:** Focused air currents strong enough to hinder or harm a target.

Your setting may have additional energy types. Use the above descriptions as guidelines.

the alternate form, the character reverts to their original body. The switch back from the alternate form gives your character the lower of each form's power points, sanity points, hit points, fatigue points, etc. Furthermore, a debilitating state such as a curse, insanity, etc. remains in either form, if applicable.

Work with your gamemaster to decide whether death in one form means death in both, or if one form can survive the loss of the other and any detrimental effects. This may cause a sanity point loss (depending on circumstances) or inflict shock, requiring a *Difficult* Luck roll to overcome. Failure causes the victim to be stunned for 1D6 combat rounds or longer.

This power is best employed with the various power modifiers and character failings involving partial access to powers. At your gamemaster's discretion, one of those may be mandatory with the purchase of the Alternate Form power.

Armor

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on, or 10 combat rounds
Character Point Cost: 1 per level per type
Power Point Cost: None, or 1 point per level per 10 combat rounds

Each level provides 1 point of armor against a particular type of attack. This protection can be tough skin, hardened scales, steel plate, etc. When purchased, the energy type it is intended to protect against must be chosen from **Energy Types** (page 95) and listed like 'Armor (Kinetic)'. Purchasing Armor against multiple types of damage equally costs the level multiplied by the number of energy types it protects against.

However, all types of Armor do not need to be at the same level: a superhero can have 'Armor (Kinetic) 2' and 'Armor (Heat) 5'. If so, the power should be listed separately. While in effect, Armor is proof against all protected types of damage, in any number of attacks per round, and does not have to be consciously directed.

Armor can be a self-only force field, needing power points to activate costs ½ the normal price (round up). The power point cost is 1 power point per level to activate. It lasts for 10 combat rounds and can automatically renew itself for 1 power point per level.

Barrier

Base Range: 15 meters
Duration: 15 minutes
Character Point Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: 3 per level

This brings a wall-like obstruction out of the ground or forms it of available material. Alternatively, the barrier can be formed of an energy type generated by another power—though that power must be used beforehand. The barrier is usually placed to protect against attacks or attackers, though it can appear anywhere within range. Each level provides a barrier 1 meter thick, 1 meter wide, and 1 meter high. These square meters can be distributed as desired along the dimensions of width, height, and length, or spread thinner. This barrier can be shaped in any simple form: a straight or curved wall, half-sphere, etc. Whatever its configuration, the base must rest on the ground. When creating the barrier, decide how large it will be, using height × thickness × length in meters as to determine levels and power point cost. Any extra multiples can be distributed as desired anywhere along the length of the barrier.

***For example**, Barrier 9 can create a barrier 1 meter thick, 3 meters high, and 3 meters long (1×3×3=9).*

A barrier cannot be created in the air to drop onto an opponent, though a tall thin barrier could be toppled onto a foe. If so used, it does 1D6 points of damage per 1-meter section that strikes an opponent (if they do not dodge successfully). A barrier composed of an energy type (see **Energy Types**, page 95) may have additional properties, such as a barrier of fire causing incendiary damage to those who try to bypass it.

Regardless of its substance, a barrier has 30 hit points. Each additional meter of material added to its thickness adds 30 hit points to its total in that spot. Most human-sized opponents need only to destroy one or two 1-meter segments to move through it. If desired, more 'authentic' hit point or armor values for the barrier's substance can be found in **Armor Value of Substances** (page 189). When the power ends, the barrier dissolves, melts, retracts, or gradually disappears in an appropriate manner, unless formed of a substance that would normally remain.

Defense

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: None

This power modifies all attacks made against the character by –5% per level. This does not increase with experience, but stacks with other factors that reduce an attacker's chance to hit the character, such as Unarmed Combat. The levels are limited to the character's DEX+POW, though if attack skill ratings above 100% are allowed (page 131), ignore this restriction.

Density Control

Base Range: Self
Duration: Variable
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per level per combat round

This power lets the character increase or decrease their density by ±1 SIZ per level (for this power, SIZ is weight and not actual physical mass). Density Control allows both an increase and decrease in density, unlike Size Change. and it does not confer Intangibility.

Increased density increases the damage modifier and hit points, though it lowers movement rate by 2 meters per round. Additionally, every 10 levels (round down) of Density Control adds +1 armor vs. kinetic-based attacks (punches, falls, gunshots, etc.).

Decreased density lowers the character's SIZ (in weight) and modifies the damage modifier and hit points. At SIZ 0, a human-sized character can fly by gliding on air currents, moving at the speed of the wind. Decreased density does not affect normal movement. Every level of decreased density modifies armor value by –1, to a minimum of 0. Decreased density also lowers the damage from falls by –1 point per level.

See **Object SIZ Examples** (page 190) for information on weight relating to an item's SIZ. At your gamemaster's discretion, this power applies to any equipment worn (such as armor).

Diminish/Enhance Characteristic

Base Range: Touch
Duration: 10 combat rounds
Character Point Cost: 5 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per level

This power decreases or increases a characteristic (STR, CON, DEX, INT, POW, or CHA) by 1D6 per level. If the target is unwilling, overcome them with a current power point vs. current power point resistance roll. No roll is required for a willing target. The effects are temporary (except for hit points, see below), and affect the target's damage modifier, characteristic rolls, DEX rank, power points, or fatigue points as appropriate. Characteristics enhanced go above the normal

maximum allowed for rolled characteristics (usually 21 for humans). If the characteristic modifiers are used, those modifiers are affected.

A characteristic reduced to 0 or lower is considered as 0, and the target can do nothing relating to that characteristic.

***For example**, having a DEX 0 means the target cannot move, while STR 0 means that they cannot lift anything.*

Anyone reduced to CON 0 is comatose for the power's duration, and a target with 0 hit points is dead. When the superpower is over, the characteristic is restored to its normal value, and any secondary attributes are no longer affected. The target's hit points are restored to their previous value or the current value, whichever is lower. Similarly, power points and fatigue points are restored to the lower of their previous or current value.

Drain

Base Range: Touch
Duration: 1 combat round
Character Point Cost: 10 per level for hit points, 5 per level for others (fatigue, power, or sanity points)
Power Point Cost: 1 per level per combat round

Drain allows the character to drain hit points, power points, fatigue points, or sanity points from another character and add those to their own points. When this power is purchased, designate which resource it drains, such as 'Drain (Hit Points)'. Draining more than one resource requires taking the power multiple times.

The method of draining can vary widely (grab, bite, handshake, etc.) but must involve physical contact for at least one full combat round. This may require a successful Grapple attempt in combat, or Agility roll if outside of combat. No roll is required for an immobile or willing target, and against an unaware target the roll is *Easy*. To continue to drain a target on successive rounds, the requisite maneuver (Grapple, etc.) must be rolled again. Once contact has been established, defeat the target in a current power point vs. current power point resistance roll. Failure means it has no effect and the target can attempt to break free. For a willing target, no resistance roll is required. If successful, the drained resource is transferred from the target to the character in the Powers phase of the next round. The rate of this transfer is 1D6 points per level per combat round, with additional levels draining more points (level 2 drains 2D6, level 3 drains 3D6, etc.).

- **Hit Points:** While being drained, the target must make a successful Effort roll to act. If the target's hit point total reaches 1 or 2, they fall unconscious. If their hit point total reaches 0, they die at the beginning of the next combat round (see **Hit Points**, page 20). Any hit points above the drainer's normal hit point total are lost. Drained hit points return normally.
- **Power Points:** While being drained, the target must make a successful Luck roll to act. If the target's power point total reaches 0, they fall unconscious. The drainer can store power points above and beyond their normal power point maximum: these points are temporary. They are not recovered when spent and dissipate when the normal power point total is restored. The maximum for 'extra' power points is equal to the drainer's power point maximum plus the levels of Drain. Drained power points return normally.
- **Fatigue Points:** Fatigue points are optional, so if they are not used, this choice cannot be taken. While being drained, the target must make a successful Stamina roll to act. If the target's fatigue point total goes below 0, they suffer penalties (see **Fatigue**, page 24).

Any fatigue points above the drainer's normal fatigue point total are lost. Drained fatigue points return normally.

- **Sanity Points:** While being drained, the target must make a successful Idea roll to act. A target that goes below 0 sanity points is now hopelessly insane and must become a nonplayer character (if they are not already so). See the rules for sanity point loss on pages 218. The drainer can transfer as many sanity points as desired up to the maximum allowed (see **Maximum Sanity**, page 218). Drained sanity points do not return.

The drainer does not have to transfer the points drained to themselves: they can instead allow them to dissipate, gaining no benefit. A character that drains multiple resources (hit points and power points, for example) can attempt to do so in the same contact but must make a separate resistance roll for each resource drained. Each additional resource type takes an additional combat round: targets cannot be drained of multiple resources simultaneously, though the drainer can alternate turn-by-turn.

This superpower is the opposite of Transfer (page 107).

Energy Control

Base Range: 15 meters, or Touch (when attacking)
Duration: 1 combat round
Character Point Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per level each combat round to activate, 1 per combat round to keep active

Energy Control allows manipulation of a single type of energy, generating it if it is not already present (see **Energy Types**, page 95). Each type is a separate superpower, chosen when the power is purchased, and specified as 'Energy Control (Cold)', 'Energy Control (Darkness)', etc. Multiple types of Energy Control must be purchased separately. An obvious concept is to purchase multiple powers relating to a single energy type, such as Absorption, Armor, Energy Projection, Resistance, and Snare Projection, all based on the same type.

Each level of Energy Control is equivalent to 1 point in a resistance roll. ***For example**, if trying to affect an area, the level is equal to SIZ. If trying to overcome the STR of an opponent, the level is equal to STR.*

When directed at a specific target (as opposed to an environment or area), a resistance roll using the power's level as the active force may be required. Whenever possible, use the resistance table if the power significantly affects something (or someone).

An Agility or Grapple roll may be required to touch an unwilling target, or Projection to make a ranged attack. Generally, an unaware target is *Easy* to hit, and a willing target requires no roll.

Once a superpower is active, it can be deactivated instantaneously, ending the major effects. Lingering effects may remain (frost, smoke, sparks, etc.), but without causing damage unless activating some aspect of the environment (sparks lighting a forest fire, etc.).

Following are specific guidelines for each energy type:

- **Cold Control:** Cover an item or section of floor with ice, freeze a liquid, make an item brittle and easier to shatter, or freeze an opponent's limb (or entire body) as with Snare Projection. The power affects 1 SIZ point per level, where applicable. Defeat the target's CON vs. the superpower's levels in a resistance roll. Failure means that the target takes 1D6 damage per 10 levels of Cold Control (round up) from the intense cold. Any appropriate environmental effects may also be applied (see **Cold**, page 146). Protection such as winterized clothing may serve as Protection 1 or more, at your gamemaster's discretion. Cold Control cancels the effects of Heat Control on a level-for-level basis.
- **Darkness Control:** Each level creates a volume of darkness two meters in radius, centered around the character or at a point within range of their choosing. Within this volume, all creatures without some form of infrared vision suffer all penalties of fighting in darkness (see **Darkness**, page 146). Any normal benefits from intense darkness also apply, such as to the Hide skill. Darkness Control does not cause any damage. There is no resistance to Darkness Control, as it is not directly cast on a target. The only counter to it is a light-based power, a non-visual sense, a super sense, or some other means of detection such as sonar. Each additional level adds another meter to the volume of darkness. Darkness Control cancels Light Control on a level-for-level basis.
- **Electric Control:** Manipulating ambient electric current or generating fresh current. Each level provides enough electricity to affect 1 SIZ point of an electrical appliance or vehicle. Additionally, the power can cause 1D6 electrical damage per 10 levels (round up), if a resistance roll is made with the superpower's levels vs. the target's CON. Other uses may include shorting out any non-insulated equipment that has metallic parts and runs on a power current (use the object's SIZ in a resistance roll), or to transfer ambient electricity into a storage battery at the rate of 1 power point per point of stored electricity.
- **Gravity Control:** Increase or decrease a target's SIZ by 1 point per level (similar to Density Control). The target can be a living being or an inanimate object. This may adjust hit points and the damage modifier. If used against an object, use the superpower's levels vs. the object's hit points for the resistance roll. Against another character, it is an opposed power points resistance roll. A character whose SIZ has doubled or been reduced by half (round up) involuntarily has all their combat and physical actions made *Difficult*, due to their unfamiliarity with the current weight. If the target is accustomed to this power's effects, or is voluntarily under its influence, there is no modifier. Gravity Control can be used offensively causing physical damage from intense gravity. Once a target is under its effects, on the powers phase of the next round, the gravity can be increased to do damage at the rate of 1D6 points per 10 levels (round up). When the power is deactivated, the target instantly regains its original weight.
- **Heat Control:** Each level fills 1 SIZ of an area with flame or snuffs out that much existing flame. It can be shaped and otherwise manipulated, used to ignite an object, provide light, or warm an area. If directed against a living being, the target must be overcome by the superpower's levels vs. their power points in a resistance roll. Heat Control causes 1D6 damage per 10 levels (round up) to the target it is directed against. Heat Control can also be used to melt items, using the power's level vs. the object's SIZ or hit points in a resistance roll, adjusting the object's SIZ based on how meltable it is. Each successful resistance roll melting an object does the power's level in damage to the object and lowers its SIZ by the same amount. When the hit points or SIZ reach 0, the object is melted completely. Heat Control cancels the effects of Cold Control on a level-for-level basis.
- **Kinetic Control:** Exert crushing force on an item or targeted opponent, affecting an area equal to 1 SIZ per level. If a target's CON is overcome with the superpower's levels on a resistance roll, they suffer 1D6 damage per 10 levels (round up) from pure kinetic force. If directed against a nonliving target, the object's current hit points are used for the resistance roll. It can also inhibit kinetic force in an area, creating a form of armor against physical attacks or action. This can lessen damage from a fall or duplicate the effects of Armor (Kinetic), though it must be targeted specifically and only lasts one combat round. If uncertain about what Kinetic Control can do, assume it is the equivalent of a rapid or forceful movement, not subtle or dexterous.
- **Light Control:** Each level fills 1 SIZ point of an area or illuminates 1 SIZ point of an object with the brightness of a light bulb. The light can be of any color desired, and can strobe, pulse, or radiate

from any source within range. Light Control can potentially blind a target if it strikes them in the eyes with a successful strike and they are overcome in a resistance roll of the superpower's levels vs. their power points. All sight-based actions for a blinded character become *Difficult* for one combat round, after which the blindness wears off. Light Control does not cause damage. Additional forms of light (infrared, ultraviolet, etc.) may also be created and used by this power, with effects to be determined by you and your gamemaster, using the superpower's levels as a guideline. Light Control cancels the Darkness Control on a level-for-level basis. For laser intensity, see Energy Projection (Light).

- **Magnetic Control:** Affect, magnetize, and manipulate 1 SIZ per level of metal or metallic substances, move them using magnetism, or affix one metallic object to another magnetically. Magnetic Control does not cause damage to most living beings, though it can be used to damage any mechanical item with metallic parts (use the object's SIZ in a resistance roll) and disrupt electronic equipment or erase magnetically stored electronic media (memory cards, hard drives, disks, etc.). If using Magnetic Control against a countering force, use the object's SIZ for a resistance roll.
- **Radiation Control:** Flood an area 1 SIZ per level with radiation equaling 1 potency (POT) per level or eliminate it in the same area. When used against a living being, defeat the target's CON in the resistance roll vs. the superpower's level. Radiation Control inflicts 1D6 damage per 10 levels (round up) to the target. To cause radiation poisoning, overcome the target's CON+POW vs. the power's level in a resistance roll. The nature of this radiation must be approved by your gamemaster (see **Radiation**, page 152).
- **Sound Control:** Affect 1 SIZ per level of an object or the sound in an area, silencing it, increasing its volume, etc. This power can also duplicate sonic or ultrasonic forms of sound. In combat, create a cacophony or loud blast of painful sound, using the superpower's level vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. Success means that the target is stunned for 1D3 rounds (see **Stunning or Subduing**, page 154). Additionally, for the duration of the stunned state, the target's Listen skill rolls are *Impossible* and mental skill rolls are *Difficult*. For less offensive uses, create phantom noises, mimic sounds, transfer sound from one place to another (within range), and even duplicate any sound previously heard (use an *Idea* roll to determine how correctly the sound is remembered). Sound Control can also destroy inanimate objects, doing 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels (round up) to an object whose hit points or CON is overcome in a resistance roll. Sound Control can oppose itself as well as other sound-based attacks such as Sound Projection.
- **Wind Control:** Control the wind, stirring air currents to incredible force, whether in a straight line or whirlwind. Though Wind Control does not cause direct damage, it can oppose foes' movement, hold a target in place in a vortex of wind, blow something onto a target, hinder missile weapons used in range, create a tornado, fill a sail with wind, fan a fire into an inferno, or blow a fire out. Use the rules for knockback (page 149), using the power's level, where applicable. Wind Control is not subtle, and its effects are often difficult to control. When appropriate, use the power's levels vs. the target's SIZ or STR in a resistance roll. **Weather Conditions** (page 156) includes other effects that might be simulated using Wind Control.
- **Other Energy Control:** This category covers any undefined or new sort of Energy Control you and your gamemaster may devise. The guidelines for the other types of Energy Control can be used to determine the parameters for new types of energy, with the following guidelines: 1 level equals 1 SIZ point of energy to be manipulated or generated; if appropriate, the power will do 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of the power (round up); base range is 15 meters. When in doubt, determine a means by which the superpower can be used in a resistance roll.
- **Combined Energy Control:** Your character can combine these superpowers if they pay the full amount for each Energy Control type. Each aspect of the power will have full effectiveness, though damage is rolled separately for each type, as the target may have different types of Absorption, Armor, Protection, or Resistance. Levels of combined Energy Control types do not have to be equivalent. All special effects for each Energy Control type are added onto this attack. For combined attacks, each use costs the full amount of power points required for the power.

You and your gamemaster should discuss further potential uses for each energy type, though whenever the use of the superpower seems to duplicate another power, that superpower should be purchased instead. This superpower does not grant immunity to the energy type being used—instead, the character is immune to the initial release of the energy but is susceptible to it later. Purchase levels in Absorption, Armor, Protection, or Resistance, if desired.

Many of these energy types can be used to duplicate or mimic environmental effects described in *Chapter 7: Spot Rules*.

Energy Projection

Base Range: 15 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Character Point Cost: 10 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per level

Energy Projection allows the projection of a beam of concentrated energy of some type (see **Energy Types**, page 95) at a target. Each type is a separate power and must be purchased separately: choose when the superpower is purchased and note it as Cold Projection, Darkness Projection, etc. Multiple types of Energy Projection must be purchased separately. Each cause 1D6 damage per level with a 15-meter range, and each additional level increases damage by +1D6 and range by +15 meters. To strike a target in combat, use the Projection skill (page 93), though Projection is not defined separately for each energy type.

Following are commonly used types of energy projection, and some potential side effects. Work with your gamemaster to develop additional appropriate side effects for these or any new types of Energy Projection.

- **Cold Projection:** Generates a ray of intense cold or ice, doing 1D6 damage per level. When used against a physical object, a POW×level chance causes the object to become brittle, halving its armor value and hit points for one combat round.
- **Darkness Projection:** Fires a harmful bolt of intense darkness, doing 1D6 damage per level. If targeted against a foe's eyes, it can blind them for 1D3 combat rounds (see **Darkness**, page 146).
- **Electric Projection:** A lightning bolt (or ball of lightning) that does 1D6 damage per level. When used on a metallic object, it has a POW×level chance of traveling (and jumping) along any connected or nearby metallic surface to strike any other target touching the metal surface. Successive targets take ½ of the original damage (round up). Additionally, it can scramble any electric or electronic equipment it hits, using its power level against the item's hit points in a resistance roll.
- **Gravity Projection:** A pure wave of gravitic energy, causing everything it hits to either become incredibly heavy or light, as desired, doing 1D6 damage per level. In addition to damage, it can sweep items aside or cause them to plummet to the ground, taking damage as appropriate (see **Knockback**, page 149, or **Falling**, page 148).
- **Heat Projection:** A line of flame or intense heat, doing 1D6 damage per level, with a POW×level chance of setting a flammable object on fire in addition to any damage it causes.
- **Kinetic Projection:** A beam of concussive force doing 1D6 damage

per level, that on a special success also inflicts the effects of a crushing special success (page 128) or knockback (page 130) (player choice).

- **Light Projection:** A laser-like ray of light, doing 1D6 damage per level. It can temporarily blind an opponent for 1D3 combat rounds if it strikes them in the eyes (see **Aimed Attacks**, page 140) and the power brightly illuminates the area when it is used. If directed against an inanimate object (such as a wall or safe) for multiple rounds, it can cut through them, doing its normal damage.
- **Magnetic Projection:** This wave of magnetic force does 1D6 damage per level to electronic circuitry or machinery made of ferrous materials. Use the power's level as the active force against the object's hit point total in a resistance roll. If used against metallic objects, it can knock them back into other targets, doing damage as appropriate to SIZ.
- **Radiation Projection:** This beam of radioactive energy does 1D6 damage per level and can irradiate anything it hits, causing potential radiological reactions (exposing film, etc.) or even radiation sickness, using the damage dealt as its potency (POT) (see **Radiation**, page 152).
- **Sound Projection:** A shock wave radiating along a path towards the target, doing 1D6 damage per level. If targeted against the head or ears of a target, it can temporarily deafen them for 1D3 combat rounds if the power level overcomes their CON in a resistance roll. All hearing-based actions for a deafened character become *Difficult* until the deafness wears off.
- **Wind Projection:** An intense blast of wind doing 1D6 damage per level and a knockback special success (page 130) if the dice roll indicates so. It can also be used to knock items into other targets, doing damage as appropriate to SIZ, and on a *Difficult* Projection roll, can parry low-velocity missile weapons (thrown, arrows, etc.).
- **Other Energy Projection:** See **Other Energy Control** (page 99) for suggestions on creating new energy types.
- **Combined Energy Projection:** These attacks can be combined if each Energy Projection type is purchased separately. Levels do not have to be equivalent. A single successful Projection roll means that all Energy Projection types hit the target. Each Energy Projection type has its normal effectiveness, though resistance rolls and side effects must be determined separately. Damage is rolled separately for each type, as the target may have different types of Absorption, Armor, Protection, or Resistance. For combined Energy Projection attacks, each attack costs the full amount of power points for all levels and all types of energy used.

Many of these have variable effectiveness against certain types of defenses, such as a Fire Projection being weak against cold-based defenses, or a Magnetic Projection being especially powerful against metallic defenses. At your gamemaster's option, the power level of the Energy Projection may be checked in a resistance roll against the resisting force to see if it has any effect: superpowers that would be weak against a particular defense are at –5 to their level for the purpose of the resistance roll, while powers especially potent against a defense are at +5 their power level for the resistance roll (as if a special success—if a special or critical success is rolled, these bonuses stack).

Extra Energy

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 1 per 10 points of additional power points
Power Point Cost: None

This should be taken by every character wishing to use superpowers. This is an additional energy reserve above and beyond the power points granted by POW. Each level is +10 additional power points (there is no effect on POW). The energy source may be from the character's own body or an external item like a battery. Internal energy supplies can fuel personal powers, and external batteries can fuel external items. The gamemaster may allow your character to draw from either. The source is relevant as an external battery may be targeted. Multiple energy supplies may also be used, each fueling different powers or being used by the same powers.

Some superpowers do not need power points to activate, though many others do, in one of the following ways:

- The power points activate the superpower, with no further power point cost until the superpower is activated again. This includes most instantaneous powers.
- The power point cost must be paid each round the superpower is in use.
- Expended energy (power points) returns to your character as described in **Power Points** (page 20). Batteries must be replenished by recharging. One common method is a wall socket, though others such as batteries, solar panels, and generators can be used. Absorption can be used to recharge personal or external energy supplies if the energy type matches.

Extra Hit Points

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: None

Additional hit points beyond what CON and SIZ provide. Your character cannot purchase more levels in Extra Hit Points than their initial CON, unless your gamemaster allows it. These hit points are added to normal hit points, and the major wound threshold (page 20) is adjusted to the new total. Healing is as normal. If hit locations are used, the combined hit point total is used to determine hit points per location.

Flight

Base Range: Self
Duration: Varies
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 SIZ points to activate, then 1 power point per turn to maintain

Once this power is activated, use the Fly skill (page 41) to fly 3 SIZ per level at a rate of 500 meters per combat round or any speed lower than this, including a hover. Your character must purchase enough levels of Flight to accommodate their SIZ. The ability to carry anything else while flying depends on STR and any additional levels of Flight above those needed to remain airborne. In non-combat situations, your gamemaster may allow each power point spent to maintain flight last for 1 hour rather than one turn. Once the initial power points are spent, your character can land and fly at will for the duration of the power without needing to spend the initial power point cost again.

This flight is not automatically maneuverable or graceful. Flight requires some finesse to properly use, handled with the Fly skill. This superpower is a prerequisite for the Fly skill: if the power is innate, it begins at the starting skill rating, and ½ of DEX (round up) as a skill rating if granted by equipment.

If used in conjunction with Super Speed, the number of additional meters provided by the Super Speed is added to the meters per combat

round. For reference, 500 meters per combat round is a speed of roughly 93 miles per hour.

Force Field

Base Range: Self to 15 meters
Duration: Varies
Character Point Cost: 1 per level per energy type per point of SIZ
Power Point Cost: 1 per combat round, plus 1 per point of damage absorbed

The ability to project a defensive field that provides 10 points of armor per level to 1 SIZ from incoming injury based on a specific energy or attack type.

***For example**, a character of SIZ 14 must pay 14 points for Force Field 1, 28 points for Force Field 2, etc.*

The energy type the Force Field protects against must be specified when the superpower is purchased, selected from the **Energy Types** list (page 95). A Force Field can protect against multiple types of energy, though each type must be purchased separately.

Damage is rolled for any attacks against anything protected by the Force Field, and the Force Field's armor value (10×level) is then subtracted from that damage. Any damage beyond that is subtracted from your character's power points, if desired. If the Force Field is dealt more damage in a single blow than the amount you have specified protection, or exceeds your character's available power points, the Force Field is dissipated.

Typically, the Force Field is centered on the character, though they can project it to cover other objects or beings adjacent to them, or anywhere within range.

Intangibility

Base Range: Self
Duration: Varies
Character Point Cost: 2 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per point of SIZ per level, then 1 power point per combat round

Each level allows movement of 1 SIZ through 10 centimeters of wall or other materials per combat round and allows the character to 'fly' by walking on air at a normal walking speed. While intangible, your character cannot be affected by kinetic or thermal (cold and heat) forces of any sort and cannot use any attacks resulting in the same forces. Your character can still be affected by radiation or other non-kinetic forces and can use them as well. Each extra level adds another 10 centimeters to the distance that can be passed through in a combat round (up to normal movement rate) or can be used to affect another SIZ point outside of their own SIZ. Once active, intangibility can be maintained at a cost of 1 power point per combat round, though it ends if your character is knocked unconscious or runs out of power points. If your character takes damage in a combat round, your gamemaster may require a successful Idea roll to maintain the intangibility. If desired, your gamemaster may determine that certain materials are easier to pass through than others, based on the guidelines presented in *Chapter 8: Equipment*. Denser materials may slow or even stop an intangible character from passing through.

Invisibility

Base Range: 15 meters
Duration: 1 combat round
Character Point Cost: 1 per level per point of SIZ
Power Point Cost: 1 per point of SIZ to activate, then 1 power point per combat round

Each level allows your character to turn 1 SIZ of something invisible, whether themselves, another character, an object, or portion of an object. Your character must concentrate on using the superpower and do no more than walk or speak. Fighting, using other powers, or other distractions (injury, intense physical activity) breaks the effect and causes the subject to become visible. Any attacks against an invisible character or object are at 1/5 the normal skill rating. Any parries are equally difficult, requiring a successful Listen, Sense, or Spot roll to even attempt parrying. A successful roll for one of these skills to overcome the Invisibility reduces the penalty of attacks to *Difficult* instead of 1/5.

There are few limitations to what actions can be performed while invisible. One can move, attack, flee, or stand still as long as the superpower is active. Invisibility can be deactivated at any time, though starting it again requires activating the superpower again. In combat, the rules for **Ambushes** (page 140) and **Backstabs and Helpless Opponents** (page 142) may be relevant.

Leap

Base Range: 2 meters per level
Duration: Instantaneous
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: None

Each level adds an additional 2 horizontal meters or 1 vertical meter to normal jumping range (see page 45). Leap only adds to the range of the Jump skill and does not require a roll or power points to use. The Jump skill must still be used successfully when appropriate (in combat, not

during normal movement). A Leap counts as a normal movement action during a combat round. As with Jump, landing successfully is automatic, no matter how great the controlled leap. However, a successful Agility roll may be required if trying to catch a building ledge or land somewhere small or requiring balance. This roll may be *Difficult* for especially small or narrow perches (a windowsill, power line, or atop a streetlight).

If falling, the Jump skill may be used to reduce damage. If the Jump skill roll is successful, reduce the distance fallen by 3 meters for every level of Leap.

In combat, your character can leap at an opponent to gain extra damage. Each level of Leap used (up to the character's SIZ) can be added to the character's total of STR and SIZ to determine a new damage modifier (if any) on a physical attack. The levels of Leap you can use for this increase to damage modifier are those of the actual distance leaped, not the overall levels, and the damage modifier only applies for the first attack made during the attack. A successful Jump roll must be made in addition to the normal attack roll.

Consult the damage modifier table (page 15) and the Jump skill (page 45) for more information. Depending on how high and far a character jumps, **Aerial Combat** (page 143) in *Chapter Seven: Spot Rules* may be useful.

Protection

Base Range: Self or touch
Duration: 1 combat round
Character Point Cost: 1 per level per energy type
Power Point Cost: 1 point per level per combat round

When purchased, Protection must be specified for a particular type of energy, such as Protection (Kinetic). Each level of Protection reduces the level of the appropriate superpower directed at your character. This may reduce the attacking superpower's level to 0, meaning that it has no effect. Multiple types of Protection can be purchased. There is no requirement for all types of Protection to be at the same level, so your character could have Protection (Kinetic) 2 and Protection (Heat) 5. If an attack uses multiple types of energy, only the applicable types of the superpower are reduced through the Protection power.

Many types of armor and equipment incorporate the Protection power (see *Chapter 8: Equipment* for more information).

Regeneration

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per hit point healed per combat round

This superpower gives the ability to heal extremely fast, drawing on the body's natural energies to accelerate the natural healing process. Each level of Regeneration heals 1 hit point of damage every combat round at the end of the combat round (DEX rank 0), if there are power points remaining. Regeneration does not have to be activated to work, though it may be deactivated at will. This superpower will not bring your character back from the dead but will heal damage that would normally require hospitalization. Regeneration will also heal the effects of any major wound, though the effects of this healing will take place once all hit points from the injury have been completely restored. Your gamemaster will determine if severed body parts can be restored. Your character cannot purchase more levels of Regeneration than ½ their CON (round up). Various equipment may confer this power, as described in *Chapter 8: Equipment*.

Resistance

Base Range: Self or touch
Duration: Always on, or 1 full turn (5 minutes)
Character Point Cost: 1 per level for turn-based, 3 per level if permanent
Power Point Cost: 1 per level used if turn-based, none if permanent

Resistance serves as an artificial shield allowing a greater chance of resisting attacks of a particular energy type. Each level of Resistance must be specified towards an energy type (see **Energy Types**, page 95) and either adds to a passive characteristic in a resistance roll, or provides a resistance value if there is no applicable characteristic.

Resistance is an all-or-nothing power. If Resistance overcomes the attacking energy type, that energy type has no further effect. If Resistance fails to resist the active energy type, Resistance has no effect.

Additional types of Resistance can be introduced, other than energy types, such as:

- **Disease:** This increases resistance to disease, adding to CON in resistance rolls against illness, infection, or other sickness. Resistance (Disease) also applies to any other characteristic (such as STR) the disease acts against in a resistance roll.
- **Poison:** This increases resistance to poison, whether natural toxins or some manufactured chemical compounds. It also provides resistance to non-poisonous chemical influences, such as drugs, alcohol, or other non-lethal substances. In all cases, levels in Resistance (Poison) are added to CON or the applicable characteristic.

This power works well in tandem with Armor and/or Protection. At your gamemaster's discretion, Resistance can be expanded to encompass entire power sets, such as Resistance (Magic) or Resistance (Psychic),

ABSORPTION, ARMOR, PROTECTION, AND RESISTANCE

These four superpowers work differently but all serve the same purpose: keeping your character from taking damage. These guidelines illustrate their differences and how they work in conjunction with one another. They are presented in the order they come into play.

- **Resistance** is all-or-nothing, like parrying with a shield. If it resists the attack, there is no effect. If the attack gets past the Resistance, it strikes your character with full effect.
- **Protection** reduces the effects of an attack. Like sunscreen, it limits the amount of solar radiation getting through to your skin, but it isn't the same as staying in the shade, and certainly won't help against skin cancer.
- **Armor** protects like physical armor. If your character is hit by an attack, it reduces the amount of damage taken.
- **Absorption** soaks up damage taken from an attack and turns it into energy your character can use.

Where more than one of these four superpowers is in effect, handle them in reverse alphabetical order (as above). First, Resistance determines whether the power works at all, Protection lowers the levels of the power if it gets through, Armor reduces the damage inflicted on your character, and Absorption soaks up any remaining points and turns them into power points.

but it is suggested that this widespread Resistance be significantly more expensive, such as 10 points per level.

Sidekick

Base Range: Not applicable
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: Variable
Power Point Cost: None

A Sidekick is a secondary character controlled alongside your own character. The Sidekick is loyal and potentially possesses similar skills and powers. You and your gamemaster should create the Sidekick as if it is a new character, though the Sidekick does not have to be human. The Sidekick's characteristics and skills must be purchased as if they were Super Characteristics and Super Skills, out of your character's point budget. If the Sidekick is a natural animal, determine its characteristics and skills normally, adjusting as desired, and then pay for them, using the above powers. The Sidekick can have powers and equipment, but these must also be paid for out of your character's point budget.

Generally, a Sidekick has powers and skills like its 'owner', though this is not necessary. A Sidekick usually has the following attributes:

- It is loyal to the owner, though it may disagree and occasionally rebel.
- It often idolizes its owner and fashions its appearance after them.
- It depends on its owner for living arrangements and necessities.
- It often gets into trouble, and sometimes must be rescued. This should happen at least twice as often as a Sidekick is able to rescue its owner.
- It is often younger and less experienced than its owner, though it can increase in experience as a normal character would. The Sidekick's owner can determine how the Sidekick will improve powers through their earned character point budget.

When the Sidekick is finished, you run the Sidekick as a secondary character, rolling for it and guiding its actions. Occasionally, your gamemaster may choose to roleplay the Sidekick and make rolls for them, though this should be rare. The Sidekick is in most cases an extension of your character's identity, and you should have control over the Sidekick's behavior. Sidekicks can improve characteristics and skills, just like a character.

Normally, your character can only have one Sidekick at a time, though your gamemaster may allow you to purchase an additional Sidekick or more. Your character cannot have a Sidekick with a higher POW than your character. If this happens due to POW increases, the Sidekick leaves your character's service (becoming a character controlled by your gamemaster, or even by another player) and your character gets ½ of the original character point budget back. If a Sidekick is killed, your character gets ½ of the original character point budget back. Similarly, if you want your character to release the Sidekick, they get ½ of the Sidekick's current character point budget back (this should be calculated from current characteristics, skills, and powers). This way, it is more profitable in the long run to nurture and train a Sidekick before parting ways, rather than to let them outstrip your character or get killed in the line of duty.

Size Change

Base Range: Self
Duration: Varies
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per level to activate, no cost to keep active

Size Change allows an increase or reduction of SIZ by ±1 point per level (no maximum, minimum 0). When this power is purchased, you must specify whether it is to grow or to shrink. To do both, buy the superpower twice.

Growing to giant size has the following effects:

- Hit points are likely increased, so recalculate your character's hit point total based on the average of CON and SIZ (page 20). This also affects the major wound threshold (page 20) and hit points per location (page 21).
- Damage modifier may increase, as it is the total of STR+SIZ (see page 20).
- Increasing SIZ by 20 or more points makes your character twice as easy to hit in combat. Any attacks against them are considered Easy.
- If fatigue points are used, they are not affected by being giant-sized.

Shrinking has the following effects:

- Hit points may be decreased, so recalculate based on the average of CON and SIZ (see page 20). This also affects the major wound threshold (page 20) and hit points per location (page 21).
- Damage modifier may decrease, as it is the total of STR+SIZ (see page 20).
- Shrinking to SIZ 1 or 0 makes your character much harder to hit: all attacks against them become *Difficult*. For a SIZ below 0 (see below), it may be *Impossible* to be hit with normal weaponry, though attacks with an area of effect (like a flamethrower) still work if your character can be spotted, at your gamemaster's discretion.
- Hiding becomes *Easy* when your character is SIZ 3 or below. At SIZ 1 or 0, only a critical result for a Spot roll finds your character.
- Your character's physical attributes are also affected in several unquantifiable ways (volume, etc.).
- If fatigue points are used, they are not affected by being tiny.
- Your gamemaster may allow your character to shrink beyond SIZ 0, though this is outside the scope of these rules.

Once activated, this superpower does not cost any further power points to maintain. If your character is knocked unconscious, goes to sleep, runs out of power points, or is hit with something that cancels any active superpowers, Size Change deactivates and your character returns to their normal SIZ.

If your character takes a major wound while using Size Change, they must make a successful Stamina roll to maintain the current SIZ. If the roll fails, your character reverts to their original SIZ. If your character has taken damage while in giant or tiny form, the switch back to normal size gives your character's normal hit points or those from the alternate-sized body, whichever is currently lower. If your character has already taken damage before using the Size Change power, your gamemaster should take note of the damage your character has already taken before figuring the new hit point total. Once these have been determined, your gamemaster should apply this damage to your character's new hit point total. This may incapacitate your character if they are shrinking.

The spot rules for **Big and Little Targets** (page 142) may be of use. Consult the **Object SIZ Examples** table (page 190) for guidance on larger SIZ ratings.

Snare Projection

Base Range: 15 meters
Duration: Until destroyed or 10 combat rounds
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 point per use

Snare Projection creates an entrapping force (webbing, lasso, energy cage, blob of adhesive, extensible limb, etc.) that can be used against a target within range. The snare has STR equal to the superpower's level. Use of the power is automatic, though directing it may involve a skill check (see below). Being entrapped by Snare Projection forces the target to make a STR vs. STR resistance roll or be held as if entangled (see the entangle special success, page 129). If the resistance roll overcomes the snare's STR, the snare dissipates (if appropriate) or is otherwise shrugged aside. If used against multiple opponents,

the levels of Snare Projection are distributed evenly among the targets, with you choosing which foe gets any leftover levels. Each target is required to make a STR vs. STR resistance roll to break free of the snare.

The range of the snare can be increased by allocating levels to it instead of to its STR, on a per-use basis. Each level adds another 15 meters to the range.

Snare Projection may require the Throw or Projection skills (page 93). Ask your gamemaster which applies. If it is a piece of equipment, the relevant weapon or gear use skill should be used to determine if Snare Projection hits the target. If the power is not intrinsic and is a piece of gear, **Equipment with Powers** (page 161) in *Chapter 8: Equipment* may be of relevance. Consult the rules for entangling (page 129) for additional detail.

Stretching

Base Range: Self
Duration: Varies
Character Point Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: None

Each level allows your character to stretch their entire body (or some portion) for 1 meter in any direction. Additionally, if the total levels of Stretching are equal to twice your character's CON, they are capable of stretching in even more remarkable ways, through keyholes, under doors, gliding like a kite on the wind, mimicking items of furniture or other objects, or other examples of extraordinary plasticity. Expanding in SIZ will always be limited to your character's normal SIZ plus the levels of Stretching, and your character can contract their body to a SIZ equal to their SIZ characteristic minus the superpower's levels (minimum SIZ 1). Every meter stretched lowers current STR by 1, which may lower the damage modifier.

If knocked unconscious, goes to sleep, runs out of power points, or is attacked with a force that cancels any existing superpowers, Stretching deactivates and your character returns to their normal shape. If your character takes a major wound while stretching, they must make a successful Endurance roll to maintain the current shape. If that roll fails, your character reverts to their original form.

Your character can use Stretching to improvise the effects of another superpower such as Absorption, Barrier, Defense, Flight, Super Sense, Leap, Resistance, Shape Change, Size Change, Snare Projection, or others. In these cases, your gamemaster should require you to describe exactly what your character is doing, and your character must succeed in an Idea roll. If successful, your character can spend double the relevant power points and temporarily have ½ their Stretching levels in the superpower being imitated. Repeatedly mimicking a superpower your character does not have may require you to purchase levels in that mimicked superpower, at your gamemaster's discretion.

Super Characteristic

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 1 per point of STR, CON, SIZ, or CHA; 3 points for each point of DEX, INT, POW, and EDU
Power Point Cost: None

Each level adds +1 of STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, CHA, or EDU to your character's original characteristics. All characteristic rolls and figured abilities (hit points, fatigue points, power points, and sanity points) may increase. If STR and/or SIZ are increased, damage modifier may also increase (page 20). Increases to INT and EDU grant higher initial skill points, as described in **Step Seven** of character creation (page 11).

Super Movement

Base Range: Self
Duration: Varies
Character Point Cost: 10 per type
Power Point Cost: 1 per combat round

Each type allows your character to move their normal MOV rate in an unconventional manner or one that defies physics. Each type must be purchased separately, but there are no levels—the movement simply works if the power points are spent. Carrying capacity is based on normal STR, and heavy weights are handled with a resistance roll. Following are some common Super Movement types. You and your gamemaster may devise others using these as examples.

- **Air Walking:** Walking upon the air itself, as on invisible walkways and staircases, immaterial to anyone else. Your character can carry others, as if on normal ground.
- **Irresistible:** Moving through water or any environmental condition as if without resistance. Hazards that would normally slow movement (water, mud, etc.) are no hindrance, allowing the full movement rate. This also applies to movement speed outside of combat, ignoring weather or terrain effects, but it does not apply to resistance from unnatural conditions, such as Snare Projection or a physical barrier.
- **Lightfoot:** Lightfoot allows a normal movement rate while in the air, leaping from surface to surface, gliding, skipping, or making slight motions upon solid surfaces to maintain movement. Lightfoot lets your character stand on surfaces that would not normally support their weight, such as a bamboo reed, a slender tree branch, a sword point, or even a house of cards. moving as if gravity has no effect. Your character can run lightly up rough walls or trees, or even skip across water or the surface of snow. They cannot remain in the air indefinitely, and to change direction (right, left, or even up or down) requires a successful Agility roll as well as additional power points spent.
- **Trackless:** Moving across the ground or the surface of snow and leaving absolutely no track unless desired. Only special successes on Track rolls can find a Trackless trail, and the result will only be a standard success. Your character can stand still or even cartwheel across a surface and will not leave tracks. This power is intrinsic and cannot be shared. Carrying any more than a normal burden negates it entirely.
- **Wall Walking:** Walking on walls and ceilings, whether on all fours or standing upright. Your character can stand still on vertical or upside-down surfaces as if on the ground, and jumping keeps them on the same plane. Carrying additional weight must be handled through a normal STR resistance roll.
- **Water Walking:** Walking or running across water as if it were solid ground, meeting no resistance from waves and not sinking. Unlike Lightfoot, your character can stand still on the water's surface, though turbulent water will cause them to sway with the motions of the waves. Your character can also surf along rapid-moving water, riding the current and being swept along as if on a surfboard or conveyor belt. Your gamemaster should determine how rapid the water is and may require Agility or Jump rolls to overcome obstacles such as outcropping stones in river rapids.
- **Zero-gravity:** Your character can ignore the effects of zero gravity, orienting their body in relation to whatever object or plane in three-dimensional space they inhabit. Your character can move easily through zero-g environments, incurring no penalties to actions, and even when in deep space will always be able to find a comfortable orientation. They can use Super Movement (Zero-gravity) to orient other characters in zero-g through touch.

When using Super Movement, if a conscious character falls, they can attempt an Idea roll to remain on the surface they are on (air, water, ceiling,

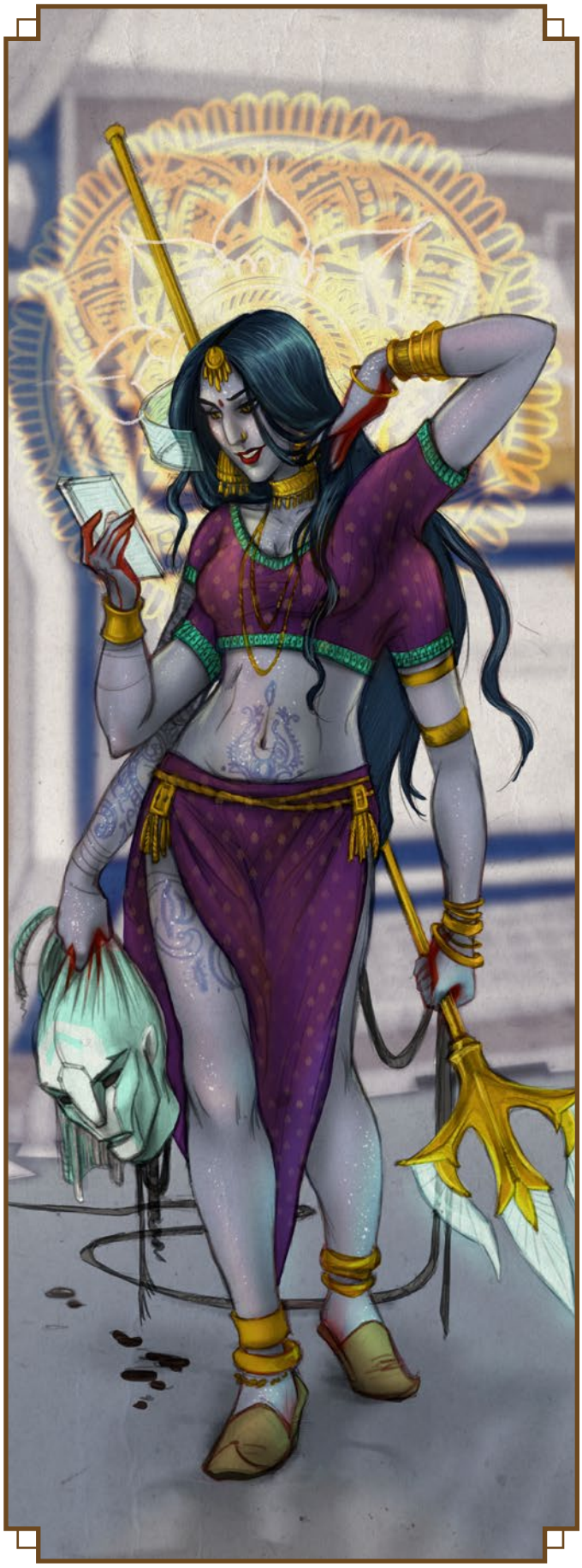
wall, etc.) rather than sink or fall to earth. If your character is knocked unconscious or runs out of power points while using Super Movement, they fall to the ground, sink beneath the water, etc. as appropriate. If your character is using normal movement and is presented with an opportunity, they can make a *Difficult* Agility roll to switch to Super Movement, such as being hurled through the air towards a wall and using Lightfoot or Wall Walking to land on the wall, in control and unharmed.

Super Sense

Base Range: Varies
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: None

Super Sense represents a variety of superpowers, each keyed to a principal sense. Each must be bought separately and should be noted like 'Super Sense (Dark Vision)'. Different Super Senses can be combined, using the same skill roll, or they can be used separately. Following are common Super Senses, though you and your gamemaster may introduce others:

- **Dark Vision:** See 15 meters in absolute darkness, canceling any negative modifiers to the Spot or combat skills due to darkness. Detection of color is almost nonexistent, and long-range sight is extremely limited. Each extra level increases the range by 15 meters.
- **Microscopic Vision:** See microscopic objects in considerable detail. At level 1, the rate of magnification is 25× (25 times normal size). For each additional level, double the existing magnification (25× becomes 50×, then 100×, then 200×, etc.), or add an additional 15 meters range. Use of Microscopic Vision is incompatible with normal sight—it must be deactivated to perceive the world normally. This can be done instantly, but it must be reactivated to use again.
- **Night Vision:** If there is a source of light (however faint), your character can see with perfect clarity for 15 meters. This cancels any negative modifiers to Spot or combat due to partial darkness. Night Vision allows for some differentiation between colors and provides the sharpest form of vision in near-dark conditions. Each additional level increases the range by another 15 meters.
- **Sonar Detection:** Hear ambient sounds (or creates them) and use them for echolocation, determining the presence of other beings, obstacles, and the terrain in range. Each level provides a 15-meter, 360-degree field of sonar detection, projected from the head. Use the Listen skill to notice a particular feature, and an Idea roll to identify it. Each additional level of this power adds 15 meters to the range.
- **Super Hearing:** Each level doubles the effective range of the Listen skill. Normal hearing range is 15 meters, assuming there is no intervening obstacle (such as a wall) or noise-making interference. This can also be used to hear things outside human range of perception, such as an opponent's heartbeat. This superpower also allows your character to hear opponents even if they have successfully used the Stealth skill. If an opponent has an average success on a Stealth roll, an *Easy* Listen roll detects them. If the opponent has a special success, an unmodified Listen success hears them. Even a critical success with Stealth is heard with a special success.
- **Super Smell/Taste:** Use their Sense skill to detect the taste of something a normal human would be unable to discern, such as a tasteless poison. Each level increases the range of the sense of smell by another 15 meters, so your character can smell something faint at great range. Taste increases by 1 meter per level, so your character can even taste something within range without having to consume it.
- **Super Touch:** Each level lets the Sense skill detect subtle changes in texture through fingertips or other body parts. It also gives the ability to 'see' with exposed skin, acting in darkness as if in normal daylight, ignoring any penalties from darkness (use the Listen skill).



Finally, it provides a POW×level chance of detecting oncoming missile weapons or other hand-to-hand attacks that might not be detected otherwise (an ambush or backstab). The range is 15 meters. Each additional level extends the range by 15 meters.

- **Super Vision:** Each level doubles the distance your character can see detail in, doubling the range at which they can use skills such as Spot. It also increases the magnification that your character is capable of, allowing them to perform skills such as Appraise at long range.
- **Thermal Vision:** Detect heat patterns within range, allowing them to see living beings in the dark through bodily heat. Heat sources appear as red blurs in a bluish-black background. Everything outside the range of the power is an indistinct blur, and the superpower does not allow detection of objects that do not emit heat, such as furniture or walls, unless they are wired to do so. Each additional level increases the range by another 15 meters.
- **Ultrasonic Hearing:** Hear sounds that would be inaudible to a normal human, above or below audible frequencies. Use your character's Listen skill to see if the sound is noticed. A wall or other barrier 10 centimeters thick will block most sounds from passing through, but this superpower negates that blockage. Each additional level increases range by 15 meters and increases the ability to hear through barriers that would normally block sounds (2 levels allows hearing through 20 centimeters of barrier, 3 levels through 30 centimeters of barrier, etc.). Ultrasonic Hearing does not give your character sonar detection (as described above).
- **X-Ray Vision:** See through 10 centimeters of any substance per level, blocked only by a single substance such as lead, gold, or some other higher-density substance (player choice). The range is 15 meters. Each additional level increases range by 15 meters and the penetrating value of the power by an additional 10 centimeters. With enough levels, make Spot or other visual perception skill rolls unimpaired, even when obstructed by a barrier.

Super Skill

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on
Character Point Cost: 2 per level
Power Point Cost: None

Each level of Super Skill adds +20% to a single skill rating, above and beyond skill points spent during character creation. Additional levels can be stacked for greater bonuses. The increased skill rating also improves the likelihood of special successes and critical results, The Super Skill can increase with experience as normal: the bonus is not figured into the experience roll.

Based on the game power level, your gamemaster may wish to limit the total levels of this power your character can purchase or prohibit certain skills from being used with this power. See **Skill Ratings Over 100%** (page 37) and **Attacks and Parries Over 100%** (page 131) for useful information.

Super Speed

Base Range: Self
Duration: Varies
Character Point Cost: 20 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per level used per combat round

Super Speed increases the movement rate to 10×MOV per level and allows both full movement in a combat round as well as performing a combat action. Normally, your character is restricted to only one of these actions. Each additional level allows another full round of movement or another non-combat action. The extra full movement can be taken before, after, or at your character's normal DEX rank plus the levels of Super Speed. When performing a normal action using Super Speed, your character acts at the usual DEX rank plus levels in Super Speed. Alternatively, your character can run all-out, performing a full movement for each level of Super Speed, plus their normal full movement without performing an action other than movement during the combat round. If your character is running all-out, they cannot perform an action in the combat round.

It is not necessary to use all levels of Super Speed at once: your character can choose to use fewer levels of Super Speed than they possess, spending less power points each combat round.

Super Speed used in a combat round modifies attacks against the character by –10% per level, assuming they are within range. However, if the attacker is also using the Super Speed power, the reduction to attack chances is based on the difference between levels, if the defender is higher than the attacker. If both Super Speed powers are of equal level, there is no modification to any attack chances, and there is no modification to the attack chances if the attacker has a higher Super Speed than the defender.

The Super Speed defensive bonus is cumulative with modifiers such as cover, darkness, etc. Area attacks are not affected by Super Speed if your character is in the affected area.

If making a physical attack at the end of a Super Speed charge, every level of Super Speed used increases the damage modifier by one step and adds the knockback special success effects if a special success is rolled. Use of this specific aspect of the power costs 1 additional power point per level.

Teleport

Base Range: 1,000 meters
Duration: Instantaneous
Character Point Cost: 1 per level
Power Point Cost: 1 per level

Teleport allows instantaneous teleportation of 1 SIZ per level from one place to another within range. Teleport can be used on things other than your character, either along with your character or independently, assuming there are adequate levels. Teleport does not need a targeting roll and can be used on anything within range. If the target is affixed to something or does not wish to be transported, your character must also successfully overcome the item's hit points (or armor value) vs. their power points in a resistance roll. Clothes and personal gear in close contact with the subject accompany them when teleported. For an unwilling subject, make a resistance roll matching the power's level with the subject's current power points. A willing subject does not require a resistance roll.

A fumbled roll when using this superpower sends the subject into a solid object, perhaps even underground. Make a Luck roll to avoid this mishap. If the roll is successful, no damage is taken, and the teleported subject narrowly escapes this fate. If the roll fails, the subject immediately takes 3D6 points of damage. For a living being, roll on the **Major Wound** table (page 135), adapting the result as appropriate. If sanity is used, a sanity loss of 1D6/3D6 for the victim is suggested, and 1D3/1D10 for the teleporting character. An object teleported becomes fused with another object, a structure, or the ground.

Teleport can also be used offensively in the following ways:

- Deliberately teleporting a living target or an item into a solid structure costs the target's SIZ in power points and lets them make a *Difficult* Luck roll to avoid this fate. Use the guidelines for a fumble, above, including potential sanity loss.
- Teleporting an object into a living being costs 6 power points per SIZ of the object and causes 1D6 damage per SIZ, if successful, with a *Difficult* Luck roll allowing them to dodge or resist, as appropriate. If sanity is used, use the above guidelines.
- Teleporting an inanimate object into another requires your

gamemaster to determine the outcome.

- A subject can be teleported into the air and dropped, letting gravity take hold (see **Falling**, page 148). An unwilling target can avoid this with a successful *Difficult* Dodge roll.

Whether inadvertent or intentional, becoming fused with a solid item is usually traumatic for a living being, and the target must find some means of extricating themself from the item or structure (perhaps being teleported free or pulled out via Intangibility). Failure to do so can cause any major wound to have permanent effect.

Consult the section on objects in *Chapter 8: Equipment* for sample sizes and hit points of items.

Transfer

Base Range: Touch
Duration: 1 combat round
Character Point Cost: 3 per level for hit points, 1 per level for other resources (fatigue points, power points, sanity points)
Power Point Cost: None

Transfer moves an internal resource (hit points, power points, fatigue points, sanity points) from your character to another. It works similarly to Drain, though in the opposite direction. The rate of this transfer is 1 point per level per combat round, with additional levels increasing the points transferrable (level 2 transfers 2 points, etc.). The means can be a grab, a bite, a handshake, etc., but must involve physical contact for at least one full combat round. This may require a successful Grapple attempt if in combat, or Agility roll if outside of combat. No roll is required for an immobile or willing target, and an attempt against an unwary target is *Easy*. To continue to transfer points to an unwilling target on successive rounds, the maneuver (Grapple, etc.) must be rolled successfully each combat round. Failure breaks the contact.

Once contact has been established, your character can begin to transfer points. If the target is willing or unconscious, no resistance roll is required. An unwilling target can resist using a particular characteristic roll, described below. If they succeed in resisting, the transfer has no effect, and the intended recipient can attempt to break free. If successful, the resource is transferred from your character to the recipient in the powers phase of the next round.

The power works the same for any resource:

- Your character can transfer 1 resource point per level per combat round.
- Your character cannot transfer more of the resource than they currently possess.
- The target cannot accept more of the resource than their normal maximum, other than power points (see **Power Points**, page 20). Any resource points beyond the maximum are lost.

These four resources can be transferred, with the following guidelines:

- **Hit Points:** If your character reduces their own current hit point total to 1 or 2 hit points, they will fall unconscious. It is possible to transfer all your character's hit points to the recipient, but this requires a successful POW×1 roll to go below 1 hit point before falling unconscious. At 0 hit points, your character is unconscious and begins to die, as described in **Hit Points** (page 20). Your character cannot transfer enough hit points to go into negative hit points. A recipient can resist with a Stamina roll.
- **Power Points:** If your character's power point total reaches 0, they fall unconscious. A recipient can resist with a Luck roll.
- **Fatigue Points:** If your character's fatigue points reach 0, see the rules for **Fatigue** (page 24). A recipient can resist with a Stamina roll.
- **Sanity Points:** Adding sanity points does not eliminate any temporary or indefinite insanity the target suffers—it merely increases the chance of success for future sanity rolls. Specific insanities must be dealt with through psychotherapy and treatment. A character whose sanity points reach 0 is hopelessly insane and outside player control. Consult the rules for sanity (page 218). Your character can transfer as many SAN as they desire up to the target's maximum allowed SAN (see **Maximum Sanity**, page 218). If the target wishes to act against your character, they must make a successful Luck roll to do so.

This superpower works well with Drain, allowing one character to restore resource points they have transferred to others, or drain from one character and transfer to another, with them as the conduit.

Unarmed Combat

Base Range: Self
Duration: Always on, or 5 combat rounds
Power Cost: 20 per level
Power Point Cost: None

This represents an exceptional level of hand-to-hand combat training, whether secret techniques, ninjutsu, mystic fighting styles, or hyper-advanced fisticuffs. No roll or power points are required—but you must announce that your character is using Unarmed Combat.

Each level of this superpower:

- Adds +2 points per level to damage for any successful Brawl or Grapple attack.
- Acts as 2 points per level of (additional) armor to limbs when parrying melee, missile, or unarmed attacks while unarmed. This armor value is only applied if the parry is successful, and damage is being applied. The 2 points per level are also subtracted from damage determining a knockback or other weapon breakage.
- Modify a single attacker's chance to hit your character in a combat round by –5% per level. Pick who suffers this modifier, and it can vary from round to round. Alternatively, this penalty can be divided among multiple opponents in –5% increments, at the player's discretion.
- Modifies unarmed hand-to-hand attacks by +5% per level when the Brawl or Grapple skill is used. This applies to all qualifying attacks made in a combat round.

If using Unarmed Combat and facing an opponent using the same power, make a resistance roll of the opposing power levels. If both succeed, or both fail, the superpowers cancel each other and no one benefits from the superpower for five combat rounds. If only one of the combatants is successful, they can use Unarmed Combat while their opponent(s) cannot. If the combat is still occurring at the end of the five rounds, make another resistance roll, as before. Unarmed Combat is always effective against anyone without the superpower.

Unarmed Combat works in conjunction with the Martial Arts skill, with all modifiers from that skill combining with the superpower's benefits. The Brawl and Grapple skills (pages 39 and 43) are also relevant.

Weather Control

Base Range: 15 meters per level
Duration: 1 combat round
Power Cost: 3 per level
Power Point Cost: 3 per level to activate, 1 per combat round to maintain

Weather Control allows control over weather in the immediate area, creation of new atmospheric conditions, manipulation of ambient

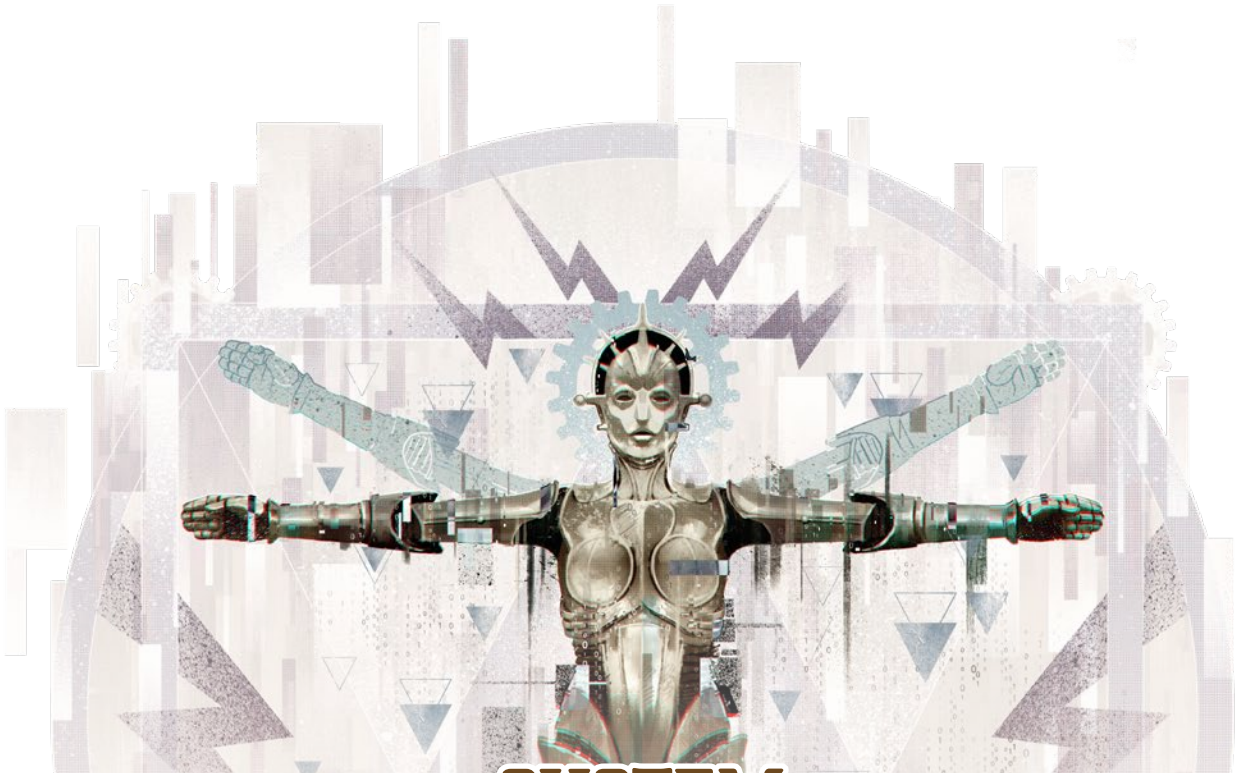
temperature, increasing or decreasing precipitation, and manifesting any of a variety of non-harmful weather conditions such as fog, freezing rain, etc. Each level increases the range by an additional 15 meters. While the effects only affect those within the range of the power, the actual extent of the weather is more widespread, as appropriate.

Additionally, Weather Control confers the following abilities:

- Each level can raise or lower the temperature by ±5° Celsius. See **Cold and Freezing** (page 146) and **Fire and Heat** (page 148) for more information.
- Each level allows your character to alter conditions such as wind, clouds, and rain by one 'step' per combat round (see **Weather Conditions**, page 156).
- A hailstorm or thunderclap can potentially cause stunning effects (see **Stunning or Subduing**, page 154).
- High winds can potentially cause knockback effects (page 149).
- Tornadoes that can cause sweep attacks (page 154) or reduce the attack chances for missile weapon use (see tornado-force winds in **Weather Conditions**, page 156).
- Rain that can douse a fire, including fires created with Energy Control (page 98).
- Snow and/or ice that can make a surface slippery and dangerous (see **Slippery or Unstable Surfaces**, page 153).
- Fog that can reduce effective visual range to five meters (see **Weather Conditions**, page 156).

Other effects can be devised with your gamemaster's approval.

Once the superpower ends, the weather returns to its normal state by one step per combat round. Weather Control does not allow your character to throw lightning bolts or weather effects strong enough to cause direct damage. These are covered by Energy Projection (page 99).



SYSTEM

The entire purpose of a game system is to answer two questions: *"How do the players determine whether they succeed or fail?"* and *"How well do they succeed or fail?" Basic Roleplaying* answers those questions with a clean and intuitive system using dice rolls to simulate the probability of whether an action succeeds or fails, and qualities of success to determine a range of possible outcomes.

Routine actions in routine situations without challenge should almost always succeed. However, when the action becomes dramatic or extraordinary, it's time to roll dice for the resolution. You will want to know if skills succeed when danger threatens, or if they fail miserably in the face of stress. Dice allow crises and decision points to be resolved impartially without the constant need for intervention of your gamemaster.

Some skills, especially weapon skills, are inherently dramatic and dangerous, and always are rolled for, as are accidents such as falls. All rolls to determine success or failure use percentage dice (D100s), with lower being better. Other types of dice establish the damage done by various weapons or determine other supporting information. *Chapter Six: Combat* discusses attacking and defending in combat. *Chapter Seven Spot Rules* contains guidelines to cover a variety of conditions and situations.

Usually, your gamemaster tells you when to roll and what sort of roll to make— whether it be a skill roll, a resistance table roll, a characteristic roll, etc., but this chapter is useful for everyone who wants to know how the game works.

ACTIONS

Regardless of genre, all good stories (and roleplaying adventures) have one thing in common: conflict. Characters are called upon to accomplish all sorts of things against the odds, from finding and interpreting clues to overcoming enemies in deadly combat.

Percentile rolls determine the success or failure of actions whose outcome is in doubt. Other dice can help define the results of a roll (damage, etc.), but percentile rolls are the core of the system. To see if an action succeeds, roll D100 and compare the result to the chance, determined by the type of roll and its potential modifiers. If the percentile roll is equal to or less than the target, the action succeeds. Rolls higher than the chance of success fail.

Automatic or Impossible Actions

Not all actions require a die roll. Routine activities attempted under normal conditions should generally succeed unless they're outside the ability of the characters. No D100 roll is necessary for any action your gamemaster deems simple or routine, without challenge or conflict.

On the other hand, your gamemaster may decide that truly overwhelming tasks, like performing heart surgery without medical training or building a computer out of coconuts are beyond the abilities of even the most accomplished experts. If your gamemaster rules that a task is *impossible*, no die roll will be sufficient—all attempts fail.

Evaluating Success or Failure

Sometimes your character's efforts can have very different results: a good toss at darts will hit the board, while a lucky or exceptional throw hits the bull's-eye. There are five degrees of success for any type of action roll. Ranked from worst to best, they are as follows:

Fumble

Bad luck or incompetence sometimes conspire to produce the worst possible result, a spectacular failure called a fumble. The chance of fumbling an action roll equals 5% (1/20th) of the chance of failure, usually in the 96–00 range. A roll of 00 is always a fumble, no matter what the skill rating is. Fumbles never yield any beneficial results, and always end up impeding or even harming your character and/or allies

through disastrous or unintended results. *Chapter Three: Skills* and *Chapter Six: Combat* discuss the specific consequences of fumbled rolls.

Failure

Rolls higher than the base chance fail. Unless an action is *Automatic*, there is always some chance of failure: no matter how high the modified base chance, rolls fail on results of 96 or higher. Some failures cost nothing more than perhaps a little dignity, while others can be expensive in time, money, or physical damage. See *Chapter Three: Skills* for the consequences of failed rolls. The exception are resistance rolls, where a difference of 10 characteristic points is enough to make only a roll of 00 a failure.

SKILL RESULTS TABLE

These are the ranges for critical success, special success, and fumbles. The results for special successes incorporate the number range for critical successes. Whenever a roll result is in the range of both a critical and special success, the results of the critical success (if appropriate) should be applied, not both.

Base Chance	Critical	Special	Fumble
01–05	01	01	96–00
06–10	01	01–02	96–00
11–15	01	01–03	96–00
16–20	01	01–04	96–00
21–25	01–02	01–05	97–00
26–30	01–02	01–06	97–00
31–35	01–02	01–07	97–00
36–40	01–02	01–08	97–00
41–45	01–03	01–09	98–00
46–50	01–03	01–10	98–00
51–55	01–03	01–11	98–00
56–60	01–03	01–12	98–00
61–65	01–04	01–13	99–00
66–70	01–04	01–14	99–00
71–75	01–04	01–15	99–00
76–80	01–04	01–16	99–00
81–85	01–05	01–17	00
86–90	01–05	01–18	00
91–95	01–05	01–19	00
96–00	01–05	01–20	00
101–105	01–06	01–21	00
106–110	01–06	01–22	00
111–115	01–06	01–23	00
116–120	01–06	01–24	00
Each +5	Etc.	Etc.	00

Success

Any roll equal to or below the base chance qualifies as a success. Successes accomplish the action with average results. Weapon skills that achieve a success inflict the listed damage dice, and other skills have the results suggested in *Chapter Three: Skills*.

Special Success

Some results are better than average and yield extra benefits. Actions achieve special success if the roll is equal to or less than 1/5 the skill rating. Round fractions normally (down if .49 or under, up if .5 or higher). In combat, an attack that rolls a special success can inflict a knockdown or impale based on the type of weapon (see *Chapter Six: Combat* for additional detail), while the skill descriptions in *Chapter Three: Skills* provide guidance for special successes.

Critical Success

Sometimes your character will perform an action and so well they achieve extraordinary results. Rolls that are equal to or less than 1/20 of the skill rating are a critical success. Round fractions normally. A critical success yields the best of all possible results. Weapons that critically hit utterly bypass the target's armor and do maximum damage (plus the normally rolled damage modifier); while skill rolls achieve far better results than normal. Refer to *Chapter Three: Skills* to for suggested critical results.

Skill Rolls

Most actions your character attempts are resolved with skill rolls. Here, the percentile roll uses your character's rating in the appropriate skill as the base chance. Any skill which normally has a base chance of 5% or higher always succeeds on a roll of 01–05 chance of success, even if difficulty, conditional modifiers, or other factors reduce the skill rating below 5%. See **Modifying Action Rolls** (page 113). See *Chapter Three: Skills* for more information about each skill.

Characteristic Rolls

Some actions are not easily linked to a specific skill: pulling oneself up a rope, for example. For these situations, use a characteristic roll, with a base chance of your character's characteristic multiplied by a number. CON, INT, DEX, and CHA are common characteristics to use, and most characteristic rolls have a ×5 multiplier. Your base characteristic roles were defined in character creation (page 9). Depending on the difficulty of the action, your gamemaster may use a higher or lower multiplier. See **Difficulty Modifiers** (page 113).

Resistance Rolls

Some actions require more than skill or natural ability: obstacles must be overcome to succeed. In these cases, gamemasters should refer to the resistance table and call for a resistance roll. Resistance rolls never involve skills, instead pitting characteristics or other measurable quantities against each other. See **Opposed Skill Rolls** (page 113) for ways to handle skill vs. skill contests.

To make a resistance roll, compare the active factor to the passive factor on the resistance table. The active factor is the party or force trying to influence the passive factor. The following are all examples of resistance rolls:

- Potency 17 venom (active) poisons your character with a CON 15 (passive). The venom is trying to inflict damage on your character, so the venom is active.
- Your character has STR 18 (active) and tries to move a SIZ 25 (passive) boulder. Your character is trying to move the boulder, so their STR is active.

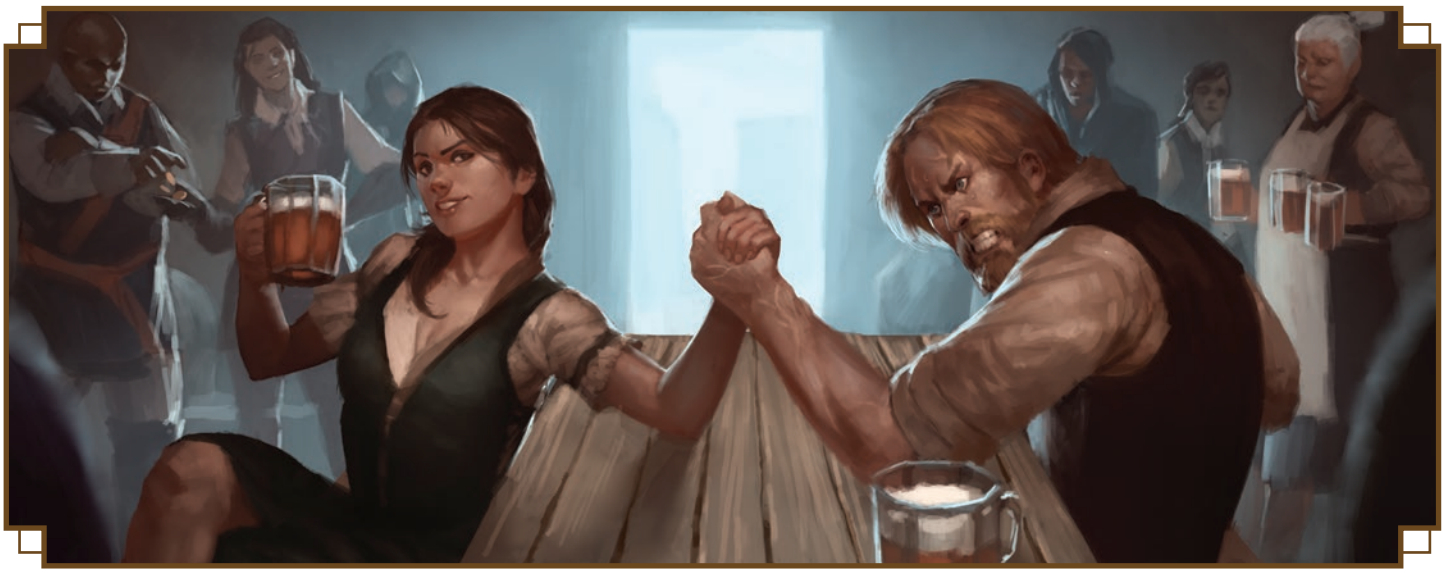
The base chance of a resistance roll equals 50% + (active characteristic × 5) – (passive characteristic × 5). If the active and passive factors are equal, the active factor has a 50% chance of success. Every point the active factor exceeds the

THE RESISTANCE TABLE

Passive Characteristic

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
4	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–	RANGE OF AUTOMATIC SUCCESS			–	–
5	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–				–	–
6	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
7	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
8	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
9	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–	–
10	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	–	–	–	–	–
11	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95				
12	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95			
13	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95		
14	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	
15	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95
16	–	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
17	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
18	–	–	RANGE OF AUTOMATIC FAILURE			–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75	80
19	–	–				–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70	75
20	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65	70
21	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60	65
22	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55	60
23	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**	55
24	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	**50**

For success, roll D100 equal to or less than the indicated number.



passive factor by modifies the chance of success by +5%, while passive factors higher than active factors modify the base chance by –5% for every point of difference. Differences of 10 points or more result in automatic success or failure, though your gamemaster may allow a roll of 01 or 00 to succeed or fail, respectively, where results would otherwise be automatic.

Some specific uses of the resistance table include:

- **Power Points vs. Power Points:** Powers that attempt to influence or control a target often involve contests of power points: your character's current power point total must overcome the target's current power points for the power to take effect.
- **Potency vs. CON:** All diseases and poisons are measured in terms of Potency (POT) and match this rating against the target's CON to determine the effects. Depending on the venom or illness, even a failed roll can impair the target.
- **POW vs. POW:** A classic contest of willpower. In addition to winning the resistance roll, success in a POW vs. POW contest gives the active character an opportunity to raise their POW score if they win vs. a higher POW opponent.
- **STR vs. STR:** Used in arm wrestling, as well as attempts to force open a stuck door or bend an iron bar. These contests involve inflexible obstacles, not heavy ones.
- **Damage vs. CON:** Knockout attacks and blows to the head match the rolled damage against the CON of the target to determine if the target is stunned or knocked out.
- **STR+SIZ vs. STR+SIZ:** Overbearing attacks attempt to use the mass and strength of the attacker to knock down the target.

Your gamemaster may wish to always allow for a chance of failure when a result of 00 is rolled, regardless of skill rating. Similarly, a 01 may be a success, even if improbable, though this should be within your character's capabilities.

Critical Results, Special Successes, and Fumbles on Resistance Rolls

Usually resistance rolls have yes/no results—success or failure—but your gamemaster may choose to characterize results more granularly in the cases of a special or critical success (see below), or a drastic failure with a fumble. The nature of this is up to your gamemaster, using the guidelines for levels of success and failure with skills (see page 109).

Special Skill Rolls

Special circumstances may require something other than a standard skill roll. These cases arise when two characters work together, work against each other, or attempt to do two things at once.

Cooperative Skill Rolls

Two or more characters can attempt to work together on an action, if reasonable. This is a type of augment (page 38). Your gamemaster may impose restrictions on how many characters can contribute to a particular activity, as it may be limited by physical or other practical concerns. Some tasks simply cannot be assisted, depending on circumstances.

Whenever working together on an action, pick one character as the lead. All the other characters pitching in should make skill rolls. Take the best result or a fumble, if one occurs.

- **Critical Success:** Modify the primary character's skill rating by +50%.
- **Special Success:** Modify the skill rating by +30%.
- **Success:** Modify the skill rating by +20%.
- **Failure:** If no helpers succeeded, the primary character's skill rating is modified by –10%.
- **Fumble:** A fumble from any helper is so distracting that the primary skill is modified by –50%.

One reason for cooperative skill use is to increase the chance of the primary character's success, as well as the chance of special and critical successes.

If the primary skill roll is successful, everyone involved who made a successful skill roll can make an experience check. If not, no one gets an experience check.

OPPOSING SKILL ROLL SYSTEMS

There are many ways to handle opposing rolls, and the following alternate methods allow for your gamemaster to pick the one they prefer, instead of the default presented above.

Opposed Skills Using Highest Successful Result

Let everyone involved in the opposed check roll as normal (with any applicable modifiers) and compare the results. The highest successful result rolled that is not a critical or special success is the winner. For example, if two characters have the same skill rating of 87% and one rolls an 86 and the other rolls a 22, the roll of 86 is the winner. Both rolls are successful, but one has a higher result than the other.

The higher a character's skill at an attempted action, the greater the chance they will defeat less skilled (but still successful) opponents. Ties are resolved by comparing unmodified skill ratings, with the higher skill rating being the winner.

An alternate and more complex method is to make rolls as normal and then take the result of the successful roll and subtract it from the modified skill rating. The character achieving the highest difference between the skill rating and their roll is the winner.

Opposed Skill Subtraction

In an opposed skill roll, one skill is designated as the active/offensive skill and the other as the passive/defensive skill. First, make a skill roll for the passive character; if the roll is successful, subtract the full value of the that character's skill rating from the active/attacking skill's rating. If the passive skill roll fails, the attacking skill is unmodified.

A passive fumble turns the attacker's roll into an *Easy* roll. If the passive skill is higher than the active skill, the attacker still has a default 5% chance for success with any skill rating of 5% or higher.

Opposed Skill Rolls Using the Resistance Table

Actions involving two opposing skills can be resolved using the resistance table. Divide the attacking and defending skill ratings by 5 (rounding normally) and resolve it as a single roll contest on the resistance table.

This method generates different results from the others and denies one party any roll at all. If using this method, allow the players to make rolls whenever possible, with the nonplayer characters being 'passive' on the resistance table.

Another reason for cooperative skill use is when direct assistance is not possible, such as helping provide guidance from afar.

***For example**, your character (Pilot 25%) is at the controls of a small airplane, trying to land after the pilot was shot. An ally on the ground with Pilot 65% is in an air traffic control tower. Over the radio, she provides guidance for piloting and landing. Even though she is nowhere near a plane, the ally makes a successful Pilot roll, raising your character's effective Pilot skill by +20%, from 25% to 45%.*

Opposed Skill Rolls

Sometimes two characters use skills in direct opposition to each other.

***For example**, your character hides in a thick hedge while attempting to break into an enemy outpost. An alert sentry passes by, searching for intruders. Will your character elude notice? In this case, the sentry's Sense skill is pitted against your character's Hide skill.*

When two skills are opposed, both characters roll against their respective skills. The character that achieves the highest degree of success wins the contest. However, if the loser's skill roll was successful, they modify the winner's degree of success, shifting it downward one degree for every degree of success they achieve above failure. If both parties achieve the same degree of success, the higher die roll wins the contest, giving the advantage to characters with higher skill ratings.

***For example**, your character's Hide skill is 65, while the sentry has a Sense skill of 78. You roll a 47, a success. The sentry rolls a 13, or a special success! The sentry wins the contest, so they are alerted to your character's presence. Your character's successful roll downgrades the sentry's result from a special success to a normal success. In this case, your gamemaster rules that the sentry catches a glimpse of your character but does not pick out any of their identifying features. If the sentry had rolled a 30, your character would have eluded notice: both had successes, but your character's normal success beats the sentry's normal success when it comes to using Hide versus Sense.*

Combined Skill Rolls

In some cases, your character's actions can be complicated by having to do two things at once. Trying to spot a tiny detail while driving a car, shooting a bow from horseback, or climbing a tree without making a sound are all examples. In such cases, your gamemaster can link two skills together in one roll, using the lower skill rating as the base chance. If the roll succeeds, your character accomplishes both tasks. A failed roll that is below the second skill rating can be treated as a partial success.

Using the examples above, the driver might miss the detail but avoid a driving mishap, the horseman stays in the saddle but misses their shot, and the tree climber reaches the upper branches but makes noise. If both rolls fail, the consequences can be more extreme.

Make an experience check for the skill or skills that are successful.

MODIFYING ACTION ROLLS

Some actions are easier or harder than others, and sometimes challenging circumstances or lucky breaks help or hinder a character. Skill ratings are often modified based on their circumstances.

There are two main ways action rolls are modified: **difficulty modifiers** and **situational modifiers**.

Difficulty Modifiers

Some actions are simple enough that even an unskilled person succeeds without much effort, while others are challenging enough to give an expert pause. When an action itself is easier or more challenging than usual, adjust the skill rating by a difficulty modifier. The standard difficulty levels are: *Automatic*, *Easy*, *Average*, *Difficult*, and *Impossible*. These levels can apply to skill rolls, characteristic rolls, or similar rolls. Resistance rolls inevitably imply a level of conflict, with an opposing force, so they are not modified in this way.

Your gamemaster is the ultimate authority about when an action receives a difficulty modifier.

Automatic Actions

Any activity that is so mundane, routine, or under the most favorable of circumstances and without any drama or conflict can be assumed to be *Automatic*, with no roll necessary to determine whether it succeeds. Everyday physical and intellectual actions attempted under average conditions always succeed, unless there is some reason they should carry the chance of failure. Your character should be able to perform *Automatic* actions at reasonable levels of competency in their chosen profession without needing to roll each time they wish to succeed—rolling for skills are at dramatic or difficult times, when success or failure is of importance to survival or destiny. *Automatic* skill use never yields an experience check.

SKILL RATING OVER 100% (OPTION)

For games using epic or superhuman power levels, your gamemaster may allow your characters (and nonplayer characters) to have skill rankings above 100%. This heightened competency allows for greater chances of special and critical successes, and success even when significant difficulty or situational modifiers have lowered the chance of success. This represents superlative levels of expertise, the best in the world. Skill ratings over 100% can make determining opposed rolls much easier (see **Opposed Skill Rolls Systems**, on page 113), and are especially significant in combat (see **Attack and Parry Skills Over 100%**, page 131).

Easy Actions

Some actions are *Easy*, even for the untrained. Shooting a target at point-blank range, climbing a tree with many handholds, or recalling the most fundamental points of an academic discipline are all *Easy* actions. For an *Easy* action, double the skill rating. *Easy* characteristic rolls use a multiplier of ×10 or double the normal characteristic roll. However, success at an *Easy* skill roll does not merit an experience check.

Average Actions

Most actions fall within this category. If a skill or characteristic roll doesn't have a modifier before—such as an *Easy* Listen roll—assume it's *Average*. Use the base rating for *Average* actions, though they may have circumstance modifiers. *Average* characteristic rolls use a multiplier of ×5 and are the default on your character sheet.

Difficult Actions

Fighting an opponent you can't see, climbing a sheer surface, or remembering obscure scientific minutiae are all *Difficult* tasks. To determine the skill rating or characteristic rating for a *Difficult* action, divide the appropriate skill or characteristic roll in half (round up).

Impossible Actions

As described above, truly overwhelming or ridiculous actions, like performing heart surgery without surgical tools or building a computer

SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS

Condition	Description	Modifier
Task Complexity	Unfathomably complex with no apparent solution or guidance	−50%
	No clear solvable condition and/or needlessly complex	−20%
	Relatively straightforward, the solution somewhat apparent	+20%
	Simple, with an obvious solution	+50%
Equipment	No equipment when equipment is required	−50%
	Poor or improvised equipment	−20%
	High-quality equipment and superior supplies	+20%
	Advanced or high-tech equipment and supplies	+50%
Environment	Distracting environment, highly unstable ground, pitch black, stormy, etc.	−50%
	Unpleasant or unsanitary conditions, unsteady footing, darkness, bad weather, etc.	−20%
	Favorable conditions, good footing, plenty of space, relative quiet, etc.	+20%
	Pristine or immaculate environment ideally suited for the task at hand	+50%
Familiarity	Completely alien and beyond human experience	−50%
	Strange and using unfamiliar principles	−20%
	Relatively well-known subject matter	+20%
	Routine and completely familiar	+50%
Range	Far beyond the normal range	−50%
	Outside the range of comfort	−20%
	Well within range	+20%
	Perfectly placed and ideally situated for the attempt	+50%
Time	Nowhere near enough time to perform the task	−50%
	Rushed and stressed about it	−20%
	Plenty of time	+20%
	Activity can be done at leisure, with contemplation and deliberation	+50%
Understanding	No common means of interaction with subject	−50%
	Limited methods of communication available	−20%
	Subject is familiar and amenable to interaction	+20%
	Subject well-known, enthusiastic about interaction	+50%

out of coconuts are beyond the abilities of even the most accomplished experts. These are *Impossible* tasks. All attempts fail, no matter how well the player rolls. Your gamemaster may allow a flat 01% chance of success, depending on the action being attempted, though it is only suggested if the chance of success is within reason, however improbable, the equivalent of a one-in-a-million lucky guess or freak occurrence.

Situational Modifiers

Special or unusual circumstances can affect any skill rating for better or worse. Dim light, loud noises, distractions, rain, or a lack of proper tools provide penalties to skill ratings, while exceptional tools or ideal conditions might provide a bonus. Whenever external factors might affect your character's performance of an action, your gamemaster should weigh the circumstances and apply one or more situational modifiers to the base chance.

The difference between difficulty modifiers and situational modifiers is that difficulty modifiers are usually relating to the character and the attempted action, while situational modifiers are very specifically related to the subject of the action, or to external forces or influences.

If several conditions apply to a given action, apply them judiciously. Any situational modifier is applied after a skill is modified due to being *Difficult* or *Easy*. This way, the modifiers are not doubled or halved. However, any modifiers that are 'permanent', such as the bonus to Brawl from the Unarmed Combat power (page 109), are figured into the skill rating before it is doubled or halved. These sorts of modifiers are considered integral to the skill and are modified for difficulty along with the rest of the skill rating.

Take care not to get bogged down in the minutiae of determining situational modifiers. Your gamemaster should assess the severity of circumstances, determine the overall modifier, and let you roll as quickly as possible. Situational modifiers are intended to be tools that add drama to tense situations, not strict guidelines or a checklist attempting to simulate absolute realism.

TIME SCALES

Time in the game setting is rarely equivalent to time actually spent playing. Sometimes, your gamemaster may need to summarize the events of many days in a single sentence, such as *"It takes you a week to reach Constantinople"* while at other times, particularly in combat, a few seconds of time can take several minutes or longer to resolve.

In general, the primary scales of time are **narrative** time, a **scene**, the **turn**, and a **combat round**. The **Significant Time Intervals** table (page 116) lists common things that can happen in play, with how long each takes.

FATE POINTS (OPTION)

Sometimes, you and your gamemaster are not willing to let the results of a roll be the ultimate arbiter of your character's destiny. If your gamemaster wishes to allow more player agency in outcomes, power points can be as a resource to affect the results of rolls and the narrative itself. This allows greater control of die results, and increased effectiveness in play.

Following are some suggested uses of power points to manipulate rolls or narrative:

- Spend 5 power points to re-roll any percentile roll desired. This can be declared after the initial roll is made, though the results of the second roll are final. Success with this re-roll does not earn an experience check.
- Spend 5 power points to ignore a skill and trust fate, using a *Difficult* Luck roll instead. This cannot be used for resistance or characteristic rolls and cannot be re-rolled. Success with this method does not earn an experience check or modify POW in any way.
- Spend 3 power points to ignore 1 point of damage from a single attack. These damage points are simply ignored; they do not count towards knockback or other effects. Your gamemaster may ask you to provide an explanation about how the damage was not suffered, such as 'The steel whiskey flask in my front pocket caught the bullet' or some other reason.

Any use of power points for these is handled normally, so if reduced to 0 power points, your character is exhausted and faints until regaining at least 1 power point.

The uses for power points can be expanded as your gamemaster wishes, with some of the following as possibilities:

- Spend 6 power points to shift the result a roll towards a more beneficial result, such as turning a fumble into a failure, a failure into a normal success, a normal success into a special success, or a special success into a critical success. This can only be used on your character's rolls and cannot be applied to dice that have been re-rolled. You can do this after the dice are rolled and can shift the result by as many result levels as you want to spend power points. No matter what the initial roll was, success does not earn an experience check.
- Spend power points equal to the entire damage range of your weapon to inflict maximum damage in a single successful strike. For example, a short sword does 1D6+1 damage normally, so by spending 7 power points, it does 7 points of damage (no roll required), plus the damage modifier if applicable. This costs the entire rollable damage range of the weapon and cannot be incremented. The damage modifier is rolled normally.
- Spend a variable number of power points to add a detail to the surroundings, or to your character's background or resources. This can range from 1 single power point for a tiny detail to 10+ power points for a significant advantage. For example, 'remembering to have brought a book of matches when matches would be useful might only cost 1 power point. However, after being disarmed and thrown in a pit, finding a rusty but usable dagger in the pile of the bones of former victims might cost power points equal to the dagger's damage total (5 points). These costs are at your gamemaster's discretion. Other examples might be having a contact that owes your character a favor (1–3 power points, depending on the size of the favor), being able to find clean clothing unattended hanging on a line (1 power point), or even finding the keys of a car hidden over the sun visor when needing an escape vehicle in a hurry (6 power points).

Your gamemaster should only use these options if the goal is a more action-oriented, high-adventure game with more durable and competent characters, such as superheroes or high fantasy adventurers. A horror setting should not utilize this system, as a key component of horror is the inability to control one's fate, and a means of manipulating outcomes is counterproductive to that end.

Narrative Time (variable)

Due to its flexibility this is the most nebulous of the time scales. It is the time your gamemaster may be narrating or when you and the other players are out-of-character discussing plans and the situation your characters are in. Most game play occurs in narrative scale. Unless there is a specific reason for it, most actual roleplaying takes place in the narrative time scale as well. When you and your gamemaster are roleplaying conversations, the narrative time scale most closely resembles real time, where a conversation takes as long to have as it takes to play.

If a game session includes lengthy travel, or periods of activity where exact time is not relevant, time is compressed greatly, generally unobserved outside of narration, and days or even weeks can be skipped over in a line of narration. If large amounts of time are being dealt with in this fashion, your gamemaster should allow your characters to perform any activities that could fit into this timeframe, within reason. If your characters are free to act during these jumps in time, your gamemaster should ask you to account for your character's activities in that period.

Scene (variable)

This term describes any sequence that takes place in a specific location and time frame. A scene is an encounter or an instance of story time, where the players begin and end an activity. Scenes can be long or quite short, depending on what and how much happens. Essentially, a scene begins when it is important to pay attention to combat or roleplaying (leaving narrative time) and the scene ends when the characters re-enter narrative time.

Part of or an entire scene can be measured in narrative time, game turns, and combat rounds (described below), or any combination of one or more of the three. Most scenes contain narrative time, while some do not necessarily need to contain game turns or combat rounds. Some scenes, however, might be nothing but combat rounds and/or game turns.

Turn (5 minutes)

The first specific non-variable amount of time is the turn. Each turn equals five minutes (25 combat rounds). Turns are used for general

SIGNIFICANT TIME INTERVALS

Following are useful examples of significant measures of time for things that happen in games:

Activity	Amount of Time
Narrative time	Variable, time spent roleplaying or describing actions
Scene	Variable, can include narrative time, turns, and combat rounds
Game turn (or just 'turn')	Five minutes, or 25 combat rounds
Combat round	Twelve seconds
Travel time	Characters can usually travel ten hours of time without significant difficulty, depending on mode of travel, terrain, weather, etc.
Turn	See Game turn, above
Unconsciousness	Usually around one hour, depending on cause
Regenerate 1 fatigue point	One minute (five combat rounds) of inactivity
Regenerate all fatigue points	Twenty minutes of rest and inactivity
Regenerate 1D3 hit points	One game week (seven days)
Regenerate 1 power point	One power point per hour of sleep, and 1 per two hours awake
Regenerate all power points	One game day (24 hours, or an equivalent)
Training roll, combat skills	Approximately three game weeks
Training roll, non-combat skills	Approximately 12 game weeks or less
Experience rolls	One game week or more

movement when there is no conflict or other event that must be handled in detail. It is also a general amount of time for how long certain skills to take, particularly non-combat ones, such as a quick repair or properly cleaning and bandaging a wound. *Chapter Three: Skills* discusses how long skill attempts take to complete, though this can vary dramatically by circumstances.

Combat Round (12 seconds)

The combat round defines what happens moment-by-moment in an action sequence (not just combat). It consists of 12 seconds of fast-paced activity. When it's important to keep track of what happens in what order, use combat rounds. These are repeated until the combat or action sequence is over and there is no more need for such detailed consideration of time.

Usually, each character gets one active (offensive) action and one or more defensive actions in a combat round. If your character does not engage in combat, in one combat round they can move about 30 meters and still be able to watch what is going on nearby, parry incoming blows, and react to emergencies.

See *Chapter Six: Combat* for more detail on what is possible in combat, and **Combat Round Movement** (page 116) for more information about how fast characters can move in a combat round. Other creatures move faster or slower during a combat round (see *Chapter Eleven: Creatures*).

TIME AND MOVEMENT

It is often important to know precisely how far your character can travel in a game month, a week, a day, an hour, a turn, and most importantly, a combat round. Movement is classified into three categories: **combat round movement**, **local movement**, and **regional movement**.

- Combat round movement is relatively concrete. It is simply the amount of time your character can move in 12 seconds of game time. Combat round movement rates are described in **Combat Round Movement** (page 116) and are based on the MOV characteristic.
- Local movement is how long it takes for your character to move from one location to another and is described in the **Movement Rates** table (page 119). This is when you need to know how long it takes to get from one part of a large building to another; or across town.
- Regional movement takes you from one region to another and is usually abstract and handled through narration rather than actual gameplay. Generally, any amount of movement requiring more than an hour is best handled in regional movement. Sometimes it's important to determine exactly how much time regional movement takes: consult the 'Days' column on the **Movement Rates** table (page 117).

The **Movement Rates** table includes common modes of travel. For reference again, a combat round is 12 seconds; a turn is five minutes; an hour is 12 turns; and a game day is assumed to allow ten hours of travel. Character actions such as riding hard and taking few rests can affect this, so your gamemaster should base other durations on these guidelines.

For more detail, see **Vehicles** in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* (pages 183) These rates are extremely general—for specific speeds consult the relevant entry, and your gamemaster should adjust for all of the variables like combat, repairs, terrain, traffic, etc.

Combat Round Movement

Characters have a movement rate (MOV) of 10 units per combat round. A unit can represent several to 10 meters, depending on the situation. If your gamemaster needs an exact measurement, they might use 3 meters per unit, but the relative distance between combatants is usually the most relevant matter.

Ten units represent the maximum sustainable rate of movement for a normal human being. Other creatures have different MOV rates (see *Chapter Eleven: Creatures*). When distance and rate are important, your gamemaster can provide a specific measurement, but should try to answer such questions in game terms, such as "It takes you two combat rounds to get there."

Your gamemaster can also temporarily lower your characters' MOV attribute based on circumstances, such as being overburdened, fatigued, cautious movement, etc. **Terrain and Weather Modifiers** (page 117) gives guidelines about how movement can be affected by these factors. See **Chases** (pages 142) when it comes to pursuit.

The values in **Movement Rates** (page 117) and following are approximate, based on a ten-hour travel day where relevant. Vehicles with crews working in shifts or manned by beings that do not get tired or take breaks can travel 24 hours uninterrupted.

To get a movement rate for a mode of transport not listed, determine the movement rate for that mode for a combat round. Once you have that value, it can be used to determine the rest of the movement rates:

- Multiply a combat round movement rate by ×25 for a turn
- Multiply a turn movement rate by ×12 for an hour
- Multiply an hourly movement rate by ×10 for a day
- Multiply an hourly movement rate by ×24 for an uninterrupted day of travel

MOVEMENT RATES

Rate	Combat Round	Turn	Hour	Day
Walking	10 meters	250 meters	3 kilometers	30 kilometers
Marching, forced*	12 meters	300 meters	3.6 kilometers	36 kilometers
Running, normally**	30 meters	750 meters	9 kilometers	90 kilometers
Running, sprinting**	50 meters	1,250 meters	15 kilometers	150 kilometers
Swimming	5 meters	125 meters	1.5 kilometers	15 kilometers
Riding, walking speed	12 meters	300 meters	3.6 kilometers	36 kilometers
Riding, gallop*	60 meters	1.5 kilometers	18 kilometers	180 kilometers
Land vehicle, drawn	10 meters	250 meters	3 kilometers	30 kilometers
Land vehicle, vintage	200 meters	5 kilometers	60 kilometers	600 kilometers
Land vehicle, modern	400 meters	10 kilometers	120 kilometers	1,200 kilometers
Land vehicle, future	1.2 kilometers	30 kilometers	360 kilometers	3,600 kilometers
Boat, small rowed	40 meters	1 kilometer	12 kilometers	120 kilometers
Ship, ancient rowed	10 meters	250 meters	3 kilometers	30 kilometers
Ship, vintage sailing	20 meters	500 meters	6 kilometers	60 kilometers
Ship, modern cruise	200 meters	5 kilometers	60 kilometers	600 kilometers
Ship, future	600 meters	15 kilometers	180 kilometers	1,800 kilometers
Train, steam engine	200 meters	5 kilometers	60 kilometers	600 kilometers
Train, bullet	1.1 kilometers	27.5 kilometers	330 kilometers	3,300 kilometers
Train, mag-lev	1.6 kilometers	40 kilometers	480 kilometers	4,800 kilometers
Air vehicle, dirigible	400 meters	10 kilometers	120 kilometers	1,200 kilometers
Air vehicle, propeller	600 meters	15 kilometers	180 kilometers	1,800 kilometers
Air vehicle, jet	3.25 kilometers	81.25 kilometers	975 kilometers	9,750 kilometers
Air vehicle, future	1.75 kilometers	43.75 kilometers	525 kilometers	5,250 kilometers
Space vehicle, modern	100 kilometers	2,500 kilometers	30,000 kilometers	300,000 kilometers
Space vehicle, future	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies

***Optional Rule—Fatigue Points:** This costs 1 fatigue point per game hour, and requires a daily Stamina roll or your character loses 1 hit point daily. If your character is mounted, both mount and rider lose the hit point. See **Fatigue Points and Sanity Points** (page 24).
****Optional Rule—Fatigue Points:** Running costs 1 fatigue point per turn, and requires a successful hourly Stamina roll or costs 1 hit point each hour. See **Fatigue Points and Sanity Points** (page 24).

TERRAIN AND WEATHER MODIFIERS

The above travel rates assume reasonable road or trail conditions. The following modifiers apply to unusual or differing types of terrain. Powered vehicles may be exempt from some of these modifiers, with common sense and your gamemaster providing the final judgment. Normal rainfall does not slow cars dramatically, while thick snow does.

- Unless bridged or fordable, a major river takes an entire day to cross. A minor river reduces movement by a negligible amount to 1/3.
- Unless on roads or trails, crossing through a forest reduces land travel rates by 1/3.
- For rolling hills, reduce movement rate by 1/3.
- For deserts, reduce by 1/3.
- For heavy storms, reduce by 1/2 to 4/5, depending on the severity of the storm. Air vehicles are only reduced by 1/5 their normal speed, though many fly above storms, and are unaffected.
- For mountains, reduce by 2/3.
- For marshes and swamps, reduce movement by 2/3.
- For ice and snow, reduce movement by 4/5, but sleighs or skis might reduce it to only 1/3.
- Heavy fog reduces the movement of most human-guided vehicles to 2/3 but does not affect walking or riding speeds.
- Travel on a river is 1/2 the speed of open water.
- At night, a ship's speed is 1/4 the daytime speed.

ENCUMBRANCE

Encumbrance measures how much weight your character can carry. If unencumbered, they can move faster and lose fatigue points more slowly. If your character is encumbered, they are slowed and lose fatigue points faster. Encumbrance is measured in encumbrance points (ENC). Your character can easily carry as many points of ENC as they have points in STR, and can only maneuver normally for any length of time carrying ENC equal to or less than the total of their ENC limit (STR+CON).

ENC

Any item which can be held easily in one hand (a sword, an axe, a pistol, a shield, a hand-sized rock, a rope, etc.) is a 'thing', an abstract unit of bulk and convenience, represented in ENC values. Most 'things' are 1 or 2 ENC. Though they may have very different weights, they take up the same amount of space on your character and are about the same difficulty to handle. Every item has an ENC value, measured by how difficult it is to handle rather than by its actual weight.

If an item does not have an ENC value, use its SIZ as a base and adjust by relative density or bulkiness. *Chapter Eight: Equipment* lists the ENC of all weapons, armor, and shields, and provides SIZ values for many other common objects.

How Much is an ENC?

ENC is not a direct unit of weight. Your character can reasonably carry ENC equal to their STR+CON without too much strain. While they could probably lift much more than this, ENC really measures how much they can do with the weight lifted, such as being able to carry it for a while and still function normally. Your character cannot carry an amount of ENC beyond this ENC limit for very long and still be able to fight, climb, or run.

Your gamemaster may decide that some items have a higher ENC value than their weight indicates. This represents awkwardness in handling the item, such as additional SIZ or bulk.

ENC Penalties

Every point of ENC your character carries over their maximum ENC causes them to suffer the following modifiers:

- –1 to Movement (MOV)
- –5% to the Agility characteristic roll
- –5% to all Physical, Manipulation, and Combat skills

Additionally, your character loses 1 fatigue point per turn per additional ENC above their maximum while exerting themselves (marching, combat, strenuous activity, etc. in addition to any other fatigue point losses (see **Fatigue Points and Sanity Points**, page 24).

These modifiers accumulate but are applied separately in order of severity rather than added together. When the reductions differ, such as 2/3 and 1/3, modify the movement rate with the more severe movement penalty first, then the second and subsequent penalties. They should never be added together, as this will potentially eliminate the movement rate altogether.

***For example**, riding horseback through forested mountains reduces your character to 2/3 normal movement rate for mountains. Thus, 36 kilometers of normal horseback movement rate is reduced 12 kilometers per day. This total is then reduced again by another 1/3 for the forest terrain, ending up at around 8 kilometers per day of travel.*

CHARACTER IMPROVEMENT

Your character's skills and characteristics can and should improve in play, especially when participating in adventures that take more than a day to resolve. These can be raised through training and research, but the primary means of improvement is through successfully using the skills in hazardous situations.

Skill Improvement

Successful use of a skill indicates that your character might be able to improve their rating in that skill. Note that the term 'skill' is used here but refers to anything rated like a skill other than a characteristic roll. Thus, this method also works for magic spells (page 55), passions (page 214), and even personality traits (page 203).

Whenever your character successfully uses a skill in a dramatic situation such as combat or when something is at stake, place a checkmark in the small box next to that skill on your character sheet. This checkmark is called an **experience check**. If a skill roll was *Easy*, no experience check is allowed. If there is no box next to the skill percentile, then the skill cannot be increased through normal experience. (For skills that cannot be increased through experience, black out the checkbox on the character sheet.)

An experience check for a particular skill is made only once per adventure, no matter how many times the skill is successfully used. Skills used before or after the 'adventuring' time are not eligible for experience checks, nor are skills used to augment another if the primary skill roll fails.

If a skill is used successfully, you almost always get an experience check. Something that later undoes the results does not remove an experience check. Your gamemaster should almost always allow experience checks whenever skills are successfully used in stressful situations. An attack against a helpless target is not a stressful situation and does not deserve an experience check. Likewise, taking an hour to pick a lock in your workshop is not a stressful situation—but doing the same task in one combat round, as guards approach, is a stressful situation, and deserves a check.

In addition to earning experience checks through successful rolls, your gamemaster may tell you that your character automatically earned a check in the experience box, usually through significant exposure to the skill being used successfully.

***For example**, this might be due to being immersed in a foreign language environment for a prolonged period and 'soaking up' some of the basics, or assisting an expert in that skill, paying close attention to what they say and do.*

What Does "After an Adventure" Mean?

Your gamemaster determines when experience checks are made; this is usually after an adventure or significant pause between events, when your characters have had some downtime. If in doubt, assume it's a week. During a long evening's play the characters may earn several moments where they can see if their skills improve.

In this downtime, you may make an experience roll for each experience check on your character sheet.

Making an Experience Roll

The experience roll is a normal percentile roll. Your character's **experience bonus** (equal to 1/2 INT, rounded up, see page 20) is added to the die roll when determining whether the experience roll succeeded. If the result of an experience roll is higher than your character's current skill rating, then the experience roll succeeds.

The experience bonus is not added to the actual skill points gained, just to the roll to see if there is improvement.

Increasing Skills by Experience

After a successful experience roll add +1D6 to the skill rating. The result of experience varies—your character may learn much from one incident and little from another, no matter how successfully they performed either time. Based on the level of the campaign, your gamemaster may increase the experience roll to +1D8 for epic or even +1D10 for superhuman, which creates extremely rapid advancement.

If you do not feel lucky rolling for a skill increase, you can choose to add a default of +3 to the skill rating instead of rolling. This must be announced before rolling. If the die type for the skill increase is higher than 1D6, increase it to half the dice maximum—for 1D8 it's +4, and for 1D10 it's +5.

Exceeding 100% in a Skill

Your character may improve their skills beyond 100%. The effect of such an increase is mainly improving critical and special success chances, but certain skills provide special benefits for ratings over 100% (see **Skill Ratings Over 100%**, page 37). Only successful experience rolls can increase skills beyond 100%. If your character has 100% or higher in a skill, you must roll equal to or over 100 on D100 for your character to succeed at an experience roll, which means that the experience modifier is necessary. No matter how much over 100% the skill has risen, any roll of 100 or over earns a skill improvement.

Skill Training and Research

Though experience is often the best teacher, it is not the only way to improve skills. Instruction from masters of a skill can also increase your character's ability with a skill or even decrease it. Your character can train to improve a skill by getting instruction in it from another character with a higher rating in the same skill. This other character can belong to another player but is usually a nonplayer character. Each skill takes a different sort of teacher and costs different amounts of time and money to learn. Training to high skill ratings can be a lengthy, costly process.

The second method is research, working alone either with a self-designed course of study, deep immersion in the background of the skill, or a rigorous, self-guided disciplined regimen of exercise and physical training to improve one's ability in a physical skill. The gamemaster should judge whether the resources are adequate for training oneself, and in some cases may rule that a skill cannot be trained alone, such as some Perception skills.

Skill Training

First, your character should find a trainer, ideally between adventures but potentially as a part of one. Some sort of compensation should be arranged, if appropriate, in money, goods, favors, patronage, or in any other acceptable item or service. The type of teacher can range anywhere from a college professor, a wise master, to an interactive holographic tutor.

Your character must then train for hours equal to their current skill rank with the skill. An average character has 50 hours of time per week available for training, but full-time non-stop study is possible. More than double this amount is grueling, and such extended studying hours

AGING AND INACTION (OPTION)

As your character grows older and more experienced, their skills improve, but the tradeoff is that sometimes their characteristics may decrease, especially if they are not actively adventuring or improving themselves. When beginning play as an older character, use the guidelines in Step Three (page 10), but after play has begun, use these rules.

When your character reaches 41 years of age and each year after, roll 2D6 on the **Characteristic Point Loss** table to determine how many rolls to make on the Characteristic table.

CHARACTERISTIC POINT LOSS

2D6	Points Lost
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1
6–8	–
9	1
10	2
11	3
12	4

After determining the number of points lost, roll 1D10 for each point lost on the **Characteristic** table. If the second roll equals '—', your character does not lose a characteristic point. Rolling twice for a characteristic is combined, so losses might be –2, –3, etc.

CHARACTERISTIC

1D10	Characteristic
1–2	–1 STR
3–4	–1 CON
5–6	–1 DEX
7–8	–1 CHA
9–10	–

If a characteristic is lowered to 0, your character dies, even if the characteristic is CHA. A lowered INT represents forgetfulness or difficulty focusing. However, POW and EDU do not decrease with aging.

These rules assume human characters with roughly 80–100 year lifespans. These losses can be offset with characteristic training and self-care. If your character takes exceptional care of themselves or has access to sources of longevity (exceptional medicines, anti-aging treatments, magic potions, etc.), disregard these rules. Alien or other nonhuman creatures may experience the effects from aging and inaction differently or may have different effects other than characteristic degradation.

For every 10 years of game time since your character is created, increase their EDU characteristic by +1 to represent experience learned through general living. This modifies the Knowledge roll (EDU×5) but does not affect skill points or any skills based on EDU. If your character does not interact with the outside world in this time, EDU is not improved.

are counterproductive or have negative effects on other skills or even physical and mental health.

At the end of the training session, the teacher must attempt a Teach skill roll (page 52). If their roll is successful, your character improves the skill rating by +1D6 points. A failure equals no benefit from the instruction, and a fumble is counterproductive, with the teacher causing self-doubt and contradicting your character's prior learnings, reducing the skill by –1D3.

Your gamemaster may use a dice type to indicate better or worse training opportunities, or even automatically grant an amount increase based on factors in the setting (skill downloads, psychic implanting, past life memories, etc.).

Mastery of a skill requires actual experience outside of the 'classroom'. No skill can be trained above 75%, no matter how good the instructor. Any increase above this must come through successful use of the skill in challenging situations, such as found during an adventure. The gamemaster may determine that this is not true in a particular setting, such as with secret scrolls of mastery or implanted skills, but the 75% maximum is the default.

Researching

Any skill that can be increased through training can also be increased through research. Research is best described as either self-help or self-tutoring: delving into ancient tomes, scouring databases; disciplined exercise; holographic instructors; or neurological or neuromuscular implanting. In most settings, some form of research is possible for any trainable skill.

Dedicated research takes as much time as training but does not incur the same cost. You should determine any costs based on the setting and the type of training being undertaken.

Researching a Knowledge skill may require additional rolls for appropriate skills like Language, Literacy, and Research. Your character may even need to make a successful roll in the very skill to be researched, to find relevant resources or to be pointed in the right direction. Unless these skills are performed in challenging or hazardous circumstances, no experience checks are awarded for skill rolls made while researching other skills.

After the required time is spent, make an experience roll as normal (page 119). If the roll succeeds, increase the skill by 1D6–2 points, or choose to add 2 to the current skill rating. Unlike training, researching allows your character to improve more than 75% in a skill, though your gamemaster may require you to get 'out in the field' from time to time to alternate book learning with practical experience.

Increasing Characteristics

Skills are not the only things about your character that can improve. Your character can improve their characteristics through a variety of means: POW can increase through being tested against a higher POW,

and STR, CON, DEX, and CHA can increase through training and research. INT and SIZ increase only rarely, and in most settings do not change much, though your gamemaster may allow for increases based on the campaign's setting or actions taken during (or between) adventures.

Any increases to characteristics cause any associated attributes to increase accordingly, including characteristic rolls, damage modifier, experience bonus, hit points (and total hit points and/or hit points by location), major wounds, fatigue points, power points, etc. as appropriate. Sanity points are not increased, though the temporary sanity threshold is.

Generally, characteristics other than POW can't improve beyond the species maximum (for humans, this is 21), but for epic or superhuman power level games, this limit is ignored.

POW Increases

When your character successfully matches their POW against an opponent with equal or greater POW in a resistance roll (when a roll is 50% or less to succeed), they can check for a POW gain just like a skill gain, putting a check in the checkbox next to POW on the character sheet.

To determine if your character's POW improves, add their maximum possible rolled POW (18 for humans) plus their minimum rollable POW (3 for humans if the standard character creation system is used—consider each bonus of +6 as a single D6 for other character creation systems). The result is 21 for most humans (18+3=21). Subtract the amount of your character's current POW from that total. Multiply the remainder by ×5 and try to roll that result or less on D100.

If the roll is successful, increase your character's POW by 1D3–1. This might mean no gain at all (1–1=0), or a 2-point increase (3–1=2). Alternately, you can choose not to roll and just add +1 to your character's POW. Like an experience check, choose before rolling.

Characteristic Increases

Your character can train their characteristics to improve them. The exact method varies by the setting—a medieval world might require your character to increase their STR by lifting heavy weights, doing manual labor, etc. while a futuristic setting may utilize muscular augmentation surgery. Increasing STR or CON through training or research is limited by the highest value of the character's original STR, CON, or SIZ. For example, if the highest value of the three is a SIZ of 14, neither STR nor CON can be increased past that number through training.

Any attempts to train or research an increase to the DEX or CHA characteristics are limited to half again the original characteristic (round up).

***For example**, your character with DEX 13 can train or research their DEX up to 20 (1/2 of 13 rounds up to 7, and 13+7=20).*

Characteristic Increase through Training

Your character may attempt to train their characteristics, taking an amount of time in hours based on the value of the current characteristic. The exact number is the current value for the characteristic multiplied by ×25. This sort of training is rigorous and requires dedication for the entire period: one cannot break it to go adventuring or spend more than a handful of hours a day dedicated to anything else.

At the end of the training period, roll 1D3–1 and add the result to the current value of that characteristic.

***For example**, if your character's STR is 12, the total number of hours required to increase their STR is 300 hours (12×25=300). At the end of 300 hours of study, you roll 1D3–1, with a result of 1 (the roll is a 2, so 2–1= 1). Your character's STR is now 13.*

You and your gamemaster should work together to determine the exact type of training required to gain this increase. Your gamemaster may allow SIZ to be trained, representing a radical change in diet or exercise to increase or decrease mass (if not height, which is usually unable to be modified without surgery).

COMBAT

Combat is a significant part of many adventures. In combat it is important to know exactly what happens when, who can act at a particular time, and what actions are capable in the amount of time provided. This section addresses the wide variety of actions that occur during a combat round.

As described in Time Scales (page 114), the combat round measures time in a combat or action situation. A combat round is 12 seconds long, and in it, your character can perform actions and react to other actions in an order usually determined by their DEX characteristic; higher DEX characters act before characters with lower DEX. As with skills, actions in combat are determined by rolling D100 to determine the success or failure of attacks, defenses, and other actions.

COMBAT ROUND PHASES

A combat round consists of four phases: **Statements**, **Powers**, **Action**, and **Resolution**. These always occur in the same order and are repeated with each new combat round until the combat is over. Each phase is described below.

Statements

First, the gamemaster and the players whose characters are involved in a combat round announce what they plan to do. This is the **statement of intent**. Actions can be attempted in order of DEX, highest first. You do not need to announce defensive actions—parries or dodges—unless you opt for a completely defensive stance.

Statements of intent must be reasonable and based on what your character knows.

> ***For example**, you cannot declare an attack upon an opponent your character doesn't know about, no matter what you know as a player.*

Statements of intent are handled in order of the **DEX rank** for everyone involved. Those with high DEX ranks make their statements of intent before those with low DEX ranks. Usually the gamemaster will count down, from the highest DEX rank to the lowest, calling on each player to state their intended actions at the appropriate times.

The gamemaster is not required to state how nonplayer characters will act in a round, but it is considered fair to do so if the actions are physical in nature or otherwise might affect the behavior of the player characters during the combat round.

> ***For example**, if a group of nonplayer characters visibly looks like they going to withdraw peaceably, a player should know this before their character attacks.*

Otherwise, if there's no way for the players to know what the nonplayer characters are going to do, their actions remain unknown until they act.

Anyone can choose to delay their action until later, with the last action occurring on DEX rank 1. If you delay longer than this, your character takes no action in that combat round (other than defensive). The same is true for nonplayer characters.

If there is a need to determine who acts first when DEX ranks are tied, use the relevant skill to determine who acts first. The character with the higher skill rating goes first. If these are still tied, the actions occur simultaneously.

Powers

Powers operate in many ways, but in combat they are handled the same. If your character is using an instantaneous power, the power activates

ALTERNATES TO THE STATEMENTS OF INTENT (OPTIONS)

Following are three alternative methods of handling the order of actions in a combat round. They can be used as desired, even combined to suit your group's preferences.

Removing the Statement of Intent (Option)

The statement of intent can be gotten rid of entirely for faster play. In this case, jump straight to the powers phase and then into the action phase. This streamlined mode of play has the gamemaster count down DEX ranks in the action phase and each player makes statements of action and immediately rolls to determine the outcome.

Reverse Order Statement of Intent (Option)

Reversing the statement of intent allows for a more tactical style of gameplay allowing those with higher DEX ranks the ability to respond better to the actions of other characters, whether opponents or allies. The gamemaster begins with DEX rank 1 and counts upwards, letting all parties announce their actions, as normal. This allows the higher DEX characters the ability to act with full knowledge of what is going to happen in the combat round, enabling them to make tactical decisions accordingly. When the statement of intent phase is over, the gamemaster counts the round down normally. This method creates the opportunity to integrate feints and other potential fake-out maneuvers into combat, allowing for a richer and more tactical environment for any player or gamemaster who enjoys that style of game play.

Initiative Rolls (Option)

At the beginning of a combat round, all player and nonplayer characters roll a D10 and add it to their DEX, creating a new and variable DEX rank. Actions still occur in order of DEX rank. For powers, use a D10 plus INT and use this value alongside the DEX ranks. This initiative value (DEX+D10) can be maintained throughout the entire combat.

The gamemaster rolls for each nonplayer character and for convenience can roll 1D10 to represent a group of nonplayer characters, if desired, or even break large groups of nonplayer characters into smaller groups with different initiative rolls. A leader or otherwise exceptional nonplayer character may have their own rolls, to distinguish them from the crowd.

As a note, characters will more likely be able to perform second or third actions in a round using this method, which will make combat rounds somewhat longer.

POWERS IN THE ACTION PHASE (OPTION)

Normally, power use is handled during the powers phase before any physical action happens. To streamline things and even the playing field, power usage can instead occur during normal DEX ranks, just as with a normal attack. The powers phase of the combat round remains as the period where non-instantaneous powers cast during the previous combat round go into effect, but in the action phase, INT ranks and DEX ranks occur side-by-side, combining both countdowns. Your character is still limited to one action, based on what they're doing: a power goes on the INT rank, a physical action on the DEX rank. Ties are resolved using the other characteristic (if INT is tied, the higher DEX goes first) or the higher skill/power level if applicable. If still tied, the powers happen simultaneously.

during this phase, in order of the involved characters' INT, highest to lowest. This is called the **INT rank**. Powers that are not instantaneous activate at the beginning of the next combat round in that powers phase, unless otherwise stated.

Anyone may delay their power use until a later INT rank. The last INT rank is 1, and as with DEX rank, if an action is delayed past this rank, it does not occur in this combat round. If INT ranks are tied, use the relevant skill (if any) as the tiebreaker, with the higher skill rating going first. If there is no relevant skill, the higher POW goes first. If still tied, the powers occur simultaneously.

Your character can activate one power per combat round. Using a power in the powers phase of a combat round counts as your character's action for a round. They cannot attack with a weapon during their DEX rank, but can move if desired, and dodge or parry if required. Most powers require exactly one full combat round to prepare and use, with their effects occurring at the beginning of the next combat round during the powers phase. Exceptions to these are presented in the power descriptions.

Power points used for powers are spent on the INT rank they are used.

Action

A character in combat is either **engaged** or **unengaged**. An engaged character is within swinging distance of their opponents and is ready to attack or defend when possible. Usually, anyone engaged in a combat can act against anyone else in that combat without penalty or requiring any significant movement. An unengaged character is still acting during the combat but performing other actions and outside the range of hand-to-hand combat (or they are in it, but not actively involved).

As with statements of intent, actions occur on your character's DEX ranks. Actions can be attacks, parries, dodges, or other actions performed by unengaged characters.

Within a particular DEX rank, attacks usually go in order of weapon type. Attackers armed with missile weapons (bows, guns, etc.) are considered to act before those in hand-to-hand (melee) combat. After these go characters armed with long weapons (spears, lances, etc.), then those with medium-length weapons (swords, axes, etc.) and finally those with short weapons (daggers, etc.) or who are unarmed. Parries and attack-related dodges occur in the same DEX rank as the original attack.

If your character can perform more than one action in a round (some weapons allow for multiple attacks, and combat skill levels in excess of 100% also allow multiple attacks), each attack should be separated by 5 DEX ranks. The first action is at the full DEX rank; the second is at DEX rank –5; the third at DEX rank –10; etc. Your character cannot act on DEX rank 0, so any actions that would occur below DEX rank 1 are lost.

Following is a summary of the results of actions within a combat round. Later in this chapter the results for different levels of success (critical and special successes) and different types of attacks will be described in additional detail.

Combat Actions

In a combat round your character can perform any one of the following actions on their DEX rank:

- Move
- Attack
- Noncombat action
- Engage
- Disengage

At any time during the combat round, your character can:

- Parry or dodge
- Fight defensively
- Speak

Move

If your character is unengaged, they can move around 30 meters in a combat turn if they perform no actions other than to defend themselves (parry or dodge). Moving between 6–15 meters means that your character acts at 1/2 their normal DEX rank. Moving between 16–29 meters in a combat round means that your character acts at 1/4 their normal DEX rank. These modified DEX ranks are cumulative with penalties for additional actions, with movement modifiers to DEX rank being applied first.

Attack

Your character can make an attack against a target on their DEX rank, in addition to moving up to 5 meters. Unless modified otherwise, this attack is performed at the full skill rating. As noted above, if a particular weapon allows for multiple attacks, each successive attack should be at 5 DEX ranks lower than the previous attack.

Noncombat Action

An unengaged character can attempt the use of a skill or power or do some other action not requiring a skill check, such as drawing a weapon or opening a door. Use common sense as to what actions can reasonably be performed in this amount of time and within the degree of movement allowed. These actions, if combined with combat actions or multiple non-combat actions, incur a DEX rank penalty of 5 per action, unless your gamemaster says they should take longer.

Engage

An unengaged character can move up to 5 meters and make an attack and/or defensive action without penalty, engaging in combat.

Disengage

An engaged character can choose to leave the combat by declaring during the statement phase that they are disengaging. Generally, they do not take any attack actions, but instead are limited only to dodges, parries, and movement actions. If your character is successful in all dodges or parries made during this combat round, they have successfully disengaged from combat and may move their full movement rate away from the battle. If any of these rolls fail, your character is still engaged in combat. Other options are covered in **Disengaging** (page 147).

Parry

Anyone armed with a parrying weapon or shield (or using their own body) can block the damage from an attack. Roll against the relevant combat skill to parry a blow. You do not need to announce this beforehand, and it is done in reaction to a successful attack roll from another combatant.

A successful parry usually deflects all damage from the incoming attack (unless you are parrying with your own body as a form of Martial Arts, page 49), reducing successful attacks to misses or reducing the severity of special or critical attacks accordingly. Shield armor points and hit points (AP/HP) are used only when dealing with damage done directly to the shield itself, as in an attack to try and destroy a shield or parrying weapon (page 142); or when resisting damage vs shield armor points on the resistance table when parrying a crushing blow (page 128), or when 2 or 4 hit points of damage are done to the parrying weapon or shield on the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127).

Each successive parry attempt after the first is modified by –30% to the skill rating, cumulative. If the chance to parry an attack falls below 1%, your character cannot attempt to parry. Under most circumstances, your character can only parry missile weapons with a shield, at the shield's base chance (see **Shields and Missile Fire**, page 153). If attempting to parry a thrown weapon with a hand weapon, the chance of parrying must be a special success (1/5 the normal skill rating).

Similarly, if your character is using improvised weapons or weapons not generally used for parrying, the parry chance is half of the weapon's skill rating, or a flat 20% if the weapon is not normally parried with or is outside their training. This might be modified based on skill ratings in similar skills, at the gamemaster's discretion.

> ***For example**, when firing a rifle, your character has a 58% attack chance, but when parrying an attack with the rifle, their chance is Difficult, or 29%, because most modern military rifle training encompasses using it as a parrying weapon. Another character, such as a hunter, on the other hand, with the same attack skill of 58%, has a 20% chance to parry with a rifle, the default chance to parry with a missile weapon. Similarly, a soldier might use an entrenching tool (a small collapsible shovel) as a parrying weapon at 1/2 their skill with an axe, a weapon roughly similar in size and shape.*

The gamemaster may rule that a particular attack cannot be parried, such as from a vastly larger attacker (double or more the defender's SIZ, for example) or when the attacker is using an area or sweep attack.

> ***For example**, a character with SIZ 15 cannot parry an attack from a brontosaurus of SIZ 72. Instead, the attack must be Dodged or otherwise evaded.*

Dodge

Some weapons and attacks cannot be parried and must instead be dodged. Dodges can be attempted against all melee attacks or thrown weapons. As with parries, dodges do not need to be announced prior to the attack roll but are attempted in reaction to a successful attack roll from another character (see Dodge, page 42). Each successive dodge attempt after the first is at a –30% modifier to the skill rating, cumulative. If the chance to dodge an attack falls below 1%, your character cannot attempt to Dodge.

Normally, a character cannot dodge against bullets or high-speed projectile weapons (arrows, lasers, etc.). Instead, it is assumed that they are dodging out of the direction the weapon is being pointed. In this case, your character is only able to attempt a Dodge against the first such missile weapon in a combat round, and only if the attacker and weapon are visible. Such attempts are *Difficult*. Certain genres or power levels may allow more freedom in dodging missile fire (see **Dodging Missile Weapons**, page 131).

Fight Defensively

Using this option, your character forfeits any offensive action during the round to get an extra Dodge attempt. This dodge does not incur the subsequent cumulative –30% penalty for further dodge or parry attempts (see **Fighting Defensively**, page 130).

Speak

Speech is a free action, and normal conversation or shouted commands do not cost any DEX ranks or limit your character's actions in any significant manner. However, if your character is speaking for some time, or a conversation between two characters is ensuing amid action, your gamemaster may ask you to keep conversations brief during combat rounds or action sequences. This may vary by setting: while it is perfectly normal for soliloquies to be delivered during a fistfight in a superhero game, they would be out of place in a Wild West gunfight.

Parries and Dodges

Parries and dodges cannot be combined in a round unless your character is in a completely defensive state. In this case, the –30% modifiers for successive defensive actions include both parries and dodges.

MELEE HIT LOCATION TABLE (OPTION)

As described in **Hit Points per Hit Location** (page 21), your character's hit point total is divided among their body parts, as well as being kept track of as a total. When an attack is successful, roll a D20 and use the result to consult the appropriate hit location table. Humans use the standard hit location table, and other body types have their hit location tables provided in **Nonhuman Hit Locations** tables in *Chapter Eleven: Creatures*. If your character is not humanoid, your gamemaster should indicate the correct hit location table you should use.

HIT LOCATIONS

D20 Roll	Result	Description
1–4	Right Leg	Right leg from hip to bottom of foot
5–8	Left Leg	Left leg from hip to bottom of foot
9–11	Abdomen	Hip joint to bottom rib cage
12	Chest	Ribcage up to neck and shoulders
13–15	Right Arm	Entire right arm
16–18	Left Arm	Entire left arm
19–20	Head	Neck and Head

Some situations, such as cover or mounted vs. unmounted characters, modify what hit locations are available to be hit in combat (see the relevant entries in *Chapter Seven: Spot Rules*).

RESOLUTION

To make an attack, parry, or dodge, roll percentile dice and compare the result to your character's skill with the weapon or shield being used. Attacks may provoke a dodge or parry, rolled in the same fashion. The success or failure of these rolls is compared to the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127) to see the result of the combined actions of the attacker and defender.

COMBAT SUMMARY

Attack Roll	Parry or Dodge Roll	Result
Success	Success	Attacker's blow is deflected or dodged.
Success	Fails	Defender is hit and may lose hit points.
Fails	No roll required	Defender maintains guard, does not need to roll.
Fumbles	No roll required	As per attacker's miss above, plus attacker rolls on fumble table.

Levels of Success and Failure

As with skills, in combat it is often essential to know not only whether an attack or parry succeeded or failed, but also how well it succeeded or how badly it failed.

Critical Success

The best possible roll! A D100 result less than or equal to 1/20 (rounded up) of your character's skill rating. A critical attack means that the weapon does the maximum possible damage for the weapon used (6 for 1D6, 9 for 1D8+1, etc.) plus the normal rolled damage modifier. Unless countered with a critical or special parry, a critical attack result always ignores armor, even if that armor is all-encompassing. A critical parry can damage the attacking weapon.

> ***For example**, if your character has a weapon skill rating of 60%, they achieve a critical success on a roll of 01–03. When this is rolled, your character simply takes the maximum damage the weapon can inflict, rolls the damage modifier as normal, and ignores any armor the target may be wearing, whether natural or powered. If the critical success is with a shortsword that does 1D6+1 damage, and your character's damage modifier is 1D4, the critical damage is 7+1D4 (6+1=7), ignoring the target's armor. If the weapon is a pistol that does 1D10 damage, the damage is 10 and ignores the target's armor.*

Your gamemasters can allow your character to inflict a special success (below) upon a target in place of a critical success, if desired.

Special Success

An exceptional roll. A D100 result equal to 1/5 (rounded up) or less, but more than 1/20 of your character's skill rating. Often, a special attack means that the weapon does normal damage in addition to a special result based on the weapon's type.

> ***For example**, a bludgeoning weapon, like a club, has a knockback/down effect.*

A special parry can do damage to an attacking weapon.

> ***For example**, with Firearm 60%, your character achieves a special success on a roll of 04–12. This does normal damage (1D8, for example), but in the case of a firearm, also does impaling damage.*

Success

A good roll. This is a D100 result equal to or less than your character's skill rating but higher than the result needed for a special or critical success. Attacks are successful if not parried or dodged, and damage is rolled normally, with no damage done to either attacking or parrying weapon.

> ***For example,** with a skill of Firearm 60%, your character achieves a*

normal success on a roll of 13–60. For a firearm that deals 1D8 points of damage, the normal damage is rolled.

Failure

A poor roll. A D100 result greater than your character's skill rating but less than the highest 1/20 of chance of failure (see **Fumble**, below). Failing a combat roll means that the attempt failed, but your character can try again later in the same or a following combat round.

***For example**, with a Firearm skill of 60%, your character fails on a roll of 61–97. No damage is rolled, and your target does not need to attempt to dodge or parry the attack.*

Fumble

A disastrous roll! A result of the highest 1/20 of the chance of failure (see chart on page 110), usually ranging from 96–100 for lower skill levels to a roll of 100 when character skill levels are over 100%. Often, a fumble indicates a dramatic mishap of some sort, and often forces a roll on the relevant fumble table. The **Melee Weapon Attacks**, **Melee Weapon Parries**, **Missile Weapon Attacks**, and **Natural Attacks and Parries Fumbles** tables are on page 128.

***For example**, with a Firearm skill of 60%, your character fumbles on a roll of 98–00. No damage is rolled, though you must roll on the **Missile Weapons Fumble** table (page 130) to determine the result of this botched attack.*

Some weapons have their chance to malfunction (jam, lock up, etc.), expressed as a high result.

***For example**, a musket always malfunctions on a roll of 95–00, regardless of the user's skill.*

Depending on the result of the same unfortunate roll and depending on your character's skill rating, it is possible for your character to both fumble and have a weapon malfunction; to have a weapon malfunction without fumbling; or to have a fumble without a weapon malfunction.

***For example**, your character has a skill of 60% with a musket and rolls 99 while firing it. Because the weapon malfunctions on a roll of 95–00, and your character normally fumbles on a roll of 98–00, this attack is unfortunately both a fumble and a weapons malfunction. If the roll had been a 95, 96, or 97, it would have only been a weapons malfunction.*

If the result of a fumble specifies an attack on a target other than the intended one, and a malfunction causes a jam, the attack happens before the malfunction (see **Malfunctions**, page 171).

Special Successes and Damage

Different types of weapons do different types of damage upon special successes. There are five types of special damage: bleeding, crushing, entangling, impaling, and knockdown.

- **Bleeding:** A wound resulting in a deep tissue cut into arteries or major organs. Weapons with a sharp edge inflict bleeding damage.
- **Crushing:** A wound involving a blunt trauma to the victim, often breaking bones and stunning the target. Clubs, unarmed strikes, and other blunt weapons can cause crushing damage.

ATTACK AND DEFENSE MATRIX

Attack Roll	Parry Roll	Dodge Roll	Result
Critical	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges damage, no other result.
Critical	Special	Special	Attack partially deflected or dodged and achieves a normal success. Attacker strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Critical	Success	Success	Attack marginally deflected and achieves a special success. Attack does normal damage plus normal damage modifier and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 4 points of damage.*
Critical	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does maximum damage** plus normal damage modifier (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value is bypassed.
Critical	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does maximum damage plus normal damage modifier (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value does not apply. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table (**Natural Weapon** table if unarmed).
Special	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges attack; no other result. If attack is parried, attacking weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Special	Special	Special	Defender parries or dodges attack, no other result.
Special	Success	Success	Attack partially parried or dodged and achieves a normal success. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Special	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does normal damage plus normal damage modifier and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Special	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does normal damage plus normal damage modifier and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table (**Natural Weapon** table if unarmed).
Success	Critical	Critical	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 2 points of damage.*
Success	Special	Special	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Success	Success	Success	Defender blocks or dodges damage, no other result.
Success	Failure	Failure	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Success	Fumble	Fumble	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table (**Natural Weapon** table if unarmed).
Failure	–	–	No damage; no effect.
Fumble	–	–	Attack misses completely and attacker rolls on the appropriate fumble table (**Natural Weapon** table if unarmed). Defender unharmed.

* If the parrying weapon or shield is destroyed during the parry attempt, roll the attacking weapon's normal damage and subtract the points of damage used in destroying the parrying weapon or shield. The remaining damage penetrates the parry attempt to damage the defender (armor still protects). If the attacking weapon is destroyed during a successful attack, damage is still inflicted on the defender and the weapon is broken at that moment.

** This is the maximum rollable damage which that type of attack would normally do. For a greatsword, damage is 2D8 on a normal success, 2D8 bleeding damage on a special success, and on a critical success it does 16 damage ignoring armor. Damage modifier, in all cases, is rolled separately and added afterwards, .

MELEE WEAPON ATTACK FUMBLES

D100	Result
01–15	Lose the next combat round and are effectively helpless.
16–25	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds and are effectively helpless.
26–40	Fall prone.
41–50	Drop the weapon being used.
51–60	Throw weapon 1D10 meters away.
61–65	Lose 1D10 points of weapon's hit points.
66–75	Vision obscured, modify all appropriate skills by –30% for 1D3 combat rounds.
76–85	Hit nearest ally for normal damage or use result 41–50 if no ally nearby.
86–90	Hit nearest ally for special damage or use result 51–60 if no ally nearby.
91–98	Hit nearest ally for critical damage or use result 61–65 if no ally nearby.
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

MELEE WEAPON PARRY FUMBLES

D100	Result
01–20	Lose the next combat round (or this one if no action has yet been taken), and are effectively helpless.
21–40	Fall prone.
41–50	Drop weapon being used.
51–60	Throw weapon 1D10 meters away.
61–75	Vision obscured; modify all appropriate skills by –30% for 1D3 combat rounds.
76–85	Wide open; foe automatically hits with normal hit.
86–90	Wide open; foe automatically hits with special hit.
91–93	Wide open; foe automatically hits with critical hit.
94–98	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
99–00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

MISSILE WEAPON ATTACK FUMBLES

D100	Result
01–15	Lose the next attack or other activity.
16–25	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds or other activity.
26–40	Fall prone.
41–55	Vision obscured; modify all appropriate skills by –30% for 1D3 combat rounds.
56–65	Drop weapon; which slides or bounces 1D6–1 meters away.
66–80	Do 1D6 damage to weapon's hit points (or use result 81–85 if the weapon has no hit points).
81–85	Break weapon; regardless of weapon's current hit points.
86–90	Hit nearest ally for normal damage or use result 56–65 if no ally nearby.
91–95	Hit nearest ally for special damage or use result 66–80 if no ally nearby.
96–98	Hit nearest ally for critical damage or use result 81–85 if no ally nearby.
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

NATURAL WEAPON ATTACK AND PARRY FUMBLES

D100	Result
01–25	Lose the next combat round (or this one if no action has yet been taken).
26–30	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds (this includes this one if no action has yet been taken).
31–50	Fall prone.
51–60	Fall prone and twist ankle; modify MOV by –1 MOV for 1D10 full turns (and all combat turns within them).
61–75	Vision obscured; modify all appropriate skills by –30% for 1D3 combat rounds.
76–85	Miss and strain something; lose 1 hit point (in the attacking limb if hit locations are being used).
86–90	Hit nearest ally for normal damage or use result 76–85 if no ally nearby.
91–94	Hit nearest ally for special damage or use result 76–85 if no ally nearby.
95–98	Hit hard surface; do normal damage to self (in the attacking limb if hit locations are being used).
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

- **Entangling:** Pinning or otherwise ensnaring the target's limbs or body. Flexible weapons, nets, ropes, and those with short, jagged points inflict entangling attacks.
- **Impaling:** A deep wound piercing vital organs or passing entirely through the body of the target. Firearms, arrows, and other pointed weapons inflict impaling damage.
- **Knockback:** A wound that unbalances and possibly sends the target sprawling backwards. Some forms of unarmed attacks and shield attacks cause knockback.

These five types of damage are described in the sections below.

Bleeding

A special success with a slashing weapon inflicts bleeding damage on the target, who now has a vein or major artery severed and is rapidly losing blood. This does 1 additional hit point damage on DEX rank 1 of each round after the round in which the wound is inflicted. If fatigue points are used, the target loses 1 additional fatigue point each round they are bleeding. Armor protects against the initial attack, but not against the effects of bleeding.

While in combat, the target may try to staunch the bleeding once per round, essentially putting an empty hand over the wound and applying pressure. At the end of each round, the target can try a Stamina roll to determine if the bleeding stops. If successful, the wound is held closed, and the target will not suffer any more bleeding damage. While doing so, any attacks, parries, or physical actions they attempt are *Difficult*. Attempting to dodge cancels the attempt to stop the bleeding. If unsuccessful, the bleeding continues, and if the target dodges or does any strenuous activity, the bleeding begins again.

The most reliable way to stop bleeding damage is to make a successful First Aid roll on the injury. Success means that the bleeding stops and will not begin anew. Failure for this First Aid roll means that the bleeding continues until the target receives successful medical attention (in the form of a power or another skill like Medicine) or dies from blood loss when they reach 0 hit points.

If the bleeding is stopped for five combat rounds, it stops entirely on its own.

Crushing

A special success with a crushing weapon—a club, staff, mace, or a particularly lucky unarmed strike—inflicts crushing damage upon the target. This is a particularly powerful blow, often causing massive bruising or even broken bones, frequently stunning.

A crushing special success doubles the damage modifier normally applied to the attack. If the attacker has a negative damage modifier, this becomes no damage modifier, and if there is no damage modifier, it becomes +1D4 (see the **Damage Modifier** chart, page 20). The weapon's damage is rolled normally, but the damage modifier is increased.

A target suffering a crushing special success must also make a successful Stamina roll or be stunned for 1D3 rounds. Being stunned is a dizzying, disorienting experience, as stars dance in the target's eyes and their head swims from the pain of the sudden blow. A stunned target cannot attack while stunned and can only attempt to dodge or parry an attack if they make a successful Idea roll for each attempt. Furthermore, all attacks against the target are *Easy*. The stunned target can attempt to flee, but to do so requires a successful Idea roll to discern an escape path and a successful Agility roll to get out of danger.

If the target successfully parries against a crushing special success attack, they risk their weapon or shield breaking. The attacker rolls damage and the increased damage modifier, and compares the damage rolled to the parrying item's current hit points on the resistance table. The active value is the damage inflicted, and the passive value is the item's normal hit points. If the active roll is successful, the parrying item takes all the damage from the blow, and any remaining damage is inflicted on the parrying target. The target may subtract armor protection from the damage done by the crushing blow but cannot further dodge or parry this attack—it automatically hits and the remainder of the damage is inflicted on the target. If the target takes damage, they are subject to the rules for stunning (above).

If the passive roll of the parrying item's hit points is successful, it takes the normal attack damage directly to its hit points. If the parrying item takes more damage than it has hit points, it is destroyed by the attack—broken or shattered, whichever is appropriate—but the blow does not continue to strike the target.

If specific hit locations are being used and the parrying item was a shield, this further damage is automatically applied to the arm the target wore their shield upon, allowing for armor protection, if applicable. If the parrying item was a weapon, the further damage is applied to a random hit location, rolled by the gamemaster. As above, armor protection is still proof against the continued strike.

Entangling

A special success with an entangling weapon—whip, net, chain, rope, man-catcher, etc. —entangles the target. An entangling attack cannot be made from close range and must be made with at least three meters of space between the attacker and target (though the garrote can be used at close quarters). A successful entangle prevents the target's movement for the rest of the combat round and into the next combat round. This gives the attacker time to close with the target or otherwise subdue them.

This may prevent attacks by the target. Based on the nature of the entangling attack, the gamemaster may allow an entangled target a Luck roll to determine if they are able to attack.

***For example**, a whip wrapped around one arm might allow the other arm and leg free attacks, while a lasso might immobilize both arms.*

This should be handled on a case-by-case basis. However, there are few entangling attacks that do not allow for some method of attack, whether a kick or head butt.

If the attacker still has control over the entangling weapon (for example, a whip allows this, while bolas do not), the attacker can attempt one or more of the effects on the next round, as described in the Grapple skill (page 45). Allowable effects include: immobilize limb, immobilize target, throw target, knockdown target, disarm target, injure target, and strangle target, as appropriate. If hit locations are being used, this might disallow certain attacks.

***For example**, a whip making an entangle on the leg cannot disarm a hand-held weapon.*

On the round following a successful entangle attack, the target can attempt an Agility roll to free themselves or make a STR vs. STR resistance roll to attempt to pull the entangling weapon from the attacker's hand(s). Alternatively, if the entangled target can, they may attempt an attack on the entangling weapon itself, cutting through it, if they have a cutting weapon equipped.

For entangling attacks employing flexible weapons such as nets, ropes, chains, and whips, a successful STR vs. STR resistance roll allows an entangling weapon to wrench a parrying weapon from the target's grasp.

A successful Dodge roll or Wrestle roll negates a successful entangle but can only be attempted on the next combat round. A critical parry negates a critical entangle, but an ordinary parry success has no effect.

Impaling

A special success with a pointed or thrusting weapon inflicts impaling damage upon the target, piercing deeply within flesh and potentially striking internal organs. An impale doubles the dice and modifier for the weapon's normal rolled damage.

> ***For example**, a short sword normally does 1D6+1 points of damage, while an impale with the same weapon does twice that, or 2D6+2 points of damage.*

Only the weapon's damage is doubled. If the attacker has a damage modifier, the damage modifier is not doubled, but is instead rolled normally and added to the damage.

An impaling weapon is still lodged in the target's body until removed. If the weapon is a hand weapon, the attacker may immediately attempt a *Difficult* weapon skill roll with the impaling weapon. If successful, the attacker can pull the weapon out after the impaling attack strikes home. Otherwise, the weapon is stuck in the body of the target.

If the attacker's weapon is still in the wound, and the attacker wants it back, they must attempt to retrieve the weapon. In this case, the attacker must focus on pulling the weapon from the wound. This raises the chance of retrieval to the attacker's full attack chance with the weapon, but any attacks against the attacker are considered *Easy*, and they obviously cannot parry or dodge while trying to extract their weapon from the target.

For thrown weapons such as javelins, daggers, or even arrows, the attacker must close with the target and succeed in a *Difficult* Agility roll to grab the weapon. The chance to remove the weapon on succeeding rounds is the attacker's full skill if the attacker wishes to ignore any attacks for that round and concentrate on retrieving the weapon, as described above.

An impaled target cannot be healed until the impaling weapon is removed, if it is larger than a knife. Tiny items such as arrowheads or bullets can be left in the wound, though this may present complications later, at the gamemaster's discretion. If impaled with a weapon like a spear or sword, whenever the target moves in any significant fashion, they take half the weapon's damage roll (roll again, without the damage modifier or armor protection) again (to the same hit location, if used) because the extruding weapon is catching on nearby surfaces, moving within them, and widening the wound, etc.

A target impaled with a weapon and attempting to remove it must make a resistance roll of their STR vs. the amount of damage dealt thus far by the weapon. Success means that the weapon has been freed and is in the hands of the target, while failure means that they are unable to free it that combat round and they take an additional 1D3 hit points of damage (to the same hit location, if used) from the activity. This action takes a full round and ends with the target holding the weapon that formerly impaled them.

The gamemaster may impose additional difficulties or reduce the effective STR by half, if the impaling weapon is in a position that would be difficult to reach or is otherwise inaccessible, such in the back.

Another means of dealing with an impaling weapon is to break or damage it so that it will not cause further distress but can be removed later. This is usually done with arrows, removing the shafts so they do not hinder any more. Depending on the weapon and the method of damaging it, this will require either a resistance table roll of the wounded target's STR versus the weapon's hit points, or an outright attack on the weapon itself.

Outside of combat, any attempt at removing an impaling weapon is *Easy*, either with the resistance roll or using First Aid.

Knockback

A special success with an unarmed throw or a shield attack has knocked back the target. The total damage rolled (before armor is subtracted) is pitted against the target's SIZ in a resistance roll. The gamemaster may lower the target's effective SIZ to reflect unevenness of ground, slope, or the target's condition (fatigued, stunned, etc.). If unsuccessful, the target is knocked back one meter for every 5 points of damage rolled (before armor), and the attacker must once again close and engage the target in melee combat if previously knocked out of melee combat range. If the knockback target also hits an obstacle in their path, they take 1D6 damage for every three meters or fraction thereof they have left to travel. The target must also make a successful Agility roll or fall prone (see **Prone**, page 151).

If the target wins the resistance roll, they are not moved, and if their SIZ is higher than the attacker's SIZ, the attacker staggers back one meter.

Fighting Defensively

If your character forgoes all attacks in a round to fight defensively, they can substitute one free Dodge attempt for their attack and can continue to make dodge or parry attempts. Normally, each subsequent Dodge or parry attempt is at a cumulative –30% modifier, but while fighting defensively, your character can substitute a Dodge skill attempt for an attack without incurring the –30% penalty. If they have already made Dodge attempts and parries and are at a negative modifier, the modifier does not increase. Essentially, it is a free Dodge attempt that does not incur a penalty on the next dodge or parry attempt.

The only restriction in this case is that your character cannot Dodge and parry within the same DEX rank. If your character can normally make multiple attacks per round (such as having a skill over 100%), they can make a second free Dodge or parry without incurring the cumulative penalty.

Under no circumstances can fighting defensively be combined with any attack or offensive action, even such as the **Desperate Action** (page 146).

Fumbles in Combat

Fumbles in combat are unfortunate events or mishaps, attributable to bad luck or inexperience. When a fumble is rolled, roll D100 on the appropriate table and apply the result. The gamemaster rolls for nonplayer characters. If the result of the roll is inappropriate, the gamemaster should adapt it to something that makes sense, or reroll.

There are four fumble tables (page 128); use the most appropriate one to the action. Though the **Natural Weapon Attack and Parries** table (page 128) is intended to guide the actions of intelligent humanoids; with discretion it can also be useful for natural animals such as bears, wolves, etc. Again, the gamemaster is encouraged to adapt or reroll unlikely results.

Some weapons can **malfunction**. These occur in addition to any fumbles if the roll result overlaps the fumble and the malfunction ranges (see **Malfunctions**, page 171).

ARMOR

Armor is traditionally a form of clothing thick and tough enough to protect from attack. Historically, it was made from leather, bone, wood, and metal appropriate to the period. In the modern world, armor is made from ceramic and ballistic fibers, light metals, and other tough plastic-based substances, and in future eras, armor will likely be made of similar high-tech materials, or even energy-based protection. Though wearing it may cause fatigue, conventional armor does not require a skill roll or effort to be utilized. If an attack is not parried or dodged, armor is all that stands between your character and injury.

Armor's most important aspect is its **armor value (AV)**. The higher the armor value, the better it protects the wearer. The armor value is subtracted from damage inflicted by a successful attack. The subject of

VARIANT COMBAT RULES (OPTION)

These optional rules modify combat to better simulate combat in different genres, with some recommendations and advice about how these rules affect gameplay.

Attacks and Parries Over 100% (Option)

Your character may have skills over 100%, allowing for greater chances of critical results, special successes, and with combat skills, for multiple attacks in a round.

A combat skill rating of 100% or more lets your character split their attack into multiple attacks, though each attack must be at least 50%. These totals do not have to be equal. For example, with a skill rating of 101%, your character can split attacks into one attack at 51% and one attack at 50%. With a skill rating of 151%, your character can split attacks into two attacks at 75% and 76%, one at 92% and another at 59%, or three at 50%, 50%, and 51%, etc. You cannot create fractions and round up—assign all skill rating to the attacks.

Your character can then make separate attacks with the same weapon, resolving each using one of the divided skill rating. The DEX rank for the first attack is normal; the DEX rank for the second is 5 DEX ranks lower; the third at 5 DEX ranks after that, etc. If this reduces an attack to DEX rank 0 or below, it cannot be attempted.

Exceeding 100% in a Skill (page 37) provides information about how your character can achieve skills higher than 100%.

Dodging Missile Weapons (Option)

Normally, your character can only dodge missile weapons at a penalty or not at all (see Dodge, page 40), but in a more heroic game, your character can Dodge at their full skill rating, assuming that they have a chance to see the attacker and can get out of the way. This may even include dodging area attacks.

Furthermore, your character can attempt to parry missile weapons with hand weapons. A special or critical success is required to successfully parry a missile weapon with a hand weapon, and if the result is a normal success or even a failure, the attack automatically strikes your character.

Your character can also attempt to catch a missile weapon such as an arrow, spear, or other thrown weapon with a special or critical success on an Agility or Throw skill roll. In this case, your character has caught the weapon and escaped injury, and may dispose of it or utilize it in combat, as they see fit. If the roll is successful but not a special or critical success, your character has not caught it but is uninjured. If the roll is a failure, your character must make a successful Luck check to avoid being injured, otherwise they take the missile weapon's normal rolled damage. If the roll is a fumble, your character automatically takes the missile weapon's rolled damage (to their hand/arm if hit locations are being utilized). Armor protection is allowed against this attack.

Your character can also parry high-velocity missile fire (arrows, bullets, etc.) freely with shields, as well, attempting a Spot roll beforehand. If the roll succeeds, your character may parry freely with their shield at full skill rating. If the Spot roll fails, the parry roll is *Difficult*, or the skill rating defaults to the base chances provided in Shields and Missile Fire (page 153).

Dying Blows (Option)

The ability to strike one last time at a foe, despite a fatal wound, can be a dramatic and heroic finale for your character if mortally wounded, or a dismaying final strike by a hated opponent. The subject of a fatal blow (see Damage and Healing, page 134) can attempt one additional combat action if they make a successful Stamina roll. This action must take place on the next available DEX rank they are able to act, or if later, they must make an additional Stamina roll for each round their dying blow is deferred. Failure on any of these rolls results in the dying before the dying blow is delivered.

The gamemaster is encouraged to allow a character's dying blow to be performed at their full skill rating, minus any situational modifiers, such as being prone. At the gamemaster's discretion, a dying blow does not have to be a combat action, but instead can be a final use of a power, a skill, or even some mundane action. It is recommended that a dying action be only a simple and direct task. Speaking final words to another character is a dying action, and requires a successful Luck roll for each relevant piece of information.

Once a dying blow is delivered or a dying action is performed, the character promptly passes on, having performed their final duty in the world. In such a case, the gamemaster may rule that medical attention afterwards automatically fails. The dying blow was the final capstone on a heroic death, or a villainous end.

This system replaces the Desperate Action spot rule (page 146).

the attack has the remaining damage removed from their hit points. If the result after armor value is subtracted is 0 or a negative number, no damage is taken.

Some types of armor can be layered over one another for greater effectiveness. Where shields are also used, a successful shield parry may not be enough to stop a blow, and damage from the attack can potentially pass through the armor value of the shield and to its wielder. In these cases, armor values for both shield and armor are subtracted before the parrying character takes damage.

Disadvantages of Armor

Despite all the advantages, there are negative aspects to wearing armor. The following are the most significant, though the gamemaster may wish to emphasize some more than others, de-emphasize some of these aspects, or even introduce new conditions based on the setting:

- **Skill Penalties:** Armor can inhibit certain skills, particularly Physical skill group skills such as Climb, Jump, Stealth, and Swim. Additionally, wearing a helmet may limit certain Perception skills. Some armor descriptions in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* include negative modifiers to these skills. Weapon skills are unaffected by wearing armor, as armor is crafted specifically to be used in combat.
- **Physical Discomfort:** Armor is heavy, uncomfortable, and inflexible, or at least more-so than normal clothing, and the weight of armor can fatigue and/or encumber its wearer. **Fatigue** (page 24) and **Encumbrance** (page 118) cover clumsiness or any weariness from wearing armor. In desert or other hot environments, armor may be even more uncomfortable (see **Cold, Exposure, Hunger and Thirst** on page 146 and **Fire and Heat** on page 148).
- **Social Issues:** Many types of armor are difficult to conceal and can be interpreted as hostile in many societies or cultures. Some Communication skills may become *Difficult* based on the situation, as it is often difficult to persuade or manipulate someone when giving the appearance of being ready for violence. Other Communication skills may become *Easy* for the same reason. These situations should be judged by the gamemaster.
- **Access:** Two other practical aspects limit the use of armor in a game setting: the availability of armor, and whether it fits. Availability should be judged by the gamemaster and based on the setting. For example, a quality mail shirt might be expensive but relatively easy to obtain in a medieval historical setting, while a practical and usable mail shirt might be next to impossible to find in a prehistoric or far-future setting. In some settings availability might seem unlimited (the modern world, for example), and access to actual armor might be as easy as an order online. The likelihood that the armor is of sufficient quality to withstand combat is not guaranteed however, and delivery may be restricted by regional laws and regulations.

Chapter Eight: Equipment covers all the specific advantages and disadvantages of armor and provides examples of many armor types, ranging from rawhide tunics to personal force fields. Additionally, several powers can modify your character's armor value. These are discussed in *Chapter Four: Powers*.

Armor and SIZ

Finally, not all armor is usable by everyone. Armor is usually rated by the SIZ it was crafted for, with the mosrt comfortable armor being the most formfitting. Loose and ill-fitting armor is just as awkward to wear as armor that is too tight. Each armor type has a 'Fits SIZ' rating, expressed as a ± that determines the range of character SIZ above and below a particular suit of armor's default SIZ. It is assumed that a character possesses or purchases armor suitable to their own SIZ, if given the choice. If your character's SIZ is outside the range of the armor's SIZ range, the armor cannot be worn.

Generally, the higher the armor value, the less likely it is to fit a character of another SIZ. If your character has an extreme SIZ one way or another (below 8 or above 16), they may be unable to wear much 'off the rack' armor (if it exists) and be forced to pay more for bespoke armor or seek alternative sources for defensive equipment.

Shields

The easiest way to think of a shield is that it is a weapon whose primary purpose is to move between your character and an attacker. Shields do not cover the entire body but are both lighter than body armor and much cheaper and easier to manage. Shields do not generally lose hit points when struck by normal blows, and they are not very easy to knock free from a defender's grasp. Usually, only powerful blows (special successes or better) will damage a shield, and the only way to lose one is through a fumble.

Different types of shields are described from page 178). Unlike weapon types, all shields use the same Shield skill, and the same skill rating applies to any shield used. Your character parries melee attacks with their shield just as they would a hand weapon. Against missile weapons, a half or small shield has a base 15% chance to block a missile, a full shield has a 30% chance to block a missile, and a large shield has a 60% chance. If your character kneels behind it, a full shield has a 60% chance to block a missile, and a large shield offers a 90% chance. These values are used in place of your character's skill rating. See **Missile Weapons** (page 134) and **Shields and Missile Fire** (page 153).

Under most circumstances, shields cannot effectively parry extremely fast missile weapons like firearms or energy weapons and are of limited use against hand-propelled weapons like arrows, sling stones, and spears. In these cases, a default chance is substituted instead of your character's skill, but if allowed, see **Dodging Missile Weapons** (page 131).

Your character can also use a shield to attack an opponent. The chance is the same as your character's Shield skill rating, as shield training usually incorporates offensive use as well as defensive. Shields generally use the knockback as their special success, though some types of shields are spiked and can use the impaling special successes.

If an attacker wishes to destroy an opponent's parrying weapon or

RANDOM ARMOR VALUES (OPTION)

Sometimes armor is unreliable and may not protect your character dependably each time they are struck in combat. Armor has gaps, spaces that are less armored, and some parts of your character's body may not even be armored at all. Instead of a fixed armor value, random armor value simulates this unpredictability with a dice range, rolled whenever an attack that would do damage successfully strikes your character. This randomly-determined armor value is rolled and subtracted from any damage received. Armor value is rolled separately for each attack landing on your character, even in the same round. *Chapter Eight: Equipment* (page 170) covers armor in detail and provides ranges for random armor values. In games using random armor value, it is recommended that armor be generic rather than hit location specific, to minimize the bookkeeping per location.

DAMAGE AND HIT LOCATIONS (OPTION)

If the optional hit location system (page 21) is used, your character's hit points are distributed among various bodily areas but are also tracked as a single 'pool' of hit points. This system is incompatible with major wounds (page 134) and the two systems should not be used together.

The individual hit points per location add up to more than your character's normal hit point total. Keep track of each wound and each location separately, but also keep a running total of all hit point damage your character has suffered. Regardless of how many points remain in individual hit locations, if the combined hit point loss is enough to reduce your character to 1 or 2 hit points, they fall unconscious and at 0, they will die if they do not receive immediate medical attention.

As noted in the initial section on hit locations, a hit location can take up to its hit points in damage without inconvenience. For example, if your character has 5 hit points in their leg hit location, they can take up to 4 hit points of damage in a leg without being disabled. However, when a hit location takes all or more than its hit points in damage, the effects can be debilitating or even fatal.

The reference to 'medical attention' can be the First Aid or Medicine skills, healing magic or technology, or use of an appropriate power.

Damage Equal to or More Than the Location's Hit Points

- **Leg:** The limb is temporarily useless, and your character falls prone. They are unable to act for the rest of the round but may act while prone in following rounds. See **Prone** (page 151) for effects.
- **Abdomen:** Both legs are temporarily useless. Your character falls prone but may act while prone in subsequent melee rounds. If your character has the means to heal themselves, they can do so. If not healed or treated with First Aid within ten minutes (two turns), your character bleeds to death, losing 1 hit point per round if they do not make a Stamina roll to stop the bleeding.
- **Chest:** Your character falls and is too busy coughing blood to do perform any action, including healing. They will bleed to death in ten minutes (two turns), losing 1 hit point per round unless receiving medical attention or stopping the bleeding with a successful Stamina roll.
- **Arm:** The limb is temporarily useless, and anything not attached to the arm is dropped. Your character can continue to stand and fight with whatever limbs are still functional.
- **Head:** Your character is knocked unconscious and must receive medical attention within five minutes (one turn) or make a successful Stamina roll to stabilize. If neither happens, they die.

Damage Equals or Exceeds Double the Location's Hit Points

- **Limb:** Your character cannot take more than twice the possible points of damage in an arm or leg from a single blow. For example, a 2-point arm hit for 5 points takes only 4 points of damage off the total hit points: the remaining 1 point of damage has no effect. However, further blows to that arm affect the total hit points of your character. However, a character so damaged from a single blow is functionally incapacitated: they can no longer fight until healed and are in shock. They may try to heal themselves. Bleeding occurs at a rate of 1 hit point per round until receiving successful medical attention or a *Difficult* Stamina roll.
- **Head, Chest, or Abdomen:** If the head, chest, or abdomen suffers more than twice as much damage as it has hit points in that location, your character becomes unconscious and begins to lose 1 hit point per melee round unless receiving medical attention or making a successful *Difficult* Stamina roll.

Damage Equals or Exceeds Triple the Location's Hit Points

- A limb hit for three times more points than it can take in a single blow is severed or irrevocably maimed. For example, if your character has a 2-point arm and is struck for 8 points, they take only 4 points of damage against their total hit points. However, the arm is maimed. In these cases, your character is also functionally incapacitated.
- A head, chest, or abdomen hit for three times as much damage as there are hit points in that location results in instant death.

Severed and Maimed Limbs

- Only drastic medical attention can restore a severed limb, assuming all parts are available, such as some extremely powerful magic, technology, or serious surgery followed by months of recovery.
- The maiming or severing of a limb can be permanently damaging. If your character no longer has part of a limb, they lose 1 hit point in that location. Your gamemaster should work with you to discuss options appropriate to the setting, whether cybernetics, powerful magic, or more drastic measures.
- Use the guidelines for major wounds (page 134) to determine any characteristic loss.

shield, they should make an attack as normal. If the target is not attempting to parry, the attack is an aimed attack (page 140). If the attack is a success and is successfully parried, or if the attack successfully strikes the shield as an aimed attack, damage is rolled normally (modified if it is a special or critical success). The shield's armor value is subtracted from the damage done. Any excess damage is done to the shield. If the shield is reduced to 0 hit points, the remainder of the damage goes on to strike the defender. Armor will protect against this, and if the optional hit location system is used, the damage will be to the defender's weapon or shield arm.

MISSILE WEAPONS

A weapon that is launched or hurled at a target is a **missile weapon**. This includes javelins, rocks, throwing knives, boomerangs, darts, or even hatchets. Weapons that use some form of mechanism to project a damage-causing element at a target, including firearms, bows, catapults, and even energy weapons, are also missile weapons.

Missile weapons are described from page 170. Some kinds of missile weapons such as bows and crossbows attack at a slower rate than your character can swing a hand-to-hand weapon, while firearms and other self-propelled weapons often attack at a faster rate. The attacks-per-round (Attk) column in the weapon tables shows how frequently attacks can be made with each type of missile weapon. For an increased rate of fire (a higher attacks-per-round), see **Volley Fire** (page 155).

Following are range modifiers for missile weapons:

- **Point Blank:** If the target is within the attacker's DEX/3 meters (round up) (even if the target is prone), the skill is *Easy.*
- **Normal Range:** Unmodified if the target is within the weapon's standard listed range.
- **Medium Range:** If the target is at double the weapon's standard listed range, the attack is *Difficult.*
- **Long Range:** If the target is at quadruple the weapon's standard listed range, the attack is 1/5 normal skill chance (equivalent to a special success, but if rolled, the result is a normal success).
- **Fast Moving Target:** –50%
- **Difficult Vision:** Light shadows –10%, light fog –25%, in darkness skills are *Difficult* (see **Darkness**, (page 146).
- **Concealment:** If the target is covered or partially concealed, skills are *Difficult* (see **Cover**, page 146).
- **Prone at Distance:** If the target is prone at a range greater than attacker's DEX/3 meters (round up), the attack is *Difficult.*
- **Targeting Gear:** Using long-range goggles, a scope, or other targeting system divides range modifiers by 1/2 if one combat round is taken to aim.
- **Support:** If the weapon uses a fixed support (a bipod or tripod, suspensor sling, etc.), add +40% for the first attack if one round is taken to aim, then +20% for subsequent rounds.

Missile weapon fire cannot generally be dodged or parried with hand weapons. The only method of defense against missile weapon fire is to parry with a shield if the missile is slow enough to be seen in flight. Firearms and other projectiles are too fast for this, while arrows, javelins, and other hand-propelled weapons are all able to be parried with a shield (see **Shields and Missile Fire**, page 153). If using the optional rule for dodging and parrying missile weapon fire without restriction or hindrance, see **Dodging Missile Weapons** (page 131).

DAMAGE & HEALING

Hit points measure the amount of injury your character can take and survive. When your character loses hit points through injury, this is called **damage**. You start with hit points based on your CON and SIZ characteristics, and these are reduced by the amount of damage you take. Wounds or other injuries, poisons, disease, and other forms of attack may cost your character hit points in damage. You should cross off lost hit points from the current hit point total shown on your character sheet, keeping track of each injury separately. Or circle the current amount based on each loss.

Poison and disease are special sorts of injury; they may attack randomly, and their effects may be delayed. Some cost hit points, while others target characteristic points or have other effects. The First Aid and Medicine skills can lessen or heal minor wounds and injuries. Various powers and gear can also restore hit points to characters.

Wounds are classified as **minor**, **major**, or **fatal**, and are described below.

Minor Wounds

A **minor wound** is a single wound that costs your character up to half of their total hit points. It might be portrayed as a cut, a sprain, a mild poisoning, a small break or fracture, a mild concussion, or as a wound that soon closes. Minor wounds do not impair DEX or affect your character's ability to think and to fight.

Your character may take several minor wounds on the same day. If the total hit points lost equal the amount of a major wound, your character must make a successful Luck roll or they will fall unconscious. This does not imply that the total of minor wounds causes a major wound: do not roll on the **Major Wounds** table (page 135) for multiple minor wounds. It means that your character has suffered an equivalent to a major wound but has not actually been inflicted with one. Additionally, if your character suffers minor wounds enough to reduce them to 1 or 2 hit points, this knocks them out for up to an hour. Each minor wound is a separate wound and can be dealt with separately by medical treatment as described in **Healing** (page 136).

Major Wounds

When your character has sustained an injury equal to or more than half the character's total hit points, they have suffered a **major wound**. Receiving a major wound risks suffering a permanent injury. When your character receives a major wound, roll on the **Major Wounds** table (page 135) or choose an appropriate result if hit locations are used. As noted in **Hit Locations** (page 21), major wounds are incompatible with hit locations without considerable gamemaster interpretation.

The effect of a major wound is immediate. Depending on the severity your character's wounds, they may not be able to fight after the round of injury. See the **Major Wounds** table for more details on this.

Even though your character may still be able to fight or has received some form of immediate medical attention, if they have suffered a major wound they go into shock. Because of this, your character can fight on only for combat rounds equal to their current remaining hit points.

***For example**, if your character has taken a major wound and has 3 hit points remaining, they fall unconscious in three rounds.*

A character possessing 2 or fewer hit points after suffering a major wound collapses immediately from shock and loss of blood and is unconscious for an hour. For the gamemaster, the unconsciousness provoked by a major wound often offers a secure way for nonplayer characters to abandon characters for dead or capture them rather than killing them outright.

Major wounds and their effects apply to player and nonplayer characters alike, along with animals, monsters, or other creatures. They do not apply to equipment, inanimate objects, or other beings that do not have a standard musculature (robots, immaterial, gelatinous, etc.). Such beings may suffer structural damage or operational difficulties, but this is up to your gamemaster's discretion.

If your character has suffered a major wound, attempt a Luck roll immediately. If successful, the major wound will heal cleanly and does not inflict any permanent loss of characteristic points. If the Luck roll

fails, the injury or wound is permanent. Your character suffers the full wound as described below, subtracting the indicated characteristic points.

Each injury description has multiple causes or specifics, allowing your gamemaster to select the most appropriate to the situation. Through training or other various means, your character can regain characteristic points lost from major wounds but will likely retain a significant scar (if applicable). When the characteristic point loss incurred by the major wound has been regained, any effects from the major wound are eliminated. If your character does not regain the characteristic point(s) lost, the characteristic loss imposed

MAJOR WOUND TABLE

1D100	Result
01–10	Severed leg tendons cause limping; fused ankle bones cause limping; back muscles or spinal nerve damage bend the torso to the left or right; a shattered knee cannot bend; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 DEX and reduce MOV by the same amount. The character is still able to fight.
11–20	Much of the nose has been sliced away; multiple scars deface both hands; an ear has been cut off; a livid scar lends an evil cast to appearance; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 CHA. The visible and unappealing deformity cannot be disguised. The character is still able to fight.
21–30	Wrist or hand damage; a slab of arm or shoulder muscle has been cut away; a chunk was hewn from thigh or calf muscles; spinal nerves are damaged; several fingers or toes are severed; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 STR; this loss may change what weapons can be used. The character is still able to fight with a weapon, but not a shield.
31–40	A punctured lung leads to a weakened respiratory system; deep stomach wounds become chronically reinfected, or belly wounds weaken digestion and general health; kidneys and liver are damaged; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 CON; reduce MOV by the same amount, and hit points may be lowered. The character is still able to fight.
41–50	Concussion damages hearing and limits Listen and Insight to maximums of 65%; injury to the head thereafter require Luck rolls each time to use any Mental skills; blows or cuts which affect depth perception leave missile weapon skill ratings at a maximum of 65%; multiple wounds to the face and neck limit the skills of any Communication skills to a maximum of 65%; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 INT; this loss may affect the character's ability to use any powers, such as sorcery. The character is still able to fight.
51–60	Refer to 01–10, but expanded to the loss of one or both arms or legs. Lose 1D6 DEX and reduce maximum MOV by that same amount. The character is unable to fight.
61–70	Refer to 11–20, but the major wound now includes worse mutilations. Lose 1D6 CHA; it creates one or more visible deformities that cannot be disguised. The character is still able to fight.
71–80	Refer to 21–30 for examples of mutilating cuts and losses. Lose 1D6 STR, perhaps adjusting damage modifier. The character is still able to fight.
81–90	Refer to 31–40 for various wounds to the vitals. Lose 1D6 CON; may affect hit points and damage modifier and reduces MOV equal to the CON loss. The character is unable to fight.
91–92	Bad facial and vocal cord injuries. Lose 1D6 CHA. The character is still able to fight.
93–94	Broken bones and severed ganglia. Lose 1D6 DEX; from now on the character can only use one-handed melee weapons. The character is still able to fight using their remaining arm.
95–96	Nerve damage to left or right arm. Lose 1D6 DEX; hereafter your character can only wield weapons or equipment in their undamaged arm. The character is still able to fight using their remaining arm.
97–98	Nerve damage to both arms. Lose 1D6 DEX; though the legs are fine, neither arms nor hands can wield anything. The character is unable to fight, unless using their legs or head butts.
99	Mutilated with vicious wounds. Lose 1D3 points each from CHA, DEX, and CON. The character is unable to fight.
00	Deliberately mutilated after collapsing. Remove 1D4 points each from four characteristics (gamemaster's discretion). The character is unable to fight.

by the major wound is permanent. You should immediately recalculate your character's characteristic rolls, hit points, damage modifier, fatigue points, etc. with the new characteristic totals.

When a limb is not specified, roll 1D6: a result of 1–3 is left, 4–6 is right.

Fatal Wounds

A **fatal wound** is one that does more hit points in damage than your character has currently. If an injury reduces your character to 0 or negative hit points, they have suffered a fatal wound. Your character is immediately knocked prone (page 151) but unable to take any action of any type.

Fatal wounds lead to death, though they may be averted with immediate successful medical assistance. If a fatally wounded character receives medical attention (First Aid, Medicine, a power, an item, etc.) in the round they received the fatal wound or the round immediately after, and their hit points are brought up to 1 or more, they have almost died, but survive that particular injury.

Healing Naturally

Most living creatures heal naturally, given enough time and a relatively stress-free environment. Your character will normally heal 1D3 hit points per game week. This is the normal healing rate. Usually, your gamemaster rolls the healing rate dice and tells you the results. Each week, make a different roll to determine how many hit points are restored. As the healing rate can vary depending on each character, the die result can change from week to week. Your character will keep healing each week until all their hit points have been restored.

The result of the week's healing is granted at the end of the week (consisting of seven days), but if time is of the essence, your gamemaster may choose to divide the healing rate across the days of the week, such as dividing the week by result of the die roll and announcing that each hit point is restored in that many days (round up).

Remove the recovered hit points from existing injuries, spreading the healing between multiple wounds as evenly as possible. The First Aid or Medicine skills or other remedies can speed recovery. A successful First Aid roll immediately restores 1D3 hit points per wound or injury. The Medicine skill may be used to offset the effects of major wounds (described earlier) and can be used to restore hit points lost through means other than injuries. A wide variety of medical equipment and other means (such as healing powers) can be utilized to aid in the healing process.

CONDITIONS OF MEDICAL CARE

Medical Conditions	Effect on Healing Rate
Poorly equipped, unsanitary, and/or full of stressful elements; patient is mobile and exerting self heavily (combat, rugged travel, etc.); or receiving no medical care whatsoever.	Caregiver (doctor, nurse, healer, self, etc.) must succeed in a *Difficult* First Aid or Medicine roll for any healing to occur. If successful, the patient heals normally (1D3 hit points/week); if unsuccessful no healing occurs. A fumble inflicts 1D3 additional hit points in damage.
Decent and sanitary conditions, restful environment, care provided, only moderate physical exertion.	The patient heals 1D3 hit points naturally.
Excellent conditions and equipment utilized, environment conducive to healing and restoration, full bedrest and therapy, full-time high-quality medical care provided.	The patient heals 1D3 hit points naturally; a further successful First Aid or Medicine skill use allows possible additional healing (page 41 and 47).

Finally, the quality of medical care the patient receives each week may increase their healing rate significantly. The Conditions of Medical Care table (page 136) offers guidelines for various conditions and the effect on the healing rate.

A COMBAT EXAMPLE

The following example is set in a fantasy world and describes how the warrior Yvarre has stolen a priceless amulet from the treasure chamber of a sinister cult of serpent-worshippers and is trying to escape the temple to where her ally Kallistor is waiting.

FIRST COMBAT ROUND

Tucking the enormous jewel-studded golden amulet into her waistband, Yvarre slips out of the cult's treasure room and silently moves down the passage beyond, hoping to avoid notice while she gets to where her friend Kallistor waits with a couple of horses.

As she moves down the corridor, a dagger is thrown at Yvarre from behind. The gamemaster rolls a success and says that Yvarre has been struck high on her left shoulder (the optional hit location system is not being used. This is just the gamemaster elaborating with added detail in their description). The gamemaster rolls 1D4+2+1D2, the damage that the dagger does plus half the thrower's damage modifier. Luckily for Yvarre, the gamemaster gets a 4 on the damage roll, the lowest possible result.

Yvarre wears a soft leather tunic (armor value 1) and has 17 hit points. Her armor protects her from 1 point of damage, so Yvarre loses 3 hit points, not 4. She's now down to 14 hit points, so her player carefully crosses out the numbers 17,16, and 15, and circles the 14 on Yvarre's character sheet.

She glances back and sees a serpent priest drawing another dagger from his sleeve as he approaches.

SECOND COMBAT ROUND

Cursing at her bad luck, Yvarre enters the chamber and bolts the door behind her, then reaches around to examine her wound. Fortunately, the attack was not an impaling one, so the blade is not stuck deeply in her shoulder. Next, she attempts to treat the wound with First Aid. Yvarre's First Aid skill is 47%: her player rolls a 99—a fumble!

A roll on the fumble table is not necessary: the penalty for a fumble with First Aid is always the loss of 1 hit point of damage. The gamemaster says that Yvarre did herself an extra point of damage in pulling at the wound, due to the awkward location. The wound is wider now, and blood from it drenches the back of her soft leather tunic (again, this is not a result of a special damage result: it's just flavor for the players to help them visualize the scene).

Yvarre's player sighs and crosses off another hit point. Yvarre now has 13 hit points.

THIRD COMBAT ROUND

Muffled thuds come from the bolted door. Yvarre wheels and goes to the window through which she entered. She takes hold of the rope she had hung there, preparing to climb down. The gamemaster holds up a hand to halt the player's description and injects, "Yvarre notices that the rope feels very light. Does she want to see why?"

She does, the player says, and has Yvarre pull up the line. Yvarre's escape rope ends a meter beneath the sill. It has been cut, likely by someone leaning out the window below.

Yvarre is trapped unless she decides to jump to the street. The gamemaster says, "Make a Spot roll to find out if Yvarre notices something." In this case, the 'something' the gamemaster

is referring to is a cult assassin on the roof top opposite Yvarre, readying his bow for an attack.

The player rolls D100 for Yvarre's Spot skill and fails. Since Yvarre doesn't notice the cult assassin, the gamemaster rolls 43, a hit, and then rolls for damage, 1D8+2, but no damage modifier. The gamemaster rolls 10 in damage, which will be reduced by 1 for Yvarre's armor. "Is that enough for a major wound?" the gamemaster inquires. The player nods glumly. She marks off 9 more hit points on her character sheet, lowering her remaining hit points to 4.

Yvarre's player rolls on the major wound table, getting a result of 27, and the gamemaster says that the arrow struck Yvarre in the left arm. Yvarre's Luck roll succeeds, so the wound will not become a permanent injury. Yvarre feels herself weakening, the gamemaster says. She'll become unconscious in four combat rounds, one round for each hit point she currently possesses.

At the other end of the room, the door to the hallway is beginning to splinter. Yvarre could use the next round to try to apply First Aid to this new wound, but she can't afford the time.

FOURTH COMBAT ROUND

If Yvarre stays in the room, she'll soon be at the mercy of the serpent-worshipping cult, not something to look forward to. It's 6 meters down to the ground, and Yvarre's player realizes that in her condition the fall could kill her. However, the player also knows that Yvarre herself would never hesitate. "I jump," she says. The archer takes another shot. Missile fire cannot be dodged, so Yvarre hopes for the best. She's in luck—the arrow misses.

"Make your Jump roll, please." The result is a 21, a success. "Okay", says the gamemaster, "now roll 1D6 for the damage reduction." She gets a 3, to be subtracted from any damage incurred in the fall to come. "And now roll 2D6 for the fall damage." Her dice total 5. Yvarre had 4 hit points. She loses 5, but the jump preparation saves 3. Yvarre now has 2 hit points left.

At 2 hit points, Yvarre automatically falls unconscious. This is not more than half her total hit points, so there is no new major wound.

FIFTH COMBAT ROUND

In the night-black alley, Yvarre's friend Kallistor hears her hit the ground and finds her motionless on the cobblestones. Listening to the approaching shouts, Kallistor's player decides to throw Yvarre across the saddle of one horse and mount the other, fleeing immediately.

SIXTH COMBAT ROUND

A few streets distant, Kallistor feels safe enough to stop for a round. He uses the magic spell Healing 1 on Yvarre's knife wound. Kallistor's spell restores 3 hit points to Yvarre (a roll of 3 on 1D6) and the gamemaster rules that Yvarre is now conscious and able to ride but is very weak. Kallistor's player marks off 3 power points for the use of the spell (which costs 3 power points per level used). Kallistor has 14 power points, so it puts him down to 11.

SEVERAL COMBAT ROUNDS LATER

After some evasive riding through town to prevent followers, gamemaster says that no pursuit is evident. The two adventurers reach their hideout. Inside, safe for the moment, Kallistor uses First Aid to try to heal the arrow wound, raising her hit points to 7.

NEXT COMBAT ROUND

Yvarre also took fall damage. Kallistor treated her knife and arrow wounds, but Yvarre's First Aid roll works on the general bruising from the fall. The 2 points of fall damage are erased. The injury is still present, but no longer has practical consequence. Now Yvarre is at 9 hit points.

NEXT COMBAT ROUND AFTER THAT

Kallistor's tries First Aid but fails to heal the point of damage from Yvarre's fumbled First Aid attempt.

ONE MORE COMBAT ROUND

Kallistor uses Healing 2 on Yvarre's arrow wound, restoring 4 points out of a possible 12. Yvarre is now at 13 hit points, and Kallistor is now down 6 more power points, leaving him at 5 power points total. Neither of them is in dire shape, but Yvarre is not at full hit points and Kallistor has used up many of his power points.

The dagger wound will heal naturally in a week, and the remaining damage from arrow wound will take at least two weeks. Kallistor wants to keep some power points in reserve in case of emergency. He'll use the Healing spell later when he's got more power points or when the coast is clear.

AFTER COMBAT

At this point, there is little reason to continue using combat time, so everyone switches into narrative time in which the player behavior and gamemaster narration becomes more relaxed.

Her wounds and injuries attended to for the moment, Yvarre reaches into her waistband to pull out the amulet. It seems to twist in her hands, as she does so, so she lets it go. As it hits the ground, the amulet breaks into dozens of tiny jewel-eyed golden snakes that fall to the ground and slither away.

All that, and for nothing!

MINIATURES, MAPS, AND VIRTUAL TABLETOPS

Movement and positioning in hand-to-hand combat are challenging elements to keep track of in roleplaying games. While some players and gamemasters are less concerned with particulars during combat, some feel the need to keep track of the relative positions of the player characters and their adversaries. Using figures, tokens, or markers on a map can answer any questions, presenting a concrete means of determining what is happening and where.

Roleplaying miniatures are small plastic or metallic statuettes about several centimeters high, available at most game and hobby stores or online. There is an enormous variety of character types, costumes, genres, historical periods, and poses, and collecting, assembling, and painting miniatures is a pleasant side hobby.

To keep track of movement, maps with grids of squares or hexagons are often useful. These come in sheets of various sizes made of paper or sturdier materials. Stores that carry miniature figures also probably carry these. Some players dislike grids as rigid, confining, or mechanistic, and prefer to eyeball distances and negotiate movement, using rulers or tape measures as last resorts. You may want to experiment, to see what suits you. A gamemaster who uses miniatures or maps will want a few larger sheets of paper to use for sketching out floor plans and creating simple maps. Players may find graph paper useful in mapping ruins or buildings. Mapmaking programs specialized for roleplaying games make this increasingly easy, and pre-made maps and tile sets are readily available.

Online tabletops allow for entire game sessions to be played online, with gamemaster tools, player storage of character sheets, and battle maps that also have sound effects, lighting, dice rolling apps, and even more, letting gamemasters and players automate this aspect of play and allow for immersive play with players anywhere they can use their computers. These range from top-down simple map programs to 3D environments, customizable by the gamemaster, with 'modules' of content available, including adventure and other aspects useful to play.

SPOT RULES

A great myriad of situations can arise during combat, action sequences, or under specific conditions. These 'spot rules' are intended for the gamemaster's use. As a player, it is not necessary for you to know these, though some familiarity is always useful.

SPOT RULES IN THIS SECTION

Acid	Disengaging	Prone
Aerial Combat	Drawing or Exchanging a Weapon	Pulling Blows
Aimed Attacks	Enclosed Environments	Quickdraws
Ambushes	Entangle	Radiation
Area Attacks	Explosions	Shields and Missile Fire
Armor Damaged	Extended Range	Shooting Up or Down
Aura Attacks	Falling	Slippery or Unstable Surfaces
Autofire	Fighting While Down	Stunning or Subduing
Backstabs and Helpless Opponents	Fire and Heat	Superior/Inferior Positions
Big and Little Targets	Firing into Combat	Superior Numbers
Both Sides Surprised	Fortified Positions	Sweep Attacks
Broken Weapons	Improvised Parrying Weapons	Thrown Weapons
Chases	Improvised Weapons	Two Weapons
Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation	Knockback	Underwater Combat
Close Combat	Knockout Attacks	Vacuum
Closing	Light Sources	Volley Fire
Cold, Exposure, Hunger, and Thirst	Mass Combat	Weapon Length (Closing)
Cover	Missile Fire While Moving	Weather Condition
Darkness	Mounted Combat	Zero-gravity Combat
Desperate Action	Natural Weapons	
Disarming	Poison	
Disease	Point-blank Range	

ACID

Exposure to acid or corrosive substances can be a hazard. Treat all acids the same: the degree of acid damage represents how diluted it is, rather than the specific type of acid. Only significant contact (the immersion of a limb or contact with the eyes) should cause serious immediate damage.

- Weak acids inflict 1D3–1 points of damage per round.
- Strong acids inflict 1D4 points of damage per round.
- Very strong acids inflict 1D6+1 points of damage per round.

Armor does not neutralize acid but does momentarily slow its effects. If a target is armored, halve its damage (round up), though the gamemaster should adjust based on the armor's type, quality, and coverage. Armor protection against acids lasts 1D3 rounds. After that, the acid inflicts normal damage.

Exposure to very strong acid eats away at armor bindings and weakens armor: after 1D6 rounds of exposure, the armor has been functionally destroyed and is useless. This occurs simultaneously with the 1D3 rounds of armor protection—the armor may have been rendered useless in combat but still offer temporary protection from the acid.

Your gamemaster may rule that holy water (or an equivalent) acts as acid against unholy creatures such as vampires or demonic entities.

AERIAL COMBAT

The Fly skill (page 41) covers flight in considerable detail. If your character does not have to use both hands for flight and/or adjust mechanisms (jet-pack controls, for example), they can make attacks while flying. As with riding, your character's attack and other combat skills are limited by their Fly skill: combat skill ratings are reduced to the level of your character's Flight skill; if they are lower, the skill remains unaffected.

If your character can make a successful Fly roll during the powers phase of a combat turn (this does not cost an action), any attacks, parries, and other combat actions are unimpaired. The following modifiers may affect your character's ability to use the Fly skill. See also **Weather Conditions** (page 156) concerning rain, hail, sleet, and snow.

- **Simple Stunt (such as a barrel roll):** No penalty
- **Moderately Difficult Stunt (roll):** –10% penalty
- **Difficult Stunt (wingover):** –25% penalty
- **Extremely Difficult Stunt (loop-the-loop):** –50% penalty
- **Light or Moderate Wind:** no penalty
- **Strong Wind:** –10% penalty (no penalty for strong tail wind)
- **Severe Wind:** –25% penalty (–10% penalty for severe tail wind)
- **Windstorm:** –50% penalty (–25% for tail wind)
- **Hurricane-force Wind:** –75% penalty (–50% penalty for tail wind)
- **Tornado-force Wind:** –100% penalty
- **High Altitude / Low Pressure / Becalmed:** –25% penalty
- **Wearing Light Armor:** –10% penalty
- **Wearing Medium Armor:** –25% penalty
- **Wearing Heavy Armor:** –50% penalty

All modifiers are cumulative.

On a failed Flight roll, any actions a flying character makes are *Difficult*. A critical success for the Fly roll makes any rolls made during that round of combat *Easy*. If the Fly roll fumbles, your character cannot attack or act in that round and may even fall or crash.

If the flight is granted with a vehicle or a flying creature, your character does not have to make Fly rolls—the skill required is Ride or Pilot, or the Fly skill of the being doing the flying, if applicable. Regardless, the effects of the outcome of the skill roll are applied equally to the rider(s) and the flier.

AIMED ATTACKS

There are two ways your character can improve their chance to make a particular shot: to take more time and aim, or to target a specific area. Both can be used for a single shot. If your character is interrupted (attacked, jostled, etc.) while using either method, they must make a successful Idea roll to maintain the aim. If the roll fails, the benefits are lost.

Taking More Time

Your character can take time aiming a missile weapon in return for an increased skill rating. For every five DEX ranks your character delays, add 1/10 of the existing skill rating (round up) as a bonus, cumulative, for the first shot. Round fractions up. The missile attack must be made in the same combat round if it is a hand-propelled weapon (bow, throwing knife, etc.), or can be held indefinitely if it is a self-propelled weapon (firearm, energy weapon, etc.). Once the shot is taken, the bonus no longer applies. Careful aim has no effect at ranges beyond double the weapon's base range. If aiming at a doorway or small aperture waiting for a target to appear, the target must be half or less of base range.

Targeting a Specific Area

Targeting a specific part of a victim's body is *Difficult*, though delaying for 5 DEX ranks (as in **Taking More Time,** above) can offset this modifier. Apply the *Difficult* modifier before any adjustments for taking more time. The gamemaster should determine the result of any successful attacks against targeted areas, such as a *Difficult* characteristic roll to maintain a hold on weapon, keep standing, etc. The hit location system (page 126) may be of use. If your character targets an unarmored area and is successful, the target's armor is ignored, just as if a critical hit were rolled.

AMBUSHES

In the event of a surprise attack, the attackers gain the advantage of attacks that cannot be countered. For an ambush to be successful, the attacker must make a successful Stealth skill roll, opposed by the intended target's Listen, Sense, or Spot skill, whichever is appropriate.

- If the attackers are using missile weapons and are not seen, the attackers get a free round of *Easy* attacks. The target(s) cannot dodge or parry this initial round of attacks.
- If the attackers are using missile weapons and are seen, the attackers get a free round of *Easy* attacks, but the targets can dodge or parry this initial round of attacks.
- If the attackers are using hand-to-hand weapons and have not made successful Stealth rolls, the targets must make a successful *Easy* Listen, Sense, or Spot roll to notice the oncoming attackers. If the targets fail to detect the attackers, attacks against them are *Easy* and any parries or dodges they make are *Difficult*.
- If the attackers are using hand-to-hand weapons, and the target is aware of them with a successful Listen, Sense, or Spot roll, the attackers' skill ratings are unmodified and the targets can parry or Dodge normally but cannot retaliate or move until the next combat round.

In most cases, the target's armor defends normally, unless the attackers are using aimed attacks (see above) to bypass armor.

After the initial round of surprise, the ambush becomes a normal combat round for all parties involved, with no modifiers due to surprise.

AREA ATTACKS

When an attack is aimed at an area with the intent of doing damage to anyone within that area, ranging from divine wrath to grenades, characters in that area can attempt Dodge rolls to avoid damage

altogether, or an Agility roll to reduce damage by half (player choice) by getting behind cover. In either case, it is assumed that those formerly in the area have thrown themselves prone to prevent injury (see **Prone**, page 151). Standing up from a prone position takes 5 DEX ranks. If the area attack is not avoided, it automatically strikes everyone in its area of effect. Depending on the type of attack, this may cause knockback (page 149) or even being set afire (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148). At the gamemaster's discretion, shelter or cover may further reduce this damage. Armor should work against damage from area attacks.

ARMOR DAMAGED

Acid, fire, or other corrosive or highly caustic attacks can damage or even destroy armor. It is possible also that a piece of armor can be destroyed by critical hits or even fumbles, though this is at the gamemaster's discretion. If armor is damaged or loses pieces, reduce its armor value by 1/2, rounding down.

> ***For example**, armor worth 5 points of protection is downgraded to only having 2 points of armor value. If random armor value is used, armor worth 1D8+1 may be reduced to 1D4 protection, which is 1/2 of 1D8, with the +1 rounded down.*

Already-damaged armor that is damaged again before being repaired is destroyed (loses all protective value, but retains all penalties and ENC).

Repairing armor costs half-again the armor's normal cost. This may be adjusted based on circumstances, such as your character's relation to the craftsman, the availability of materials needed for repairs, and the nature of the damage. Armor that has been wholly destroyed can be repaired at the full cost of the armor, but will have 1 point less armor value.

AURA ATTACKS

Your character may attempt an aura attack, commanding attention with a display of outstanding presence and strength of will. Aura attacks can also be used as an invaluable resource in epic or superhero games. To make an aura attack, your character must measure average their SIZ, POW, and CHA (round up) into a value called an aura total. Aura attacks must have a full combat round to initiate if in combat, or they must have at least 12 seconds of preparation if not in combat. An aura attack occurs in the powers phase of the combat round.

When an aura attack is performed, anyone who can view your character must make a resistance roll with their POW characteristic vs. the aura total of your character. Some or all of the following factors may modify the resistance roll:

- **Command:** Your character may attempt to make a Command roll before making an aura attack. If successful, add +1 to the aura total, a special success +2, and a critical success +3. A fumbled roll reduces the aura total by half (round up).
- **Previous Success:** If your character has previously succeeded in an aura attack against a target, add +1 to the aura total. A lucky or powerful character can make continued aura attacks against an opponent to keep them at bay, or to paralyze them with fear.
- **Experience:** At the gamemaster's discretion, relative fame, prior history with the target, or a successful Reputation roll may add +1–3 to the aura total.
- **Passions:** A successful appropriate Passion roll can add +1 to the aura total, a special success +2, and a critical success +3. A fumbled roll reduces the aura total by half (round up).
- **Circumstances:** The situation can also modify your character's aura total positively, or the target's POW negatively, by ±1–3. Reasons might be the display of a powerful magic item with legendary

qualities, overwhelming inferiority or superiority in firepower, death of allied combatants, prior defeat or wounded state, or any implied threat accompanying the aura attack.

If the resistance roll fails, the target(s) of the aura attack are mesmerized for the remainder of the combat round. They can dodge, parry, or otherwise react to attacks against them, but cannot initiate any attack or other actions of their own volition.

This mesmerization ends at the end of the combat round. If the resistance roll is a fumble, the target is demoralized and may surrender, or flee, as appropriate. All actions become *Difficult* for a demoralized target for the remainder of that combat round. Whether the result is a failure or fumble, all results end on the last DEX rank of the combat round in which the aura attack is made.

Aura attacks do not inflict horror or cause sanity loss.

AUTOFIRE

Many weapons, such as machine and submachine guns, can fire short bursts (multiple shots) or automatic fire (abbreviated as autofire), consisting of a large number of shots as long as the trigger is held down. Unlike most missile weapon combat, autofire or bursts occur on the attacker's DEX rank, rather than at the beginning of the combat round before DEX ranks.

Against a single target, a burst increases the chance of success by +20% and autofire by +40%. The attacker should announce how many shots are being fired (bursts are usually three shots, while autofire can empty the whole clip), keeping track of spent ammunition. The attack is rolled normally. If the shot is a failure, all shots in the burst miss. If it is successful and hits the target, roll an appropriate die based on the number of shots fired. To get an odd number, roll an appropriate dice type and divide by two (rounding up).

***For example**, if 8 shots are fired, roll a D8; if 5 shots are fired, roll a D10 and divide it in half, rounding up, etc.*

The gamemaster may require that all bursts or autofire occur in numbers with dice equivalents, such as 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, etc. The result of this die roll is the number of shots that hit the target. Only the first attack is able to achieve a special or critical success—all of the rest are normal successes.

For multiple targets, if they are spread across the field of fire, the skill rating does not improve. Instead, each attack uses an unmodified attack roll for each target. The attacker can allocate the number of bullets per target. In this case, each target could potentially receive a special or critical success. If multiple targets are restricted to a narrow field of fire, such as in a corridor or grouped closely together, the attacker's skill rating is increased by an additional +20%.

BACKSTABS AND HELPLESS OPPONENTS

If in the midst of hand-to-hand combat, your character can attack the unprotected back of a target, that one attack is *Easy*. If the target succeeds in a *Difficult* Listen or Sense roll, they can make a *Difficult* Dodge or parry attempt, but only if they have any remaining opportunities for defense. No additional damage is done by such an attack.

Similarly, if a target is helpless (unable to move, dodge, or parry), the attack is *Easy* and they cannot make a dodge or parry attempt against the attack. Conditions by which a target might be helpless are when they are unconscious, asleep, or restrained entirely. In such cases, the gamemaster may allow the target a POW×1 roll to determine if some lucky incident occurs that stays the attacker's hand for the duration of the combat round.

BIG AND LITTLE TARGETS

If an attacker and target are within the same relative SIZ, there are no modifiers for their attacks due to SIZ. If they are of vastly different sizes, any attacks may be modified. If the target is more than twice your character's SIZ, add +20% to your skill rating. If the target is less than half your character's size (round up), modify your skill rating by –20%. Inanimate large objects are *Easy* to hit, if a roll is required at all, while tiny objects are *Difficult*.

BOTH SIDES SURPRISED

Unlike ambushes (page 140), situations with both sides surprised are unplanned and typically involve unaware parties on either side. Depending on the situation, the gamemaster should allow for each involved party to make an opposed Spot or Listen roll to determine who detects the other first. Everyone involved should make the roll, as some might not notice what's happening in front of them if their attention is elsewhere. In a tie, they notice each other simultaneously. To see who can act first, have each aware party make an Idea roll. If both succeed, use DEX ranks to determine who goes first.

BROKEN WEAPONS

Equipment is often damaged or broken during combat. A weapon or shield breaks if it is used to parry an attack that reduces the weapon's hit points to 0. A broken weapon does half its normal rolled damage (round up). Any attacks or parries with the weapon are *Difficult*, though if it resembles a similar weapon with which your character is familiar, the skill may be unmodified.

***For example**, a broadsword with a blade broken in half is still useable as a shortsword. However, half of a longbow is unusable except as a light club, and a broken laser pistol is a paperweight.*

CHASES

Chases occur when one party needs to outrun or outmaneuver another character, whether to avoid harm or to inflict it, or to prevent or instigate some action. Due to the variety of circumstances, chases are handled abstractly, allowing for improvisation and creative input of players and the gamemaster without requiring a map or detailed system. Whether in the open sky with jet fighters, on the busy streets of a major metropolis, or in ancient, ruined tunnels far beneath the earth's surface, all chases are handled with this system.

Before beginning a chase, the gamemaster should decide these six aspects:

- **Starting Positions:** Does one party in the chase begin with a significant advantage (a head start) or does the chase begin on relatively equal footing? Are they close to one another or already at a distance?
- **The Course:** How complex or hazardous is the path and how much can the participants do to alter the conditions? Will the environment of the chase change? Are there other bystanders at risk or presenting a hazard of their own? Is the course a combination of several environments? Does the environment present a hazard or special challenges?
- **Skills Required:** What skills can be used in this chase, such as Drive, Fly, or Pilot? What powers? What skills are required if conditions of the chase change? If the vehicle malfunctions, do other characters need to act to keep it running?
- **Combat:** Are the parties in the chase going to be attacking one another, and with what weapons or skills? Most often these are missile weapons, but when side-by-side, hand-to-hand weapons may be used. Are others in the environment presenting a threat?

- **Duration:** Is there is a limitation on how long the chase will be allowed to last, such as a fixed distance before the chase will naturally end? Does fatigue play a part?
- **Conclusion:** What location, change of situation, or status ends the chase? This is usually obvious—but should be clear before the chase begins.

Tracking a chase uses the **range track** (see below). If playing together, it is useful to copy or print this out and place it on the table, or to share the image if playing online. Set the starting positions of each participant on the appropriate track relative to one another, with 'lengths' equaling one full MOV in distance. Mark these positions with coins, miniatures, spare dice, or other markers.

Each round, all participants must make the appropriate rolls to determine how far forward (to the right) they advance. Success means that no advancement is made, while a special success means the person in the lead is moved back one step, and a critical means they are moved back two steps. If the roll is a failure, the character rolling moves back one space, and two if it is a fumble.

The goal for escaping a chase, or getting to the desired location or destination first, is to reach the 'Out of Sight' square. Once someone is there at the end of the round, the chase is functionally over.

Chases on Foot

When handling chases on foot (or mounted) between opponents with the same MOV rate, the gamemaster should match the participants' CON vs. CON in a resistance roll, or use an opposed Agility roll or a Climb, Jump, or Swim roll (if appropriate) to settle who wins a race. Several rolls may be needed for complex courses or extended chases. If they're mounted, they should make opposed Ride rolls and use the mounts' appropriate skills.

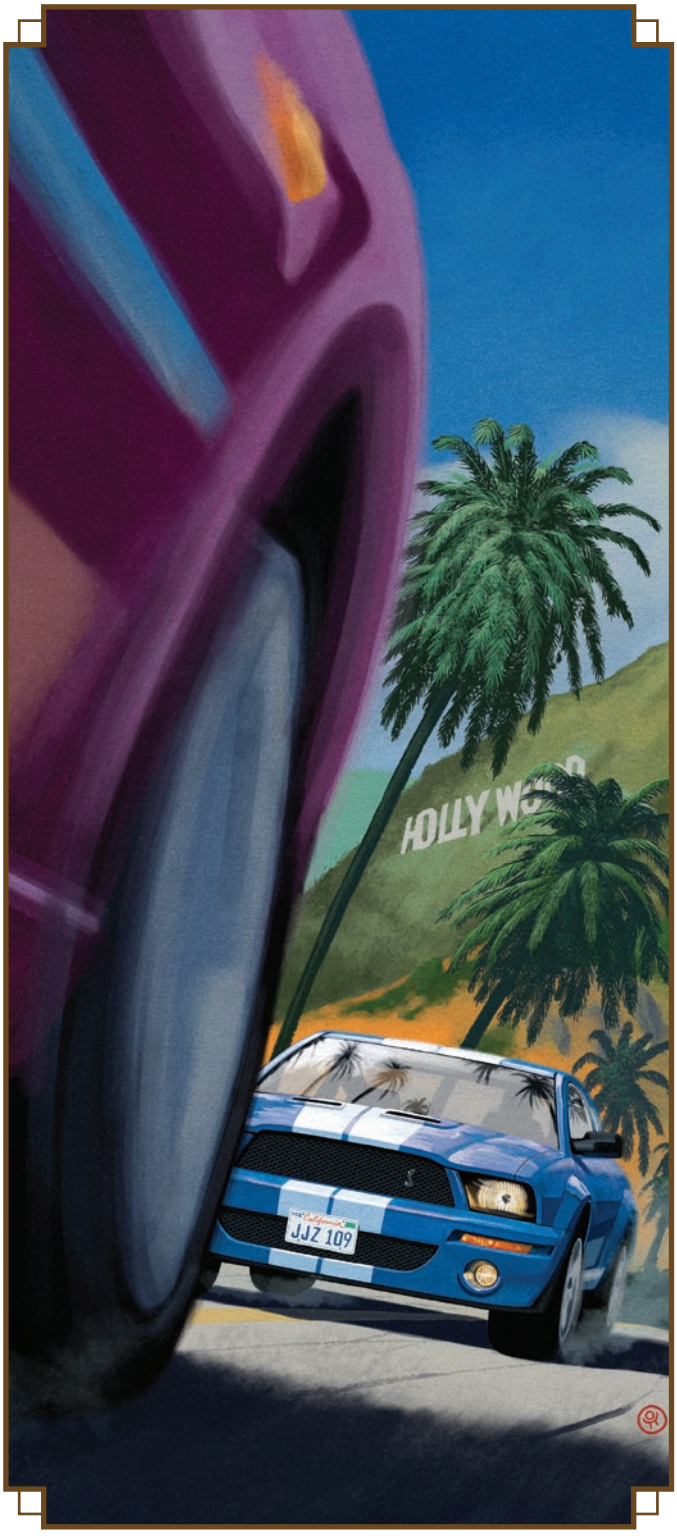
If either of the participants is heavily armored or encumbered, they must make a successful *Difficult* Stamina roll each combat round to keep going. A character that fails one roll moves backwards one square, and if they fail two rolls in a row they can't continue, too winded or overburdened to move forward.

Vehicular Chases

For vehicles, things get a bit more complex. Ranges are not specific, and each round can instead be combat rounds, turns, hours, or even days. Relevant skills for chases include Drive, Fly, Pilot, and Ride, and in certain circumstances, additional skills such as Navigate or Spot may be required for the chase to continue uninterrupted. If piloting a sophisticated vehicle, Technical Skill may be required to handle tracking sensors or similar equipment.

Each round, the gamemaster should determine the following:

- If participants in the chase can change speed.
- The outcome of maneuvers and potential crashes.
- If individual characters can move or act on their DEX ranks.



RANGE TRACK

Side-by-side	Two Lengths	Close	In Sight	Out of Sight
Range 1	Range 2	Range 3	Range 4	Range 5
Hand-to-hand attacks possible, missile weapon attacks are unmodified	Hand-to-hand attacks impossible, missile weapon attacks are *Difficult*	Missile weapon attacks are at 1/5 skill rating	Only a roll of 01 hits	No chance to hit

The following terms are relevant for vehicle chases:

- **Rated Speed:** The maximum sustainable speed of the vehicle. It may travel at the top rated speed, or any speed less than this. All entities in a chase begin at Speed 0 and accelerate up to travel speed.
- **Range:** The gap between participants in a chase. There are five ranges, as shown on the range track. For every speed faster than an opponent, a character or vehicle can move one range increment closer to or further from the other character or vehicle per combat round—if ahead, the leader moves further away from the pursuer; if behind, the pursuer moves one range increment closer.
- **Accelerate, Decelerate:** In a round, a vehicle can accelerate/decelerate by X Speeds (see **ACC** in the vehicle descriptions on pages 183–186).
- **Handling:** The ease and responsiveness of a maneuver. Add or subtract the handling modifier for the vehicle from the pilot's appropriate skill.

Maneuvers

Maneuvers are described in the **Skill Roll Modifier** table (opposite). When a maneuver is failed, roll on the **Chase Trouble** table (opposite).

- **Turn:** A turn may require a vehicle to decelerate by 1+ Speed increments. A U-turn always requires a vehicle to slow to Speed 1. Success for this maneuver under normal circumstances is *Automatic.*
- **High-speed Turn:** When a vehicle attempts this, the character must succeed in the relevant skill, with a –10% modifier applied.
- **"Bootlegger" Reverse:** A maneuver where use of brakes (braking jets, reverse thrusters, etc.) causes the vehicle to skid and whip around, ending its movement facing the direction it came from. To accomplish this, make a relevant skill roll with a –25% modifier. Success reorients the vehicle in reverse direction, and it may accelerate to Speed 2 in the next round. This cannot be performed with horses or horse-drawn vehicles. Failure causes it to move in an undesirable direction or continue in the same direction.
- **Collide:** The vehicle smashes into or sideswipes the target. A collision does 1D6 damage per level of Speed to the vehicle it collides with, 1D3 per level to the colliding vehicle, and passengers within each vehicle take 1D3 damage per level of Speed. Adequate protection (seatbelts, etc.) can reduce the damage suffered by the passengers by 1/2 (round up). Exceptional protection (shock-chairs, impact foam, etc.) can reduce the damage suffered by the passengers by 3/4 (round up). Make a SIZ vs SIZ resistance roll for the two vehicles or the target to determine if one is knocked out of line or aside.
- **Ram:** Smashing the vehicle directly into an obstacle in front of it. The target takes 1D10 damage per level of Speed the vehicle is traveling, 1D6 per level to the colliding vehicle, and 1D6 damage per level of Speed to occupants of both vehicles (or inside the structure, if within range of the impact). Match that against the targeted vehicle, object, or structure's armor points, then subtract the remaining damage from its hit points. If the target is destroyed outright, the ramming vehicle may continue through it. Make a resistance roll of SIZ vs. SIZ for the vehicle and its target. The winner prevails, whether continuing on its way or remaining immobile, as appropriate.
- **Vehicle Damage:** Sample vehicle hit points are provided on page 184. When a vehicle collides or is rammed, subtract the vehicle's armor value, and subtract the remaining damage to its current hit points. When the vehicle has taken more than half its hit points, reduce its top Speed by half (round up). When it has 5 or fewer hit points, the vehicle ceases to function (and may crash as it halts). If a vehicle is damaged noticeably, the gamemaster may choose to roll on the **Chase Trouble** table (page 145). When a vehicle's hit point total reaches 0, it is destroyed. The gamemaster should determine what happens to the passengers inside based on the nature and location of the vehicle (see the spot rules for explosives, falling, fire, radiation, etc. as appropriate). See the Repair skill (page 50) for more information about repairing or jury-rigging the vehicle to keep it running.

Skill Roll Modifiers

Apply any of these modifiers to the vehicle piloting roll where applicable. All modifiers are cumulative.

Conditions	Skill Modifier
Fog	–10%
Night	–10%
Rain	–10%
Wind	–10%
Heavy rain	–20%
Oily or icy	–20%
Snow	–20%
Maneuver	**Skill Modifier**
At Speed 1 or 2	+10%
At maximum speed	–10%
High-speed turn	–10%
Bootlegger reverse	–25%
Collision	–10%
Ram	–
Terrain	**Skill Modifier**
Gravel road	–10%
Long downhill grade	–10%
Dirt road	–20%
Limbs, rocks	–20%
Vehicle	**Skill Modifier**
Minor vehicle damage	–10%
Handling	By vehicle type

See the vehicle record (page 260) for use in chases. It covers all manner of vehicles.

Individual Actions

Side by side, characters can clamber around inside or atop vehicles, move to one other, and even perform skill rolls on each other or the vehicle itself. Any such movement skills in a chase are *Difficult*, and the gamemaster may impose additional penalties on skills attempted while in a moving vehicle. Generally, skills relating to the operation or repair of the vehicle (Drive, Pilot, Repair, Technical Skill, etc.) and managing it in combat (Heavy Weapon, etc.) are unmodified and do not require movement.

Depending on the size and type of vehicle, it may require Climb rolls to get around inside, or even maneuvering in zero-g (page 156). If a character misses a skill roll and could potentially be thrown off the vehicle, the gamemaster should allow the character to make a *Difficult* Luck or Agility roll, as appropriate, to grab hold and keep from being thrown clear. In enclosed vehicles, this is generally not a possibility.

Chase Trouble Table

Roll a D10 on this table whenever a maneuver roll fails or when a vehicle is damaged to a notable degree, modified using common sense, interpretation, and personalized based on the type of vehicle and environment it is moving through.

***For example**, a hover-car flying through a ruined city may fall out of the sky or collide with a building if the engine stops working.*

If a roll is modified to higher than 10, consider it as a 10, but roll again and apply the second result as well.

CHASE TROUBLE

D10	Result
1	**Flat Tire, Cracked Wheel, Damaged Thruster:** This slows the vehicle to Speed 1 until repaired. It can also indicate minor damage to a jet, wing, or other propulsion system.
2	**Propulsion Damage:** This slows a vehicle by 2 Speed each round until it halts entirely. The vehicle cannot start again without a successful Repair roll. In the case of creature-drawn vehicles, this could indicate damage to harness, tongue, or yoke.
3	**Propulsion Rupture:** This has no effect until the vehicle takes additional damage, though long-range travel becomes severely limited. If an animal-drawn vehicle, the animal is killed, lamed, or cannot continue. To restart the vehicle, the tank must be repaired or replaced, and the fuel must be restored. This may also be a radiation leak from an engine core, battery damage, etc. If an amount is desired, the vehicle loses 1D6×5% of its fuel supply every combat round while in combat and per turn when not in combat. Leaking fuel or radiation may cause additional threats other than limiting travel, at the gamemaster's discretion.
4–6	**Skid:** The vehicle hits a rough spot or turbulence that causes it to shudder as it slows, and the pilot loses control momentarily. Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by −20% in the next combat round only.
7	**Minor Fishtail:** Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by −10% in the next combat round only.
8	**Moderate Fishtail:** Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by −15% in the next combat round only, then roll again on this table with a +2 modifier and apply the results.
9	**Severe Fishtail:** Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by −30% in the next combat round only, then roll again on this table with a +4 modifier and apply the results.
10	**Roll or Tumble:** The vehicle careens wildly off the intended path, rolling once per Speed traveled. Each roll does 2D3 hit points damage per Speed to vehicle if appropriate, and 1D3 hit points per Speed to each passenger (1D6 hit points per Speed to creature-drawn vehicle passengers or animals hurled free on the first roll). For fueled vehicles, allow a 10% chance of a fuel explosion.

CHOKING, DROWNING, AND ASPHYXIATION

In dire circumstances, your character may be denied breathable air, such as through smoke inhalation, drowning, poisoning by gas, strangulation, or choking. All these can cause asphyxiation damage.

If the situation is not a surprise and is due to an environmental element, roll your character's CON×10 (an *Easy* Stamina roll). If successful, your character can hold their breath during the first combat round of exposure to asphyxiation. The next round, though, the CON roll becomes CON×5 (an unmodified Stamina roll), then is successively reduced by one multiplier each combat round after. Thus, in the third round the roll is CON×4, then CON×3 in the fourth round, etc.

This continues until your character is no longer able to succeed in CON rolls, or until the roll reaches CON×1. When the roll fails, your character takes damage total hit points at the end of each following combat round, until they escape the situation, are rendered unconscious, or die.

The amount of damage depends on the substance inhaled or action being committed against your character. Inhaling water inflicts 1D8 hit points per combat round; smoke does 1D4; dense smoke does 1D6; poison gas does 1D8 plus its corrosive effect, if any. All of these go to the chest hit location, if used. Powers such as Adaptation may offer immunity.

If your character is being deliberately choked, roll your character's CON×1 each combat round, or take 1D6 damage to total hit points. Additionally, a strangle cord, garrote, or even strong attackers may simultaneously do basic damage to the head hit location (if used). See the Grapple skill on page 43 and the weapon statistics for a garrote (page 172) for more detail.

If your character is surprised by sudden asphyxiation, attempt a Luck roll to determine if they were able to take a breath before it began. If the roll is successful, follow the asphyxiation procedure described above (CON×5, etc.). If the roll fails, the first roll is equal to CON×3, then reduced each round until stopping at CON×1. All further effects are identical to above.

CLOSE COMBAT

When wielding a short hand-to-hand combat weapon (SIZ 0–1.5), your character is at a slight tactical disadvantage when fighting an opponent armed with a longer hand-to-hand combat weapon (SIZ 2+). This is **close combat**, roughly equivalent to one meter of space around your character. For weapons like spears and polearms, the short weapon-user must first close (move into the one meter space) on their opponent to get within striking range (page 156). The following conditions apply to close combat:

- In hand-to-hand combat, if the two characters are not in close combat, the gamemaster should allow a long-weapon-user to strike first against short weapon-users, regardless of DEX rank.
- If a short weapon-user is in close combat with a long weapon-user, any parry attempts made by the long weapon-user are *Difficult*.

If the long weapon-user wishes, they can keep one or more short weapon-users at bay. This means that in place of an attack, the long weapon-user can attempt a normal weapon skill roll to prevent the short weapon-user(s) from closing and being able to engage in an attack in that combat round. This roll must be made each combat round, and if successful, the short weapon-user does not take any damage but cannot close during that combat round. If the long weapon-user has multiple attacks in the combat round, they can make them as normal. On subsequent combat rounds, the character with the higher DEX rank goes first, regardless of length of weapon.

A short weapon-user being kept at bay may have to make a successful Dodge or parry roll to get into close combat with a long weapon-user. If the attempt succeeds, they slip past the guard of the long weapon-user and can attack normally. If the Dodge or parry attempt fails, the short weapon-user is kept away from close combat for the remainder of the combat round and cannot attack.

CLOSING

In hand-to-hand combat, once an attacker **closes** with a target using a longer weapon (such as a spear-user attacking a sword-user), the longer weapon-user always gets the first strike regardless of DEX rank. After the initial attack by the long weapon-user, the short weapon-user can act on their normal DEX rank.

To close with a long weapon-user, a character must be closing on the target during the next combat round or next available action and may be required to make a successful Dodge roll if being kept at bay (see **Close Combat**, page 145). Though the character with the longer weapon may attack, parry, or Dodge, they may perform only one of these actions in that DEX rank. Normally a character may do two of those three actions in the same combat round, but in this case, the length of the weapon makes it less wieldy against the short weapon-user once the combat becomes close.

If a long weapon-user closes with another long weapon-user, they are both limited as noted prior, but they strike at normal DEX ranks, and all subsequent combat is as normal, if they find space to wield their weapons. As noted in **Close Combat** (page 145), a short weapon-user can close on a long weapon-user with a successful Dodge or parry.

See also **Weapon Length** (page 156) for more information.

COLD, EXPOSURE, HUNGER, AND THIRST

When adventuring outside civilized areas, it is wise to have protective gear and carry adequate food and water to avoid the risk of succumbing to hazardous environmental conditions. If your character has purchased ample supplies, is wearing appropriate protective gear, and has prepared for the terrain and the difficulties faces while traveling, your gamemaster should assume that the environment presents no special difficulty, unless a struggle for survival is an element of the scenario or campaign. If not, your character risks exposure to hazardous environments, starvation, and dehydration.

If fatigue points are used, when your character suffers prolonged exposure to stifling heat or freezing cold, they suffer ×2–4 the normal fatigue point loss per combat round. The gamemaster determines the multiplier for the situation.

A healthy character can survive up to three days without food or water without any difficulty other than hunger and thirst. A hungry character has the same penalty for combat round activity applied to their fatigue points after two days without food, and a thirsty character must bear the penalty after one day without liquid. If fatigue point system is not being used, any physical actions your character takes after the three-day mark are *Difficult*.

If your character has been exposed to stifling heat, freezing cold, or without food or water for 1/2 their CON in days, any physical action must be preceded by a successful Stamina roll. Failure still allows your character to perform the action, though your character takes 1 hit point in damage from the exertion. After a number of days equal to your character's CON, all rolls for Mental and Physical categories and combat rolls are *Difficult*.

While still exposed, hungry, or thirsty, simple rest does not restore fatigue points. For every day your character's fatigue points are not a positive number, the negative value is applied directly to hit points. Furthermore, wounds take twice as long to heal after a number of days equal to your character's CON without food and/or water. In extreme cases, the gamemaster may even lower your character's SIZ characteristic by 1 or 2 points if they begin to waste away from starvation. If your character's hit points are reduced to 0 or less, they die after that day is over. The gamemaster should decide what circumstances constitute the conclusion of a day.

Powers such as Adaptation (page 94) may negate the effects of exposure to extreme environments.

COVER

If a target is partially covered by a wall, doorway, window ledge, fencepost, etc., any attacks on that target are *Difficult*. If the attack roll is over the adjusted amount to hit (but less than the normal skill rating), the attack has hit the obstacle or cover rather than the target of the attack.

> ***For example**, your character shoots at a foe half concealed behind a wall. Their normal skill rating is 72%, reduced by half to 36% because the task is Difficult. The attack strikes the target if the outcome of the roll is 36 or under. If roll falls between 37 and 72, the attack strikes the covering wall.*

If appropriate, damage should be rolled to see if it bypasses the cover and goes through to the intended target of the attack (see **Damage to Inanimate Objects**, page 188). Rolling damage only when it makes sense, such as when the attack's normal range of damage is higher than the obstacle's armor value and/or hit points.

If hit locations are used, you should announce what portions of your character's body are behind cover before the gamemaster rolls for an attack, with the gamemaster deciding how much cover the obstacle allows. The attack is rolled normally, with no skill adjustments, but any protected hit locations strike the cover instead. As above, the damage rolled may pass through the covering object or structure and strike the intended target, if appropriate.

DARKNESS

If your character is fighting in darkness, whether semi-darkness or pitch black, see **Situational Modifiers** (page 114) for modifiers. To detect an opponent in complete darkness, you must make successful *Difficult* Sense or Listen roll. If successful, reduce the darkness modifier by half.

Your character can offset the penalties of darkness by wielding a light source in one hand (see **Light Sources**, page 150). Powers such as Keen Sense, Aura Detection, or Super Sense may offset any darkness-related penalties.

DESPERATE ACTIONS

If your character has performed all their actions in a combat round and yet must make one final action, your character can attempt a desperate action on the last DEX rank of the round, at the gamemaster's discretion. To do so, first must make a successful *Difficult* Agility roll. If this fails, no action can be attempted. If successful, a **desperate action** is allowed. This final attack or action is always *Difficult*, no matter what it is. Regardless of the outcome, your character cannot attack or make a movement action in the following round, having unbalanced themselves with the desperate action. Dodges and parries are unaffected. If fatigue points are used, a desperate action costs double the normal fatigue points.

DISARMING

Sometimes the best strategy is to remove a weapon from an opponent while in combat to stop their attacks and potentially threaten them and force a surrender. Disarming removes the target's hand weapon. Though weapons may be inadvertently broken in combat, to deliberately disarm an opponent, use one of these two methods:

- Close with the target to grapple with them and wrest the weapon from their hand. Make a Grapple roll, and if successful, use a Grapple effect (page 42) to disarm the target.
- At the beginning of a round, announce the intent to disarm a target by knocking or twisting their weapon away, specifying which weapon if the target has more than one weapon. Make a *Difficult* attack to strike the weapon. If successful, roll damage normally and make a resistance roll vs. the target's STR. If the roll is successful, the target drops the weapon, taking no damage. Compare the damage rolled to the weapon's hit points: any in excess are removed from the weapon's hit points. While a successful Dodge negates a successful disarming attack, a parry of any sort has no effect. If the target suspects a disarm attack, a successful parry avoids it.

DISEASE

If exposed to a minor disease, such as a bad cold or mild flu, make a Stamina roll to see if the disease is contracted. Success means that it is avoided, while failure means that your character catches the disease. For a minor disease like those above, the extent of the illness should merely cost 1 or 2 hit points and 1D6 fatigue points over a few days. On the

morning of the second day your character suffers from a minor disease, roll CON×2. If the roll is successful, your character recovers. If the roll fails, the disease persists for another day. On the morning of the third day, roll CON×3, continuing by increasing the multiplier by the roll until the disease is finally overcome. A fumble reduces the multiplier by ×1.

Your character must rest and be cared for while recuperating from a disease. Strenuous conditions (adventuring, combat, hard travel, etc.) reduce this characteristic roll by ×1 per outstanding condition. Thus, if the recovery roll normally would be CON×5, reduce it to CON×4 if your character is not at home in bed, reduce it to CON×3 if they are hiking in the wilderness, reduce it to CON×2 if engaged in rigorous activity such as combat, and reduce it to CON×1 if suffering from injuries inflicted before or after the disease, another disease, or some other unfortunate medical condition.

Though medical attention may speed recovery from the disease, they must recover naturally by succeeding in the CON roll. Simply receiving medical care does not cure a disease entirely. See the Medicine skill (page 47) for how treatment affects recovery. Some powers and equipment may help against disease: see *Chapter Four: Powers* and *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for details.

A major disease such as plague might attack any characteristic, but most diseases attack CON or hit points. Immensely powerful diseases (such as ebola) could even inflict 1 or up to 1D3 hit points per hour, enough to kill an average human in eight hours. Symptoms vary greatly. Lesser diseases might inflict 1 hit point per day, or per week, coupled with loss of characteristic points. Cross-index the number of times your character has failed their CON roll on the **Illness Severity** table.

ILLNESS SEVERITY

Failures	Degree of Illness
0	None
1	Mild: lose 1 characteristic point per week
2	Acute: lose 1 characteristic point per day
3	Severe: lose 1 characteristic point per hour
4+	Terminal: lose 1 characteristic point per minute

The first characteristic point is lost within 24 hours of initially contracting the disease (failing the first roll). Each successive loss is added to the total whenever the CON roll is made to recover. The type of disease dictates what characteristic points are being lost.

Following are generic disease types, each tied to a single characteristic. The gamemaster is encouraged to develop a list more suitable to the setting of the campaign (or rename these as appropriate). All characteristic loss affects associated attributes (hit points, skill category modifiers, etc.). Reaching 0 in a characteristic usually means death or permanent debilitation (see **Characteristics**, page 17).

- **Atrophy:** This affects the muscular system, causing a loss of STR.
- **Chills:** Chills and fever, ruining health and lowering CON.
- **Delirium:** A feverish state marked by muddled thought and clouded cognition, affecting INT.
- **Malaise:** Either a supernatural or psychic disease, attacking the POW on the spirit plane, or a simple ennui, causing a lack of will and energy.
- **Shakes:** A nerve ailment, causing tremors and unsteadiness, affecting DEX.
- **Pox:** Any disease affecting CHA, usually by deteriorating skin condition, or other visible symptoms. Could also represent general illness, causing regular coughing and/or a sickly appearance.

At the gamemaster's discretion, some diseases may combine the effects of these and have other effects as well. Long-term chronic disease may also reduce SIZ, as above.

DISENGAGING

To disengage from a fight while the opponent wishes to continue, try one of these courses of action:

- Succeed in a knockback attack and then make a successful Dodge roll. This method does not allow any further attacks on your character and removes them from close combat.
- Make a fighting withdrawal, taking no attack actions, but only dodges, parries, and movement away. If your character is successful with all dodges and/or parries made during this combat round, they have successfully disengaged and may move their full movement rate away from the battle. If any of these rolls fail, they are still engaged in combat.
- Turning and running, leaving the disengaging character open and defenseless while doing so. Any opponent(s) may attempt an immediate *Difficult* attack against the fleeing character which cannot be parried or dodged, regardless of their DEX rank or available actions.

DRAWING OR EXCHANGING A WEAPON

A sheathed weapon is not instantly ready for use. If your character enters combat with no weapon drawn or loses a weapon in combat (or has it broken), to draw or ready another weapon takes 5 DEX ranks, or 10 DEX ranks to put one weapon away and draw another. Your character may instead merely drop the weapon they currently hold (costing 0 DEX ranks) and draw another (for 5 DEX ranks). However, if your character has 101%+ skill with their weapon, they can draw or sheathe it at a 0 DEX rank cost.

ENCLOSED ENVIRONMENTS

Generally, your character needs a radius of at least one meter of free space to fight comfortably with a hand-to-hand weapon. If your character has less room than that, any attacks with a hand-to-hand weapon larger than SIZ/Enc 1.5 are *Difficult*, and larger than SIZ/Enc 2.5+ might be *Impossible*. If your character has less than a half-meter radius around them, all weapon attacks with hand-to-hand or ranged weapons of SIZ/Enc 1 are *Difficult*. Using a SIZ 0 hand-to-hand or ranged weapon, they are not inconvenienced.

ENTANGLING

The special entangle weapon effect is described fully on page 129, but an entangle can also be attempted by an attacker armed with a suitable weapon, declaring it as their intention. Any weapons with the entangle special effect can be used to make entangle attacks, and the gamemaster may allow other weapons to entangle if used in that fashion (such as a spiked weapon catching someone's garments). Attempting an entangle is *Difficult* and if successful, it does no damage, but the target is entangled as with the special success (page 129).

EXPLOSIONS

An explosion inflicts a combination of shock and projectile damage upon any caught within its blast range. The gamemaster should determine the power of the blast (damage dice) and its radius of effect in meters (range). A good rule of thumb is two meters per D6 of damage. The damage from explosions decreases from the epicenter to the perimeter of the blast radius. Typical damage dice for explosives are D6s; reduce the damage dice by –1D6 for every two meters away from the epicenter.

> ***For example**, a stick of dynamite does 5D6 damage at the center of explosion to the first two meters, 4D6 at three to four meters, 3D6 at five to six meters, 2D6 for seven to eight meters, 1D6 for nine to ten meters, and no damage outside of the 10-meter radius.*

To determine how much damage anyone caught in the blast radius suffers, determine how far from the epicenter they are and roll damage as appropriate. Damage from most explosives is general, and not applied to any specific hit location. If using hit locations, divide the damage among 1D4 hit locations, rolled randomly. A character in the blast radius of an explosion may also suffer the effects of the knockback special success (page 130).

Use of the Demolition skill can adjust the strength of an explosive charge, increasing the damage and radius by as much as +50%, or cutting the charge to decrease the damage and radius by half.

EXTENDED RANGE

Using a missile weapon, your character may attempt to hit a target well beyond the base range. Within a weapon's base range, the skill rating is unmodified. At medium range (double the base range), it becomes *Difficult*, and at long range (four times base range) it becomes 1/5 the normal skill chance (equal to the chance of a special success, though the result is a normal hit).

The rules for point-blank range (page 151) still apply: missile attacks are *Easy* at a target less than DEX/3 in meters.

Small hand-propelled weapons such as the throwing knife and the throwing axe have no chance to hit beyond double base range.

FALLING

Your character may end up falling, either from cliffs, into pits, thrown from riding animals, or through a failed Climb roll. A falling character takes 1D6 base damage for every three meters fallen. If thrown with considerable force, the dice rolled may be doubled.

A small character takes less damage when they fall—if SIZ is 5 or less, reduce the damage from falling by 1D6. Unfortunately, large characters take additional damage from falls, adding an extra 1D6 damage if the character's SIZ is over 20 and another 1D6 for every fraction of 20 after that. This is cumulative with the modifier for force, described above.

If hit locations are used, a fall does damage to 1D4 hit locations, but a falling character making a successful Jump roll can specify on which hit location they land. The entire damage done by the fall applies both to the rolled hit location and to the falling character's total hit points. This is an exception to the rule that a limb may take only twice its hit points in damage.

The gamemaster may adjust the damage based on the surface impacted, or any intervening minor obstacles like branches. Armor provides half protection against falling damage up to three meters. Powers that protect against kinetic damage can lower falling damage.

If landing on a stake or other pointed object at the end of a fall, the falling damage is rolled separately than the damage from the stake. Normal stake damage is 1D10+1, with the chance of hitting determined by the gamemaster when setting up the trap. Based on circumstances, a falling character must make a successful Spot roll (if unaware of the hazard) before they may attempt a Dodge roll to avoid a stake.

FIGHTING WHILE DOWN

If your character has tripped or fallen, or has been knocked down, they are prone (page 151). Generally, a character knocked back and down in hand-to-hand combat falls backwards and lands on their back, but if struck from behind, tripping, or collapsing from injury causes the character to fall forward. A prone character's attacks, parries, and Dodges are *Difficult*, while any attacks directed at them are *Easy*.

A prone character gets no damage modifier while down and cannot attack with a two-handed weapon. A prone character can parry or Dodge, though actions are *Difficult*. If attacked, a successful *Difficult* Dodge roll gets the character back on their feet without being hit and allows an attack action in the combat round if the DEX rank permits. Alternatively, a successful Dodge and Agility roll (both unmodified) on their DEX rank gets the character on their feet, unscathed, but takes the place of an attack action in that combat round. See also **Superior/ Inferior Positions** (page 154).

FIRE AND HEAT

Your character may take damage if exposed to fire or intense heat. At the end of the combat round on DEX rank 1, fire or intense heat damages any character it touched during that round.

- Tiny flames equivalent to a candle or lantern inflict 1 damage per full combat round they are directly exposed to it.
- A hand-held torch does 1D6 damage per full combat round if held against a target. A target who is clothed but unarmored may attempt a Luck roll each combat round to prevent being set aflame. If successful, they are not set on fire. Failure means their clothing and/or hair starts burning, doing 1D6 damage per combat round until extinguished. This damage also applies to any fire the size and intensity of a small campfire.
- A large bonfire or equivalent in size to a bonfire inflicts 1D6+2 damage per combat round. An exposed character's hair and clothing may catch fire as well. A successful POW×1 roll avoids this.
- Being caught in a fiery boat or house can inflict 1D6+2 damage per combat round in addition to the force of any explosion (page 147). If exposed to these conditions, see **Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation** (page 145).
- Intense fires are those too hot to approach closely, inflicting 3D6 damage per combat round of exposure. This is the equivalent of molten metal or lava, a jet or rocket engine, or the heat inside of a furnace. This heat automatically sets a character aflame for 1D6 additional damage per combat turn after the initial round.

Armor and/or powers that offer protection subtract their armor value from this fire damage for one combat round. The gamemaster may choose to adjust this based on circumstances, such as fleeting contact, being wet, etc. Conventional armor's protection lasts 1D3 rounds, and when it ends, the armor does not protect the character any longer. Fire-retardant gear, such as worn by firefighters, only loses its protection if exposure is extreme or prolonged. Improvised methods of defense (get under a wet blanket, etc.) may have some effect. Random armor value protects a character from fire damage for up to 1D6 points of armor protection, no matter what type of armor.

Equipment can be damaged by fire. Every round fully exposed to open flame reduces non-metal armor value by at least 1 point. Metal weapons and armor are not destroyed by fire unless left in the flames for several full turns, but they may become too hot to use, or their non-metal portions may be damaged, causing inconvenience. At the gamemaster's discretion, firearms may even have their ammunition set off by the heat and fire, calling for Luck rolls for nearby characters to avoid being hit.

A character who takes more than 1/4 their total hit points (round up) in burn damage must make a successful Luck roll. Failure costs the character 1D4 characteristic points. The gamemaster should roll for the loss and determine which characteristics are affected, but at least 1 of these points must be from CHA.

Hit locations may determine where fire affects a character. In these cases, the quantity of hit locations affected derives from the size of the fire, at the gamemaster's discretion.

***For example**, a torch affects only one hit location, but if caught inside a raging house fire, all their hit locations are affected.*

Extinguishing a fire is not difficult, one easily be smothered with a cloak, dirt, water, fire extinguisher, etc. It takes one combat round to attempt to extinguish a small fire, longer for larger fires. If there is any chance of failure, a Luck roll extinguishes it. Failure means that the fire continues to burn, while a fumble means that the character extinguishing the fire has inadvertently set themselves aflame.

If attempting to burn or melt an inanimate object, the gamemaster should determine how many points of damage per combat round it takes to cause it damage, using the substance and relative size as a guideline.

***For example**, a book might ignite with 1 point of fire damage per round, while a steel sword might take 50 points or more of flame damage per combat round to melt.*

FIRING INTO COMBAT

Combat is a blur of action, complicated when some combatants use hand-to-hand weapons while others use missiles. Firing a missile weapon into combat is modified by –20%, while firing a missile weapon while engaged in combat is *Difficult*. However, if the attacker and the target are both within close combat range, the attack is *Easy* (for **Point-blank Range**, page 151), so the *Difficult* and *Easy* modifiers cancel one another.

In situations where your character must fire a missile weapon into (or within) close combat, it is a challenge to avoid accidentally hitting an ally. If your character rolls a number between their skill rating and their modified chance (–20%, as above) while shooting into hand-to-hand combat, the gamemaster should randomly determine which of the other potential targets was struck, by having all potential targets make a Luck roll and choosing the biggest failure (or most marginal success) as the unlucky target of the attack. In any case, the attacker is not eligible for an experience check, as they have technically missed what they aimed at.

If your character is using a missile weapon on a mass of targets and doesn't care who they hit, the skill ranking is increased by +5% for every extra body shot at if the potential targets are standing closely. The gamemaster should select which target in the group of combatants is struck, using the system described above. If targets are approaching in a loose skirmish line, the attacker must pick one target and attack as per normal. If targets are packed into a dense cluster (a spear wall, for example), the attacker may fire at the massed troops with the +5% per potential target skill rating modifier.

FORTIFIED POSITIONS

If your character is standing or kneeling to fight, or even observing, from behind some sort of fortified position such as a stone wall or other sturdy defensive bulwark, any attacks against them are *Difficult*. This can be overcome through aiming (see **Aimed Attacks**, page 140). A defender who crouches or kneels entirely behind a suitable defensive structure cannot be hit by small missile fire, though they could potentially be vulnerable to siege weapons, explosions, or attacks involving an area of effect. The gamemaster should determine whether such an attack can potentially injure your character.

IMPROVISED PARRYING WEAPONS

Most missile weapons can be used to parry if the need arises, aside from those too small to make much of a resistance, such as slings, throwing darts, or handguns. Weapons in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* that are SIZ/ENC 0 cannot be used to parry—they are either too soft and pliable, or too unsubstantial and small to present adequate resistance to attack. In most cases, an improvised parrying weapon loses 1 hit point each time it successfully parries an attack. When consulting the **Attack and Defense Matrix** (page 127), assume that improvised weapons always take at least 1 damage if successfully used to parry. Some exceptions may exist, such as a steel item used to parry a wooden club or an unarmed attack, at the gamemaster's discretion.

The base chance to parry with a missile weapon is half of the weapon's base chance (or 20%, whichever is higher). It is assumed that in a character's training and experience they have had to use the weapon to parry out of necessity and learned from that. This can vary by the weapon type and the style of training.

***For example**, basic military training in hand-to-hand combat includes the use of the rifle as an improvised club, including parrying. Hunting rarely requires parrying with a rifle.*

If the hit points of a missile weapon used to parry are exceeded by the rolled damage, it takes 1 hit point damage (or more, depending on the quality of the attack and parry).

IMPROVISED WEAPONS

As weapons and shields can be damaged or even destroyed in combat, characters in combat may attempt to improvise weapons from items found around them. The weapon tables in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* provide suggested statistics for a variety of improvised weapons, based on sizes.

KNOCKBACK

The impact of a weapon can do more than damage a target. A sufficiently powerful blow can send a target staggering backward. This is called a **knockback**. If an attack is designated as a knockback attempt, the final amount of damage done is compared vs. the target's SIZ in a resistance roll. If the target loses, they are knocked back by one meter per 5 points of damage in excess of their SIZ. In addition to any damage taken, they must make a successful Agility roll to remain standing. If an attack achieves the knockback special success, see page 130. The gamemaster may lower the chance of the resistance roll to reflect unevenness of ground, slope, or previous degree of damage already taken, or if the character is already in midair, such as flying.

If the targeted character is riding or on a vehicle, they should attempt a Drive, Pilot, or Ride roll, as appropriate. If successful, the SIZ of the mount or vehicle is added to their own SIZ. If unsuccessful, the knockback is figured only against the character's SIZ, and they can be knocked off his animal or vehicle, though the gamemaster may adjust this based on elements such as harness, seatbelts, cockpit configuration, etc.

An attacker can specify that their attack came from directly above the target, driving the target into the ground. In this case, the target is not knocked back, but must make an Agility roll to remain standing. If this roll fails, they fall prone (page 151). Generally falling from a standing position does not incur damage, but if the distance is greater, use the rules for falling (page 148).

In a setting where knockbacks are common, such as with superheroes or powerful martial artists, the gamemaster may announce that any successful blow has the potential for a knockback, regardless of whether it does damage to the target. In this case, the knockback threshold may be lower, such as 1/2 the target's SIZ, to increase its frequency.

KNOCKOUT ATTACKS

Knockout attacks only work against humans and humanoids, or other living beings with clearly defined heads. To render a target unconscious, declare your character's intent at the beginning of the round. A *Difficult* attack roll is made as if targeting a particular body part (such as the head). The attack is non-lethal and is not intended to do damage, though

damage is rolled to determine the potential for a knockout. Armor defends normally in all cases. If the damage is equivalent to a minor wound, the original damage rolled is ignored and the target is dealt the minimum damage for the weapon (after armor) but is not knocked out. If the attack is successful and the rolled damage is equivalent to a major wound (after armor), the target takes 1 damage and is knocked out for 1D10+10 rounds (the gamemaster rolls secretly for this).

The effects of special or critical successes (such as extra damage or bypassing armor) apply in all cases, while other special effects (slashing damage, knockback, etc.) do not apply to knockout attempts.

LIGHT SOURCES

Candles, torches, lanterns, flashlights, and other equipment provide portable sources of light, and give enough light by which to read and to use Search or Spot skills. Torches and lanterns provide visibility (and are visible) from 100 meters away in darkness. At 100 meters, your character must succeed with a Spot roll to see a candle or equivalent light source. Other light sources can range from much higher than these extremes, or fall somewhere between (see **Darkness**, page 146).

A candle flickers, is easy to drop, and is easy to blow out, less so if in a lantern. A long wax candle burns for approximately six hours; a short, pouch-sized candle burns for two hours. A torch gives a large, bright flame, and is difficult to blow out. A torch burns for approximately one hour. Oil lamps or lanterns usually contain enough light for several hours. If dropped, any flaming light source keeps burning with a successful Luck roll and might present a danger in combat (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148). If a light source must be used with care (an oil lamp, etc.), applicable skills are *Difficult*.

Many powers can provide light (see their entries in *Chapter Four: Powers*).

MASS COMBAT

Sometimes your character may become part of a **mass combat**, a tactical engagement consisting of far more participants than the number of player characters. If your gamemaster wishes to simulate a mass combat where there is an uncertain outcome, this can be handled via a series of opposed Strategy rolls on the part of the opposite sides; a series of resistance rolls with each side represented with a POT value assigned by the GM; or even a symbolic abstract combat between two representative combatants whose hit points reflect troop size.

Usually, the gamemaster has already decided the outcome of a mass combat and is including the engagement as a dramatic element, giving your character a chance to participate in the struggle at whatever level is appropriate, from the battlefield itself, the war room back in the capital city, or even on the bridge of a massive vehicle.

In these cases, the gamemaster should describe the battle through narrative, summarizing the high points as appropriate, and allow for scenes where the player characters can participate in one or more smaller engagements. In cases where your characters are immersed in combat, every involved character must make a Luck roll each turn (five minutes). Success means that no damage is taken. Failure means that 1D6 points of damage are taken. A fumble means that 2D6 points of damage are taken. Armor reduces this damage.

MISSILE FIRE WHILE MOVING

Your character can attempt missile fire while riding, driving, or piloting a moving mount or vehicle, but any appropriate combat skill is limited to the skill rating for the mount or vehicle they are directing. Attacking while running is limited to your character's Agility roll, or attacks during a midair leap can use the Jump skill as a cap. The gamemaster should

determine whether an attack is possible or simply outside the range of possibility. Some settings err on the side of over-the-top action (see **Variant Combat Rules**, page 131).

Moving and throwing a hand-propelled weapon (spear, axe, knife, rock, etc.) or a firearm directly ahead can be attempted at the normal skill rating. Moving and throwing or firing sideways makes the attack *Difficult* due to the distraction of moving in a direction other than the one being targeted. Bows are easier to fire sideways and are not penalized. Attacks directly behind a mobile character are at 1/5 normal skill rating (equivalent to a special success), and require an Agility, Ride, or Drive roll, as appropriate, to attempt. As noted in *Chapter Six: Combat*, your character can move for half of a combat round, and then throw, fire, or shoot a bow in the other half, at the appropriate DEX rank.

MOUNTED COMBAT

Combat while mounted is similar to combat on foot, though several conditions modify the experience for all involved parties. If the mount is a motorcycle or equivalent vehicle, the Drive skill should be substituted for the Ride skill. Following are modifiers to combat involving mounts:

- While mounted, the rider's combat skill ratings are limited to the skill rating of their Ride skill.
- Some types of weapons cannot be used while mounted, such as two-handed polearms and/or large shields.
- While mounted, any Dodges the rider attempts are *Difficult*.
- A mounted character uses the mount's MOV for any movement in the round, assuming they make a successful Ride roll.
- A mounted character is in a superior position (page 154) to targets on the ground.

- A successful knockback attack dismounts a mounted target, as does a major wound. The gamemaster may decide that other special successes (such as entangling) also may cause involuntary dismounting.
- When falling from a mount, the rider must make a successful Luck roll or take 1D6 damage (to a random hit location, if used). Armor protects normally, but if the Luck roll is fumbled, they are caught on their saddle and dragged for another 1D3 per combat rounds, taking damage each round, until freeing themselves with a *Difficult* Agility roll. In either case, the character must make a successful Stamina roll or be stunned for the next combat round (see **Stunning or Subduing**, page 154).
- A rider must dismount to retrieve a fumbled or dropped weapon. A dismount is a free action, though getting mounted again counts as a partial movement action.
- Charge attacks take place at the end of a full movement. When charging and wielding a weapon, your character should use the damage modifier for the mount instead of their own. Usually, a charge attack requires a successful Ride (or Drive) skill roll to maneuver the mount in the correct direction.

One means of defense against a mounted charge is a lance, spear, pike, or similar weapon, wielded with the haft set firmly (seated) in the ground, making it immobile against a charge. The attack is rolled as normal, and if successful, the charging mount's own damage modifier is added to the damage of the set weapon. To avoid a set weapon, the rider must abort any combat action and make a Ride (or Drive) roll to avoid being hit. If the mount is intelligent and does not wish to run onto a seated weapon, it may use its own Dodge skill in defiance of the mounted character's wishes. A rider may need to make a successful Ride roll and a successful POW vs. POW resistance roll to spur a mount to injure itself. Failure of either of these means that the mount will Dodge or balk at any further action for the remainder of the round.

If hit locations are used, the gamemaster may choose to make certain hit locations inaccessible between a mounted and unmounted opponent, depending on the weapons being used. For an unmounted character, small hand weapons may not be able to reach the mounted target's head, while long weapons have no such limitation. If appropriate, reroll any results of 'head' on the hit location roll. A mounted character equipped with a medium-sized hand weapon may be unable to strike the lower abdomen or legs of an unmounted character. If appropriate, a mounted character attacking an unmounted character rolls 1D10+10 for hit locations. Additionally, based on the position of the mounted character and the unmounted character, certain hit locations (right/ left) may be inaccessible. The gamemaster should assume that these attacks struck the mount instead. Two mounted characters fighting only have the right/ left limitation and are otherwise fully able to attack one another.

NATURAL WEAPONS

Natural weapons are part of the body of the attacker.

***For example**, a human's fist and foot are their natural weapons, and your character can use hands and even legs to Grapple an opponent.*

Most other creatures have natural weapons such as claws, fangs, prehensile tails, stings, and horns. Some even have natural missile weapons. As described in *Chapter Eleven: Creatures*, most creatures so equipped do 1D6 damage with claws and 1D3 damage with a bite or horn, plus damage modifier.

Your character can use their natural weapons the way they can use normal weapons, attacking and parrying a target. If hit locations are being used, the hit points for the fist parry are your character's hit points in the arm hit location and everything surpassing the arm's armor points goes directly to your character's arm location hit points and their total hit points.

Most creatures with natural weapons such as claws, stings, etc. use them just as a human would use a weapon, with the same DEX ranks and same options such as grapples and Dodges. Few wild animals know to parry attacks, as it is not a natural tactic. The gamemaster should decide if a creature tries to parry or Dodge, based on the animal's relative INT, DEX, and its mode of combat.

POINT-BLANK RANGE

Your character's chance to hit with a missile weapon is *Easy* when the range to the target is less than or equal to their DEX/3 in meters. Once the range between attacker and target is within touching distance (one meter for most weapons, two meters for polearms, spears, etc.), combat changes to hand-to-hand. Some weapons (bows, thrown weapons, etc.) are useless at hand-to-hand range, becoming *Difficult*, while some weapons (firearms, energy weapons, crossbows, etc.) are *Easy* at point-blank range.

At point-blank range, parries against missile weapons are allowed, as a defender can now attempt to block an arm pointing at them or otherwise misdirect a missile weapon.

POISONS

All poisons have a potency value (POT) matched against the CON of a poisoned character. If the poison overcomes your character's CON, then its full POT is done as damage to hit points. If the poison does not overcome the character's CON, it has a lessened effect—usually only doing half the poison's POT in damage (round up). See Sample Poisons (page 186).

Poison damage is always damage to total hit points or to a characteristic. Poison damage does not usually occur on the same combat round in which your character is poisoned. The delay before poison damage takes effect depends upon the poison. Unless otherwise specified by the gamemaster, the delay is three combat rounds for fast-acting poisons, or three full turns for slower poisons. Your gamemaster may wish to devise more complex rules involving poison administered to hit locations or different onset times or a more granular approach.

If your character takes two doses of a poison, they must make a separate resistance roll versus each one: two doses of a POT 10 poison are not the same as one dose of a POT 20 poison. Some powers or equipment may protect against poison: see *Chapter Four: Powers* and *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for details.

POISON ANTIDOTES

Almost all poisons have antidotes. All antidotes have a POT rating, just like poisons. If your character takes a poison's antidote no more than six full turns before being poisoned, the antidote's POT is subtracted from the poison's POT before damage is figured. An antidote for one type of poison may give a lessened benefit even when used with a different poison type, at the gamemaster's discretion.

PRONE

Your character is lying on the ground, either willingly or unwillingly prone. The following conditions apply to a prone character (also see the knockback special success, page 130):

- All hand-to-hand or medium-range missile attacks against a prone character are *Easy*.

- All long-range missile attacks against a prone character are *Difficult*.
- A prone character's attacks, parries, and Dodges are *Difficult*.
- Any attacks by a prone character wielding a two-handed weapon are *Difficult*.
- A prone character cannot add any positive damage modifier to attacks, though negative damage modifiers still apply.
- A prone character can utilize missile weapons such as firearms, crossbows, or energy weapons at their full skill rating. Some archery styles allow for prone use, even when the archer is on their back. However, some weapons simply cannot be fired effectively while prone, at the gamemaster's discretion. If in doubt, attacks should be *Difficult*.

The gamemaster may allow a modifier of +10% when using firearms or other self-propelled missile weapons while voluntarily prone, to simulate additional stability. This modifier can be applied in addition to any modifiers for scopes, etc.

It takes no roll to get back up after being knocked prone, but this takes the place of an attack, makes all parries and Dodges *Difficult*, and all attacks against the character while getting up are *Easy*. A successful *Difficult* Dodge roll gets a prone character back on their feet on their DEX rank and allows an attack action in the combat round. Alternately, a combination of successful Dodge and Agility rolls accomplishes the same, avoids the *Easy* modifier to be attacked, but does not allow an attack action (the Agility roll takes the attack action's place).

PULLING BLOWS

It is assumed that any attack is performed with the intent of doing as much damage as possible, but if needed, your character can 'pull' an attack, choosing to do less damage by striking lightly or by not striking vital body parts. During the statement of intent, you must declare that your character is intentionally pulling their blow to do less damage. Your character can add less of their damage modifier, or none of it, and they can roll smaller dice for the weapon damage, to a minimum of 1D2, but any + to the weapon's damage dice remains unchanged. If a weapon does multiple dice of damage, you can choose to reduce all of the dice of damage, or roll fewer dice, but you cannot split the dice and apply different reductions.

***For example**, a shotgun that does 4D6 in damage can have the damage reduced to 4D4, 4D3, or 4D2, or it can be reduced to 3D6, 2D6, or 1D6.*

If there is a question about reducing the value of dice, their order is, from smallest to largest: D2, D3, D4, D6, D8, D10, D12, to D20.

QUICKDRAWS

In a contest of who can draw their weapon and attack faster, whether with revolvers or katanas, each participant must hold their action to a later DEX rank as the gamemaster counts them down. When one of the characters chooses to act, the other must make an *Easy* Spot skill roll to notice the intention to attack. If the Spot skill roll fails, the character who opts to shoot first can make an attack against the other character which they cannot dodge or parry. If the Spot roll is successful, make a DEX vs. DEX resistance roll. The winner can shoot first, and if still able, the other can return fire on their next available DEX rank.

After the initial exchange of attacks, combat then begins as normal, using regular DEX ranks and attack skill ratings, allowing for dodges and parries. Dodging or parrying subsequent attacks is *Difficult*, making quick-draws extremely dangerous to all participants.

Larger numbers of characters can participate in a quick-draw contest, using the above guidelines.

RADIATION

Exposure to radiation or radioactive materials is usually harmful to living beings. The effect of radiation poisoning (acute radiation syndrome) is the equivalent of both poison and direct burns. Though radiation's intensity is measured in **rads**, here it is classified as low-intensity through fatal-intensity (see chart below) with associated potencies. The gamemaster should assign a potency (POT) to each exposure for use in a resistance roll. If your character is exposed to radiation, they must make a resistance roll using CON vs. the radiation's POT. Success means that your character avoids the effects for the period listed. The **Radiation Effects** table (below) provides guidelines for different POT levels of radiation.

Acute radiation syndrome is quite deadly. There are few means of reducing exposure to radiation in the modern world. First Aid is useless

RADIATION EFFECTS

Potency	Radiation Intensity	Effects
5	Low	Roll every 30 days. Failure means that your character suffers irritations such as skin rashes, headache, shedding skin, minor hair loss, mild nausea, diarrhea, etc.
10	Moderate	Roll every week. Failure means that your character suffers a bout of incapacitating illness (cannot rise from bed, tremors, shaking, etc.) that lasts 2D10 hours, in addition to the above symptoms. Two failures in a row means that your character has developed cancer (at the gamemaster's discretion).
15	Medium	Roll every day. Failure means that your character suffers a bout of incapacitating illness lasting 2D10 days, cumulative with other failed rolls. Your character also suffers 1 damage, in addition to suffering from one or more heightened symptoms of low-intensity radiation, described above. Failing this roll twice in a row inflicts 1D10 days of temporary blindness on your character. Failing this roll three times in a row means that your character has developed cancer (at the gamemaster's discretion). Other characters coming into close contact with your irradiated character are at risk for low-intensity radiation (see above).
20	High	Roll every hour. Failure means incapacitating illness as above, cumulative. Your character suffers 1D3 damage as above, as well as other symptoms. Blindness is automatic if the roll fails. If blindness continues for ten consecutive days, it becomes permanent. A character failing a roll of CON×1 becomes permanently sterile. Two failures of this roll indicate terminal cancer. Other characters coming into close contact with your character are at risk for moderate-intensity contamination (see above).
25	Acute	Roll every minute. Failure equals all the above symptoms. Blindness and sterility are immediate. Burn damage is 1D6 points per turn, and your character inevitably dies in CON/2 hours unless provided with suitable medical assistance. All physical skills are *Difficult* and require a successful *Difficult* Stamina roll to attempt. Your character's corpse presents a health risk to others, exuding medium-intensity radiation.
30+	Fatal	Roll every combat round. Failure equals all the above symptoms. Burn damage is 1D4 points per combat round. Movement or action is *Impossible*. Your character is wracked with excruciating pain until their death in 1D3 combat rounds. Your character's corpse is highly irradiated to a value equal to ½ the radiation's potency (round up).

against radiation, and the Medicine skill can do little to stave off its effects. Various powers and equipment may protect against the effects of radiation: see *Chapter Four: Powers* and *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for details, and more futuristic settings may have means of dealing with through chemical or technological means.

The above treatment of radiation is based on a normal power level model of its horrific effects. The superhero and post-apocalyptic genres often have radiation as a source of beneficial mutation; instead of terminal cancers and irradiated tissue, exposure to radiation causes super-powered mutations or dramatically accelerate the evolution of some species. The gamemaster may allow a character a POW×1 (or higher) chance of one of these beneficial mutations from radiation exposure, or radiation exposure may figure into your character's origin, giving them superpowers.

SHIELDS AND MISSILE FIRE

As described on page 132, while used in hand-to-hand combat versus a ranged attack, a half or small shield has a base 15% chance to block a missile, a full shield has a 30% chance to block a missile, and a large shield has a 60% chance. If your character kneels behind it, a full shield has a 60% chance to block a missile, and a large shield has a 90% chance. Only successes are blocked; special successes and critical hits are assumed to strike their intended targets. If your character is trying to parry a very fast missile weapon, such as an energy weapon or firearm, they have only the shield's base chance as the chance of success.

SHOOTING UP OR DOWN

If firing a missile weapon at a target or an angle more than 45°, the attack is *Difficult*. Effective and maximum ranges are halved for a target directly overhead, but are not affected for targets at the 45° angle or greater, up to 90° (directly overhead). The gamemaster should arbitrate whether a target is directly overhead or at an angle.

Attempts to fire up at a target are at –10% to the skill rating. Attacks made at an opponent that is significantly below the attacker's normal line of sight are at a +10% bonus to the skill rating, with no modifiers to range. Damage is unaffected in either case.

At the gamemaster's discretion, some weapons might be less able to fire directly above or below, such as slings or crossbows. If the nature of the weapon makes firing at these angles problematic, these attacks are *Difficult*.

SLIPPERY OR UNSTABLE SURFACES

If your character is fighting or taking sudden action on a slippery or otherwise uneven surface, they may run the risk of slipping. Make a successful Agility roll to keep from slipping. If the surface is especially slick (oily, in an earthquake, etc.), the roll may be *Difficult*. Failure means your character falls prone or is unsteady enough to take any action other than trying to stay upright. If your character fumbles on this roll, they may suffer 1D3 damage, based on the surface. Alternately, use the **Natural Weapon Fumbles** table (page 128). See **Fighting While Down** (page 148) for additional information.

STUNNING OR SUBDUING

Your character may wish to subdue an opponent rather than killing them outright. Being stunned is a dizzying, disorienting experience, as stars dance in the target's eyes and their head swims from the pain of the sudden blow. A stunned target cannot attack while stunned and can only attempt to Dodge or parry an attack if they make a successful Idea roll for each attempt. Furthermore, all attacks against the target are *Easy*. The stunned target can attempt to flee, but to do so requires a successful Idea roll to discern an escape path and a successful Agility roll to stagger out of danger.

Stun or subdue a character using one of these methods:

- Use the crushing special effect described on page 128.
- Use a weapon or blunt object to stun a target (see **Knockout Attack**, page 149).
- Use a weapon designed to stun (or knock out) an opponent rather than injuring them. First make a normal targeted attack (see page 125). On a successful attack, roll the weapon's normal damage, subtracting armor, and make a resistance roll vs. the target's current hit points. If successful, the target is stunned for rounds equal to the points of damage rolled. A critical result causes it to do maximum rolled damage plus normal rolled damage. If a stun weapon achieves a special result, count the weapon's maximum damage instead of rolling. If the attack fails, the target takes no damage and is not stunned. The stunned target only suffers the minimum rollable damage for the weapon. If the originally rolled damage would reduce the target to 1 or 2 hit points, the target is knocked out rather than stunned. If it reduces them to 0 hit points, they may die from a concussion unless receiving medical attention.
- A target can be immobilized with the Grapple skill (page 43) or use of a weapon with the entangle special effect (page 129).

Armor protects against stunning damage unless the attack is specifically targeted at an unarmored head. Energy or other weapons that do stunning damage ignore primitive, ancient, and medieval armor entirely, though the gamemaster may rule that electricity-based stunning weapons are at full effect vs. targets in metallic armor. Advanced armor is usually insulated against energy-based stunning weapons and works at full strength against them.

SUPERIOR/INFERIOR POSITIONS

If your character is standing at least half-again higher (or more) than their target, they are to have a superior position, an advantage over their opponent.

***For example**, for most human opponents, superior ground means standing higher than an opponent by one meter or more.*

Standing higher than an opponent's height negates this advantage unless the attacker is armed with a long weapon such as a spear or polearm.

A character in a superior position modifies their attack and parry chances by +10%. If hit locations are being used, add +1 to the D20 hit location roll. Rolls over 20 are equal to 20. There are no penalties for being in an inferior position, as the tactical advantage given to the character in the superior position are enough of a disadvantage. The superior position bonus does not apply if the character in the inferior position is equipped with a long weapon and the character in the superior position is not. If both are equipped with weapons of roughly the same size, the advantages are applied as described above.

As noted in **Mounted Combat** (page 150), a mounted character has a superior position to a character on foot, and gains the advantages listed here.

SUPERIOR NUMBERS

In a situation with many combatants, attackers and defenders alike may be at a disadvantage. Ordinarily, no more than five characters using hand-to-hand weapons can surround a single character and all have room to attack. In close quarters, there might be room only for two characters at a time to attack if both are equipped with large weapons, while eight characters with long spears might be able to thrust at a surrounded defender.

The gamemaster should evaluate the number of attackers and defenders, examine the terrain or environment, and consider the weapons used when determining how many characters can attack a single target in a round. Any remaining characters are crowded out and are unable to attack but may perform other actions, if desired. This assumes human-sized characters: the gamemaster may adjust these numbers for larger or smaller characters.

SWEEP ATTACKS

A giant opponent or a character attacking with a massive or long weapon may attempt a **sweep attack**, a horizontal swing across a large area to potentially strike multiple foes. Such an attack has a high chance of succeeding but does less damage than a normal attack. A sweep attack made with an appropriate weapon against a character standing in the target area is *Easy*, but damage is halved (round up). A creature with a natural sweep attack should use the skill rating and damage listed in its description, unmodified.

To avoid a sweep attack, your character cannot Dodge, but must instead use the Jump skill to get out of the way. Parrying a sweep attack is possible, though the parrying character must also make a resistance roll of their STR vs. the attack's damage (before being halved). Failing means they are struck, while a successful parry stops the sweep, sparing other potential targets in the sweep's path.

A successful attack with a sweep attack using a non-edged weapon potentially causes a knockback effect for anyone struck (see **Knockback**, page 149). Knockbacks are rolled for each character in the range of the sweep attack's effect, from the first struck to the last. If one character successfully resists being knocked back, none of the remaining characters are affected.

Sweep attacks can only cause crushing, knockback, or slashing special successes, as appropriate. Impales and entangles are not generally the result of a sweep. If an impale or entangle special success is rolled, the gamemaster can either substitute the result with a crushing, knockback, or slashing special success as appropriate, or consider it a normal success.

THROWN WEAPONS

Generally, weapons are usually crafted for hand-to-hand combat or for throwing, rarely both. However, in the excitement of combat, sometimes it becomes necessary to throw a weapon not meant to be thrown, or to use a thrown weapon in close combat. A few weapons, like the hatchet and javelin, are equally useful in both circumstances. When using thrown weapons, your character's damage modifier is halved (round up). If your character has multiple dice of damage modifier, each is halved, rather than the number of dice being halved.

Weapons meant for throwing are usually flimsier than hand-to-hand weapons and not always balanced for hand-to-hand combat. If your character is forced into close combat wielding a throwing weapon they do not have an hand-to-hand weapon skill for, attacks with that weapon are *Difficult*.

TWO WEAPONS

Your character can use two hand-to-hand (or small missile) weapons at the same time, rather than one weapon or one weapon and a shield. The weapons do not need to be of the same type, or class. For example, your character can fight with a dagger in each hand, or a sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. There is no advantage to handedness. Fighting with two weapons simultaneously has the following conditions:

- Using two weapons in combat does not automatically grant a second attack, or more parries than are normally allowed.
- If your character has a skill of 100% or more in each weapon used, they can split the attack as per the optional rules for skills over 100% (page 131). In this case, each attack is *Difficult*, with the other attack for each weapon ignored.

  ***For example**, your character has a rapier (with a 102% skill) in her right hand and a dagger (110% in the other) in their left hand. If she splits her skill ratings this round and attacks multiple times, her rapier attack is 51% and her dagger attack is 55%. The second rapier attack and the second dagger attack are ignored, as the dagger attack takes the place of the second rapier attack.*

- If a second attack is allowed, it occurs 5 DEX ranks after the initial attack.
- Attacks with the secondary hand are *Difficult* if your character is not trained in the use of fighting using that hand (see below).
- If the weapon is traditionally used in the secondary hand (such as a parrying dagger or shield), or your character has a skill of 100% or more with the weapon, they do not suffer this penalty.
- A primary advantage to fighting with two weapons is that your character is not defenseless if they lose one weapon due to breakage or a fumble.
- Fighting with one ranged and one hand-to-hand weapon allows your character the advantage of being able to switch between both modes. See **Firing into Combat** (page 149) and **Point-Blank Range** (page 151).
- A second weapon does not always have to be a weapon and can be a tool or other useful implement.

  ***For example**, your character may fight with a sword in one hand and a torch in the other, using the torch for light and as a potential club. The gamemaster may require Luck rolls if the secondary item is fragile or potentially hazardous (like an oil-filled lantern).*

For a quick rule of thumb, if your character has a DEX 15 or less, they are either right or left-handed. If your character has a DEX 16 or more, they can be ambidextrous if they choose. If handedness has not been established prior and is a concern, the gamemaster may ask you to make a Luck roll. A special success allows your character to be ambidextrous. Success lets you pick, while failure should be determined with a D6 roll (1–3=right, 4–6=left). Once handedness has been determined, you should note it on your character sheet for future reference.

UNDERWATER COMBAT

There are few places where humans are less suited for combat, but sometimes fighting while submerged is unavoidable. If your character does not have equipment or some power to prevent drowning, see **Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation** (page 145).

Many weapons are next-to-useless underwater, such as those that do crushing or knockback damage. The effects of others are lessened considerably, and some (like firearms or energy weapons) may not function at all if submerged. The following conditions affect underwater combat:

- A swimming character must succeed in a Swim skill roll each turn to maneuver into position to make an attack. If standing on a surface, this roll is not required.
- A weapon that does anything other than impaling damage does only half damage (round up) while underwater.
- Being underwater counts as having an additional 3 points of armor against any non-impaling weapons.
- While underwater, all attacks, parries, and Dodges are limited to the attacker's Swim skill, unless they are in close combat, grappling, and/or using a piercing weapon of SIZ 0 or 1.
- Parrying with a shield while underwater is *Impossible*.
- Fighting underwater costs double the normal fatigue points per combat round.

At the gamemaster's discretion, someone acclimated to an underwater environment (merfolk or all aquatic animals, for example) suffers none of the above conditions.

VACUUM

If your character is exposed to vacuum without some form of protection, the first course of action is to exhale all air within their lungs to equalize pressure within and outside. If your character does not do this, they take 1D6+2 points of damage per combat round from the collapse of their lungs. If rapidly exposed to vacuum, a character who would know to do this can remember with a successful Idea roll. The gamemaster may also allow a successful *Difficult* Knowledge roll or an unmodified Science (Astronomy) roll to provide your character with this information.

Additionally, a human being begins to hemorrhage if exposed to vacuum or near-vacuum conditions, suffering 1 damage per round for the first round, then 2 damage at the second round, 4 damage after three full rounds, 8 damage at four full rounds, etc. This may be delayed by one combat round per armor point of a protective suit, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Additionally, abrupt exposure to vacuum may cause your character's eardrums to burst (make a Stamina roll to avoid this), and after CON×2 combat rounds in vacuum, their vision begins to become affected, making any rolls involving sight *Difficult*. Depending on how and where your character was exposed to vacuum, they may also suffer from the effects of extreme cold, extreme heat, or radiation. See those spot rules for more information. Powers and/or equipment are the best solution to mitigate this.

VOLLEY FIRE

Volley fire rules apply specifically to thrown/self-propelled weapons. These are almost always launched at the rate of one attack per combat round. However, your character may wish to send as many attacks at an opponent as are possible in the shortest amount of time, either as suppressing fire or to bypass a particularly effective defense.

If your character chooses to throw, fire, or launch weapons as rapidly as possible, use the relevant weapon's attacks-per-round entry, with the first attack at the normal DEX rank and subsequent attacks happening at 5 DEX rank intervals after. All volley fire attacks are *Difficult*. If the DEX ranks for any attacks are below 0, your character cannot attack further. Though your character may have enough DEX ranks to attack more than the attacks-per-round, that amount is the limit and all further DEX rank attacks are not used.

***For example**, if your character with DEX 12 uses volley fire with throwing rocks (which get two attacks-per-round), the first throw will occur on DEX rank 12, and the second will occur on DEX rank 7. Even though there is the potential to attack on DEX rank 2, a thrown rock allows only two attacks-per-round.*

Drawbacks to volley fire, however, aside from being *Difficult*, is that it uses ammunition faster and does not allow the attacker to parry or Dodge while launching volley attacks.

WEAPON LENGTH

In combat, there are effectively three distances to consider: close (within arm's reach), medium (roughly 1–2 meters apart), and long (2+ meters). On the weapon tables, all hand-to-hand weapons include an entry for the weapon's SIZ/Enc. Generally, the larger the weapon, the more likely the wielder is to get in the first blow, or to hold off an opponent armed with a shorter weapon and prevent them from making their own attack. The longer the weapon, though, the clumsier it is to wield effectively at all ranges (see **Closing**, page 145).

- Use normal DEX ranks for short vs. short, short vs. medium, medium vs. medium, and long vs. long weapons.
- A character armed with a long weapon attacks first against an opponent using a medium or a short weapon, despite their DEX rank. The long-weapon-user attacks at their DEX rank if that is higher, or just before their opponent's DEX rank (if equal to or of lesser DEX than the opponent).
- A long-weapon-user can attempt to hold off a short-weapon-user, who must make a successful parry or Dodge to bypass their guard. Once the short-weapon-user has slipped inside the guard of the long-weapon-user, attacks against the long-weapon-user are *Easy* and attacks against the short-weapon user are *Difficult*. Parries by the long-weapon-user are *Difficult*.
- To re-establish optimal combat distance and put a potential attacker in danger again, a long-weapon-user can Dodge to disengage and retreat to a distance they can keep the attacker at bay again, or drop their weapon and either Brawl, Grapple, knockback with a shield, or draw and attack with a new medium or short weapon.
- The situation described above is not true of medium versus short weapons, which are not modified and do not require special conditions to maneuver into combat.

Some weapons, such as quarterstaffs, are especially adaptable and may be used to attack at any of the three distances.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather conditions include any atmospheric effects that may affect characters: wind, cloud cover, and precipitation. Effects from other extremes of weather are covered in **Cold, Exposure, Hunger, and Thirst** (page 146) and **Fire and Heat** (page 148).

Wind

Strong winds can affect movement and missile fire (thrown and missile weapons, not firearms or energy weapons), as well as any actions where calm air would be preferable. Movement on foot or mounted is also affected by wind (see **Terrain and Weather Modifiers**, page 117). Consult the type of wind below.

The STR value is assigned by the gamemaster, for STR vs. STR resistance rolls each round for your character to continue to stand upright, and the modifier is applied to any relevant skills (missile weapons, movement skills, etc.) and can be used to adjust the MOV rate. These values represent direct exposure to the full force of the wind and may be less the further from the epicenter or based on partial cover.

- **Light to Moderate Wind (STR 0–1):** —
- **Strong Wind (STR 2–6):** –10%
- **Severe Wind (STR 7–9):** –25%
- **Windstorm (STR 10–12):** –50%
- **Hurricane-force Wind (STR 13–15):** –75%
- **Tornado-force Wind (STR 16+):** –90%

Failure for the resistance roll means that your character falls; potentially taking damage (see **Falling**, page 148).

Cloud Cover

Cloud cover defines the amount of the sky obscured by clouds. The modifier also determines the percentage chance of rain (roll the penalty as a chance, not as a modifier, and see **Rain**, below). Skills affected by cloud cover include Navigation and Knowledge (Astronomy). This may also modify powers or any conditions requiring direct sunlight. Severe or complete cloud cover may also serve as partial darkness (see **Darkness**, page 146).

- **Light to Moderate Cloud Cover:** —
- **Heavy Cloud Cover:** –25%
- **Severe Cloud Cover:** –50%
- **Complete Cloud Cover:** –90%

Rain

For days with appropriate weather conditions, if desired, roll D100 each day. If the result is equal to or less than the percentage of sky covered (see **Cloud Cover**, above), it rains. The amount of precipitation falling equals the D100 roll, in millimeters. Depending on the weather and time of year, the rain may turn to snow, sleet, or hail. The modifier affects all appropriate skills.

- **Rain:** –10%
- **Snow:** –25%
- **Sleet:** –50%
- **Hail:** –75%

ZERO-GRAVITY COMBAT

If your character is in outer space or an environment with little or no gravity, they must make an Agility roll each round they attempt to perform any combat or Physical activities. Success indicates that your character can perform actions unmodified, while failure on this roll means that all such actions are *Difficult*.

Additionally, unless your character is braced, any impact they suffer causes the knockback special effect and half of the knockback special effect to the attacker as well, as applicable (see **Knockbacks**, page 149). However, the damage from impacting other objects is reduced by half (round up).

If they have some means of negotiating the environment (gravity shoes, etc.), the Agility roll allows them to be oriented as desired. Failure puts them pointed in the wrong direction, potentially facing away from an opponent, or even upside-down relative to their desired orientation.

EQUIPMENT

This chapter covers everything outside of your character: items that they can own and interact with, such as money, weapons, armor, equipment, vehicles, and the environment itself, mundane or exceptional. Here are also rules for special types of gear and how to handle equipment in play.

MONEY

Wealth (page 22) addresses money, but is abstracted due to the potential range of prices, incomes, and currencies throughout any possible setting. In place of currency exchange lists or currency abstractions, the Wealth rules (*Chapter Two: Characters,* page 26) and Status rules (*Chapter Three: Skills*, page 51) are used. For convenience, these are summarized on the **Wealth Levels** table (opposite).

The **Item Value** column represents the value of items available to a character of that Wealth level. *Cheap* items are worth very little, *Inexpensive* equipment is cheap and usually low-quality, *Average* equipment is of sound quality and costs a fair price, while *Expensive* gear is of higher quality or more pricey. *Priceless* items and equipment are considered to be above what can be easily purchased: buying these must be arranged or negotiated, even among the wealthy.

Two additional values are not represented on this chart: *Free* and *Restricted*. *Free* items are just that—they cost nothing and can be found without effort, while *Restricted* items are unavailable without a permit and and unauthorized ownership often incurs criminal charges. *Restricted* items may be given an actual value in addition to the quality, such as an item that is *Expensive* as well as being *Restricted*.

Character creation provides information about your character's beginning Wealth level. Your gamemaster may use this and the Status skill as guidelines for assigning starting equipment above and beyond those guidelines presented in **Step Eight** of character creation (page 16).

WEALTH LEVELS

Wealth Level	Item Value	Description
Wealthy	*Priceless*	Vast wealth, wanting for nothing. Any purchase is within reason and lines of credit allow even greater financing.
Affluent	*Expensive*	Well-off and able to spend freely without concern for budget.
Average	*Average*	A middle-class income, comfortable, but not extravagant. Major purchases are weighed carefully.
Poor	*Inexpensive*	Life on the edge. Day-to-day sustenance is meager and any loss has consequences.
Destitute	*Cheap*	Penniless, without even basic pocket money. Survival is a driving concern.

EQUIPMENT

Each piece of equipment has a relative value. Your gamemaster should assume that if your character is of that Wealth level (or above), they have access to that piece of equipment without any trouble. Your character has free access to equipment with values below their Wealth level, within reason. Your gamemaster may require Status rolls if you wish for your character to reach above their station and possess items of higher Wealth level. This can represent saving up for something, a valuable hand-me-down, or calling in a favor.

At your gamemaster's discretion, if you wish for your character to possess more expensive gear (above their Wealth level), a successful

Status roll should be required to 'purchase' items one level above your character's default Wealth level. A *Difficult* Status roll must be made for items two Wealth levels above, and your gamemaster may rule that items more than two levels of value above your character's default Wealth level are simply inaccessible. Alternately, your gamemaster may decide that a particular piece of equipment has been given, assigned, or loaned to the character, based on the character's profession.

***For example,** a soldier's Wealth level is usually Poor or Average, but soldiers are issued firearms and equipment far above their financial means. A soldier is expected to take care of the equipment and may not 'own' it, but the gear is available for adventuring. However, an astronaut is unlikely to own their own spaceship outside of a science fiction setting.*

Starting Equipment

As noted in **Step Eight** of *Chapter Two: Characters* (page 16), your character begins with gear and equipment appropriate to their Wealth level and profession. Usually, an average character will have:

- A complete set of clothing appropriate to their environment and genre.
- Pocket money and personal savings appropriate to their Wealth level.
- A personal item showing some relation to their family, whether an heirloom, keepsake, photo, etc. or some trinket of little relative value but having some emotional connection.
- Any trade tools or equipment suitable to their profession, if appropriate.
- Any weapon in which they have a skill of over 50%, if appropriate.

Each profession may have additional gear, such as the pilot, who may begin play with an airplane, ship, or even a spaceship, based on the setting. Try not to choose a profession solely for the access to equipment—your profession should be a part of the character you want to play, not the most advantageous social or economic choice.

***For example**, if everyone in the group picks a noble, game play might become stale if all the characters use their vast financial resources to make problems go away.*

Furthermore, you and your gamemaster should consider that the quality and appearance of your character's gear and garments are also likely to reflect their Status skill ranking and Wealth.

***For example**, a student's garments are clean and probably fashionable, but not suitable for black-tie events, and serve them poorly on an expedition into remote Tibet. The gear a dilettante purchases for a hunting expedition is pristine and of the best brands, though an experienced hunter has well-worn and trustworthy gear chosen for reliability over the label.*

Purchasing Equipment

When your character wants to obtain or replace equipment or gear that they cannot scrounge, loot, or take from someone, this is handled using the item's assigned value, and potentially using skills such as Appraise, Bargain, and Persuade, or by simply using Status rolls as appropriate.

First, determine whether the equipment can be found at all. Your gamemaster may require a successful Research roll or a characteristic roll such as Idea, Luck, or Knowledge to find it. Communication skills may be required if bargaining or negotiation is necessary. *Chapter Ten: Setting* provides some basic guidelines for availability of items in a variety of settings.

Assuming the desired item can be found, the most direct way to get it is with the Status skill (page 51), modified by these factors:

- If the item has value two levels below your character's Wealth level and it can be found, it is automatically available. No roll is needed.
- If the item has value one level below your character's Wealth level and it can be found, a single item (or a small set of items, as appropriate) can be had without making a roll.
- If the item has value equal to your character's Wealth level, no roll is required to obtain it.
- If the item is one value level above your character's Wealth level, a successful Status roll is required to obtain it.
- If the item is two value levels above your character's Wealth level, a successful *Difficult* Status roll is required to obtain it.
- If the item is more than two value levels above your character's Wealth level, no Status roll will obtain it.

Finally, there's always theft or violence to get a desired piece of gear. If your gamemaster permits, your character may begin play with a stolen item of almost any value. In this case, determine who owned the item originally, whether they know it has been taken (and who took it), and the degree and severity of the resources they will devote to recovering it. The theft itself may be roleplayed as an introductory scene or flashback, or automatically assumed to have been successful. In either case, your gamemaster should make any reasonable efforts to deal with the repercussions of the theft in a manner appropriate to the setting, potentially including the recovery efforts into the overall story or campaign. As with other skills, a successful skill roll made before an adventure begins is not eligible for an experience check.

Starting Equipment with Powers

You may wish for your character to begin with a piece of powered equipment, if powers are used in the setting. If your gamemaster approves, your character must 'pay' for that piece of equipment out of their own starting budget for powers, whether in initial spells or psychic abilities, at the cost of a mutation, or out of your character's power budget. You may begin with one or more pieces of equipment that utilize powers, with the following guidelines:

- **Magic Powers:** To begin play with a magic item, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW per spell invested in the item, plus 1 point of permanent POW per level of spell capacity the item can use. Additionally, your character must know (or have access to) the spell(s) the item can use. The item has a power point capacity equal to your character's normal power point total after the magic item is created, or the SIZ of the item. If your character did not create the magic item, your gamemaster should determine its power point capacity. A magic item must have an initial skill rating paid for out of your character's personal skill points, and cannot be higher than the skill rating of its creator. If your character did not create it, your gamemaster

WHEN TO DESCRIBE EQUIPMENT?

When does a piece of equipment need to be described in game terms, versus when it can be assumed to be a part of the background? This is a question of detail: when are game effects required, and when are they unnecessary? Though this decision is for your gamemaster, there is no right or wrong answer: merely the degree of convenience. Ideally, the time spent figuring game specifics is minimized in favor of maximizing time for roleplaying and adventuring.

This chapter covers a variety of pieces of equipment, including weapons, armor, and vehicles. Ideally, these guidelines are enough that an equivalent to an some other piece of equipment can be derived, or a piece of gear can be abstracted into a straightforward skill modifier.

should determine the initial skill ratings. When the magic item is created, determine whether it is personal (only your character can use it), whether it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll if it has power points, or if anyone can use it. See **Magic Items** (page 161) for more information.

- **Mutations:** To begin with an item with mutations, work with your gamemaster to provide a reasonable explanation why such an item exists and what mutations are best to represent its abilities. The mutated item is a part of your character and must be paid for out of their initial characteristic and available mutations. To begin play with a mutated item, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent CON per level of the mutation (and an equal number of available starting mutations). Any characteristic rolls the item makes are based off your character's own characteristics. A mutated item is considered to be 'alive' and will heal at the same rate your character does. See **Mutated Items** (page 161) for more information.
- **Psychic Abilities:** To begin with an item that uses psychic abilities, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW per level of the psychic ability (and one psychic ability 'slot' from their starting psychic abilities if the ability is not known). The item has a starting POW (and maximum power points) equal to your character's. Your character must pay the skill points for the item's psychic abilities out of their personal skill point pool. See **Equipment with Psychic Abilities** (page 161) for more information.
- **Sorcery:** To begin play with an artifact, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW per sorcery spell invested in the artifact and must know (or have access to) the spell(s) the artifact can use. The artifact has a power point reservoir equal to your character's normal power point maximum (after the artifact is created), whichever is larger. Your gamemaster should set the POW and power point value if the artifact was not created by your character. When the artifact is created, you should determine whether it will be personal (only your character can use it), whether it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll if it has power points, or if anyone can use it. See **Equipment with Sorcery** (page 162) for more information.
- **Superpowers:** To begin play with a gadget, pay for the gadget's powers as if they are from your character's own power budget. It is recommended that the gadget be the same power level as its owner, though your gamemaster may allow for a gadget more or less powerful. Your gamemaster can also decide to shift the relative level of the gadget and your character for balance purposes, so if the gadget is a level higher than the campaign power level, your character's power level should be shifted one level down, or vice versa. You can take the power failing "Superpowered identity must be turned on in an obvious and preventable manner" tied to the item (page 91), usually a +1 power budget bonus. Other power failings may apply, such as "Power has a limited number of uses per day". Also, your gamemaster may allow you to take a new power failing: "Power comes from a gadget" for a +1 power budget bonus. Whenever applicable, the gadget should rely on your character's relevant skill. See **Equipment with Superpowers** (page 162) for more information.

Making Equipment

Your character may want to actually build a piece of equipment, which is usually cheaper than buying it and less risky than stealing it. Any item your character makes (as opposed to buying) is considered to be one value level lower than its standard price. This assumes that your character is skilled in the manufacture of the item (a relevant skill rating of 75%+). This assumes that your character knows where to find trustworthy components at good prices (black market, mail order, salvage yard, etc.), and will spend the time testing and evaluating materials to make sure they work. Your gamemaster may require that this process involve other skill rolls, or even Status rolls as above. The time and effort spent gathering parts and/or raw materials is up to your gamemaster to determine, based on how much they want to focus on it during play.

Some items cannot traditionally be fashioned from store-bought pieces, such as duplicating unique pieces of art or artifacts as anything but replicas. Though the individual pieces may be cheap to make or find, the craftsmanship or item's rarity may limit your options. If your character is not skilled enough, or fails the relevant rolls, the cost of raw materials and components may even be more expensive than the item traditionally is.

> ***For example**, attempting to build a car out of pieces purchased through retail is time-consuming and expensive, and much more money and time than just buying a car outright. However, if your character is skilled and is able to use Bargain and Research successfully, their may find a junkyard or be able to scavenge all of the necessary elements for much cheaper than paying asking price.*

Ultimately, it is up to your gamemaster to decide how much time it takes to manufacture a particular item. If necessary, assuming that all required equipment is on hand and all relevant skill rolls are successful: an item that is relatively simple to make requires one hour per SIZ. If it is of average complexity, each SIZ requires one day. If it is relatively complex, each SIZ is one week. If it is extremely complex, each SIZ may take a month. If more than one character is working on the item, divide the SIZ between them. When the work has covered the required SIZ of the item, it is complete. Use the SIZ equivalency tables (page 190 and 188).

> ***For example**, a target shield (SIZ 3) is relatively easy to construct and takes three hours. A SIZ 50 automobile is of average complexity and takes a single person 50 days of work or two mechanics 25 days of work to assemble from pieces. A SIZ 110 airliner, however, is extremely complex, and would take a single character nine years to complete. Your gamemaster is encouraged to modify these amounts based on equipment, facilities, and the quality of successes rolled. For such a long-term project, each time period (one hour, one day, or one week) requires a separate and successful skill roll, if a skill roll is necessary.*

These values are abstract, and your gamemaster is encouraged to provide more accurate information on manufacturing time, if desired.

Equipment Quality Modifiers

Skill rolls can be modified by having relevant and appropriate equipment handy. Equipment can be anything from a set of lockpicks, a machinist's tool set, a research library, a medical lab, or anything else that is useful and appropriate. The quality of equipment can provide a modifier to a skill roll, as described in **Situational Modifiers** (page 114). This modifier can range from inferior equipment penalizing your character's skill rating by –20%, to superior quality equipment offering a +20% bonus.

Most types of equipment exist in a wide variety of qualities. Your gamemaster should determine whether a particular piece of equipment is available in a range of qualities and how easy or expensive it may be to obtain said equipment. Most equipment your character uses is by default of average quality. However, you may wish for your character to own or use superior quality equipment, to increase their chances of success with a relevant skill roll.

Following is a quick guide to handling value and availability of different quality levels of equipment:

Quality	Modifier	Value and Availability
Inferior	–20%	Subtract one to three value levels
Average	None	As normal
Superior	+20%	Add one to three value levels

To use this chart, find the piece of equipment's normal value (or consult your gamemaster). Next, determine the quality of the item you would like for your character. Consult the **Value and Ability** column to determine the final value of the equipment. A piece of equipment's value and availability cannot usually be modified beyond normal limits. Assumedly, your character wants good or superior equipment to increase their skill ratings, though if budget is an issue, you may choose to have your character use more affordable lower-quality equipment.

At your gamemaster's discretion, alternate values and/or modifiers can be assigned to equipment—the values presented are guidelines.

Having adequate gear provides no modifier at all. However, if your character does not possess the required equipment to use a particular skill, your gamemaster may make the skill's chance *Difficult* or *Impossible*, or simply rule that the skill cannot be attempted without the right gear.

***For example**, your character encounters a lock that must be picked. Following are some of the outcomes due to circumstances:*

- *Superior lock picks and other tools provide a +20% bonus.*
- *Average tools provide no bonus.*
- *Inferior tools (rusty, broken, improvised) modified the skill by –20%.*

Your gamemaster may declare that the skill cannot be attempted at all if your character does not have even the most rudimentary lockpicking tools. They may say "You can't pick the lock without a lockpick, or anything to stick in the lock. Maybe look around some more? You might find something to fashion into an improvised lockpick."

Your gamemaster may allow your character a straight 1% chance of success, even without tools. If the roll is successful, your gamemaster may say: "You manage to wiggle the lock assembly back and forth until you hear a slight click. Either you managed to unlock it through applying the right vibrations, or it wasn't locked correctly in the first place. Either way, it was amazing luck."

Remember that situational modifiers to a skill rating are applied after an *Easy* modifier is doubled or *Difficult* divides it in half.

Skills and Equipment

Many skills require equipment to be used successfully, or are greatly enhanced with equipment. As noted before, some skills are penalized for having no equipment. The equipment needed for a particular skill varies by setting, and your gamemaster may provide more details this topic. The **Skills & Equipment** table (page 161) describes potential specialized or general equipment to use with skills. If the skill is not listed, it does not require any equipment, or it is obvious (such as weapon skills).

Other Equipment (page 186) contains additional information on useful equipment, including sample kits your character might use.

Equipment with Characteristics

Some equipment has characteristic values: whether values in all the characteristics, some, or only one. Some have none. This varies item to item, but if an item has a quality requiring a resistance roll, it should have a characteristic value. For equipment with characteristics, the following guidelines describe how these values work when applied to objects:

- **Strength (STR):** An item with STR must have some means of motion. STR is not a measure of how resistant something is to STR: for that value, see its hit point or armor value. Items with STR are vehicles, construction equipment like forklifts or bulldozers, robots, or even hydraulic jacks.
- **Constitution (CON):** An item with CON is rare—hit point totals are usually based on raw SIZ and modified by armor value. Unless it can heal or is affected by disease, poison, etc. it doesn't require CON. Sample items with CON would be humanoid androids.
- **Size (SIZ):** SIZ is the primary characteristic for an item—almost everything has physical presence and therefore SIZ. As noted above, for most pieces of gear, SIZ determines hit point values. Sometimes an item will have greater hit points, based on what it is made of. See **General Qualities of Objects** (page 188) for more on hit points, armor value, and other attributes.
- **Intelligence (INT):** Rare for an item, INT represents thought, implying intuition and problem-solving. INT is unlikely for items other than computers or artificial intelligences, but magic items might have INT and attendant personalities. An item with INT should ideally have some means of communicating, such as a display, screen, voice, telepathy, or other method of relaying information.
- **Power (POW):** POW represents spiritual energy, and is almost exclusive to living beings or magical creations. This does not represent a power source—that is either mechanical (a power point reserve) or using the Extra Energy superpower (page 100).
- **Dexterity (DEX):** Any item capable of independent movement should have DEX. If an item with DEX must be operated by your character, use the lower DEX of either your character or the item.
- **Charisma (CHA):** While CHA has elements of personality and personal charisma included, for an item it can either be the aesthetic appeal, or it may represent that the item is capable of communication and charm. The main reason to assign CHA to an inanimate item is to compare its appearance to another item.
- **Education (EDU) (Option):** Aside from representing training or downloaded knowledge for a thinking computer, EDU is best used for equipment with knowledge reserves. Usually such an item either adds a bonus to your character's Research skill, or can make skill rolls *Easy* or *Difficult*. When assigned to an item, EDU stands for data it has immediate access to. This figure expands dramatically with the advent of information storage and online access to databases.

As noted above, it isn't essential for each piece of equipment or item to have characteristics unless they're needed. If in the course of play, you need a value that hasn't been defined, generate it with a roll of an appropriate number of D6s or assign it a value based on similar pieces of equipment.

You could even determine the value with a Status roll: a fumble is a value of 1, a failure equals 1D6, a success equals 2D6, a special success is 2D6+6, and a critical success gives the item a characteristic of 2D6+12.

Equipment with Skills

Some equipment may possess skills, handled just like character skills. Any piece of equipment capable of independent action can have a skill. Some examples might be automated defense systems with the Artillery skill; educational programs using Teach; diagnostic systems using Repair; etc. In general, the more intelligent piece of equipment is, the more likely it is to have one or more skills.

Your gamemaster should set the values of these skills, based on the nature of the piece of equipment. If it has a characteristic related to the skill (for example, INT and Knowledge skills), its skill level may be a multiple of that characteristic (×1, ×3, ×5, etc.), depending on how efficient it is. **Other Equipment** (page 186) provides examples of equipment with skills. If the item can speak or read, it should have a Language skill—usually the owner's or creator's native language.

To begin play with an item possessing skills, 'pay' for the item's skill points out of your character's personal skill point pool (from **Step Seven** of character creation, page 11) or the professional pool if the item is important to the performance of their profession.

Alternately, you can treat the item as if it had superpowers (see *Chapter Four: Powers*) and purchase the item as if it were a power. In this case, the following conditions apply:

SKILLS & EQUIPMENT

Skill	Potential Equipment
Appraise	None, or reference materials, measuring devices, magnifying glass, etc.
Art	By medium (paints, computer, holo-imager, spraypaint, typewriter, etc.).
Climb	None, or rope, pitons, crampons, etc.
Craft	By medium. Almost every Craft specialty uses its own equipment or tools.
Disguise	Makeup, wigs, costume changes, etc.
Fine Manipulation	None, or precision tools.
First Aid	None, or basic first aid kit and bandages.
Gaming	None, or cards, dice, game board, etc.
Knowledge	None, or reference materials.
Language	None, or a language dictionary.
Literacy	None, or a language dictionary.
Medicine	Varies by setting, ranging from herbalist materials to state-of-the-art hospital facilities and pharmaceuticals.
Navigate	None, or maps, astrolabe, compass, etc.
Repair	None, or tools appropriate to type of repair.
Research	None, or research library and reference materials.
Science	None, or scientific instruments and reference materials.
Teach	Educational materials appropriate to subject.
Technical Skill	None, or materials appropriate to specific skill.

- The item has the character failing "Superpowered identity must be turned on in an obvious and preventable manner" tied to the item (page 91), usually a +1 power budget bonus.
- Other power failings may apply, such as "Power has a limited number of uses per day" or "Power cannot improve through experience."
- Skills are purchased with the Super Skill power (page 106). It is assumed that all items have a 0% starting skill rating.
- If no obvious attributes exist for the item, work with your gamemaster to determine its power supply, range, etc. Additional superpowers can be purchased to improve these attributes.

If you invest points in an item, you are going to want to have it available. Your gamemaster should do whatever they can to make sure that your item survives with your character, is readily repairable, or a replacement can be found easily, as appropriate to its value and the setting. Despite the fact that it is a distinct item, it is considered to be a part of your character, just as another character's skill or power is, and removing it from your character's possession should be done with extreme care, unless unavoidable.

Items with skills do not increase their skill rating through successful use of experience, unless the item has an INT and your gamemaster determines that it is capable of learning in some fashion.

Equipment with Powers

A piece of quipment can have properties above and beyond its normal capabilities, and with your gamemaster 's permission, your character can purchase an item or piece of equipment with a power as described in *Chapter Four: Powers*. Additionally, your gamemaster may choose to represent a piece of equipment in terms of a power for ease determining its effectiveness against a powered character, and vice versa. This is usually only necessary in campaigns using powers, as normally the base attributes for an item are enough.

Following are guidelines for powered equipment, based on the power systems in *Chapter Four: Powers*.

Magic Items: A piece of equipment with one or more magic spells is called a **magic item**. This item appears magical to anyone able to detect such things, and allows the owner to cast a magic spell as if they were able to cast it themself. The magic item must have a skill rating with the spell. Most magic items have a power point capacity of their own, while rarer magic items use the owner's power points as the reservoir.

- A magic item is useless if it reaches 0 power points, though it can be recharged. To recharge a magic item, the user can move 1 power point from their body into the magic item each combat round.
- A magic item can hold up to double its maximum power points. These extra power points vanish as they do with a player character.
- Any spells the item casts follow all rules regarding the particular spell.
- When the magic item is created, your gamemaster should determine whether if only the creator can use it, it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll, or if anyone can use it.
- The item has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and attributes of an appropriate non-magical version.
- The item's hit points limit the number of power points it can store. As it takes damage, the maximum power points it can store are reduced. The item can be repaired normally, though if it is broken or destroyed, it is no longer magic and remains a normal item.
- If a magic item is destroyed, any POW spent on it are lost.
- A magic item may have one or more permanent magic spells bound into it that are always active, but creation of such an item costs five times the normal POW cost. Your gamemaster should determine whether a magic spell can be cast permanently on an item. If this item is created, it does not require power points and is simply always on at full strength.

Mutated Items: Items with mutations are fairly rare, as mutations are traditionally caused through genetic variance and few inanimate items are created through genetic manipulation.

- An item can have one or more adverse mutations.
- The item has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and other attributes of a normal version, unless the mutation affects these characteristics.
- Any characteristic rolls the item must make are based on the creator's characteristics if it does not have its own characteristic.
- A mutated item is considered to be alive and heals at the same rate as its creator.
- A mutated item can be used by anyone making a successful Stamina roll.
- Any CON and mutations invested into a mutated item are lost if it is destroyed.

Equipment with Psychic Abilities: Items with psychic abilities are incredibly rare, even more than items with mutations. These items are inevitably charged with psychic power, and should at least have POW. A character with any psychic ability automatically recognizes that an item has psychic abilities, and with an Idea roll, can utilize it. A character without psychic abilities can only determine if an item has psychic properties with a successful Idea roll, and must either defeat the item in a power point vs. power point resistance roll or a *Difficult* Luck roll. The creator of the item (or your gamemaster) decides who can use the item .

- The item has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and other attributes of a normal version of that item.

- Psychic items are not alive, and can be damaged. They do not naturally heal, but can be repaired with an appropriate Craft or Repair skill roll. When they are destroyed they cease functioning. If a psychic item is broken into more than one piece, your gamemaster decides which piece, if any, retains the psychic ability.

Equipment with Sorcery: A piece of equipment with one or more sorcery spells is called an **artifact**. This artifact appears to have sorcerous properties to anyone able to detect such things, and allows your character to cast a sorcery spell as if they could cast it themselves, or the item has the sorcery spell cast upon itself permanently. Most artifacts have a power point reservoir of their own, while rarer artifacts draw upon the user's own power points.

- The creator of an artifact must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW per sorcery spell invested in the artifact, and must know or have access to the spell(s) the artifact can use.
- The artifact has a power point reservoir equal to its creator's normal power points after it is created, or its SIZ, whichever is larger. Your gamemaster should set the POW and power point capacity if the artifact's creator is unknown or is a nonplayer character.
- The artifact either goes 'unconscious' when at 0 power points, or will be inert. To recharge an artifact, the user can move 1 power point from their body into the artifact each combat round.
- An artifact can contain more than its normal power point capacity, as per a character, up to double its maximum power points. These extra power points vanish as they do with a character.
- Any sorcery spells cast from the artifact follow all the normal rules regarding the particular spell.
- When the artifact is created, your gamemaster should determine whether it will be personal (only its creator can use it), whether it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll if it has power points, or if anyone can use it.
- The artifact has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and attributes of an appropriate non-sorcerous version.
- The artifact's hit points limit the number of power points that can be stored in it. As it takes damage, the maximum power points it stores are reduced. The artifact can be repaired as a normal item, though if it is broken or destroyed it can never be restored to artifact status and will remain a non-sorcerous item.
- If an artifact is destroyed, any POW invested in it are lost.

Some artifacts have permanent sorcery spells bound into them that are always active. The POW cost to create these items is doubled.

Equipment with Superpowers: A piece of equipment with superpowers is called a **gadget**. Gadgets are the most flexible of all types of powered item, and can look like anything; mundane or crude to vastly advanced. A gadget's appearance is entirely cosmetic and has nothing to do with its function: it can glow, shine, emit strange trails of energy, be carved with ancient runes, etc. A gadget does not seem unusually powerful unless the creator wants it to. Your gamemaster should set the power level of the gadget using the campaign power level guidelines presented in *Chapter Four: Powers*. Your gamemaster should assign any levels of superpowers to any gadget as desired, to suit the setting and the item's requirements.

The following rules apply to gadgets:

- The gadget's hit points, SIZ, etc. are based off a normal item of equivalent size and mass. If no obvious equivalent exists, use the **Object SIZ Examples** table (page 190) and the **Armor** table (page 189) for guidelines. To change its size, use the Size Change power.
- If the gadget needs a characteristic (such as POW for power points) should be built with the Super Characteristic power (page 104).
- A gadget requiring a power supply greater than its POW should have the Extra Energy power (page 100).
- To make the gadget more durable than a normal item, give it superpowers such as Absorption, Armor, Extra Hit Points, Force Field, etc.
- Whenever applicable, the gadget should rely on its own characteristics. If a power requires a resistance roll, the gadget's characteristic (if any) should be used. If the gadget doesn't have the relevant characteristic, it automatically fails the resistance roll.
- Whenever applicable, the gadget should rely on its user's relevant skill.

  For example, *if the gadget is a pistol, it must be fired with the Firearm skill. If it is a cosmically powered bracelet that allows the wielder to fire radioactive blasts, use the Projection skill.*
- Your gamemaster should examine any superpowered items to be sure that they are not overly powered or otherwise unbalancing.
- Superpowers invested in a gadget are permanent unless the item is destroyed.

Equipment with Multiple Power Types: Your gamemaster may wish to create a powered item drawing from multiple power types, such as a gadget that is also an artifact, using superpowers and sorcery. These should be only available at your gamemaster's discretion. The following principles apply:

- When possible, treat the item as being created as if it were a player with multiple power types (see page 54).
- An item must have all relevant characteristics or skills to use any powers it has.
- All powers draw from the same pool of resources, whether power points or another source. Recharging the item must be handled in the appropriate manner for each power set.
- If for some reason an item has two values to choose from to perform a particular action, use the higher of the two values where appropriate.

Equipment with Requirements

Some types of equipment may have requirements that must be met or exceeded to be used by your character. An example is weaponry, where most weapons have a minimum STR and DEX requirement. Other types of equipment are limited in other ways, such as the high fatigue point demand from wearing armor, and skill penalties associated with it. None of the basic equipment in this chapter have any requirements, though your gamemaster can easily introduce a restriction on the use of an item in two obvious ways:

- **Characteristics:** As with weapons, a piece of equipment may be restricted by your characteristics. Usually this is STR or DEX, such as with weapons, or SIZ for armor, but it could easily be POW for a magical item, INT for a computer, or some other characteristic-based minimum (or maximum).
- **Skills:** Your character may find that a specific piece of equipment is incomprehensible or useless unless their skill is at a certain level. Usually the skill represents an understanding of the piece of equipment and the principles it operates under.

  For example, *a diagnostic computer may require a skill of at least 50% in Technical (Computer Use) to operate.*

It is recommended that restrictions be used sparingly, and only if there is a legitimate reason for them to exist. Before assigning an outright restriction on an item's use, your gamemaster should determine if there is some means of enforcing the restriction, and if there are any penalties for using the item if your character does not meet the requirements. Some possible penalties include additional fatigue points to use, making any associated skill rolls *Difficult*, or requiring an associated characteristic roll to avoid mishaps.

Charges or Limited-Use Equipment

Many types of equipment run on power batteries or can be used only a limited number of times. In most cases batteries can be replaced fairly easily, ammunition replenished, and other required resources recharged or refilled. Most firearms have 'charges' in the form of ammunition, but if maintained well, a sword or suit of armor can be used until it is broken. Whenever appropriate, the resource required to refill or recharge a piece of equipment is either essentially free (such as electricity or solar power), or is two or three Wealth levels lower than the equipment's cost. If a charging device is required, it is a part of the piece of equipment's normal value.

Usually it's easiest to assume that given adequate time and planning, your character has adequate ammunition, batteries, refills, cartridges, power cells, etc. for all their gear, unless the setting or circumstances make this is difficult or impossible. In these cases, your gamemaster may require a Research, Status, or Luck roll to come across the relevant type of charge. In some settings (postapocalyptic, for example) ammunition, gasoline, and/or power cells are extremely difficult to come by and are usually more valuable than the equipment they're used in.

Repairing Equipment

If an item has been damaged in the course of play, your gamemaster should determine if it can be repaired, based on common sense and the nature of the damage dealt. In most cases, a relevant Repair or Craft skill roll may be used like the First Aid skill, restoring damaged hit points or SIZ points as per the guidelines for that skill. In the case of complex equipment, your gamemaster may require a Knowledge roll to find a resource for replacement components, or even require an *Easy* skill roll based on the repair skill being used to locate the necessary parts. If these components are expensive, your gamemaster may require a Status roll to legitimately obtain required replacements.

WEAPONS

Throughout history, many different types of weapons have developed as a result of changes in technology, availability of materials, and changing battlefield conditions. This section presents a representative sampling of this wide variety. If your gamemaster wishes to create more accurate weapon lists for a setting, it is easy enough to extrapolate the relevant attributes from these examples.

Weapons described in this section are categorized broadly by chronological settings for ease of use. In most cases, weapons from an earlier period are available to people from later periods, so your gamemaster may simply choose where weapon availability stops and allow your character access to weapons prior to that point.

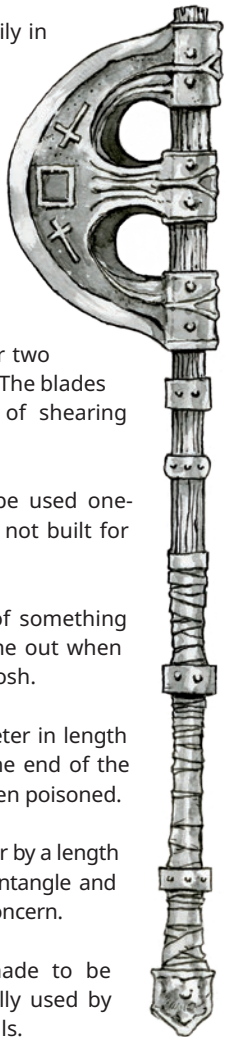
Each weapon has the following attributes:

- **Name:** The common name for the weapon.
- **Skill:** The skill used to wield it.
- **Base:** The base chance to use the weapon.
- **Dmg:** The damage done by the weapon. A '+dm' indicates damage modifier, and +½dm is half the damage modifier (round up).
- **Attk:** How many attacks-per-round does the weapon allow?
- **Special:** What type of special success does the weapon do?
- **Rng:** The basic range of the weapon. At its basic range, the skill is unmodified. At medium range (double the basic range), the skill use becomes *Difficult*, and at long range (four times basic range) it becomes 1/5 the normal skill rating (equal to the chance of a special).
- **Hands:** How many hands does the weapon require? 1H=one-handed, 2H=two-handed.
- **HP:** The weapon's hit points.
- **Parry:** Can the weapon be used to parry?
- **Mal:** The weapon malfunctions if this is rolled (see **Malfunctions**, page 171). If the weapon is not a firearm, the malfunction is some other mishap preventing immediate reuse of the weapon.
- **Ammo:** How many times can the weapon be used without being reloaded or recharged?
- **Value:** What is the weapon's average cost in an appropriate setting?
- **STR/DEX:** What are the minimum STR and DEX required to use the weapon?
- **SIZ/ENC:** The weapon's SIZ and Encumbrance value.
- **RF:** (Optional) Rate of fire (see **Volley Fire**, page 155). 1/#CR means that the weapon is so clumsy it can only be used once a number (#) of combat rounds. X/CR means that it can be used X times per combat round when using volley fire.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Following are all weapons from the melee and missile weapon tables, organized alphabetically.

Arbalest: A very heavy crossbow, difficult to cock and load, often used with a device called a cranequin. It does tremendous damage when it hits.



Axe, Battle: A one-handed axe used primarily in combat. It may have one blade or two.

Axe, Great: A large, two-handed axe that either may be single or double-bladed.

Axe, Hand: A small one-handed axe that can be thrown or used by hand. It may have one blade or two. Tool versions are used to chop wood.

Axe, Vibro-: A long-handled axe with one or two blades mounted into a generator in the haft. The blades vibrate at an extraordinary rate, capable of shearing through most substances.

Axe, Wood: A long-handled axe that can be used one- or two-handed, with one blade or two. It is not built for combat, but is sometimes utilized so.

Blackjack: A small sewn leather sack full of something heavy like lead shot, used to knock someone out when attacking from behind. Also called a sap or cosh.

Blowgun: A hollow, straight pipe up to a meter in length used to project small darts by blowing at one end of the pipe. These darts do little damage but are often poisoned.

Bola: Two or three hard balls attached together by a length of cord or chain. This weapon is thrown to entangle and bring down a foe, with damage a secondary concern.

Boomerang: A flat, angle-shaped stick made to be thrown in a curving path. It was traditionally used by aboriginal hunters to stun or kill small animals.

Bow, Composite: A bow made of materials that make it both rigid and flexible. Historical versions are made of wood and horn, and modern varieties are made with graphite and ultralight metals.

Bow, Long: A bow made either from one piece of wood (such as the famous English longbow), or in the same fashion as a composite bow.

Bow, Self: A basic bow made of one or two pieces of wood shaped and cured to prevent breaking.

Brass Knuckles: Metal weights worn on the fist to add weight and a hard edge to punches.

Cestus: Metal boxing gloves, with a weight nestled within the glove for more impact. An ancient precursor to brass knuckles.

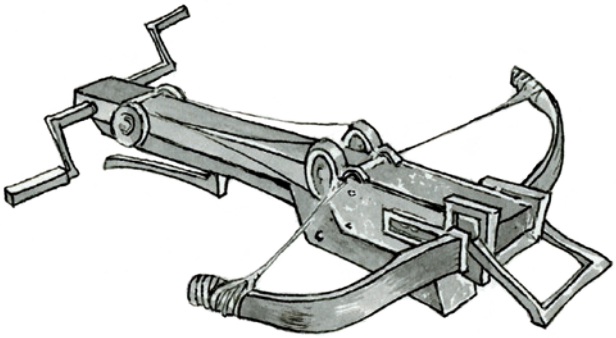
Chainsaw: A woodcutting tool consisting of an edged chain driven to revolve at high speed around a flat metal blade.

Claw: A bladed weapon shaped like animal claws, usually held in hand with the blades sticking through the fingers, or worn on the back of the hand.

Club, Heavy: A long heavy piece of wood or metal. This also describes a crowbar.

Club, Light: A lighter version of the heavy club. This can be a baseball bat, tire iron, lamp, chair leg, or truncheon.

Crossbow, Heavy: This crossbow must be cocked by a lever apparatus. Easier to load than an arbalest, but less powerful.



Crossbow, Light: This crossbow can be cocked by hand, mostly used for hunting or stealth, rather than on the battlefield.

Crossbow, Medium: This crossbow is cocked by hooking one end with a foot and using a claw mechanism to draw the string back.

Crossbow, Repeating: A complex crossbow with a magazine of bolts that may be fired as fast as a bow may be fired. Once the magazine is exhausted, the repeating crossbow takes at least six combat rounds to reload.

Dagger: A short-bladed weapon, usually less than 40 centimeters long, sharp on one or both edges.

Dart: Short, weighted points suitable for throwing, either feathered or plain. They are often used to deliver poison.

Detonator, Antimatter: Perhaps the most powerful personal-scale explosive, this can wipe out everything in a tight radius. These are used with timers, coded remote detonators, and magnetic bases.

Detonator, Electromagnetic Pulse: Instead of exploding, this device emits an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) designed to disrupt electrical devices and electronic circuitry. Unlike the EMP generated as a secondary effect of a nuclear weapon, this is a non-nuclear electromagnetic pulse, disruptive solely to electronic devices.

Detonator, Fusion: An extremely powerful sub-nuclear bomb, capable of immense destructive force. Comes with a timer, coded remote detonator, and magnetic base.

Detonator, Plasma: An explosive capable of generating and spraying a charge of plasma, the superheated intermediate state between gas and liquid. These come with timers, coded remote detonators, and magnetic bases.

Detonator, Sonic: A device that emits a destructive and concussive sonic pulse that can shatter glass and other brittle matter, as well as stunning any living targets caught in its range of effect.

Explosive, Blasting Cap: A small explosive used to set off a larger explosive. Older ones used fuses, while newer ones use electricity or more sophisticated methods to set off the explosive.

Explosive, Dynamite: Sticks of chemical explosive soaked into a solid like sawdust, wrapped in thick paper and ignited by sparks from a fuse or a smaller explosion from a blasting cap. This is highly dangerous, as it tends to 'sweat' nitroglycerine and becomes unstable when left alone for too long.

Explosive, Improvised: Usually a pipe bomb, this describes any number of small homemade chemical explosives.

Explosive, Plastic: A modern chemical explosive mixed with a substance like petroleum or wax into a malleable, putty-like plastic form, able to be molded and shaped as required. Used with a timer and often set off with an electrical charge. Also called plastique.

Fist: An unarmed attack using the Brawl skill (described on page 39).

Flail: A flail head mounted on the end of a short chain connected to a haft about a meter long, or longer.

PRIMITIVE MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Range	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc
Axe, Hand	Axe	15	1D6+1+dm	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	12	Yes	7/9	–	Cheap	0.5
Club, Heavy	Club	25	1D8+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	22	Yes	9/7	–	Cheap	2.0
Club, Light	Club	25	1D6+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/7	–	Cheap	1.0
Fist	Brawl	25	1D3+dm	1	Crushing	Short	1H	–	No[1]	–	–	–	–
Grapple	Brawl	25	Special[2]	1	Entangle	Short	2H	–	No[3]	–	–	–	–
Head Butt	Brawl	25	1D3+dm	1	Crushing	Short	–	–	No	–	–	–	–
Kick	Brawl	25	1D3+dm	1	Crushing	Short	–	–	No	–	–	–	–
Knife	Dagger	25	1D3+1+dm	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	–	–	0.2
Net	Other	05	Special[4]	1	Entangling	Medium	1H or 2H	6	Yes	12/10	96–00[5]	Cheap	3.0
Spear, Long	Spear	15	1D10+1+dm	1	Impaling	Long	2H	15	Yes	11/9	–	Cheap	2.0
Spear, Short[6]	Spear	15	1D6+1+dm	1	Impaling	Long	1H or 2H	15	Yes	7/8	–	Cheap	2.0
Torch	Club	25	1D6+flame[7]	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	6/9	96–00[8]	–	1.0

PRIMITIVE MISSILE WEAPONS

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	RF
Axe, Hand (thrown)	Axe, Thrown	10	1D6+½dm	1	Bleeding	20	1H	12	No	9/11	–	Cheap	0.5	1/CR
Blowgun	Blowgun	10	1D3[9]	1	Impaling	30	2H	4[10]	No	/11	–	Cheap	0.5	1/CR
Bola (damaging)	Bola	05	1D4+½dm	1	Crushing	15	1H	1	No	9/13	–	Cheap	3.0	1/CR
Bola (snaring)	Bola	05	Special[4]	1	Entangling	15	1H	1	No	9/13	–	Cheap	3.0	1/CR
Boomerang	Boomerang	05	1D4+½dm	½[11]	Crushing	50	1H	3	No	9/11	–	Cheap	0.5	1/CR
Bow, Self	Bow	10	1D6+1+½dm	1	Impaling	80	2H	6	No	9/9	–	Cheap	0.5	1/CR
Club, Light (thrown)	Throw	Throw	1D6+½dm	1	Crushing	20	1H	15	No	9/7	–	Cheap	1.0	1/CR
Dart	Dart	10	1d6+½dm[12]	1	Impaling	20	1H	4	No	/9	–	Cheap	0.5	1/CR
Javelin	Javelin	15	1D6+½dm	1	Impaling	25	1H	10	No	9/9	–	Cheap	1.5	1/CR
Knife (thrown)	Knife, Thrown	15	1D3+½dm	1	Impaling	10	1H	15	No	7/11	–	Cheap	0.2	1/CR
Lasso	Other	05	Special[4]	½	Entangling	10	2H	1	No	9/13	–	Cheap	1.0	1/5CR
Net (thrown)	Other	05	Special[4]	1	Entangling	5	1H	6	No	9/12	96–00[13]	Cheap	3.0	1/3CR
Rock (thrown)	Throw	Throw	1D2+½dm	2	Crushing	20	1H	20	No	5/5	–	–	.05	1/CR
Sling	Sling	05	1D8+½dm	1	Crushing	80	1H	2/12[14]	No	7/11	–	Cheap	0.1 (.1)[15]	1/CR
Spear, Short (thrown)	Spear	05	1D6+1+½dm	1	Impaling	15	1H	15	No	12/10	–	Cheap	2.0	1/CR
Spear, Long (thrown)	Spear	05	1D10+1+½dm	1	Impaling	15	1H	15	No	12/10	–	Cheap	2.0	1/CR

Notes:

1. Brawl can parry Brawl or Grapple attacks (see the Brawl skill, page 39).
2. See the Grapple skill (page 43).
3. Grapple can parry Brawl or Grapple attacks (see the Grapple skill, page 43).
4. See **Entangling** (page 147).
5. A net malfunction means it is tangled, taking a full round and a successful *Difficult* Agility roll to untangle.
6. Treat a javelin used in melee as a short spear.
7. See **Fire** (page 148).
8. A malfunction means torch goes out.
9. Blowgun darts are usually poisoned (see **Poisons**, page 151).
10. A blowgun has 4 hit points and blowgun darts each have 0 or 1 hit point.
11. If the user throws the boomerang to return, make an Agility roll to catch it on the next round. If throwing multiple boomerangs, the attack rate is 1 per round.
12. Darts are often poisoned (see **Poisons**, page 151).
13. A net malfunction means it is tangled, taking a full round and a successful *Difficult* Agility roll to untangle.
14. A sling has 2 hit points and a sling stone has 12 hit points (lead or stone).
15. First number is weight of the sling; parenthetical weight is each sling stone.

Flail, Morningstar: A medieval weapon with a handle, a length of chain, and a spiked ball at the end. Some do not have spikes and are simply weighted or studded balls at the end of the chains.

Flamethrower: A tank full of a highly combustible chemical attached to a projector/igniter that sprays jets of flaming liquid. Flamethrowers can also be used to soak an area or item in this flammable chemical without setting it afire. Incredibly dangerous due to the short range, limited period of use, and potential for setting oneself on fire. Flamethrowers may blow up when the tank is struck, causing double rolled damage to everyone within five meters of the user. Make a Luck roll to avoid this.

Garrote: A short cord used for strangling, whether a thin metal cable, ceremonial rope, to improvised use of a scarf or belt.

Gauntlet, Armored: A metal gauntlet worn with armor or without, adding damage to successful strikes with the Brawl skill.

Grapple: An unarmed attack using the Grapple skill.

Grenade, Antimatter: A small but extraordinarily powerful explosive device triggered and thrown at foes, items, or structures. Though containing infinitely tiny amounts of antimatter, these grenades are usually fired from launchers, as they are so destructive that it is difficult to throw one outside of its own blast radius.

Grenade, Concussion: A small explosive device triggered and thrown at foes or into enclosed areas, where it can stun those caught in the blast radius. Sometimes called a stun grenade.

Grenade, Disintegrator: A grenade capable of disintegrating all of the matter (or shattering molecular bonds) in the blast radius. Highly dangerous, disintegrator grenades are generally used only as weapons of last resort.

Grenade, Electromagnetic Pulse: A grenade with electromagnetic pulse capability. When thrown at a metallic target, the magnetic surface add +20% to your chance of hitting successfully.

Grenade, Explosive: A small explosive triggered and thrown, resulting in an explosion of concussive force and shrapnel.

Grenade, Flare: A stick of flammable chemicals triggered and thrown to light darkened areas or provide light-marking for air targeting.

Grenade, Fusion: An extremely powerful sub-nuclear device, capable of immense destructive force. Fusion grenades are only fired from launchers or thrown in situations where the user has adequate time to get out of the blast range.

Grenade, Gas: A small chemical explosive device triggered and thrown or rolled, emitting a toxic or otherwise harmful gas. These can be filled with a variety of gases (mustard, tear, knockout, etc.).

Grenade, Molotov Cocktail: An improvised explosive made from a bottle and fuse, lit and hurled, usually to set them or it afire.

Grenade, Phosphorous: A small chemical explosive device triggered and thrown. It emits a highly flammable chemical fire that can melt equipment and set objects aflame, or simply light a darkened area for ground personnel or targeting from airships.

Grenade, Plasma: A grenade using plasma technology. Extremely explosive and capable of causing immense destruction and fire.

Grenade, Shock: A grenade that releases an electrical charge, equipped with magnetic surfaces to stick to any metallic surface it is thrown onto. When thrown at a metallic target, the magnetic surface adds +20% to your chance of hitting successfully.

Grenade, Shrapnel: A small explosive device triggered and thrown at enemies, set to emit deadly, flesh-piercing shrapnel.

Grenade, Smoke: A gas grenade (see above) that emits harmless but shrouding smoke.

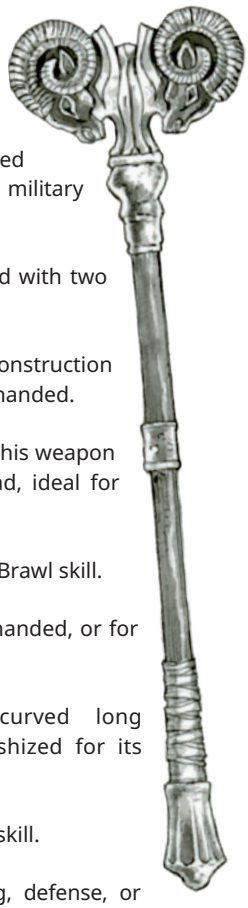
Grenade, Sonic: A grenade using sonic pulse technology that emits a high-frequency sonic burst to disable or distract targets.

Grenade, Stun: A grenade emitting a mildly concussive blast designed specifically to stun or temporarily disable targets.

Gun, Machine: A rapidly-repeating firearm with trigger settings for single-shot, short bursts, and full autofire.

Gun, Mini-: A Gatling-style heavy machine gun, often mounted on helicopters or vehicles. The STR requirement is if wielded in hand.

Gun, Submachine: A small machine gun, designed for one-handed use.



Halberd: An broad axe head on a two-meter shaft. Commonly used by medieval city guardsmen or against mounted foes.

Hammer: A common household tool used for carpentry or a small, one-handed military weapon with a striking head.

Hammer, Great: A massive hammer used with two hands.

Hammer, Sledge: A heavy tool used by construction workers and demolition crews, used two-handed.

Hammer, War: Designed like a hammer, this weapon often has a spike rather than a flat head, ideal for punching through armor.

Head Butt: An unarmed attack using the Brawl skill.

Javelin: A short spear used one- or two-handed, or for throwing.

Katana: A single-edged, slightly curved long sword, used one- or two-handed, fetishized for its workmanship and sharpness.

Kick: An unarmed attack using the Brawl skill.

Knife: A tool suitable for eating, cutting, defense, or impromptu assassination. Like a dagger, though lighter and less durable.

Knife, Butcher: A large heavy kitchen knife, suitable for hacking through large chunks of meat in a single blow.

Knife, Pocket: A small folding knife, often with multiple blades.

Knife, Switchblade: A retractable pocketknife.

Knife, Throwing: A knife balanced for throwing, usually hiltless.

Knife, Vibro-: A high-tech knife blade set into a mechanical hilt, vibrated at an extremely high speed. Extraordinarily sharp, the vibration adds additional shearing force to even slight cuts.

Lance: A long spear used one-handed on horseback. While mounted, the attacker uses the mount's damage modifier in place of their own. Lances can also be used on foot as a two-handed spear, with its normal damage modifier.

Lance, Stun: A staff-shaped weapon with a charged electric prod at one end. Some stun lances have goads at both ends.

Lasso: The traditional lariat used for cattle-wrangling. It does no damage but does immobilize the target using the entangling rules.

Launcher, Grenade: A hand-held or stationary launcher that fires grenades great distances. It can be a small platform, a hand-held firearm-shaped launcher, or attached to another firearm.

Launcher, LAW Rocket: A lightweight, disposable one-shot rocket launcher, also known as the light anti-tank weapon (LAW).

Launcher, Rocket: A smallish tube and platform assembled on the battlefield, used to fire rockets more accurately.

Mace, Heavy: A haft with a heavy weight for the head, spiked, flanged, studded, or plain.

Mace, Light: A haft with a light weight used to bash and crush.

Maul, War: A long-handled two-headed hammer used two-handed.

Mine, Antipersonnel: A land mine built primarily to wound rather than kill (maximizing difficulty to the enemy).

Mine, Antitank: A mine made to damage tank treads or enemy vehicles.

Naginata: A long spear with a sword-like head, used for cutting and thrusting attacks.

Net: A loose mesh of woven cord used to catch animals or larger targets. While smaller nets are used for small game, the net described here is large enough for use against humans.

Pike: A long spear (3–5 meters) used in formation combat. Also common to town guards and castle defense. Pikes are the best defense (short of a fusillade of gunfire) against a cavalry charge.

Pistol, Blaster: A pistol firing a short burst of energy, usually plasma, burning the target and causing concussion. Blaster pistols are usually powered by clips containing exotic chemical fuels.

Pistol, Derringer: A tiny hand-held pistol, usually palm-sized. Easily concealed, with a low ammo capacity. Some are one- or two-shot, others have small clips. Sometimes called a 'holdout' pistol.

Pistol, Disintegrator: A pistol firing an immensely destructive energy blast that rapidly disintegrates an entire target, or large portions of that target. Disintegrator pistols can be powered with energy cells or fuel clips.

Pistol, Electromagnetic Pulse: A pistol that fires a directed electromagnetic pulse stream at an target such as a computer or robot, disabling its circuitry.

Pistol, Flechette: A small, light pistol powered by either magnetic charges or gas, firing many tiny, sharp needle-like blades at a target. These generally have short range and are not very effective against armored targets, but are devastating to unarmored foes at short range. They use both clips of flechette ammunition and a gas cylinder or energy clip. Sometimes called a 'needle gun'.

Pistol, Flintlock: A pistol using flint and steel to ignite a hand-packed wad of gunpowder. Similar to a wheel-lock pistol.

Pistol, Heavy: A heavy-framed pistol possessing superior stopping power. Slower than smaller, lighter pistols. The .357 magnum is an excellent example.

Pistol, Laser: A pistol firing a high-intensity beam of light capable of searing through most substances, even melting metal. Usually powered by an energy cell containing a limited number of charges.

Pistol, Light: A light-framed pistol trading stopping power for accuracy and rate of fire. The .22 caliber is an excellent example.

Pistol, Medium: A medium-framed pistol, reliable and with moderate firepower and rate of fire. The 9mm pistol is an excellent example.

Pistol, Plasma: A pistol firing a focused stream of superheated plasma, usually powered by an energy or plasma cell.

Pistol, Shock: A pistol that emits a high-voltage electrical burst.

Pistol, Sonic: A pistol emitting a focused cone of sonic waves, damaging to living tissue and inert matter alike.

Pistol, Stun: A pistol emitting a burst of energy the same frequency as the human nervous system, short-ranged and designed for pacification. Useless against objects and beings larger than humanoid, though they can be adjusted for other targets. Sometimes called a 'stunner'.

Rapier: A slender-bladed one-handed sword, primarily used for thrusting. Though each is unique, this also describes the epee and foil, two other fencing swords.

Revolver, Heavy: A heavy pistol of large caliber, like a .44 magnum or the Colt .45.

Revolver, Light: A light pistol, usually in the .22 to .32 caliber range.

Revolver, Medium: A medium pistol, usually .357 to .38 caliber.

Rifle, Assault: A heavy, rugged rifle with a large ammo capacity, fired like a machine gun (one-shot, short bursts, or autofire).

Rifle, Blaster: A rifle firing short energy bursts, usually plasma that burns plus concussive impact. Blaster rifles are usually powered by clips containing exotic chemical fuels.

Rifle, Bolt-action: A rifle with a sliding bolt. Some use clips, while others store bullets in magazines the length of the rifle's barrel.

Rifle, Disintegrator: A rifle that emits an immensely destructive energy blast that rapidly disintegrates an entire target or large portions of that target. Disintegrator rifles can be powered with energy cells or fuel clips.

Rifle, Elephant: A huge caliber rifle designed to bring down the largest of game animals. Sometimes double-barreled, these often are breech-loaded, one thick bullet at a time.

Rifle, Laser: A rifle firing a high-intensity beam of light capable of searing through most substances, even melting metal. Laser rifles are usually powered by energy cells with limited charges.

Rifle, Lever-action: A rifle with an external lever used to cycle ammo. Popular with hunters, though impractical for military use.

Rifle, Musket: An early rifle loaded down the barrel and sometimes filled with either shrapnel shot or large ball-like bullets. Slow and unreliable, ignited with a flint or wheel-lock.

Rifle, Electromagnetic Pulse: A rifle version of the electromagnetic pulse pistol, emitting a focused blast of electromagnetic energy at an electric-using or electronic target.

Rifle, Plasma: A rifle version of a plasma pistol, capable of firing a focused burst of superheated plasma at the target.

Rifle, Shock: A rifle version of the shock pistol, capable of firing a lightning-like blast for considerable range and power.

Rifle, Sonic: A rifle version of the sonic pistol, firing a cone-like sonic pulse blast at the target.

Rifle, Sniper: A long-barreled rifle used for long-range fire, precision-calibrated and usually equipped with a long-range scope.

Rifle, Sporting: A light- to medium-caliber (.22 or .30–06) rifle used to bring down smaller game animals like deer.

Rifle, Stun: A rifle emitting a short-ranged energy burst in the same frequency as the human nervous system, meant for pacification. Useless against objects and beings larger than humanoid, a stun rifle can be adjusted for other targets. Sometimes called a 'stunner'.

Rock, Thrown: The most basic weapon, a fist-sized rock.

Saber: A single-edged, curved sword, used most commonly by mounted cavalry and in fencing.

Sai: A dagger-like weapon shaped like a trident, with a wide curved crossbar. Sai have no edge and are used as clubs, stabbing weapons, or sword-breakers. They are often used paired.

Scimitar: A single-edged, slightly curved, heavy-bladed sword.

Scythe: A long-handled farming tool with a curved blade set perpendicular to the haft, used for harvesting grains, but occasionally with ceremonial purpose.

Shotgun, Automatic: A shotgun with a large ammo capacity and automatic loading, usually for battlefield or police action.

Shotgun, Double-barreled: A breech-loading shotgun.

Shotgun, Sawed-off: A sporting or double-barreled shotgun with a shorter barrel, hand-altered or manufactured for ease of concealment and convenience. The shorter barrel trades range for wider dispersal of ammo.

Shotgun, Sporting: A medium- to light-gauge shotgun (16- or 20-gauge), used for hunting and home protection.

Shuriken: Small throwing blades, often star-shaped. Easily concealed and a favorite of assassins.

Sickle: A crescent-shaped flat blade, single-edged on the inside crescent, used one-handed to harvest grain or ceremonial purposes.

Sling: A leather thong with a cup or recess to hold a rock or sling stone, whirled and thrown with incredible force at the target.

Spear, Long: A length of wood roughly two meters long, with a metal- or flint-bladed head or a fire-hardened point. These must be used two-handed. Characters armed with long spears often strike first in a combat round.

Spear, Short: A length of wood roughly 1.5 meters long, with a metal- or flint- bladed head or a fire-hardened point. Short spears can be used one-or two-handed, or thrown.

Spray, Chemical: A chemical irritant projected from small a sprayer usually into a target's eyes. Short-range and nonlethal.

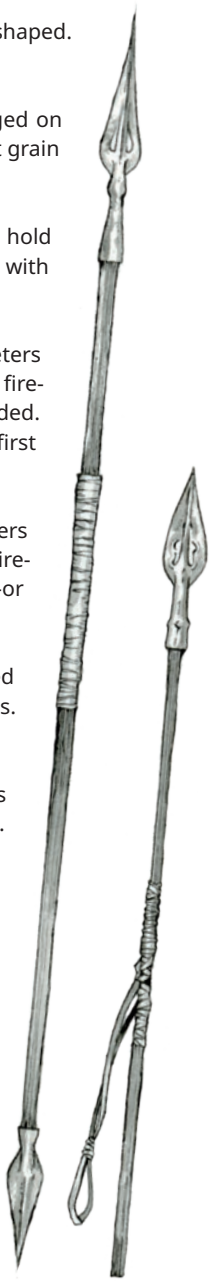
Staff, Quarter: A long wooden staff often used as a walking staff, useful for defense and attacking.

Staff, Short: A short, narrow wooden club like a police truncheon.

Sword Cane: A thin-bladed sword disguised to fit inside a cane.

Sword, Bastard: A straight, single or double-edged sword, over a meter long, with a long hilt wielded one-or two-handed.

Sword, Broad: A straight, single- or double-edged sword around a meter long, used one-handed. Some have basket hilts.



Sword, Energy: A hilt containing a shaped field emitter that projects a sword-length blade of energy, like a beam of focused light. Energy swords use power packs, and often require expensive or rare focusing crystals.

Sword, Great: A straight, double-edged sword almost two meters long, used two-handed, often against pike formations.

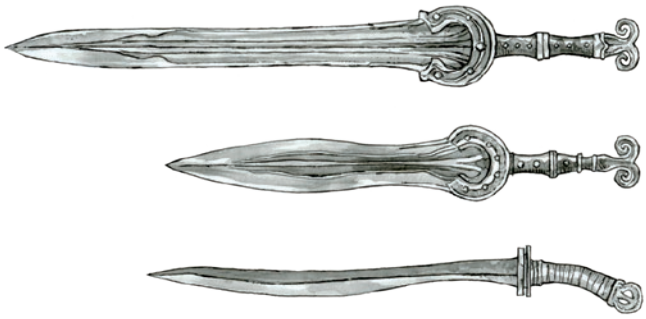
Sword, Long: A straight, single- or double-edged sword, sometimes with a basket hilt, used one-handed. Lighter and slenderer than a broadsword.

Sword, Monofilament: A sophisticated weapon consisting of a blade exactly one molecule thick, set into stasis by a generator in the hilt. With the blade able to slip between atoms, it is capable of cutting through almost anything. As the blade is almost invisible, it is extremely difficult to use, and a fumble may be fatal.

Sword, Short: A single or double-edged sword, usually a half-meter long.

Sword, Vibro-: A longer version of a vibro-knife. A handle containing a long sword-like blade vibrated at an high speed, capable of shearing through most substances.

Taser, Contact: A small hand-held electric device designed to disrupt the neural activity of the target, stunning them momentarily.



Taser, Dart: A hand-held taser that fires two small darts with attached wires. Once these hit their target, the taser emits a disruptive electrical charge that usually stuns or incapacitates.

Torch: A thick stick of wood with one end soaked in pitch or some other fuel, occasionally wrapped in rags. Ignited and used for light, torches are often wielded as improvised weapons.

Trident: A three-tined spear, like a fork, with curving side-prongs. Tridents usually have barbed points to hook into their target's flesh.

Wakizashi: A short sword version of the katana, often made as a matching pair. Some have small knives built into their scabbards.

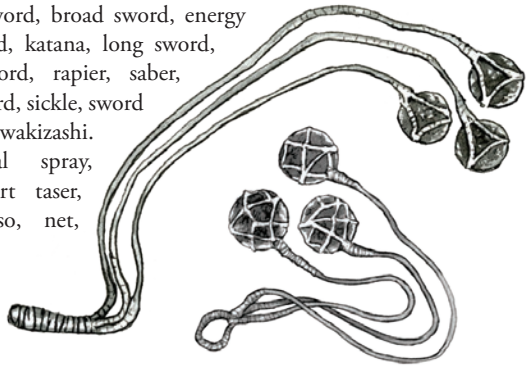
Whip: A coiled and woven leather rope with a handle at one end, used to lash an opponent or catch and immobilize a limb (see **Entangling**, page 147).

Whip, Shock: A metallic whip that generates a high-voltage electric current, released onto the target when it strikes successfully.

Weapon Classes

The descriptions for the Heavy Weapon, Melee Weapon, and Missile Weapon skills in *Chapter Three: Skills* refer to weapon specialties and **weapon classes**. A weapon class is a rough group the weapon belongs to, while the **specialty** is your character's skill using weapons in that class. Weapons fall into classes, with skills into specialties. Each weapon class is listed below, with specific examples. Some weapons fit into multiple classes, depending on how they are used.

- **Axe:** Battle axe, great axe, hand axe, vibro-axe, wood axe.
- **Bow:** Composite bow, long bow, self bow.
- **Brawl:** Fist, head butt, kick.
- **Club:** Heavy club, light club, sai, short staff.
- **Crossbow:** Arbalest, siege arbalest, heavy crossbow, light crossbow, medium crossbow, repeating crossbow.
- **Dagger:** Butcher knife, dagger, knife, pocket knife, switchblade, vibro-knife, sai.
- **Explosive:** Antimatter detonator, antipersonnel mine, antitank mine, blasting cap, dynamite, electromagnetic pulse detonator, fusion detonator, improvised explosive, plasma detonator, plastic explosive, sonic detonator.
- **Flail:** Flail, morningstar flail, whip.
- **Grenade:** Antimatter grenade, concussion grenade, disintegrator grenade, electromagnetic pulse grenade, explosive grenade, flare grenade, fusion grenade, gas grenade, grenade launcher, LAW rocket launcher, Molotov cocktail, phosphorous grenade, plasma grenade, rocket launcher, shock grenade, shrapnel grenade, smoke grenade, sonic grenade, stun grenade.
- **Hammer:** Hammer, great hammer, sledge hammer, war hammer, war maul.
- **Hand:** Armored gauntlet, blackjack, brass knuckles, cestii, claw, garrote.
- **Improvised:** Chainsaw, thrown rock, scythe, sickle, torch.
- **Mace:** Heavy mace, light mace.
- **Machine Gun:** Machine gun, mini gun, submachine gun.
- **Missile:** Blowgun, bola, boomerang, dagger, dart, hand axe, javelin, shuriken, sling, throwing knife.
- **Pistol, Energy:** Blaster pistol, disintegrator pistol, electromagnetic pulse pistol, laser pistol, plasma pistol, shock pistol, sonic pistol, stun pistol.
- **Pistol:** Derringer, flechette pistol, flintlock pistol, heavy pistol, light pistol, medium pistol.
- **Polearm:** Halberd, lance, naginata, pike, scythe, trident.
- **Revolver:** Heavy revolver, light revolver, medium revolver.
- **Rifle, Energy:** Blaster rifle, disintegrator rifle, electromagnetic pulse rifle, laser rifle, plasma rifle, shock rifle, sonic rifle, stun rifle.
- **Rifle:** Assault rifle, bolt-action rifle, elephant rifle, lever-action rifle, musket, sniper rifle, sporting rifle.
- **Shotgun:** Automatic shotgun, double-barreled shotgun, sawed-off shotgun, sporting shotgun.
- **Spear:** Javelin, lance, long spear, naginata, pike, short spear, trident.
- **Staff:** Quarter staff, short staff.
- **Submachine Gun:** Submachine gun.
- **Sword:** Bastard sword, broad sword, energy sword, great sword, katana, long sword, monofilament sword, rapier, saber, scimitar, short sword, sickle, sword cane, vibro-sword, wakizashi.
- **Other:** Chemical spray, contact taser, dart taser, flamethrower, lasso, net, shock whip, whip.



HISTORIC MISSILE WEAPONS

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	RF
Arbalest	Crossbow	15	2D6+4	1/3	Impaling	90	2H	14	No	11/9[1]	93–00	Average	10.0 (0.5)	1/4CR
Bow, Composite	Bow	05	1D8+1+½dm	1	Impaling	120	2H	12	No	13/9	–	Average	0.5 (0.5)	1/CR
Bow, Long	Bow	05	1D8+1+½dm	1	Impaling	90	2H	10	No	11/9	–	Cheap	0.5 (0.5)	1/CR
Crossbow, Heavy	Crossbow	25	2D6+2	1/3	Impaling	55	2H	18	No	13/7	97–00	Average	8.0 (0.5)	1/3CR
Crossbow, Light	Crossbow	25	1D6+2	½	Impaling	40	2H	10	No	9/7	96–00	Average	3.5 (0.5)	1/2CR
Crossbow, Medium	Crossbow	25	2D4+2	½	Impaling	50	2H	14	No	11/7	95–00	Average	5.0 (0.5)	1/2CR
Crossbow, Repeating	Crossbow	25	1D6+2	1[2]	Impaling	60	2H	12	No	9/7	91–00	Expensive	7.5 (0.5)	1/CR[3]
Knife, Throwing	Knife, Thrown	15	1d4+½dm	1	Impaling	20	1H	10	No	/11	–	Cheap	0.2	1/CR
Shuriken	Knife, Thrown	10	1D3+½dm	2	Impaling	20	1H	5	No	/13	–	Cheap	0.1	1/CR

Notes:

1. STR requirement with a cranequin (hand-crank) is 11; STR 15 when used without one.
2. Has ammo of 12 and takes five rounds to reload entirely.
3. A repeating crossbow has an ammo capacity of 6, 8, 10, or 12 bolts. It takes one combat round per bolt to reload a repeating crossbow.

Using Weapons of the Same Class

Use your skill specialty with all weapons of that particular class. This generalization means your character can use most types of similar weapons without hindrance.

For example, *if your character has the skill Melee Weapon (Sword), this applies to long swords, broadswords, short swords, etc., just as Firearm (Revolver) applies to light, medium, and heavy revolvers.*

Using Weapons of Different Classes

If you have skill in one weapon class, your gamemaster may allow your character to use a similar weapon in a different class at the same skill rating as if the skill were *Difficult*.

For example*, if your character has Missile Weapon (Bow) 60%, your gamemaster may allow the use of crossbows (a different weapon class) as a Difficult Missile Weapon (Bow) skill, a temporary skill rating of 30%.*

If using a weapon with a temporary skill rating is successful and any experience is gained, the experience roll is made from the base chance rather than the temporary skill rating. Any experience is added to the weapon or weapon skill's base chance rather than the temporary skill rating. When your character exceeds the temporary skill rating, the actual skill rating becomes the default.

ARMOR

At a basic level, armor is hardened clothing. Depending on the setting, armor is made of leather, metal, plastic, or some combination of these materials, and it is worn to have something protective between oneself and a source of harm. Armor is heavier than normal clothing and frequently uncomfortable and awkward to wear. If your character is a warrior, they are likely to be more comfortable in armor than the average person, though wearing armor is rarely more comfortable than not wearing armor.

Armor described in this section is categorized loosely chronologically, for reference. In most cases, armor from an earlier period is available to people from later periods, so your gamemaster may choose where armor availability stops and allow your character access to prior types.

Each type of armor has the following attributes:

- **Name:** The common name.
- **AV:** The armor value, the amount the armor protects.
- **Random AV:** (Optional) This is the armor value if random armor values are being used.
- **Burden:** The armor's awkwardness or relative encumbrance. Your gamemaster may use this value with the optional fatigue system.
- **ENC:** This value is for a character of average SIZ (11–15). For SIZ 6–10, multiply the ENC value by .8; for SIZ 16–20 multiply the value by 1.2; for SIZ 21–25 multiply it by 1.4, etc. (round up)
- **Skill Modifier:** A modifier to certain skills or skill categories while the armor is worn, also applied to any appropriate skill.
- **Fits SIZ:** The variance the armor's default SIZ can accommodate from its default SIZ, expressed as a positive or negative value.
- **Time:** How many combat rounds it takes to put the armor on.
- **Locations:** (Optional) If the hit locations are used, the hit locations covered by the armor.
- **Value:** The armor's cost in an average setting.

Unlike weapons and shields, armor generally does not suffer damage, unless by environmental factors. Armor is designed for defense; it can take a lot of pounding. Armor value is never reduced through damage in combat—instead, any change to armor value must come from some exceptional event.

ARMOR DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes all types of armor, alphabetically.

Adaptive Mesh: This high-tech cloth hardens and reacts to impacts, but remains pliant and comfortable the rest of the time. Usually worn as a bodysuit, it can be layered under other armor.

Assault Armor, Light: Light armor used by soldiers to resist hand-to-hand weapons, solid projectiles, as well as against energy weapons. Made of ceramics, alloys, or high-impact plastics.

Assault Armor, Standard: Heavy armor, made for battles in hazardous environments. Made of ceramics, alloys, or resistant plastics, assault armor provides head-to-toe protection and is favored by the military.

Assault Armor (Heavy), Powered: Similar to standard assault armor but more massive and with thicker armored plating. Internal servo-motors boost the wearer's strength. Combatants in powered heavy assault armor often wield massive weapons. The frame accepts modular enhancements (such as a jetpack) and is sealed against chemical weapons and the vacuum of space.

SPOT RULES FOR FIREARMS

Chapter Seven: Spot Rules covers many conditions regarding firearms, such as automatic fire, range, etc. Following are additional rules of use. Your gamemaster may choose to allow these to cover additional types of ranged weapons, such as energy or laser weapons.

Armor and Firearms

Armor types from earlier periods are relatively ineffective against weapons from later periods; a knight's armor provides scant protection from firearms. Any primitive, ancient, or medieval armors only have half their value against firearms (rounded up). The same is true of modern armor versus advanced weaponry. Advanced armor protects at full value against all weapons. To summarize:

- **Primitive or Ancient** armor only offers ½ protection against high-velocity or energy weapons (round up).
- **Modern** armor offers ½ protection against energy weaponry (round up).
- **Advanced** armor offers full protection against all forms of attack. Your gamemaster may rule that advanced armor only protects at ½ its armor value versus energy weapons (round up).

If armor value is determined randomly, roll for the armor's protection, apply any modifiers, then divide in half, rounding up. Some armors already state the difference in coverage between hand weapons and high-velocity weapons—these do not need to be reduced twice. Some types of monsters may also be resistant to firearms, noted in their descriptions in *Chapter Eleven: Creatures*.

Loaded Revolvers

The chamber directly under a revolver's hammer is often left empty against an accidental discharge. If this practice is followed, lower the ammunition capacity by 1. To emphasize the danger of carrying a fully-loaded revolver, your gamemaster may require your character to make a successful Luck roll to avoid an accidental discharge if your character falls or is jostled roughly enough to potentially trigger the weapon. If the Luck roll succeeds, the revolver does not go off. If it fails, the revolver goes off, and your character and everyone around your character must make a Luck roll to avoid being hit by the stray bullet. Your gamemaster should determine who the friendly fire strikes. If the initial Luck roll is a fumble, the bullet strikes your character and does normal damage.

Malfunctions

If your character's attack roll is equal to or higher than the weapon's malfunction number, the weapon malfunctions and will not fire until it has been dealt with.

- If the weapon is a revolver, bolt-action rifle, or a double-barreled shotgun, the problem is only a dud round.
- If the weapon is an automatic, semi-automatic, pump-action, or lever-action, the malfunction is a jam.

A dud round can be cycled past or ejected in one combat round. Fixing a jam takes 1D6 combat rounds and requires a successful skill roll of either the firearm skill or Repair, whichever is higher. Your character can keep trying until they succeed, with each attempt taking an additional 1D6 combat rounds. A roll of 96–00 on this attempt results in the firearm becoming irrevocably damaged and beyond casual repair.

A fumble may also overlap with a malfunction. If the results of both are contradictory, your gamemaster should address them in the most practical order, applying both results whenever possible. Weapons other than firearms can malfunction, and can be cleared with in the same way. For energy weapons, the 'dud round' is likely an incomplete or faulty charge.

Reloading Firearms

It takes one combat round to load two shells or bullets into any handgun, rifle, or shotgun, and one combat round to exchange a clip, energy cell, or battery pack. Changing a machine gun belt takes two combat rounds. If time is of the essence, it is possible to put one round into a firearm and get a single shot off at ½ your character's normal DEX rank (round up).

Unaimed Shots

The attacks-per-round entry **(Attk)** for ranged weapons assumes that your character is trying to hit a target directly, and is making an attempt to aim. If you wish for your character to spray an area with shots, such as if providing covering fire, and accuracy is not a concern, you can double the weapon's attacks-per-round, but the chance to hit is reduced to 1/5 your character's skill (equal to the chance of a special success, though the result is a normal success). If there is more than one target your gamemaster should determine randomly who is struck. At your gamemaster's discretion, if your character is prepared, equipped with a laser sight or equivalent targeting device, and has a weapon skill of over 60%, the chance to hit is not modified.

HISTORIC MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc
Axe, Battle	Axe	15	1D8+2+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	15	Yes	9/9	–	Average	1.0
Axe, Great	Axe	15	2D6+2+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	15	Yes	11/9	–	Average	2.0
Axe, Wood	Axe	15	1D8+2+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	Yes	8/7	–	Inexpensive	1.5
Blackjack	Brawl	25	1D8+dm	1	Crushing	Short	1H	10	No	7/7	–	Inexpensive	0.2
Cestus	Brawl	25	1D3+2+dm	1	Crushing	Short	1H	10	Yes	11/7	–	Average	0.1
Claw	Brawl	25	1D4+1+dm	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	10	Yes	9/9	–	Average	0.1
Dagger	Dagger	25	1D4+dm	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	–	Average	0.5
Flail	Flail	10	1D6+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	7	Yes	7/6	–	Average	2.0
Flail, Morningstar	Flail	10	1D10+1+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	12	Yes	11/7	–	Average	2.0
Garrote	Hand	15	Special[1]	1	–	Short	2H	1	No	8/12	–	Inexpensive	0.1
Gauntlet, Armored	Brawl	25	1D3+1+dm	1	Crushing	Short	1H	7	Yes	7/5	–	Average	As armor
Halberd	Polearm	15	3D6+dm	1	Bleeding	Long	2H	25	Yes	13/9	–	Average	3.0
Hammer	Hammer	25	1D6+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	9/7	–	Inexpensive	1.5
Hammer, Great	Hammer	25	1D10+3+dm	1	Crushing	Long	2H	15	Yes	9/9	–	Average	2.5
Hammer, Sledge	Hammer	20	2D6+2+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	15	Yes	11/7	–	Inexpensive	2.0
Hammer, War	Hammer	25	1D6+2+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	20	Yes	11/9	–	Average	2.0
Katana	Sword	15	1D10+1+dm[2]	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H or 2H	15	Yes	11/11	–	Expensive	1.5
Knife	Dagger	25	1D3+1+dm	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	–	Inexpensive	0.5
Lance	Spear	15	1D8+1+dm	1	Impaling[3]	Long	1H	15	Yes	9/8	–	Inexpensive	3.5
Mace, Heavy	Mace	25	1D8+2+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	20	Yes	14/9	–	Average	2.5
Mace, Light	Mace	25	1D6+2+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	20	Yes	7/7	–	Average	1.0
Maul, War	Hammer	25	1D10+2+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	20	Yes	13/7	–	Average	2.5
Naginata	Polearm	05	2d6+2+dm	1	Bleeding	Long	2H	15	Yes	7/11	–	Expensive	2.0
Pike	Polearm	15	1d10+2+dm	1	Impaling	Long	2H	15	Yes	11/7	–	Inexpensive	3.5
Rapier	Sword	15	1D6+1+dm	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/13	–	Expensive	1.0
Saber	Sword	15	1D8+1+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	20	Yes	7/11	–	Average	1.5
Sai	Dagger	10	1D6+dm	1	Crushing[4]	Medium	1H	20	Yes	5/11	–	Inexpensive	1.0
Scimitar	Sword	15	1D8+1+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	19	Yes	8/8	–	Average	1.5
Scythe	Improvised	05	2D6+1+dm	1	Impaling	Long	2H	20	Yes	12/10	–	Inexpensive	2.5
Sickle	Improvised	10	1D6+1+dm	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	12	Yes	7/9	–	Inexpensive	0.5
Staff, Quarter-	Staff	25	1D8+dm	1	Crushing	All	2H	20	Yes	9/9	–	Cheap	1.5
Staff, Short	Staff	15	1D6+dm	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/9	–	Cheap	0.5
Sword Cane	Sword	15	1D6+dm	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	12	Yes	7/11	–	Expensive	1.0
Sword, Bastard	Sword	10	1D10+1+dm[5]	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H or 2H	20	Yes	13 or 9/9[6]	–	Average	2.0
Sword, Broad	Sword	15	1D8+1+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	20	Yes	9/7	–	Average	1.5
Sword, Great	Sword	05	2D8+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium/Long	2H	18	Yes	14/13	–	Expensive	3.5
Sword, Long	Sword	15	1D8+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/9	–	Average	1.5
Sword, Short	Sword	15	1D6+1+dm	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	20	Yes	5/5	–	Cheap	1.0
Trident	Polearm	15	1D6+1+dm	1	Impaling	Long	1H or 2H	18	Yes	9/7	–	Average	2.0
Wakizashi	Sword	15	1D6+1+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	13	Yes	7/9	–	Expensive	1.0
Whip	Other	05	1D3-1+½dm	1	Entangle	Long	1H	4	No	9/10		Cheap	0.5

Notes:

1. See **Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation** (page 145).
2. When using a katana one-handed, damage modifier is ½ normal.
3. Tournament lances are commonly blunt, and do crushing specials.
4. Sai are traditionally blunt weapons used primarily for parrying and striking.
5. When using a bastard sword one-handed, damage modifier is ½ normal.
6. STR requirement is 13 when used one-handed; 9 when used two-handed.

MODERN MELEE WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc
Brass Knuckles	Brawl	25	1D3+2+dm	1	Crushing	Short	1H	18	No	5/–	–	Cheap	0.1
Chainsaw	Improvised	20	2D8	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	No	11/11	97–00	Average	8.0
Knife, Butcher	Dagger	25	1D6+dm	1	Impaling	Short	1H	12	No	5/7	–	Cheap	0.3
Knife, Pocket	Dagger	25	1D4+dm	1	Impaling	Short	1H	9	No	–/5	–	Cheap	0.1
Knife, Switchblade	Dagger	25	1D4+dm	1	Impaling	Short	1H	7	No	–/5	99–00	Cheap	0.1
Taser, Contact	Other	25	Special[1]	1	–	Short	1H	7	No	5/7	97–00	Cheap	0.3

MODERN MISSILE WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk[2]	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Ammo	Value	SIZ/Enc	RF
Flamethrower	Other	05	2D6+fire[3]	1	–	25	2H	6	No	10/8	93–00	6	Expensive	8.0	½ CR
Gun, Machine	Machine Gun	15	2D6+4	1, 3, or burst	Impaling	90	2H	11	No	9/5	00	40	Expensive	3.0	1 or 3/CR or 1/CR
Gun, Mini-	Machine Gun	15	2D6+4	3[3]	Impaling	400	2H	14	No	16/12	98–00	4,000	Expensive	6.0	1/CR
Gun, Submachine	Submachine Gun	15	1D8	2 or burst	Impaling	40	1H or 2H	8	No	9/6	98–00	32	Expensive	2.0	1 or 2/CR
Pistol, Derringer	Pistol	20	1D6	1	Impaling	3	1H	5	No	5/5	00	1 or 2	Average	0.3	1/CR
Pistol, Flintlock	Pistol	20	1D6+1	¼	Impaling	10	1H	8	No	7/5	95–00	1	Average	1.0	1/2CR
Pistol, Heavy	Pistol	20	1D10+2	1	Impaling	15	1H	8	No	11/7	00	8	Average	1.5	1/CR
Pistol, Light	Pistol	20	1D6	3	Impaling	10	1H	6	No	5/5	00	8	Average	0.7	1/CR
Pistol, Medium	Pistol	20	1D8	2	Impaling	20	1H	8	No	7/5	98–00	12	Average	1.0	1/CR
Revolver, Heavy	Revolver	20	1D10+2	1	Impaling	20	1H	14	No	11/5	00	6	Average	1.5	1/CR
Revolver, Light	Revolver	20	1D6	2	Impaling	15	1H	10	No	5/5	00	6	Average	0.7	1/CR
Revolver, Medium	Revolver	20	1D8	1	Impaling	25	1H	12	No	7/5	00	6	Average	1.0	1/CR
Rifle, Assault	Rifle	25	2D6+2	2 or burst	Impaling	90	2H	12	No	10/5	00	30	Expensive	3.5	1/CR
Rifle, Bolt-action	Rifle	25	2D6+4	½	Impaling	110	2H	12	No	7/5	00	5	Average	3.0	1/CR
Rifle, Elephant	Rifle	15	3D6+4	1 or 2	Impaling	100	2H	12	No	13/5	00	2	Average	4.5	1 or 2/CR
Rifle, Musket	Rifle	25	1D10+4	¼	Impaling	60	2H	12	No	9/5	95–00	1	Average	3.5	1/2CR
Rifle, Sniper	Rifle	20[4]	2D10+4	1	Impaling	250[5]	2H	10	No	12/7	98–00	11	Expensive	4.0	1/CR
Rifle, Sporting	Rifle	25	2D6	1	Impaling	80	2H	12	No	7/5	00	6	Average	3.0	1/CR
Shotgun, Automatic	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6[6]	1 or 2	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	14	No	11/5	00	8	Expensive	4.0	1 or 2/CR
Shotgun, Double-barreled	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6[6]	1 or 2	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	12	No	9/5	00	2	Average	3.5	1 or 2/CR
Shotgun, Sawed-off	Shotgun	30	4D6/1D6[7]	1 or 2	Impaling	5/20/–	1H	14	No	9/5	00	1 or 2	Average	2.0	1 or 2/CR
Shotgun, Sporting	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6[6]	1	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	10	No	7/5	00	5	Average	3.0	1/CR
Spray, Chemical	Other	25	Special[8]	1	–	2	1H	2	No	3/7	91–00	6	Average	0.2	1/CR
Taser, Dart	Other	20	Special[1]	½	–	DEX	1H	8	No	3/7	95–00	1	Expensive	0.5	1/2CR

Notes:

1. Stuns target (see **Stunning**, page 154).
2. Many modern firearms have burst fire capabilities (see **Autofire**, page 142).
3. If a target is hit by a flamethrower, it is on fire and takes 1D6+2 points per round in additional damage until the fire is extinguished (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148).
4. Sniper rifles are usually equipped with a bipod, doubling the chance; without a bipod (or similar stabilizer), modify the base chance by −10%.
5. Sniper rifles are usually equipped with telescopic scopes that double their effective range; if without a scope, the range is 125 meters.
6. Shotguns do damage by range; the first increment is the first damage dice, the second is the second, etc.
7. Shotguns do damage by range; the first increment is the first damage dice, the second is the second, etc. Sawed-off shotguns are not effective beyond 20 yards.
8. Chemical spray is a low-POT contact poison (see **Poisons**, page 151). An example type of chemical spray might have 2D6+12 POT, instant effect, and cause blindness if the target fails a resistance roll vs. CON. It is *Difficult* to shoot into a target's eyes, but *Easy* at point-blank range, making the chance unaffected.

ADVANCED MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc
Axe, Vibro-	Polearm	10	2D8+4+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	Yes	11/5	98–00	Average	3.0
Knife, Vibro-	Dagger	25	2D4+2+dm	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	16	Yes	7/7	99–00	Average	0.5
Lance, Stun	Staff	15	1D6+dm+stun[1]	1	Knockback	Long	2H	18	Yes	9/5	98–00	Average	2.5
Sword, Energy	Sword	10	2D10+dm[2]	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	30	Yes	11/15	99–00	Priceless	1.0
Sword, Monofilament	Sword	05	3D12[2]	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	12	No	5/15	91–00[3]	Expensive	0.5
Sword, Vibro-	Sword	20	2D6+3+dm	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	18	Yes	9/7	97–00	Expensive	1.5
Whip, Shock	Other	05	1+½dm+stun[2]	1	Entangle	Long	1H	10	No	7/9	97–00	Average	1.0

ADVANCED MISSILE WEAPONS

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk[4]	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Ammo	Value	SIZ/Enc	RF
Pistol, Blaster	Pistol, Energy	15	1D8+2	2	Impaling	15	1H	14	No	7/5	99–00	30	Average	1.0	1/CR
Pistol, Disintegrator	Pistol, Energy	05	3D4+1	1	–	10	1H	12	No	7/5	96–00	10	Expensive	1.0	1/2CR
Pistol, Electromagnetic Pulse	Pistol, Energy	20	2D6 vs. tech[5]	1	–	15	1H	12	No	7/5	98–00	20	Average	1.0	1/CR
Pistol, Flechette	Pistol, Energy	05	2D4[6]	1 or burst[7]	Impaling	15	1H	14	No	5/7	99–00	6	Average	0.8	1/CR
Pistol, Laser	Pistol, Energy	20	1D8	3	Impaling	30	1H	14	No	5/5	99–00	20	Average	1.0	1/CR
Pistol, Plasma	Pistol, Energy	15	2D10+2	1	Impaling	20	1H	18	No	7/5	98–00	12	Expensive	1.2	1/2CR
Pistol, Shock	Pistol, Energy	15	2D4	1	Knockback	15	1H	12	No	5/5	98–00	12	Average	1.0	1/CR
Pistol, Stun	Pistol, Energy	25	2D6 stun[9]	1	Knockback	15	1H	16	No	5/5	00	12	Average	1.0	1/CR
Rifle, Blaster	Rifle, Energy	10	2D8+3	2	Impaling	60	2H	20	No	9/5	99–00	20	Average	2.0	1/CR
Rifle, Disintegrator	Rifle, Energy	05	3D6+2	1	–	30	2H	18	No	9/7	96–00	10	Expensive	2.0	1/2CR
Rifle, Electromagnetic Pulse	Rifle, Energy	25	3D8 vs. tech[5]	1	–	75	2H	18	No	7/5	98–00	12	Average	2.0	1/CR
Rifle, Laser	Rifle, Energy	15	2D8	2	Impaling	100	2H	20	No	7/7	99–00	20	Average	1.5	1/CR
Rifle, Plasma	Rifle, Energy	10	2D10+4	1	Impaling	70	2H	18	No	9/7	98–00	16	Expensive	2.0	1/CR
Rifle, Shock	Rifle, Energy	10	3D8	1	Knockback	50	2H	18	No	9/7	98–00	12	Average	1.5	1/CR
Rifle, Sonic	Rifle, Energy	10	1D3+2[8]	1	Knockback	50	2H	16	No	7/7	97–00	36	Average	2.0	1/CR
Rifle, Stun	Rifle, Energy	20	2D8 stun[9]	1	Knockback	50	2H	22	No	7/5	00	24	Average	1.5	1/CR

Notes:

1. Roll damage and pit it vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If target loses, they are stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (see **Stunning**, page 154).
2. Reduce the target's armor value to half (round up) versus this weapon.
3. If you fumble an attack with a monofilament sword, make a *Difficult* Agility roll to avoid hitting yourself. If you fail, your attack hits you in addition to the roll on the melee weapon fumble table. Damage ignores ½ armor value (round up).
4. Many missile weapons have burst fire capabilities (see **Autofire**, page 142).
5. If the target is a robot, machine, or uses electromagnetic energy, roll damage and make a resistance roll vs. the target's CON. If successful, the device is stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (see **Stunning**, page 154). If the damage is higher than the target's hit points, it is knocked 'unconscious'. Damage from EMP weapons is temporary, and lost hit points can be restored with a Repair roll.
6. Against a foe with hardened armor (metal, plastic, or plates), a flechette pistol does only ½ damage (round up).
7. A flechette pistol fires clusters of flechettes, either one 'shot' or a long burst that empties the magazine. Each shot is a single attack, doing 2D4 damage.
8. A sonic rifle damages living targets each combat round it successfully strikes them. Against an unliving target, the damage per round is rolled in a resistance roll vs. the target's CON, armor value, or hit points (gamemaster choice). If the target fails, it shatters or is damaged and non-functional.
9. Roll damage and pit it vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If the target succeeds, they take minimum damage (2) instead of the rolled damage. If target loses, they are stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (see **Stunning**, page 154).

Assault Armor (Light), Powered: Similar to heavy powered assault armor (page 170), but lighter and lacking extras such as sealed systems.

Ballistic Cloth: Made of aramid fiber, ballistic cloth armor provides moderate protection against bullets, though not as much as a bulletproof vest. Normally worn under street clothing or fashioned to resemble normal clothing.

Bulletproof Vest, Early: An older variant of the bulletproof vest, heavy and cumbersome, with thickened metal plates in a segmented canvas vest.

Bulletproof Vest, Modern: An evolution of the bulletproof vest, using high-impact metal alloys and plastics for a lighter, thinner form of protection.

Chain: This armor consists of a mesh made of woven metal links. It is extremely flexible, but quite heavy.

Clothing, Heavy: The equivalent of wearing an heavy cloak, a winter jacket, tight leather clothing, or multiple layers of clothing.

Energy Armor: This armor consists of an internal power pack worn on the belt or slung over the back, between the shoulders, and possibly connected to emitters distributed across the body. When activated, it covers the character with a sheath of protective energy.

Flak Jacket: This is a full jacket similar to an early bulletproof vest, though less armored, useful for pilots and ground troops alike.

Helmet: Almost all these armor types have helmets. Full suits of armor usually include helmets. If a helmet is not worn, reduce the armor value by –1 for a light helmet, and –2 for a heavy

PRIMITIVE ARMORS

Name	AV	Random AV	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Helmet	+1	+1 point	Light	0.5	–5% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Cheap
Hide	1	1D3–1	Light	3.5	None	±3	1	All	Cheap

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL ARMOR

Name	AV	Random AV	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Chain	7	1D8–1	Moderate	20.0	–20% to Physical skills	-2	3	All	Expensive
Clothing, Heavy	1	1d2–1	None	2.5	None	±2	1	All	Cheap
Helmet, Heavy	+2	+2 points	Light	2.5	–50% to Perception skills	±0	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+1	+1 point	None	1.5	–15% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Inexpensive
Lamellar	6	1D8–1	Moderate	18.0	–15% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Expensive
Leather, Soft	1	1D6–1	Light	3.5	None	±2	2	All	Inexpensive
Leather, Hard	2	1D6	Moderate	5.0	–10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All	Average
Leather, Cuirbouilli	3	2D3	Light	5.0	–10% to Physical skills	±0	2	All	Expensive
Padded/Quilted	1	1D2–1	None	3.0	None	±2	1	All	Inexpensive
Padded/Quilted, Heavy	2	1D3–1	Light	4.0	–5% to Physical skills	±1	2	All	Inexpensive
Plate, Full	8	1D10	Cumbersome	25.0	–25% to Physical skills	-1	5	All but head	Expensive
Plate, Half	7	1D8	Moderate	18.0	–20% to Physical skills	-1	4	All but head	Expensive
Ring	5	1D6	Light	10.0	–10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Average
Scale	6	2D4–1	Moderate	20.0	–15% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Average

MODERN ARMOR

Name	AV	Random AV	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Ballistic Cloth	3/5[1]	1D3/1D6–1	Light	4.0	–10% to Physical skills	±1	1	Arms, Chest	Expensive
Bulletproof Vest, Early	4	1D4	Moderate	11.0	–25% to Physical skills	±1	2	Chest	Expensive
Bulletproof Vest, Modern	4/8[1]	1D4/1D8	Light	8.0	–5% to Physical skills	±3	2	Chest	Expensive
Clothing, Heavy	1	1D2–1	None	2.5	None	±2	1	All	Cheap
Flak Jacket	4	1D4	Moderate	8.0	–10% to Physical skills	±2	1	Arms, Chest	Expensive
Helmet, Heavy	+6	+3 points	Light	3.5	–25% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+3	+2 points	None	2.5	–10% to Perception skills	±2	1	Head	Inexpensive
Riot Gear	12/6[1]	1D10+2	Moderate	12.0	–10% to Physical skills	±1	5	All[2]	Expensive

Notes:

1. First value is vs. melee or low-velocity missile weapons; second value is vs. firearms.
2. Includes helmet.

helmet. If using random armor values, modify the range by –1 or –2, as appropriate. If hit locations are used, a helmet has the same protective value as an arm or leg of the relevant armor material.

Hide: A tanned or untanned animal coat, worn as a cloak or garment, fur intact.

Lamellar (Studded, Splinted): This armor consists of thin metal strips (splints) usually held onto leather backing with rivets (studs).

Leather, Soft: An equivalent to a leather jacket or vest, soft leather is often worn under other armor as additional padding and protection.

Leather, Hard: This is equal to a half-centimeter of cured leather, about as thick as the sole of a dress shoe. It may have leather studs or embossed work.

Leather, Cuirbouilli: Thick and semirigid leather that has been cured and boiled in oil and wax, then molded to the form of the wearer. It is often ornamented and stained colorfully.

Padded/Quilted: This armor consists of sandwiched layers of stiffened thick cloth, sewn together as if a pad or quilt. Cheap and easy to make, it does not offer very much protection, though it can be worn beneath metal armor such as halfplate and chain.

Padded/Quilted, Heavy: Similar to padded or quilted armor, but heavier and thicker.

Plate, Half: This armor consists of a partial suit of plate (see below) that does not cover the entire body. Usually, it is a breastplate, helmet, and some smaller pieces, with chain covering the rest.

Plate, Full: This armor consists of solid plates of metal, molded to the body and held together with covered leather straps. Historically, this was superior to any other type of body armor, but the all-metal construction makes it the heaviest and least comfortable.

Ring: This is soft leather or other backing with metal rings sewn onto it in a close or overlapping pattern.

Riot Gear: A heavy bulletproof jacket and toughened clothing coverall, with plates in strategic body parts and a helmet.

Scale: Scale armor (sometimes called scale mail) consists of overlapping metal scales of various shapes and sizes fastened onto a backing.

Splint: See the description for lamellar.

Studded: See the description for lamellar.

SPECIAL RULES FOR ARMOR

The following rules apply to various situations involving armor.

Armor Encumbrance

Armor encumbrance (ENC) depends on the SIZ of the character wearing it. The SIZ of the character determines the SIZ of the armor in most cases. Each increment of +5 SIZ adds to the ENC of the armor, being heavier, hotter, clumsier to wear, etc. SIZ es of 11–15 are standard. Each 5–point increment of SIZ below that range is 1/5 less encumbering. The following ENC values can be used for hit locations.

Hit Location	Fraction of Total ENC
Head	1/10
Arm	1/10 each
Chest	1/5
Abdomen	1/10
Leg	1/5 each

Layering Armor

It's possible to wear soft armor under or over hard armor to provide added protection. Only soft, pliable armor like heavy cloth, padded, or soft leather can easily be worn layered with other forms of armor, and they add their usual armor value as well as their ENC value. When trying to overlap anything other than soft armor with hard, total the armor value but triple the ENC of the lesser armor.

Putting Armor On

Some types of armor are more complicated to put on than everyday clothing. There are straps and buckles to fasten, multiple pieces to don, and there may be several layers. It takes one combat round for every point of protection a suit of armor offers to put it on, assuming that your character is ready, the armor has been laid out, and there are no hazardous or distracting environmental elements. Your gamemaster may increase the time it takes if previously distracted or asleep, or in challenging circumstances (running, heavily injured, darkness, underwater, mounted, etc.). This may require an Agility or Idea roll if sufficiently distracted or inconvenienced.

Taking Armor Off

Taking off armor is much easier than putting it on, since your character doesn't have to make sure each piece is properly arranged before putting on the next one. Your character can remove 3 armor value per combat round (round up) if moving rapidly. A successful Agility roll increases this to 4 armor value per combat round. Use the maximum value of the armor if using random armor values.

ADVANCED ARMOR

Name	AV	Random AV	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Adaptive Mesh	6	1D4+2	Light	2.0	−5% to Physical skills	±1	1	All	Expensive
Assault Armor	10	2D4+2	Moderate	16.0	−25% to Physical skills	±1	3	All[1]	Expensive
Assault Armor (Light), Powered[2]	14	2D6+2	Cumbersome	36.0	−20% to Physical and Manipulation skills	±1	4	All	Priceless
Assault Armor (Heavy), Powered[3]	16	4D4	Cumbersome	48.0	−50% to Physical and Manipulation skills	±1	5	All	Priceless
Assault Armor, Light	8	2D6	Moderate	12.0	−10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All[1]	Expensive
Energy Armor	1−20[4]	−[4]	Light	4.0	−5% to Hide, Stealth, and Perception skills per AV	Any	2	All[5]	Expensive
Helmet, Heavy	+4	+4	Light	5.0	−15% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+3	+2	None	2.0	−5% to Perception skills	±2	1	Head	Average

Notes:

1. Includes helmet.
2. Light powered assault armor modifies STR by +3 and DEX by –3 (adjust relevant values when worn). Armor includes helmet.
3. Heavy powered assault armor modifies STR by +6 and DEX by –6 (adjust relevant values when worn). Armor includes helmet.
4. Energy armor can be set by its wearer for any value between 1 and 20 points of AV. Each combat round the armor expends charges (power points) equal to its AV. Standard armor power supplies hold 200 charges; each damage point absorbed costs 1 additional charge. Energy armor does not allow random armor value; use the set AV. It takes 5 DEX ranks to adjust the AV.
5. Can not be worn with other armor.

ARMOR BY HIT LOCATION (OPTION)

If using the hit location system (page 21), you may wish for more granularity in how your character is armored. Each type of armor in the armor tables lists the hit locations it covers. Your character can vary the type of armor they are wearing on each hit location, using any type that covers that location. Each type of armor worn may have a different armor value.

- To determine the armor value of each piece, use the armor value from the armor charts.
- The burden is that of the pieces worn on the chest, abdomen, or legs, using the heaviest if these differ.
- Use the skill modifier of the heaviest piece worn on the chest, abdomen, or legs. Helmets have the same modifiers.
- It takes one combat round per 5 points of armor value (round up) to put on individual pieces of armor.

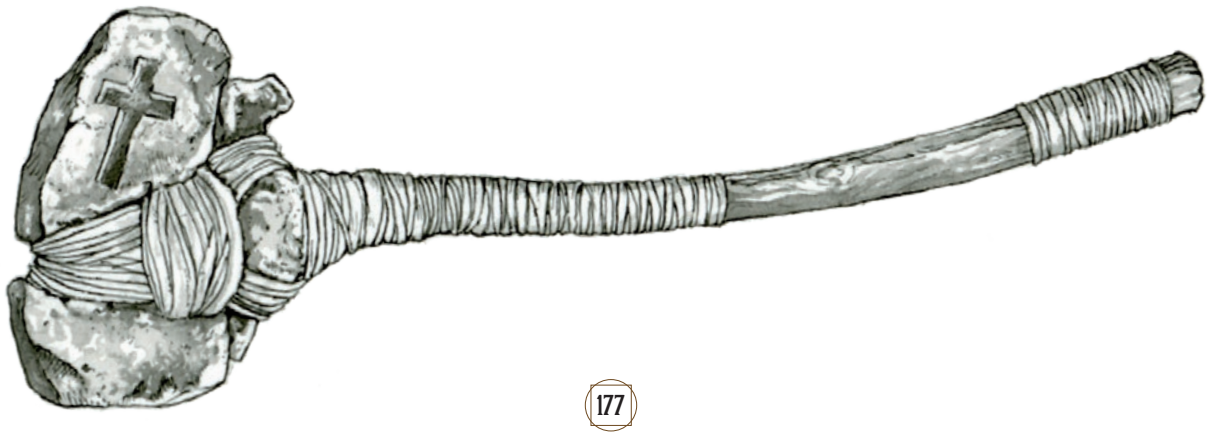
Your gamemaster may rule that some types of armor cannot be used piecemeal, such as most modern or advanced armor types. Armor by hit locations is not recommended with the random armor value system.

Use the rules for **Armor by Hit Location** and **Layering Armor** (page 176) when using armor by hit location.

Helmets

The armor tables describe helmets as a bonus to armor value. When using armor by hit location, helmets have armor values of their own. Use the following values for helmets:

Type	Armor Value
Helmet (Primitive)	2
Helmet, Heavy (Ancient and Medieval)	8
Helmet, Light (Ancient and Medieval)	4
Helmet, Heavy (Modern)	8
Helmet, Light (Modern)	6
Helmet, Heavy (Advanced)	16
Helmet, Light (Advanced)	14



SHIELDS

Shields are basically large parrying weapons, designed to be interposed between your character and an attacker. A shield usually has a handle, strap, or straps and is worn on the non-weapon arm (for most people, the left arm). Traditionally, shields must compromise between toughness, lightness, and balance. Shields range in size from the small buckler (barely the size of a dinner plate) to the large shield used by Hoplite warriors.

Shields are categorized chronologically. In most cases, shields from an earlier period are available in later periods, so your gamemaster may simply choose where availability stops and allow your character access to shields prior to that point.

All shields are used in melee or to defend against missiles. A thrown shield is an improvised weapon with a range of 10 meters and a 05% chance to hit (this can increase with experience).

Each shield type has the following attributes:

- **Name:** The common name for the shield.
- **Base:** The base chance for anyone picking up the shield. This base chance is also the beginning value for attacking with the shield.
- **Skill:** The skill used for the shield.
- **AV/HP:** This is the shield's armor point value as well as its hit point value. This amount is used if the shield is damaged or targeted. See **Slung Shields** (following) for details.
- **Damage:** The amount of damage the shield does if used as a weapon.
- **Attk:** How many attacks-per-round this shield allows.
- **Special:** The type of special success the shield does. Most shields do knockback special successes.
- **Burden:** This describes the awkwardness or relative encumbrance of the shield.
- **ENC:** (Optional) The ENC value of the shield.
- **Locations:** (Optional) For hit locations, the hit locations covered by the shield. This is usually only appropriate for slung shields. See **Slung Shields** (page 178).
- **STR/DEX:** The minimum STR and DEX required to use the shield. If your character does not meet the minimum required STR and DEX, any uses of the shield are *Difficult*.
- **Value:** The shield's cost in an appropriate setting.

Each shield type is described in **Shield Descriptions** (page 179).

Slung Shields

Usually shields are worn slung over the arm/shoulder or back when not being used actively in combat. If your gamemaster is using hit locations, add 1/2 the armor value of a slung shield (round up) to any hit location struck by a weapon, in addition to the armor value already in that location. Of the shields described in this section, only the buckler, primitive, and energy shields cannot be slung. As most shields have a high armor value, this negates most attacks.

For example, *your character has a shield slung over their back, and an opponent fires an arrow from behind. The attack is a success, and the hit location rolled indicates the torso. Your gamemaster rules that the shield covers this hit location, so ½ of the shield's armor value is applied to the arrow's damage. Your gamemaster tells you "The arrow thuds into the shield on your back, but it doesn't get through." Now your character has a chance to hold their shield properly, not trusting another lucky break.*

PRIMITIVE SHIELDS

Name	Base	Skill	AV/HP	Damage	Attk	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value
Primitive	10	Shield	10	1D2+dm	1	Knockback	Light	Arm	5/7	2.0	Cheap

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL SHIELDS

Name	Base	Skill	AV/HP	Damage	Attk	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value
Buckler	05	Shield	15	1D2+dm	1	Knockback	Light	Arm	5/7	1.0	Average
Full Shield	15	Shield	22	1D4+dm	1	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest, Head	11/9	5.0	Average
Half Shield	15	Shield	15	1D2+dm	1	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	5/7	3.0	Average
Heater	15	Shield	20	1D3+dm	1	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	3.0	Average
Hoplite	15	Shield	26	1D4+dm	1	Knockback	Cumbersome	Abdomen, Arm, Chest	12/8	7.0	Average
Kite	15	Shield	22	1D4+dm	1	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest	11/9	5.0	Average
Large Round	15	Shield	22	1D4+dm	1	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest	11/9	5.0	Average
Round	15	Shield	20	1D3+dm	1	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	4.0	Average
Spiked	15	Shield	20	1D3+dm	1	Impale	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	5.0	Average
Target	15	Shield	15	1D2+dm	1	Knockback	Light	Arm, Chest	5/7	3.0	Cheap

MODERN SHIELDS

Name	Base	Skill	AV/HP	Damage	Attk	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value
Riot Shield	15	Shield	16	1D3 + dm	1	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest, Head	9/9	3.0	Expensive

ADVANCED SHIELDS

Name	Base	Skill	AV/HP	Damage	Attk	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value
Energy Shield	20	Shield	25	1D2 + dm	1	Knockback	Light	Arm, Chest	3/3	1.0	Expensive

SHIELD DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes all types of shields, organized alphabetically.

Buckler: A small shield that protects the lower part of the arm, usually held with a handgrip or single strap. These are worn on the belt (or swash), which gave rise to the term 'swashbuckler'.

Energy Shield: A defensive device consisting of a small power pack mounted on the defenwder's arm and a projector that emits a circular shield of variable size.

Full Shield: Larger than a small shield and of a variety of shapes, a full shield is usually large enough to cover the defender's lower face and groin.

Half Shield: A smaller shield of a variety of shapes, commonly used by riders, archers, or light skirmishers (vs. heavy front-line fighters).

Heater: A medium shield shaped like a flatiron heater (and named for it). This is the traditional shape of many heraldic coats of arms.

Hoplite: A large rectangular shield, very protective, but too heavy and clumsy for horsemen. Hoplite shields are often used resting on the ground. Generally rectangular in shape, but some are oblong and with rounded edges.

Kite: A large, teardrop-shaped shield with a round top and pointed bottom, covering the body from shoulders to the knee or ankle.

Large Round: Identical to a round shield (below), only larger.

Primitive: A shield used in primitive warlike cultures. Usually nothing more than a wooden framework with stretched leather over it, wicker, stiffened cloth, or even extremely rigid animal hide.

Round: A round shield gripped inside the central boss. Unique in that it has thin unprotected edges which can be used to catch and break edged weapons with a special maneuver.

Riot: A large rectangular clear plastic shield used by riot policemen. Light and tough, these enable shield walls and provide adequate defense against most attackers.

Spiked: A type of target with a central spike, a blade, or series of small spikes facing outward at the opponent.

Target: A round, medium-sized shield, common in many cultures. Usually made with a metal rim.

ARTILLERY

Artillery describes giant mechanisms, usually on the battlefield or in defense of an installation such as a castle, military base, or mounted on a vehicle. In ancient and medieval settings, artillery is primarily siege weaponry. Artillery weapons can be mounted on vehicles ranging in size from motorcycles, wagons, jeeps, up through battleships and space stations. These massive weapons are usually mounted and complex enough to require more than one operator. Most are ranged and fire projectiles. Traditionally, most deliver what is known as indirect fire, targeting an area rather than a specific object (a character or vehicle), though some can be used against individual targets.

There are nearly as many types of artillery weapons as there are hand-to-hand weapons, and this section covers a representative sampling. Larger weapons such as missiles, rockets, and vehicle-vs.-vehicle or vehicle-vs.-structure weapons are beyond the scope of these rules.

Each artillery weapon has the following attributes:

- **Name:** The common name for the type of artillery weapon.
- **Skill:** The skill used for this artillery weapon.
- **Base:** The base chance to use the artillery weapon.
- **Dmg:** The damage done by the artillery weapon, sometimes expressed as dice/meter. Damage reduces by 1D6 per meter beyond initial radius.
- **Attk:** The number of attacks a round the artillery weapon allow.
- **Special:** The type of special success.
- **Rng:** The range of the weapon.
- **Crew:** The number of characters the artillery weapon requires to be used effectively. Below this number, all attacks are *Difficult*.
- **HP:** The artillery weapon's hit points.
- **AV:** The artillery weapon's armor value, if applicable.
- **Ammo:** The type of ammunition, whether solid, shrapnel, energy, chemical, or other?
- **CAP:** The weapon's capacity; how many shots it can fire before reloading or recharging.
- **Mal:** The artillery weapon's chance to malfunction.
- **Value:** The weapon's average cost in an appropriate setting.
- **SIZ:** The artillery weapon's SIZ.

Each artillery weapon is described in **Artillery Weapon Descriptions** (page 182).

Artillery Weapon Classes

These classes have some overlap, especially with the Heavy Weapons skill, and that skill may allow players to use artillery weapons as if *Difficult*, or vice versa.

- **Cannon:** Cannon, energy cannon, field gun, howitzer, tank gun.
- **Launcher:** Mortar.
- **Mounted Gun:** Rail gun.
- **Siege Engine:** Ballista, catapult, springal, trebuchet.
- **Missile:** Torpedo.
- **Turret:** Energy turret, flame turret, laser turret, missile turret, machinegun turret, shock turret, spear-thrower turret.

Artillery Weapon Effects

Artillery weapons are rarely used against individuals. They are fired at masses of men or at walls and other structures, usually affecting an area of SIZ 40 (around four meters in radius from the center, about the SIZ of a small airplane). Anyone caught in that range is injured. If a target is smaller than SIZ 40, reduce the chance of hitting by –1% per each point of SIZ point smaller than 40.

For example, *using an artillery weapon against a SIZ 14 person would result in a –26% reduction to the appropriate skill.*

If the projectile misses, use the rules for the Throw skill (page 52) to determine where the projectile actually went, multiplying the distance by ×5.

For example, *if the Throw skill indicates that a projectile missed by four meters, multiply the result by ×5 for a result of 20 meters. This is to ensure that a miss is still a miss.*

Guided Missiles

Forms of artillery such as missiles are guided through internal or external electronic targeting systems, making them much more accurate. If a missile is guided in this manner, it makes any skill use *Easy*. If it is self-guided, it automatically strikes the target on any roll other than a 99 or 00, though a mobile target may attempt to dodge the missile. If so, dodging attempts are considered to be evasive actions (page 131), and dodges against a guided missile are *Difficult*, whether the Dodge, Drive, or Pilot skill is used.

The best defense against guided missiles (other than thick armor) is electronic jamming. Jamming makes a guided missile's attack chance *Difficult*. If a guided missile misses its target, see the rules for artillery weapon misses (prior) to determine where the projectile actually strikes.

ANCIENT ARTILLERY WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Crew	HP	AV	Ammo	Cap	Mal	Value	SIZ	RF
Arbalest, Siege	Crossbow	10	3D6+1	1/5	Impaling	425	1	18	–	Bolts	1	98–00	Average	14	1/5 CR
Ballista	Artillery	05	10D6	1/5	Impaling	275	3	32	12	Bolts	1	99–00	Average	42	1/5 CR
Catapult	Artillery	10	6D6	1/5	Crushing	325	3	36	12	Rocks	1	00	Cheap	44	1/5 CR
Springal, Bolt-firing	Artillery	05	3D6	1/6	Impaling	300	3	40	12	Bolts	1	99–00	Average	48	1/6 CR
Springal, Rock-firing	Artillery	05	3D6	1/5	Crushing	270	3	40	12	Rocks	1	99–00	Average	48	1/5 CR
Trebuchet	Artillery	05	12D6	1/15	Crushing	300	4	44	12	Rocks	1	98–00	Average	52	1/15 CR

HISTORICAL AND MODERN ARTILLERY WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Crew	HP	AV	Ammo	Cap	Mal	Value	SIZ	RF
Cannon	Artillery	01	4D8+4	1/5	Crushing	8,000	3	36	28	Cannonballs	1	99–00	Expensive	44	1/5 CR
Gun, Field	Artillery	01	10D6/2 meters	1/3	Crushing	12,000	2	48	28	Explosive	1	00	Restricted	42	1/3 CR
Gun, Gatling	Heavy Weapon	15	2D6+4	Burst[1]	Impaling	100	1	20	24	Bullets	200	96–00	Restricted	20	1/CR
Gun, Tank	Artillery	01	15D6/4 meters	1	Impaling	2,000	2	36	28	Explosive	1	00	Restricted	28	1/CR
Howitzer	Artillery	01	10D6/2 meters	1/2	Crushing	9,000	2	44	28	Explosive	1	00	Restricted	36	1/2 CR
Mortar[2]	Heavy Weapon	01	10D6/2 meters	1	Crushing	2,500	1	18	12	Rockets	1	00	Restricted	12	1/CR
Torpedo	Artillery	01	20D6/2 meters	1/2	Impaling	5,000	1	36	6	Torpedo	1	99–00	Restricted	24[3]	1/2 CR
Turret, Machinegun	Artillery	05	4D6+4	Burst[4]	Impaling	200	1	48	28	Bullets	1,000	98–00	Restricted	36	1/CR
Turret, Spear-thrower	Artillery	05	2D10+2	1	Impaling	350	1	26	28	Spears	1	00	Expensive	16	1/CR

ADVANCED ARTILLERY WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Crew	HP	AV	Ammo	Cap	Mal	Value	SIZ	RF
Cannon, Energy	Artillery	01	4D10+4	1	Fire	1,000	3	40	28	Energy	Unlimited	00	Restricted	48	1/CR
Gun, Rail-	Artillery	01	6D8+6	1/3	Impaling	10,000	2	64	28	Shells	1,000	00	Restricted	72	1/3 CR
Turret, Energy	Artillery	05	6D10+6	1	Fire	400	1	36	28	Energy	Unlimited	00	Restricted	44	1/CR
Turret, Flame	Artillery	10	4D6/1 meter[5]	1	Fire	50	1	24	28	Fuel	100	98–00	Restricted	32	1/CR
Turret, Laser	Artillery	05	4D8+4	1	Fire	600	1	32	28	Energy	Unlimited	99–00	Restricted	40	1/CR
Turret, Missile	Artillery	01	8D6+8/2 meters	Burst	Impaling	1,200	1	36	28	Missiles	100	00	Restricted	44	1/CR
Turret, Shock	Artillery	05	4D6/1 meter[6]	1/2	Stun	40	1	24	28	Energy	Unlimited	96–00	Restricted	32	1/2 CR

Notes:

1. A Gatling gun fires a 36-round burst each combat round.
2. This is a small man-portable mortar. For larger versions, use the statistics for a howitzer.
3. The SIZ is for the torpedo itself; it must be fired from a launch tube, usually a part of a submarine or other vessel.
4. A standard machinegun turret fires a 120-round burst each combat round.
5. If a target is struck, roll Luck. If the roll fails, they are on fire and take 1D6 points of damage immediately and every subsequent combat round until the fire is extinguished or otherwise neutralized (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148).
6. Roll damage and pit it vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If target loses, they are stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (see **Stunning**, page 154).

MODERN EXPLOSIVES

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg[1]	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc
Blasting Cap	Demolition	–	2D6/1 meter	1/2	Knockback	Thrown	–	3	No	–	00	Average	0.2
Dynamite	Demolition	Throw	5D6/2 meters	1/2	Knockback	Thrown	2H	1	No	5/5	99–00	Average	0.5
Explosive, Improvised	Demolition	–	3D6/2 meters	1	Knockback	Thrown	–	4	No	–	91–00	Cheap	1.0
Explosive, Plastic	Demolition	–	6D6/3 meters	1/3	Knockback	Thrown	–	15	No	–	99–00	Expensive	1.0
Grenade, Concussion	Grenade	Throw	2D6[2]/2 meters	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	00	Average	0.7
Grenade, Explosive	Grenade	Throw	4D6/4 meters	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	99–00	Average	0.7
Grenade, Flare	Grenade	Throw	[3]/3 meters	1	–	Thrown	1H	6	No	5/5	00	Average	0.7
Grenade, Gas	Grenade	Throw	[4]/3 meters	1	–	Thrown	1H	6	No	5/5	99–00	Average	0.7
Grenade, Phosphorous	Grenade	Throw	2D6[5]/24 meters	1	–	Thrown	1H	4	No	5/5	98–00	Expensive	0.7
Grenade, Shrapnel	Grenade	Throw	4D6/4 meters	1	Impaling	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	00	Average	0.7
Grenade, Smoke	Grenade	Throw	[6]/3 meters	1	–	Thrown	1H	6	No	5/5	00	Average	0.3
Grenade Launcher	Grenade	25	3D6/2 meters	1/3	Knockback	20	1H	12	No	–	99–00	Expensive	3.0
Launcher, LAW Rocket	Grenade	15	8D6/1 meter	1	Knockback	150	2H	10	No	7/5	98–00	Expensive	4.5
Launcher, Rocket	Grenade	01	10D6/5 meters	1/3	Impaling, Knockback	400	2H	12	No	11/7	99–00	Expensive	7.0
Mine, Antipersonnel	Demolition	–	4D6/5 meters	–	Knockback	25	–	9	No	–	99–00	Average	2.0
Mine, Antitank	Demolition	–	6D6+6/3D6+2/1D6	–	Impaling	10/25/50	–	12	No	–	99–00	Average	3.0
Molotov Cocktail	Grenade	Throw	1+Fire[7]	1/2	–	Thrown	1H	1	No	5/7	95–00	Cheap	0.7

Notes:

1. Damage is expressed in dice per meters; damage done per meter past the initial radius decreases by 1D6.
2. All damaged targets must succeed with a Stamina roll or be stunned (see **Stunning**, page 154).
3. Illuminates area of range instead of damage (see **Light Sources**, page 150).
4. Fills area with toxic or non-toxic gas (see **Poisons**, page 151). A example gas grenade might have 2D6+12 POT, instant effect, and cause choking and 1D6 per round hit point loss if target fails a resistance roll vs. CON.
5. Phosphorous grenades produce smoke and are also incendiary, causing damage each round until extinguished (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148).
6. Fills an area with vision obscuring smoke instead of doing damage; can obscure a room as if darkened (see **Darkness**, page 146).
7. If a target is struck, they must roll Luck. If the roll fails, they are on fire and take 1D6 points of damage immediately and every subsequent round until the fire is extinguished or neutralized (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148).

ADVANCED EXPLOSIVES

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg[1]	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc
Detonator, Antimatter	Demolition	–	10D10/10 meters	1	–	Thrown	–	12	No	–	96–00	Expensive	1.5
Detonator, Fusion	Demolition	–	10D8/10 meters	1	–	Thrown	–	16	No	–	98–00	Expensive	2.0
Detonator, Electromagnetic Pulse	Demolition	–	6D10/5 meters[2]	1	–	Thrown	–	12	No	–	97–00	Expensive	1.0
Detonator, Plasma	Demolition	–	6D10/5 meters[3]	1	–	Thrown	–	10	No	–	99–00	Expensive	1.4
Detonator, Sonic	Demolition	–	4D6/2 meters[4]	1	Knockback	Thrown	–	8	No	–	97–00	Expensive	2.0
Grenade, Disintegrator	Grenade	Throw	4D10/2 meters	1	–	Thrown	1H	12	No	5/5	96–00	Expensive	0.8
Grenade, Electromagnetic Pulse	Grenade	Throw	5D8/1 meter	1	–	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	98–00	Average	0.5
Grenade, Fusion	Grenade	Throw	6D6/1 meter	1	–	Thrown	1H	10	No	5/5	97–00	Average	0.8
Grenade, Plasma	Grenade	Throw	3D10/2 meters[3]	1	–	Thrown	1H	10	No	5/5	98–00	Average	0.7
Grenade, Shock	Grenade	Throw	4D6/1 meter	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	98–00	Average	0.5
Grenade, Stun	Grenade	Throw	3D8/2 meters[5]	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	98–00	Average	0.5

Notes:

1. Damage is expressed in dice per meters; damage done each meter past the initial radius decreases by 1D per meter.
2. Damage is rolled and pitted vs. an electronic/electrical-based target's CON or current hit points in the resistance roll. If the target loses, they suffer the rolled amount in damage. If the resistance roll is successful, target takes the detonator's minimum damage (based on range) to current hit points.
3. A struck target must make a *Difficult* Luck roll. If the roll fails, they are on fire and take 1D6 points of damage immediately and every subsequent round until the fire is extinguished or neutralized (see **Fire and Heat**, page 148).
4. Against a nonliving target, damage is pitted vs. the target's base CON, armor value, or hit points (gamemaster choice). If the target fails the roll, it shatters or is rendered non-functional.
5. Roll damage and pit it vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If the target succeeds, they take minimum damage (2) instead of the rolled damage. If the target loses, they are stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (see **Stunning**, page 154)

Shrapnel

Many artillery weapons can shoot projectiles that fragment, or large payloads of smaller projectiles. Both of these serve the same purpose—scattering sharp objects (shrapnel) across a radius around the point of impact. Some weapons only fire solid projectiles, others fire only shrapnel, and some can fire either type of payload.

The shrapnel damages people, but not buildings (to a notable degree). The damage from shrapnel is only 1/6 the damage done (divide the number of dice if possible, if not, roll dice and divide by 6, rounding up) by a comparable solid projectile, but it is done to everything within a radius equal in meters to the number of dice called for by the solid projectile damage roll.

For example, *a trebuchet fires a projectile doing 12D6 damage when it hits. If it fires shrapnel, it will do 2D6 to everyone within a 12-meter radius of the point of impact.*

ARTILLERY WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Here is a sampling of artillery weapons, organized alphabetically.

Arbalest, Siege: A heavier version of the arbalest, reloaded with the aid of a cranequin.

Ballista: A large mounted siege weapon that throws crossbow-style bolts, usually at people on the battlefield rather than structures or other vehicles.

Cannon: A cannon fires solid projectiles such as shells, cannonballs, or smaller shot using an explosive charge contained within the base of the barrel. The older the cannon, the less sophisticated the projectile. Some pirates loaded cannons with chains to foul sails.

Cannon, Energy: A heavy-framed energy projection weapon, firing single blasts or using a rotating series of barrels for multiple fire. Usually mounted on starships or on bases, though some are portable.

Catapult: A siege weapon that hurls stones and other objects in a parabolic arc onto the targeted area. Because of the flight path of catapulted missiles, they are ideal for reaching over walls of open fortifications or shooting at slow-moving ground or sea vehicles.

Gun, Field: A smaller and more mobile cannon.

Gun, Gatling: The first rapidly repeating firearm. Too large to be carried, Gatling guns are mounted on wagons or two-wheeled caisson-like carts. Most modern machine guns descend from this initial design.

Gun, Rail: An immense gun utilizing a series of magnetic fields to propel a projectile along a rail, accelerating the projectile to incredible velocity.

Gun, Tank: The main weapon of a tank, firing high-velocity large caliber rounds from a variety of ammunition types. Some of the more common projectiles fired from tank guns are high explosive, armor piercing, or guided missiles.

Howitzer: A type of field artillery similar to the cannon, though with a shorter and narrower barrel. Howitzers fire projectiles at a higher angle and trajectory, delivering plunging fire (fire falling from above) at an enemy.

Mortar: A small rocket launcher based on the ground, firing a self-propelled bomb in a high arc at the target. These are often little more than a solid base and a tube with a simple firing mechanism.

Springal: Similar to the ballista in function, this siege weapon hurls immense javelins at a targeted area, but can also be used to throw stones or bolts. Bolts are launched in a direct trajectory and stones are thrown indirectly.

Torpedo: A self-propelled missile used underwater or in space, set to explode upon contact with the target. Older torpedoes were sometimes set off at a calculated distance to prevent them from becoming navigational hazards. More sophisticated models have guidance systems and the ability to lock on targets.

Trebuchet: This seesaw-like siege engine uses an immense counterweight to throw large stones or other payloads at the targeted area. Usually assembled on a battlefield, it only targets a single area, and the only means of changing the aim is to shorten the distance or move the entire trebuchet.

Turret, Energy: Used in space or on ground, an energy turret is a large energy-projecting weapon that draws an immense amount of power. Commonly used on space stations, medium-to-large spaceships, or in large ground battles. Otherwise similar to a machinegun turret (below).

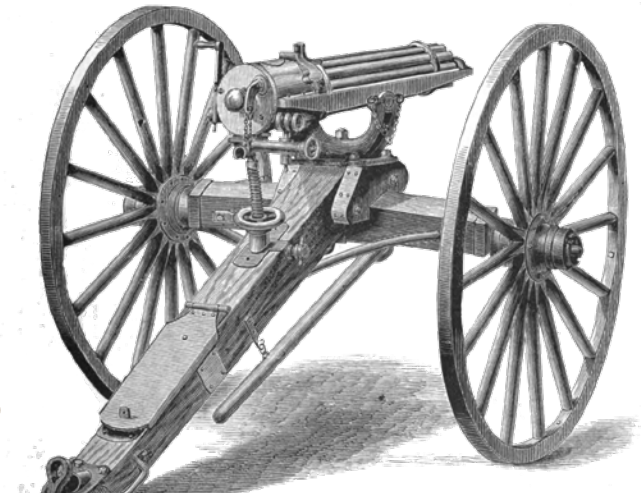
Turret, Flame: A turret-mounted flamethrower, usually with additional armor protecting the user, offering greater range than a hand-held flame projector.

Turret, Laser: A turret-mounted laser cannon, often mounted on a space station or defensive satellite. Similar to an energy turret (above) but using lased light rather than raw energy bursts.

Turret, Machinegun: A large machine gun set on a rotating base, capable of a large arc of fire, usually guided either from afar or from an internal or external gunner. Turrets are usually mounted on medium or large airplanes, ships, tanks or other motor vehicles, or even on walls or other defensive structures.

Turret, Shock: A turret capable of projecting lightning or electric arcs across a distance, often utilizing some form of alternating current. A shock turret has a +20% to hit against a metallic target, or a target covered in metal armor.

Turret, Spear-thrower: A turret-mounted automatic spear-gun, usually firing meter-long metal bolts rather than actual spears. Some early models are used in the whaling industry, though they are also utilized in post-apocalyptic settings.



ROBOTS & ARTIFICIAL LIFE

One unique type of equipment is the **robot**, a construction treated like a character, with a similar range of characteristics and skills. Robots range in shape and design from non-humanoid golems, clumsy and oversized automatons, sleek and attractive humanoids, or even indistinguishable from humanity. For convenience, all types of robots (androids, golems, synthetic humanoids, A.I., etc.) are referred to as robots in these rules.

All the attributes for a robot are identical to a normal character's, with the same characteristics, skills, and even powers. *Chapter Eleven: Creatures* has a sample robot (page 239).

Robots as Player Characters

With your gamemaster's permission, your character can even be a robot, either built using normal character creation or using one of the samples as a template. If so, your character should be built along the lines of a normal character, though POW becomes a simple battery storage capability, rather than actual soul-force. The most appropriate power set for a robot is the superpowers system. Your character must either be repaired through an appropriate Repair skill (or Technical Skill, depending on how advanced your character is), and these repairs may require a Status roll to gain access to the required components.

Cybernetics

If you wish for your character to have some cybernetic aspects to their body, such as artificial limbs or organs, work with your gamemaster to determine what effects the artificial body part should have. In most cases, if the body part does not offer any special bonuses or unusual attributes, assume that it is to be treated just like a living body part, though instead of the First Aid skill, use an appropriate Repair or Technical Skill to restore the limb to functionality if it is damaged through the effects of a major wound or an injury from use of hit locations.

If you want the artificial body part to have some special powers or attributes beyond those of a normal limb, construct the limb as if it were a gadget (see **Equipment with Superpowers**, page 162), only attached intrinsically to your character's body. Alternately, the artificial limb/organ could be removable or even modular. Either way, the gadget system is the best means of simulating cybernetic or otherwise artificial body parts.

METRIC CONVERSIONS

Basic Roleplaying uses the metric system as its default. While most of the world uses the metric system, Imperial measurements are often used in historical settings, and you and your gamemaster may wish to use such measures for ease and/or flavor. The metric conversions below are approximate and rounded where convenient.

METRIC/IMPERIAL EQUIVALENCIES

1 centimeter = 1/3 inch	0° C = 32° F
1/3 meter = 1 foot	10° C = 50° F
1 meter = 1 yard	20° C = 68° F
1 kilometer = 3/5 mile	30° C = 86° F
100 grams = 3 ounces	40° C = 104° F
1 kilogram = 2.2 pounds	100° C = 212° F
1 metric ton = 2,200 pounds	200° C = 392° F
1 liter = 1 quart	500° C = 922° F
4 liters = 1 gallon	1,000° C = 1,832° F

VEHICLES

Just as with weapons and armor types, the following section includes a variety of vehicles listed in **Movement Rates** (page 117), as well as others suitable for adventuring. These abstract examples can help you and your gamemaster create additional types of vehicles, expanding or altering statistics as desired.

The following terms are used to define each vehicle:

- **Type:** The generic type of vehicle.
- **Skill:** The skill to use when piloting it.
- **Rated Speed:** The maximum speed of the vehicle, an abstract value used in the chase system (page 142).
- **Handling:** The modifier applied to your character's skill, reflecting the vehicle's maneuverability or relative ease of use.
- **ACC:** Acceleration, the number of speed increments the vehicle can accelerate or decelerate from its current rated speed each combat round. This is provided as a value of ±, and is used in the vehicle chase system.
- **MOV:** The maximum speed of the vehicle in a combat round, expressed in its MOV rating. MOV has a sliding value of 1–5 meters; this assumes a median value of 3.
- **Armor:** The vehicle's general armor value and protection it provides to crew or passengers. Usually, attacks on passengers are through a window or open section of the cabin. If these two numbers are different, they are expressed as two values separated by a slash. Your gamemaster should determine whether a character has protection from the vehicle. Attacking someone within a vehicle is *Difficult*.
- **SIZ:** The vehicle's apparent SIZ value.
- **HP:** The vehicle's hit points. Vehicles do not suffer the secondary effects of special successes, other than increased damage, and critical successes ignore the vehicle's armor and do increased damage.
- **Crew:** The number of characters required to pilot and maintain the vehicle at full efficiency while enroute. For larger vessels, this is usually 1/3 the normal complement, as the crews work in 8-hour shifts. Vehicle-related skill rolls may be *Difficult* if the vehicle is under-crewed.
- **Passengers:** The number of passengers the vehicle normally carries, combined with the number of off-duty crewmembers (if appropriate).
- **Cargo:** The space the vehicle has for cargo, expressed in SIZ. For game purposes, 1 ENC equals 1 SIZ point.
- **Value:** A general value for the vehicle, as described in **Money** (page 157) and **Purchasing Equipment** (page 158).
- **Notes:** Additional notes about the vehicle and its capabilities.

VEHICLE DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes a variety of vehicles, organized alphabetically.

Air Vehicle, Bomber: A huge, propelleror turbine-driven aircraft utilized for long-range bombing missions, usually equipped with several machinegun turrets.

Air Vehicle, Dirigible: A balloon with a limited structural framework and a small cabin hanging below, usually inflated with a lighter-than air gas. Driven by rotors.

Air Vehicle, Helicopter: A smallish rotary blade-powered air vehicle. Cabins range from simple plexiglass bubbles to armored with troop compartments and gun mounts.

Air Vehicle, Jet: A long commercial jet airliner, with at least two wingmounted jet turbines.

HORSE & HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES

Type	Skill	Rated	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Horse	Ride	2	–	±2	10	1/–	26	20	1	1	8	Average	See page 223.
Chariot	Drive	2	–5%	±1	10	6/–	35	20	1	1	18	Average	Two-horse variety.
Four-Horse Carriage	Drive	2	–5%	±1	10	8/–	55	30	2	4	18	Average	–
Four-Horse Wagon	Drive	2	–10%	±1	10	8/–	60	35	1	4+	36	Average	–

AUTOS, TRUCKS, TRAINS & TANKS

Type	Skill	Rated	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Vintage	Drive	6	–5%	±1	67	10/1	60	35	1	3	12	Average	–
Modern Sedan	Drive	12	–	±7	134	14/2	50	40	1	3–4	24	Average	–
Modern Sportscar	Drive	15	+5%	±8	200	10/2	45	45	1	1	8	Expensive	–
Pickup Truck	Drive	12	–	±7	134	16/2	55	65	1	2+	36	Average	–
18-wheeler	Drive	10	–10%	±4	100	16/2	90	90	1	3+	72	Expensive	–
Motorcycle	Drive	13	+5%	±8	166	10/–	18	25	1	1	6	Average	–
Land Skimmer	Drive	20	+5%	±10	400	12/–	30	30	1	3	12	Expensive	–
Tank, Vintage	Drive	4	–10%	±1	42	18	80	85	4	–	8	Restricted	–
Tank, Modern	Drive	8	–	±4	83	24	90	140	4	–	12	Restricted	–
Train, Steam Engine	Drive	6	–	±2	67	14/–	100	120	4	200+	96	Expensive	SIZ is per car. Drive rolls are *Easy*.
Train, Bullet	Drive	19	+5%	±4	366	14/1	110	125	4	400+	72	Priceless	SIZ is per car. Drive rolls are *Easy*.
Train, Mag-Lev	Drive	22	+10%	±4	534	12/2	120	100	2	400+	72	Priceless	SIZ is per car. Drive rolls are *Easy*.

BOAT & SHIPS

Type	Skill	Rated	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Small Rowed	Pilot	2	–5%	±1	10	4/–	18	20	1+	1	12	Average	–
Ancient Rowed	Pilot	2	–	±1	10	10/–	84	42	50+	10+	64	Expensive	
Vintage Sailing	Pilot	3	–5%	±1	15	10/–	96	96	25+	8+	80	Expensive	–
Hovercraft	Pilot	4	–5%	±2	42	10/–	80	40	2	20+	48	Expensive	–
Motorboat	Pilot	8	–	±2	83	6/–	40	40	1	5+	24	Average	–
Modern Cruiseship	Pilot	6	–10%	±2	67	10/–	200	320	200+	2,000+	120	Priceless	–
Modern Battleship	Pilot	10	–10%	±2	100	36/–	240	480	600+	1,200+	200	Restricted	–
Aircraft Carrier	Pilot	8	–25%	±2	83	24/–	640	600	1,000+	2,200+	320	Restricted	–
Submarine	Pilot	8	–	±4	83	16/–	140	240	100+	24+	48	Restricted	–

AIR VEHICLES

Type	Skill	Rated	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Dirigible	Pilot	12	–	±2	134	–/12	100	100	40+	72+	36	Priceless	Balloon is unarmored; cabin is.
Propeller Plane	Pilot	15	–	±1	200	4/1	55	55	1–2	2+	12	Expensive	–
Bomber	Pilot	17	–10%	±1	334	6/2	105	105	6+	4+	48	Restricted	–
Jet	Pilot	30	–	±2	1084	8/3	110	110	1–2	48+	48	Priceless	–
Jet Fighter	Pilot	33	+10%	±10	1334	6/2	80	80	1	–	2	Restricted	–
Helicopter	Pilot	15	–	±10	200	4/2	48	48	1	3+	12	Priceless	–
Skyskimmer	Pilot	23	+5%	±10	584	8/4	72	72	1	5+	18	Expensive	–

SPACE VEHICLES

Type	Skill	Rated	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Rocket	Pilot	70	–10%	±1	33K	10/8	100	85	4+	–	8	Priceless	–
Transport	Pilot	92	–	±10	50K	24/18	120	180	2+	8+	48	Priceless	Speed is sublight; has FTL drive.
Starfighter	Pilot	100	+10%	±20	65K	18/12	50	150	1+	1	6	Restricted	Speed is sublight; has FTL drive.
Cargo	Pilot	90	–	±10	42K	25	150	750	2+	4+	100	Expensive	Speed is sublight; has FTL drive.

Air Vehicle, Jet Fighter: A relatively small, highly maneuverable jet designed for aerial combat and bombing strikes.

Air Vehicle, Propeller Plane: A small propeller-driven passenger plane.

Air Vehicle, Skyskimmer: A hightech ultralight air vehicle capable of vertical takeoff and landing, utilizing advanced thruster technology.

Automobile, Modern Sedan: An average four-door modern automobile.

Automobile, Modern Sportscar: An extremely fast, two-door, two-seat, high-performance automobile.

Automobile, Vintage: An old boxy automobile, equivalent to the Model–T.

Boat, Motor: A smallish motorboat with a single propeller and a small forward cabin.

Boat, Small Rowed: A small two-bench rowboat.

Chariot: A small two-horse chariot, with room for one driver, one warrior, and a small rack for weapons or personal effects.

Four-Horse Carriage: An open or cloth-top four-horse carriage.

Four-Horse Wagon: A wooden stagecoach with a cramped passenger cabin and room for storage on back and on top.

Horse: See page 223 of *Chapter Eleven: Creatures*.

Hovercraft: A commercial hovercraft ferry suitable for around 20 passengers on relatively still water.

Land Skimmer: A high-tech turbine-driven land vehicle that skims on a bed of compressed air, like a hovercraft.

Motorcycle: A two-wheeled motor vehicle with room for a driver and one passenger. Sidecar optional.

Ship, Aircraft Carrier: An immense ship (300+ meters long) with a flat deck capable of launching fighter craft and having them land on it.

Ship, Ancient Rowed: A longship with single rows of oars port and starboard, usually rowed by galley slaves or by fighting men.

Ship, Modern Battle: A massive battleship (165+ meters long), heavily armored with a wide variety of longrange artillery and missile systems.

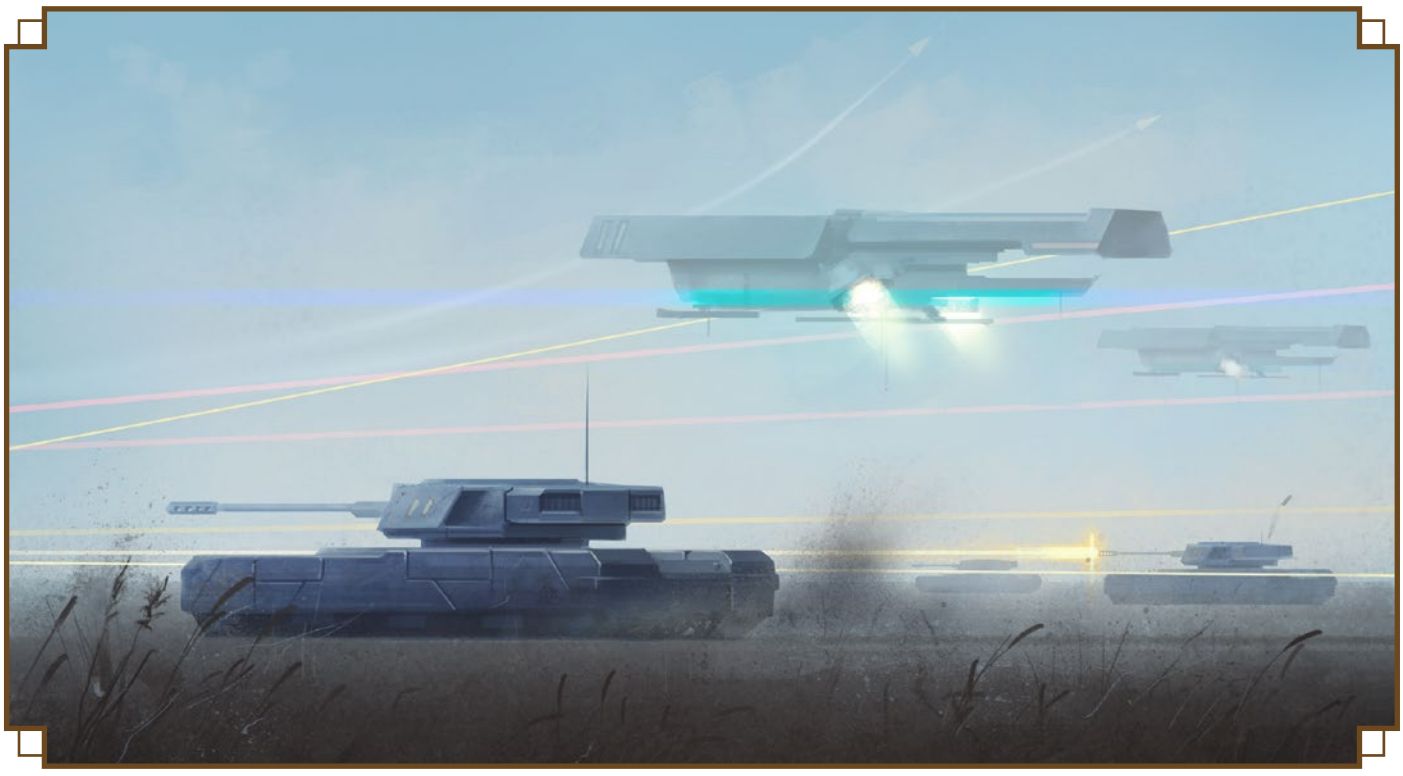
Ship, Modern Cruise: A massive passenger liner (300+ meters long) serving almost as a mobile hotel, with shops, entertainment facilities, and countless amenities.

Ship, Vintage Sailing: A galleon, roughly 35 meters in length, with two or more masts.

Space Vehicle, Cargo: The mainstay of space commerce, this is a cargo vessel with a small crew. Lightly armored and armed. May have energy shielding.

Space Vehicle, Rocket: A multi-stage fuelled rocket with a small passenger cabin/landing module.

Space Vehicle, Starfighter: A relatively small, highly maneuverable spaceship equivalent to a jet fighter. Heavily armed, though lightly armored. May have energy shielding.



Space Vehicle, Transport: A moderate-sized spaceship used primarily for passenger or cargo transport, lightly armored and armed. May have energy shielding.

Submarine: A submersible vessel used by the military for stealth, infiltration of enemy waters, and naval combat.

Tank, Modern: A heavily armored tracked combat vehicle equipped with a large-caliber central gun as well as other armaments.

Tank, Vintage: A heavily-armored tracked combat vehicle, usually equipped with a large-caliber central gun.

Train, Bullet: A high-speed, streamlined passenger train built on a specialized track, usually driven by electricity.

Train, Mag–lev: A train levitating on a magnetic track.

Train, Steam Engine: A steamdriven engine dating from the later 1800s. SIZ value is per car.

Truck, Pickup: A four-wheel drive pickup truck.

Truck, Semi (18-wheeler): A large commercial truck with a small cabin and a long cargo compartment.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

This section covers a variety of other equipment your character may use that does not fall into the previous categories. This list is incomplete, but should provide enough guidance for you or your gamemaster to determine the relevant attributes of most other types of equipment.

SAMPLE POISONS

Poison	Speed of Effect	POT	Symptoms
Arsenic	½ to 24 hours	16	Burning pain, vomiting, violent diarrhea.
Belladonna	2 hours to 2 days	16	Rapid heartbeat, impaired vision, convulsions.
Black Widow venom	2–8 days	7	Chills, sweating, nausea.
Cobra venom	15–60 minutes	16	Convulsions, respiratory failure.
Curare	1 combat round	25	Muscular paralysis, respiratory failure.
Cyanide	1–15 minutes	20	Dizziness, convulsions, fainting.
Rattlesnake venom	15–60 minutes	10	Vomiting, violent spasms, yellowish vision.
Scorpion venom	24–48 hours	9	Intense pain, weakness, hemorrhaging.
Sleeping pills	10–30 minutes	6	Normal sleep; each additional dose increases chance of respiratory failure by +5%.
Strychnine	10–20 minutes	20	Violent muscle contractions, asphyxiation.

Poisons

The rules for handling poison are discussed in **Poisons** (page 151), and the **Sample Poisons** table (page 186) provides a variety of sample poisons.

Books and Printed Materials

This category covers a large variety of reading materials, ranging from newspapers, comics, scrolls, paperbacks, grimoires, or books. For convenience, they are referred to as books. Books can be for entertainment or for informational purposes. Only the latter type is addressed here. Books can have almost any value, from cheap to priceless, depending on the subject matter, date of publication, author, rarity, or other circumstances.

When a book is sought out or encountered, your gamemaster should determine the following:

- **Language:** If the book is written in a language other than your character's native tongue, they must have the book translated or make Language rolls as appropriate (or Literacy, if that skill is used).
- **Skill:** Can your character learn to improve a skill with this book? Generally, a book contains a single skill, though rare and prized volumes may include more than one subject.
- **Reward:** What bonus to a skill can be gained by reading the book? This is generally an amount from 1% for something brief or mostly filled with nonessential materials, up to 20% for a comprehensive volume that serves as the end-all authority on the subject. Generally, an amount between +1% and +10% is appropriate. If more than one skill can be learned from the book, your gamemaster should determine two ratings, even if they are identical.
- **Time to Read:** How long does the book take to read? This represents a thorough examination of the text of the book and an attempt to understand it in context. This may involve additional supplementary reading, research, or analysis to increase comprehension and to master the material.
- **Powers:** Some rare books contain magic or sorcery spells, invocations to demons or other supernatural beings, or some other means of learning a power. Your gamemaster should determine if the book has any of these, what they are, and how much can be learned (such as a level or percentage cap, if appropriate). In some works, the actual name of the power may be obscure or deliberately vague, to shield the contents from the neophyte. Refer to the guidelines in the magic and sorcery powers for learning spells. The book may have no spells, but include the true name of a demon, elemental, or even a god.

Types of Books

Following is a variety of book types, and how they can be used in play:

- **Instructional Books:** A book meant to teach a particular subject or skill, organized and written with that goal. It is assumed that when your character is training by themselves, instructional books are being used as references. Instructional books, when read successfully, provide an experience check (see **Researching Skill Increases**, page 120), though your gamemaster may award a default skill increase.
- **Lore Books:** A lore book contained specialized knowledge of the non-scientific sort, whether occult or folklore or some other 'soft' field. These vary tremendously in structure, but often give an impression of a specific field of knowledge from the author's perspective, whether a scholarly overview or the private diary of a lunatic. Reading a lore book usually allows the reader to increase the skill(s) the book is centered around. These are similar to instructional books, though successful reading of a lore book grants an automatic increase of a skill rating. Your gamemaster may determine that books containing diabolical or horrific lore cause automatic sanity point loss without a sanity roll to prevent the loss (see page 219). For books that increase a Knowledge skill and cost sanity points, your gamemaster should impose a limit on

maximum SAN based on the total of 99 minus the skill rating in that skill, as described in the Blasphemous Knowledge skill description (page 44) and **Maximum Sanity** (page 218).

- **Reference Books:** A reference book can be a dictionary, encyclopedia, or another reference in paper, electronic, or some other format. The primary difference between a reference book and another type of book is that there is no attempt to contextualize the information—instead, it is presented in a non-heirarchical format, with all information at the same level. It is challenging to learn from a reference work without a frame of reference or context for its subject, but reading a reference work is an excellent means of augmenting another Knowledge skill. If a reference book is being used to research a skill for skill improvement, a successful roll is required to read the book, then the very skill being studied. The time required to research a skill though a reference book is double that of an instructional book. Successful skill rolls made to research or augment a skill increase do not earn an additional experience check.
- **Spellbooks:** Also referred to as grimoires, these are books, scrolls, tablets, hides, scribed stones, knotted ropes, or other means used to convey the information required for a magician or sorceror to learn magic spells or store spells they already know, or containing secret information about magical beings or demons. These spellbooks are described in the magic and sorcery powers in *Chapter Four: Powers.*

Using a Book

To use a book, your character must be able to read it or understand it if it is not written down. This may require the optional Literacy skill, if used, or a successful Language roll for the language(s) the book is written in. Alternatively, a translation can often be obtained, though this is costly if it must be done on commission. Your gamemaster should determine how much this would cost, using the guidelines for teachers given in **Skill Training** (page 119). When the study of the book is complete, your character earns the relevant skill points, if any.

Books as Objects

The physical properties of books are usually less impressive than the contents. Most books are of SIZ 0, 1, or 2, and a book's hit points equal its SIZ. Depending on what its made of, a book usually has an armor value of 0 (paperback) up to 4 points of armor (heavy leather spine and covers). A particularly old book can even be bound in iron (6+ armor value). Unless the book has some additional measure of protection or is sturdily constructed, it can be reduced to scraps or destroyed by fire in as many combat rounds as it has hit points. If the book is a scroll, electronic reading device, holographic learning display, or computer, your gamemaster should determine its SIZ and hit points based on examples of items in this chapter.

Medical Equipment

Physical harm is a constant threat to your character, and many pieces of equipment exist to assist in treating injuries and illness. The following medical equipment is listed in order of relative complexity, from the more primitive to futuristic. Each such collection of equipment is defined as a **kit**, an assortment of gear and materials used for a specific purpose. Your gamemaster can determine if a particular kit is of *inferior*, *average*, or *superior* quality, with relevant modifiers to the skill use.

- **Herbalist or Midwife's Kit:** Used by shamans, physikers, midwives, and leeches, this is an assortment of cloth for bandages, poultices, thread and a sharp needle (bone or metal), and some other oddments including herbal remedies of various levels of efficacy. Such a kit is cheap in most settings, and is often gathered by the owner using the Knowledge (Herbalism) skill.
- **First Aid Kit:** A standard first aid kit includes setting-appropriate equivalents of clean (or sterile) bandages, rubber gloves, minor ointments, pills for minor illnesses or infections, eyewash, poison or venom treatment, and small tools such as tweezers, scissors, or even a small scalpel. Larger kits have a larger variety of the above, more various medicines, and may come with a small first aid manual. A first aid kit is used with the First Aid skill, and is usually cheap.
- **Doctor's Bag:** A traditional doctor's bag includes a setting-appropriate assortment of pills and antibiotics, a stethoscope, light, a prescription pad, and various medical implements and tools for on-site diagnosis and emergency medical treatment. A doctor's bag is used with the First Aid skill, but can be used for Medicine skill rolls depending on the procedure. A doctor's bag is expensive.
- **Surgery Kit:** A set of surgical tools packaged and sterile, ready for use. This contains several rubber gloves, dressings, antiseptics, sutures, etc., and is essential for any involved surgery or use of the Medicine skill involving surgery. Any hospital should have multiples of everything that goes into a surgery kit. A surgery kit is expensive.
- **Trauma Kit:** A specialized collection of medical supplies to deal with immediate trauma. Often intended for battlefield use, a trauma kit has supplies such as adrenalin shots, antitoxins, other remedies to ward against chemical agents, emergency medical supplies to immediately deal with large and open wounds, a portable defibrillator, and a limited set of surgical tools. A trauma kit is expensive.
- **Medi-kit:** A highly advanced set of equipment, this includes dermal regenerators, hypo-sprays, instant blood clotting agents, a simple medical scanner, universal anti-toxins and antidotes, stimulation shots, synthetic skin spray, spray-on casts and other forms of instant wound sealing. Usually a medi-kit has a small medical computer or reader capable of describing thousands of treatments and diagnosing simple injuries. Use of a medi-kit makes all First Aid attempts *Easy*, and doubles the number of hit points a successful First Aid roll heals. If it is available in your setting, a medi-kit is expensive.
- **Auto-doc:** A fully automated medical treatment system complete with complex diagnostic abilities capable of recognizing and implementing treatment for almost any known medical condition. Auto-docs may include robotic components capable of maneuvering patients, or can be the size of a room, extruding limbs and other manipulators to interact with the patient on a central bed. An auto-doc has 100% skill in Medicine and First Aid, and a successful roll restores double the number of hit points to the patient, with recovery times cut in half. An auto-doc is expensive or priceless, while treatment in one ranges from free to priceless.

Other Equipment

Following are other useful types of gear that your character might wish to utilize. **Skills and Equipment** (page 161) contains more detail on equipment required for or assisting in skill use.

- **Chemistry Set:** A wide selection of small portions of chemicals and substances, with a microscope and means of mixing and storing compounds. Usually only an educational tool, it can be utilized with the Science (Chemistry) skill for basic tasks. Cheap and readily available to students or anyone else interested.
- **Computers:** Depending on the setting, a computer is either a simple (recalls information when queried and performs simple commands) or complex (possessing artificial intelligence or an approximation of sentience) tool that can be used along with other skills such as Appraise, Art, Gaming, Knowledge, Science, Teach, and especially Research. Any skill that benefits from a wide and searchable base of knowledge or near-instant communication with others in the field can benefit from using a computer. The programs contained or accessible and relative ease of use allow a bonus of up to +20% if the

computer is suitable for the skill being used; an average computer setup offers no bonus; and an inferior or inefficient computer setup can penalize a skill by up to −20%. If you and your gamemaster wish for the computer to have more capability than a period-appropriate computer, create it as a superpowered gadget with INT (page 162).

- **Criminology Kit:** Used by forensics labs and detectives, a criminology kit contains fingerprint detection methods, measuring devices, rubber gloves, collection bags and bottles for storage of evidence, magnifying glasses, appropriate chemicals and sprays, minor tools, black-light and normal flashlights, and other means of detecting traces of criminal activity. A criminology kit is expensive.
- **Disguise Kit:** A collection of skin dyes and colors, makeup, and other means to change one's appearance, a disguise kit is usually assembled by the user to be of maximum use for their physical features and/or gender. A disguise kit may include wigs, false teeth, false facial hair, hair dyes and other styling tools, scissors, a mirror, false contact lenses or glasses, and even pieces of wardrobe. More sophisticated kits can include prosthetics to alter facial features. A disguise kit can also be general-purpose, but such a kit is not usually as effective. One can be assembled out of commercially-available items for cheap to average cost, or a high-quality one can be expensive.
- **Kits, Various:** As described in **Skills and Equipment** (page 161), nearly any type of Craft skill can have a kit or tool set that aids in its use. The value and utility of these should be determined by your gamemaster based on the setting.
- **Lockpicks:** These can range from a few single picks to a more sophisticated set with stethoscope, drills, and a variety of tools and implements for opening the most complex and challenging locks. These can range from cheap to expensive.
- **Stabilizer:** A firearm accessory that adds to the stability of the weapon through recoil compensation, shock absorption, etc. These might add +5% or more to subsequent shots after the first in a round.
- **Suppressors and Silencers:** A silencer is a long tube filled with baffles, attached to the barrel of a firearm, which muffles the sound of shots fired. This slows the projectile's velocity, halving its base range. A silencer is usually made to order for a specific type of firearm, and usually wears out after D100+10 shots have been fired through it. A silencer cannot be attached to a shotgun or heavy machinegun, but can be used for a light or medium machinegun. In most settings they exist in, silencers are expensive and restricted.
- **Telescopic Scopes and Laser Sights:** These attach to a firearm and allow your character to effectively double the base range. Laser sights quadruple the base range. When combined with **Aimed Attacks** (page 140), either can be quite effective. These are of average value, though precision scopes may be more expensive.

Mecha

A mecha (sometimes shortened to 'mech') is essentially an overlarge suit of powered armor, piloted by one or more characters, usually humanoid or some bipedal structure in form, popular in science fiction settings. The example mecha depicted on page 188 was built using the superpowered gadget guidelines (page 162).

GENERAL QUALITIES OF OBJECTS

Other than weapons, armor, shields, siege weapons, vehicles, books, kits, etc. any other material object can be described as an **object**. This is a category covers telephones or telephone poles, houses or castles, ballpoint pens or the Eiffel Tower. Generally, the only reason to provide an attribute for an object is when it is being used against your character, your character is using it against another character, your character is trying to destroy it, or it is in the way (and potentially collateral damage).

MODEL D142 MOBILE EXOFRAME, A.K.A. 'SKYHAMMER'

Value: Priceless

The Skyhammer is a heavily-armored, humanoid-shaped mecha with an elongated torso that serves as the cockpit, housing the pilot. Its head is an array of sensory equipment, and its limbs are functional. Protruding from its 'navel' is a large laser cannon that the pilot sits above.

STR 100 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 50
Hit Points: 50 **Major Wound:** 25 **Power Points:** 110
Damage Modifier: +8D6 **MOV:** 15
Armor: 30 point alloyed plating (see below)
Weapons: Laser Cannon (uses pilot's Projection skill %), 75 meter range, 5D6 damage; Hammer Fists (uses pilot's Brawling skill %), 1D3+8D6 damage
Skills: Fine Manipulation 45%, Jump 65%, Listen 65%, Navigate 70%, Pilot (autopilot self) 41%, Repair (internal diagnostics and repair) 55%, Spot 65%, Track 30%, Fly 100%.
Powers: Adaptation 6 (cold, heat, high pressure, radiation, vacuum; cost = 15 points); Armor 30 (electric 30, kinetic 30, radiation 30; cost = 90 points); Energy Projection 5 (light; cost = 50 points); Extra Energy 11 (+110 power points; cost = 11 points); Flight 17 (cost = 17 points); Super Characteristics 200 (STR, CON, SIZ; cost = 200 points); Super Sense 5 (Hearing 5, Vision 5, Dark Vision 5, Infrared Vision 5, Sonar Detection 5; cost = 75 points); Super Skill (Fine Manipulation 2, Jump 2, Listen 2, Navigate 3, Pilot 2, Repair 2, Spot 2, Track 1, Fly 5; cost = 42 points). *Total Power Budget Cost* = 500 points.

Damage to Inanimate Objects

Inanimate objects such as doors, chairs, and walls are likely to interfere with a missed attack, or may need to be knocked down or blown apart. Your gamemaster should consult the SIZ values for sample items and use SIZ an object's hit points, assigning an armor value based on its equivalent (see **Armor Protection**, page 189). If the damage exceeds the object's armor value, then the hit points are reduced by the remaining damage and that many damage points reduce its armor value (representing how much less it is able to withstand damage once damaged). If an object is smaller than human-sized (such as a chair), it is totally destroyed if it is reduced to 0 hit points. It if is larger than human-sized (such as a wooden wall) and a section is reduced to 0 hit points; it has a human-sized hole in it.

SIZ of Common Objects

Nearby is a list of sample sizes of various objects. 'Full' represents the entire size of the object as used for lifting or determining its hit points, and 'Segment' represents a human-sized portion of the object, for purposes of breaking through or destroying a section for passage through. If the damage done to an object does not exceed the object segment's SIZ, a hole may have been broken through the size and shape of the attack, as appropriate. As noted above, an average object is assumed to have hit points equal to its SIZ.

Comparative Sizes

This table equates approximate weight with game SIZ. In *Basic Roleplaying*, SIZ pertains not only to weight but to volume and height as well. This table is not precise or restrictive: you should use judgment when assigning SIZ and weight based on the makeup of the item or creature. From SIZ 330 on, SIZ is roughly 1/10th the item or creature's weight in short tons.

***For example**, a kraken of SIZ 8,000 weighs 80,000 short tons.*

ARMOR VALUE OF SUBSTANCES

Armor value represents the amount of damage subtracted from a successful attack. The higher the armor value of an object, the less likely it is to be damaged. Using values for other equipment or below, your gamemaster should be able to extrapolate additional armor values or estimate them based on rough equivalencies. Following are the armor values of various substances:

Type of Substance	Armor Value
1 cm of glass	1
5 cm thick door	3
3 cm of hardwood	6
12 cm of concrete	9
3 cm of bulletproof glass	22
3 cm of steel plate	28
Large sandbag	20

Natural armor values such as these above are not lost and do not deteriorate through multiple attacks, unless through some environmental means or a specific attempt to reduce the armor value of an object.

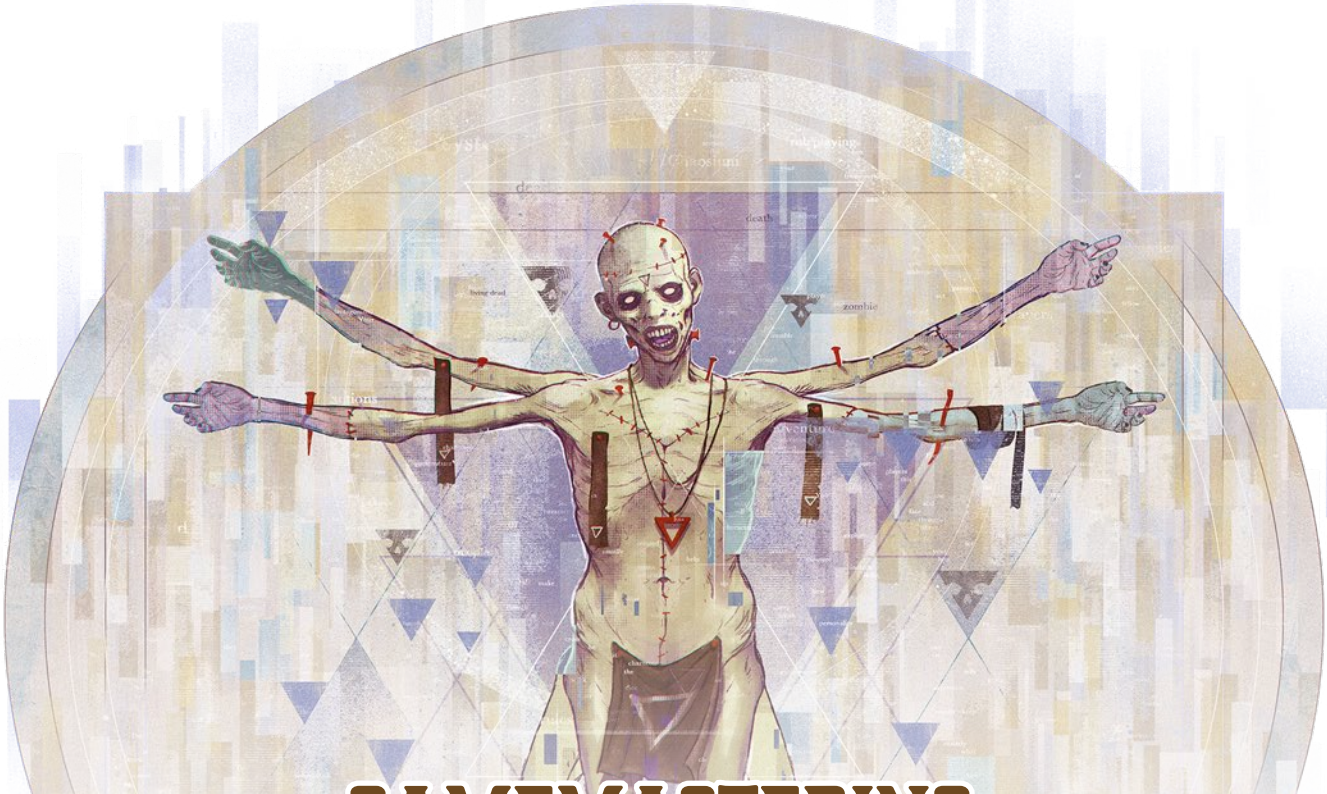
***For example,** your character bashes at a window made of bulletproof glass repeatedly with a sledgehammer, aiming at the same spot in an attempt to cause enough cracking to break through it. You your gamemaster decides to represent this by reducing the armor value by 1 with each successful hit, and rolling damage. When the damage roll overcomes the steadily reducing armor value, the window bursts.*

A simple guideline for destroying objects is that an average object has hit points roughly equivalent to its SIZ, and once armor is bypassed and these hit points are lost, the object is nonfunctional and destroyed, or at least reduced to a state where it is of no apparent use.

SIZ	Imperial Weight	Metric Weight
1	1–12 pounds	0.5–5.4 kilograms
4	38–51 pounds	17–23 kilograms
8	109–120 pounds	49–54 kilograms
12	156–168 pounds	71–76 kilograms
16	220–239 pounds	100–108 kilograms
20	310–338 pounds	141–153 kilograms
24	440–479 pounds	200–217 kilograms
32	880–959 pounds	399–435 kilograms
40	1760–1919 pounds	798–870 kilograms
48	3520–3829 pounds	1,597–1,737 kilograms
56	7040–7649 pounds	3,193–3,470 kilograms
64	7.1–7.7 tons	6.4–7 metric tons
72	14.1–15.4 tons	12.8–14 metric tons
80	28.2–30.7 tons	25.6–27.9 metric tons
88	56.5–61.5 tons	51.3–55.8 metric tons
96	96 tons	87.1 metric tons
104	104 tons	94.3 metric tons
112	120 tons	109 metric tons
120	144 tons	131 metric tons
128	176 tons	160 metric tons
136	216 tons	196 metric tons
140	240 tons	218 metric tons
144	264 tons	239 metric tons
152	320 tons	290 metric tons
160	384 tons	348 metric tons
168	456 tons	414 metric tons
176	536 tons	486 metric tons
184	624 tons	566 metric tons
192	720 tons	653 metric tons
200	824 tons	748 metric tons
208	936 tons	849 metric tons
216	1,056 tons	958 metric tons
224	1,184 tons	1,074 metric tons
232	1,220 tons	1,107 metric tons
240	1,364 tons	1,237 metric tons
256	1,516 tons	1,375 metric tons
264	1,676 tons	1,520 metric tons
272	1,844 tons	1,673 metric tons
280	2,020 tons	1,833 metric tons
288	2,204 tons	1,999 metric tons
294	2,396 tons	2,174 metric tons
304	2,596 tons	2,355 metric tons
312	2,804 tons	2,544 metric tons
320	3,020 tons	2,740 metric tons
330	3,300 tons	2,994 metric tons
340	3,400 tons	3,084 metric tons
350	3,500 tons	3,175 metric tons

OBJECT SIZ EXAMPLES

Object	Full SIZ	Segment SIZ
Glass window	3	3
Door	4–8	4–8
Chair	4–9	4–9
Table	4–12	4–12
Manhole cover	5	5
Fire hydrant	5	5
Potted plan	2–5	2–5
Glass door	8	8
Desk	10–20	10–20
Lamp post	30	10
Home interior wall	25–35	8
Home exterior wall	25–45	20
Brick Wall	30–50	20
Concrete wall	30–50	20
Concrete and steel wall	35–55	25
Small air vehicle	40	10
Automobile	50	12
Vault door	60	20
Medium land vehicle	60	12
Steel beam	65	30
Air vehicle, jet fighter	80	18
Medium tank	80	30
Locomotive	100	20
Air vehicle, jet cargo	100	15
Air vehicle, bomber	105	15
Air vehicle, airliner	110	15



GAMEMASTERING

As the gamemaster, you have the most difficult role of anyone in the group, helping the players create their characters and creating (or adapting) the setting. You must create and roleplay the nonplayer characters encountered, describe the world as it is explored, and be a fair and ultimate referee, especially during conflicts. While players can take turns and entertain one another, the gamemaster is always on. You must respond to the players' actions and engage them all equally, ideally keeping them engrossed and sharing the spotlight.

It can be difficult to balance narration, roleplaying, bookkeeping, and rules refereeing. Many players never try to gamemaster, while others do it exclusively. It can be an immensely rewarding experience, which is usually why roleplaying gamers do it. Following is an overview of the gamemaster's potential duties. Not all are necessary: you get to determine what's best for you and your players.

WHO ARE YOU?

In this chapter, 'you' refers to the gamemaster. There's nothing here that will spoil a player's enjoyment, but the material in this chapter is primarily useful only to the gamemaster.

YOUR PLAYERS

If you are just getting started as a gamemaster, you may need to recruit some players. There are many ways to go about this, whether game nights at local stores and game clubs, or posting notices on social media or online tabletop gaming sites. Game conventions are also a great way to meet local gamers. Additionally, you can create new gamers by recruiting people who have never gamed before (but are curious). These can be friends, family, coworkers, etc. if they are willing. *Basic Roleplaying* is an excellent beginner's game, with the easy-to-understand percentile system. You may be surprised at how many people were exposed to role-playing games at an earlier age but have never played themselves. Hopefully, they'll come back for more!

Group Size

A roleplaying group can be anywhere from a single player and a gamemaster to many more. Each group has its own dynamics and is unique—some have someone who always runs the game, and others change gamemasters, giving everyone a chance to play. The dynamics of group size differs, and following are guidelines for groups of different sizes:

- **Average Groups:** This is usually three to seven players plus a gamemaster. Smaller groups tend to be more closely knit and are often easier to organize and maintain. Generally, the larger the group, the more difficult it is to get everyone in one place at one time. Make allowances for an occasionally shifting group of players: someone might miss one session or bring a friend the next. Games set in densely populated environments are often best for this, as missing characters can simply do something else while the other player characters play. Games where the group is isolated or tightly knit means that missing players need to have their characters either explained away, run by other players, or handled as nonplayer characters.

- **One-on-one Groups:** Games with one player and gamemaster are often very character focused and sessions can be intense, with a lot accomplished. Planning is easier and often combat plays a lesser, easier-to-resolve role. Virtually any setting works for one-on-one gaming, though superhero, horror, or sword & sorcery settings are ideal. You should have enemies avoid killing the character, instead taking them prisoner, or leaving them to their fate once defeated. The player may participate in describing the environment, and may have hirelings, sidekicks, etc. to make things less lonely.
- **Large Groups:** If your group is larger than eight players, you may need an assistant gamemaster. To handle such a group size, ask one or more players to help with dice rolling and recordkeeping during combats, perhaps even letting an uninvolved player run some opposing nonplayer characters. It's also a good idea to keep some sort of system for checking in with everyone and keeping them engaged: keep characters grouped with characters they work well with and go around the table (or screen) periodically to make sure everyone is included.

THE GAME

The biggest decision is whether the game is a **one-shot** (a single adventure, either one session or more) or a **campaign** (a series of adventures with characters who continue throughout). Each has benefits and weaknesses.

One-shots are fun and focused. Characters are created for the one-shot, generally not used again, so there is little need to worry about experience or a longer-term goal. Characters for a one-shot can be extremely focused and specific to the adventure, deeply involved in the story. You may even create pre-generated player characters for a one-shot (see **Pregenerated Characters**, page 240). Preparation for a one-shot is also easier, as it does not need to continue beyond a single story. In one-shots, the overall focus is usually a story with a simple plot hook, dramatic enough to provide some points of action and/or conflict, and an achievable goal or goals.

Campaigns are better for in-depth roleplaying and players who want to see their characters grow and improve over time. They may consist of a grand overarching plot with smaller adventures either tied to or independent of that plot, or they can be united only by the characters' presence in the adventures. They are more challenging to create, as they require a bit of continuity and between-adventure work, but many find the campaign to be the truest and most satisfying part of roleplaying. *Basic Roleplaying's* experience and character improvement systems reward campaign play.

THE SETTING

The **setting** is the time and place the game happens in, whether a one-shot or a campaign. The setting can be any place or any time you can imagine. See *Chapter Ten: Settings* for more information about settings. It covers historical and popular settings and if one of these doesn't appeal, it might serve as inspiration for you to adapt an existing setting from some other form (another game, a movie, television show, book, comic, etc.) for your use.

OPTIONAL RULE CHECKLIST

Following are all the optional rules and their effect in play.

Characters and Character Creation

- **Choosing Characteristic Values (page 10):** Players assign characteristics where they want, resulting in characters more suited to their preferences.
- **Higher Starting Characteristics (page 10):** More robust and generally more competent characters.
- **The Education (EDU) Characteristic (pages 10, 19):** Used in settings with generalized education systems.
- **Point-based Character Creation (page 10):** Characters are designed by the players, allowing for precise customization.
- **Step Six: Personality (page 11):** Results in competent and well-rounded characters.
- **Cultural Modifiers (pages 10, 16, 18, 32):** Best in settings with dramatically different cultures and societies.
- **Increased Personal Skill Points (page 16):** Characters are professionals with prior experience.
- **Education/Knowledge Roll (page 19):** Useful for games in the modern settings.
- **Total Hit Points (page 20):** Characters can survive much more damage. Gameplay becomes heroic when player characters and important nonplayer characters have these.
- **Hit Points per Location (pages 11, 21, 128):** Useful for combat-heavy settings, ideally with *Armor by Hit Locations*.
- **Fatigue Points (pages 11, 24):** Best used in gritty, combat-, survival-, or travel-focused games.
- **Distinctive Features (page 25):** Primarily for flavor, useful everywhere.
- **Creating New Professions (page 32):** Useful for customized, difficult-to-categorize player characters.
- **Aging and Inaction (page 120):** Useful for long-term campaigns where characters age significantly.
- **Creatures as Player Characters (page 222):** Used in high fantasy and science fiction settings.

Skills

- **Skill Bonuses (page 11):** See *Skill Category Bonuses* (below).
- **Cultural Skills (page 16):** Skills granted by one's culture.
- **Skill Category Bonuses (pages 22–23):** When skills are important, these are useful. Not compatible with *Simpler Skill Bonuses*.
- **Simple Skill Category Bonuses (page 23):** Easier approach to skill bonuses. Not compatible with *Skill Category Bonuses*.
- **Augments & Complementary Skills (page 38):** Useful in any game or setting.
- **Skill Rating Over 100% (pages 37, 113):** Essential for high-powered settings with hugely competent characters.

Powers

- **The Projection Skill (page 93):** Necessary when using superpowers.

System

- **Opposed Skill Roll Systems (page 112):** Largely a matter of preference.
- **Encumbrance (page 118):** Useful for combat-, survival-, or travel-oriented games, especially when paired with *Fatigue*.

Combat

- **Alternates to the Statement of Intent (page 124):** Three options that speed combat considerably.
- **Power Use in the Action Phase (page 124):** Emphasizes powers in combat.
- **Melee Hit Location Table (page 126):** Used with *Hit Points per Location*.
- **Attacks and Parries Over 100% (page 131):** Best with high-powered fantasy and superhero adventure, though combat gets somewhat slower.
- **Dying Blows (page 131):** Useful for giving a beloved player character (or hated villain) a dramatic ending.
- **Random Armor Values (page 132):** Roll for armor value. Not compatible with *Armor by Hit Locations*.
- **Damage and Hit Locations (page 133):** Best for detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- **Dodging Missile Weapons (page 133):** Best for games where combat is exaggerated and unrealistic.
- **Armor by Hit Location (page 177):** Best for detailed and simulation-oriented games.

Miscellaneous

- **Fate Points (page 115):** Players can spend power points to adjust dice results and introduce narrative elements.
- **Personality Traits (page 203):** Useful to help define characters and nonplayer characters alike.
- **Allegiance (page 211):** Useful for games with gods that actively intervene in the world.
- **Passions (page 214):** Allows characters to act in personality-driven fashion.
- **Reputation (page 216):** Measures achievement and fame.
- **Sanity (pages 11, 218):** Useful in horror games.

Generally, as the gamemaster, you get to choose the setting with the players' agreement. However, excitement is as contagious as disinterest, and if you aren't enthusiastic, your players won't be either. You may even have an open discussion of the desired setting to play in, a creative improvisation where many voices are heard.

GETTING STARTED

Now pick a place and a time you can all meet, whether a physical space like a living room, coffee shop, or even online through a videoconferencing system or tabletop roleplaying platform (of which there are many). Gaming can happen anywhere but is more enjoyable when free from distractions. The time you spend gathering is called a **game session** (or sometimes just a session).

Time is an important consideration, as sessions usually take a few hours or longer. Pick a place you won't be abruptly kicked out of, and budget time for getting started and finishing up (these always take a little longer than expected). You and your players should decide what time you're meeting, and whether that means that the game begins exactly at that time, or whether everyone should begin trickling in at around that time. Online games are easier in this regard, as they usually just involve opening a browser from the comfort of one's home.

Determine what you and your players prefer and plan (and adapt) accordingly.

Describe the Setting

Once you're ready and have gathered the players, explain the setting to them. The ones in *Chapter Ten: Settings* are easy places to start and provide relatively concise descriptions of each setting. You can customize one of these as desired or come up with a completely new setting.

One of the best ways to think of this part of the game is that you're 'selling' the players on the setting, or the premise. Try to condense the description to a few quick sentences, providing clear answers to the following questions:

- **What is the setting like?** If you can think of a movie, book, or television show that your setting resembles, you should name it outright. Don't be shy about naming your inspirations! If you're creating something original, try to boil it down to a high-concept Hollywood pitch, combining two known properties in a way that sparks imagination and interest.
- **Who are the player characters?** This isn't a list of professions; it's a *purpose*, telling the players where they stand, and what they stand for, in the setting. This is usually the element that ties them together as a group, rather than just being a bunch of individuals with no reason to interact.
- **What do the player characters do?** This is the overall description of what kinds of adventures you'll be creating for the players, whether investigations, exploration, political maneuvering, urban skullduggery, overland survival, etc. This affects the sorts of characters they will want to create, so be clear here.

This can also be a collaborative effort, enlisting your players to provide input. Once you know the answers to these three questions, you can begin with character creation. Hopefully everyone is excited about what's in store for them in the game sessions to come!

Gamemastering Character Creation

Chapter Two: Characters provides a ten-step guide for character creation. Walk the players through that process, answering their questions. It's useful to ask the players to decide what type of character each is going to play, to eliminate any potential redundancies or weaknesses. Most of the time, it's good to have a well-rounded group of character types, to better handle a wide range of situations and to give each player a specialty or area of focus that they're best at. This is sometimes called **niche protection**.

Examine the Player Characters

When all the characters are created, review them to understand what sorts of characters you are dealing with. You may check their math, making sure that all the points for skills and powers add up correctly and that the player didn't make any mistakes. Or you may be less formal. You should decide up front which sort of a gamemaster you'll be, and let the players know ahead of time.

Use this time to note the important aspects of each player character, such as their name, profession, high characteristics, and important skills (Listen, Sense, Spot, etc.). You may also note any skills over 70%, which can inform the sorts of things the player would like their character to excel in.

> ***For example**, if a character has high Communication and language skills, you may want to give them a chance to use those skills in play, where possible.*

It shouldn't be too difficult to come up with a scene or plot element that focuses on desired skills and will make players feel they haven't made a mistake with their characters.

This is a good time for troubleshooting, such as recognizing what skills are missing, or if a player hasn't spent their skill points effectively. If an adventure calls for a lot of political negotiation and is set in a single location, and a player has invested a lot of points into skills like Pilot and Heavy Machine, you might let them know that their character may not feel very useful during much of the intended adventure. Similarly, pay attention to when a player is spending too many skill points on skills that seem uncharacteristic, based on the character's profession and what they know about the adventure. Sometimes this is a case of the player exploiting out of character information, and you should be aware if it is happening. How you choose to deal with it depends on your players and your own personality and style, though such behavior can be an unfair advantage over the other players.

Remember, always, that it's just a game, and try to keep people focused on the fun.

Character Goals

After the players have finished character creation, it's useful to ask them what goals they have for their characters. This might be a little early, as they haven't begun play yet, but if the players know the setting, ask what their characters (and they) might enjoy doing. This can be invaluable, letting you customize your game to the characters and to the players' tastes. You can come up with heroic moments, life goals, extended endeavors, or put them where they are most effective. A player may even think it would be cool for their character to die in a particular heroic fashion, somewhere down the line.

> ***For example**, if you're running a Wild West game, one of the players might surprise you by telling you that they want their character to run for sheriff in a small town. That sounds interesting, and since the planned setting was to have the characters based in a frontier town, having one player as sheriff would be a useful plot element and a rich source of plot hooks. The other characters should also have things to do, so they're not all being bossed around by the sheriff, though.*

Sometimes, without even trying, the players will help you write adventures, just using the ideas they provide at the beginning of play.

Know the Rules

The *Basic Roleplaying* rules are intuitive enough that you don't even need to know them that well to run a simple game. You don't have to be a

rules expert, but you should be familiar enough to make sensible judgments or know where to look. Your players can also help, looking rules up for you while you deal with other things.

Teaching the Rules (following) provides a high-level overview and a single read-through of relevant rules sections before the game is always useful. One helpful trick is to provide a quick list of relevant rules and note the page numbers for those sections. Sticky notes are another useful tool for this kind of preparation, tagging frequently used sections of the rules.

***For example**, if your adventure has a wall the characters must climb, noting the page numbers for Climb and Falling is useful to have ready.*

There are many optional rules for different settings and play styles. Choose those you're going to use and tell the players ahead of time, when relevant to their gameplay. When in doubt about the effect an optional rule may have, either don't use it or try it out for a limited time, such as for one session. If you don't like the way it worked, lose it.

Teaching the Rules

Though this book has quite a bit in it, the most important thing to remember is that **the players don't need to know every rule to have a good time**. *Basic Roleplaying* has only a few core concepts at its heart, and once your players know these, they'll be fine.

- **Characteristics** are usually 3–18 (the higher the better).
- Most issues are resolved with a **percentile dice roll** (D100).
- Make a **characteristic roll** (usually a characteristic ×5) when there is no opposition and a **resistance roll** when there is an opposed force.
- A resistance roll is based on equal forces having a 50/50 chance against one another. The more unequal the forces are, the greater the difference. Only one side rolls: either the active side or the player. Both chances add up to 100%.
- Skills are rated in **percentages** (the higher the better). Roll low on percentile rolls to succeed. A roll of 99 and/or 00 is a **fumble**. A roll over the skill rating is a **failure**. A roll equal to or under the skill rating is a **success**. A roll of 1/5 the skill rating is a **special success**. A roll of 1/20 your skill is a **critical success**.
- Usually, roll full skill rating on percentile dice. If there's no reason the skill can't be performed successfully, it's ***Automatic***, so don't roll. If it's ***Easy***, double the skill rating. If it's ***Average***, do not modify it. If it's ***Difficult***, cut the skill in half. If it's ***Impossible***, don't even roll, as it always fails.
- Occasionally, skill ratings are modified by a value (usually within the range of ±20%) if an outside factor makes things more challenging or aids the attempt.
- Characters' lives are measured in **hit points**. These are lost through injuries and other harmful situations. When a living being runs out of hit points, they die.
- Characters may have powers such as mutations, psychic abilities, magic, or superpowers. Most powers use **power points** for fuel. When these run out, they fall unconscious.

Everything else can be determined during play or explained as required. Players who understand the rules fully is always a benefit, but if knowledge of the rules is getting in the way of playing, better to keep playing, figure things out or look them up when needed, and don't be afraid to make your own rulings where necessary.

The Adventure

The **adventure** is usually the core of most roleplaying games. This is not necessarily an adventure in the classical sense, but the term can mean any story with a beginning, middle, and ending with opportunities for the characters to do something and achieve a goal.

To start, you need to either create an adventure or use a published one. Later in this chapter, guidance for creating an original adventure is provided. If using a published adventure, you should be familiar with it and should make any notes that may be of interest. You might print it out and mark it up with highlighter pens, sticky notes, bookmarks, and other notes to assist while running it, or even write a quick outline or flowchart to keep things straight.

Designing Adventures

The structure approximates a traditional dramatic narrative structure, though it is not the only example you might look to. Usually, this follows these phases:

- **Introduction:** The main characters (protagonists and antagonists) and the core conflict are introduced. The player characters are usually the protagonists, and the antagonist(s) embodies or serves some central conflict that is to be resolved later. The protagonists may not meet the antagonist face-to-face here or even become aware of their existence, but they are aware of the central conflict. If the adventure begins with action setting the plot in motion... that's even more exciting and involving.
- **Complication:** One or more complications come into the situation, usually to force the protagonists into action. They may discover that they cannot escape the attention of their enemies, or they could lose their homes, or will have loved ones threatened. In many cases, this is where the stakes are defined, usually by letting them know what happens if they don't act. This is where the big conflict becomes the protagonists' problem. Now something must be done about it.
- **Rising Action:** Now the hammer falls, with the protagonists coming face-to-face with the antagonist and/or their agents. This may be a single confrontation, or a series of short engagements that build to a dramatic face-off. Often, this results in the antagonist getting the upper hand, forcing the protagonists to regroup and rally.
- **Loss:** Sometimes the antagonist forces a stalemate, but they almost always have an advantage later. An ally of the protagonists may be killed or incapacitated. The protagonists may be captured, exiled, or lose some significant advantage. The protagonists should feel like there is only a slim chance of winning, and that the unfortunate outcome of the conflict will occur if they do not risk everything. If the story ends here, it might be depressing. Fortunately, it doesn't usually end at this point, though this can be used as a good spot for a cliffhanger.
- **Rising Action:** This begins with the protagonists reeling from loss in the prior phase. It may have become personal. They may gain new or unexpected allies or discover some weakness in the antagonist's forces. There is new hope, though it may be desperate and reckless. This leads to a second challenge, where the protagonists and the antagonist must confront one another.
- **Climax:** The rising action from the previous segment has reached its greatest height. The stakes are usually survival of all that matters to the protagonists. This may boil down to a single instant when everyone's fates are dependent upon a single action, or a rising sequence of steps that must fall into place exactly (with the tension rising from when they don't). In a heroic story, the protagonists win because they have overcome some personal doubt or weakness or exhibit some quality (such as mercy) that the antagonist lacks. Usually, if the antagonist wins it is because there will be a continuation where the protagonists have another chance at victory.
- **Dénouement:** This French term means 'resolution', and here all the aftermath from the climax plays out. Rewards are granted, and a new status quo is established (or hinted at). In heroic stories, this is the happy ending.

If this outline sounds familiar, it should. It's encoded into a hundred or even a thousand movies you've seen or books you've read. Many stories are coded in this fashion and viewers are subconsciously trained to respond to them, even if they recognize the elements as they transpire. The structure may be clichéd, but it works and can serve as a solid foundation for your own adventures. Don't be afraid, though, to come up with your own variations on this basic structure, or ignore it entirely, so that your adventures don't all resemble one another. You can mix things up, add or subtract elements, and defy expectations, so long as the story you're providing is compelling.

Players can be unpredictable and don't always follow a desired path. They may split up or follow their own story threads, and often they'll encounter various challenges and complications at different times than planned. This can be challenging, but not overwhelming. You can handle this by taking notes on a flowchart, or just winging it and improvising as desired.

There is no right or wrong way to do this, only what works for you.

Sandbox Worlds

Some players rebel against being manipulated through a narrative and prefer a world that reacts to their own actions. This is called the 'sandbox' approach, where any story elements are there dormant, waiting for the characters to interact with them. There are pros and cons to the sandbox approach. It requires a lot more setup work and proactive players, as you as gamemaster need to know what's in the sandbox beforehand and less active players may become bored if they're not given clear indications of what to do. As the gamemaster, you must also be ready at improvising, because the players will inevitably do something you haven't prepared for.

The main advantage to the sandbox is that the players are the ones driving the stories, a unique and personalized sort of thrill. It's the sort of thing that roleplaying games do better than any other form of existing entertainment. It's even possible with sandbox gaming to throw out the gamemaster entirely, and let players take on the roles of other nonplayer characters in the environment when required, with everyone working together to forge a unique game experience.

The Campaign

Designing a campaign sounds daunting, but it isn't, because campaigns can be as simple or complex as you want. The major difference is that a one-shot or short adventure usually consists of one basic story arc spread across one or a few sessions, while a campaign is a longer story or series of stories, spread across multiple serialized sessions, perhaps with no end planned. As the gamemaster, you can decide whether you're running a campaign or a single adventure, and plan accordingly.

The structure of a campaign varies tremendously. You might make yours like a television show, with a finite 'season', maybe even ending on a cliffhanger. Or it can be figured out as you go. A benefit of a loose structure is that diversions or downtime sessions can naturally happen. However, long-term campaigns can get bogged down if players don't feel that the resolution is achievable. A campaign that doesn't feel like it's going somewhere will lose player interest rapidly.

Campaigns can be ongoing and without a theme, where the characters simply proceed from one adventure to another. Each adventure can be independent of one another, their only major connection being the characters and (maybe) the setting. If you're using published materials from a variety of sources, this might be the default campaign type. Or they can build as if with a grand unifying scheme, where events in one adventure directly impact events in the next, and everything builds to an intended endpoint. This allows you to steer things towards this conclusion, and adventures usually lead to that conclusion. Such a

campaign usually features an epic ending, such as vengeance or the end of a great conflict, but it can be something less violent, like bringing about positive change on a major level. If the campaign was a success, you can always revisit it with a sequel featuring the same or new characters.

Campaign Themes

If you need help thinking of a unifying theme for your campaign, here are a few suggestions, though this list is not exhaustive:

- **Quest:** A quest-based campaign is the easiest to understand and works best with a fantasy setting. The characters are given a mighty task that they feel compelled to complete, and struggle and journey to achieve that quest. When and if it is completed, the campaign ends. If they fail, there are usually serious consequences.
- **Duty:** A duty-based campaign has the characters either employed or serving a single entity (group, an individual, a country, etc.), where they are assigned a variety of assignments. The adventures may vary each time, but the framework remains essentially unchanged. Unlike the quest, the participants do what they do because it's their job.
- **Task:** This campaign structure revolves around a certain finite number of tasks that must be achieved for the story to be resolved. This may be recovering a series of items scattered across the world, hunting down a certain number of entities, undoing a series of wrongs, etc. There's almost a countdown timer here, and when all the steps are completed, something big happens that resolves the campaign.
- **Story:** This campaign is strongly narrative, usually rich in drama and roleplaying opportunities, following a major plot, subplots, with the player characters as active participants. This is often the most rewarding to pull off but requires a lot of planning in advance. For this type of game, always remember that the characters should make a difference, and that it should be them, not a nonplayer character, who makes the final pivotal action or decision around which the story is resolved.
- **Location:** The characters are assigned to or 'stuck' in a particular location. It may be their hometown, some place they've been assigned, like a neighborhood, or it can be a remote outpost. They stay in the same place, and adventures come to them. A variation is where the base is mobile, such as a ship (space, seagoing, or even an airship). These campaigns can be episodic, but threats to the location should feature prominently.

Foreshadowing

In a campaign, you can introduce things early that have a payoff much later, through incidental details, bits of dialogue, or nonplayer character actions that seem small but turn into very important plot elements. Be extremely careful about abusing this technique, as it can lead to paranoia or the idea that the world is too interconnected, with every minor character or detail expected to be somehow important in the grand scheme of things.

Recurring Nonplayer Characters

Determine who the important nonplayer characters are, whether helpful or antagonistic, and give them options for survival or continuance. If your players kill the supposed villain in the first story arc of a long-term campaign, they may be retroactively determined to be just a pawn of a greater villain and be prepared to use the same tricks that player characters use to stay alive. Dramatic, impossible escapes and unexpected returns are perfectly suitable for many genres.

The Supporting Cast

Once the adventure is created, it must be populated with nonplayer characters, monsters, and other encounters. These can add to the general theme of the adventure or be purely incidental, for flavor or tied to the characters somehow. This rulebook provides many ready to use example nonplayer characters and creatures, easily modified to suit the setting, adventure, or power level.

Maps

Maps and visual aids are always useful in any adventure, whether a one-shot or in a campaign. If miniatures are used, a map is essential. Even if miniatures are not being used, a map can help explain an area to players in a way that a great deal of description does not. On the other hand, sometimes a map can be too limiting, especially in indoor areas. If you prefer to improvise descriptions of a setting or let the players add background information, a map can sometimes stifle and contradict this creativity.

A good map doesn't have to account for every tree and bush to be effective, and overland land maps may only have some major geographic landmarks displayed. This way, you can always improvise or add elements to the area as required, so if the characters are sorely in need of a place to rest after a combat took an unanticipated turn for the worse, they might discover a small little inn alongside the road, unmarked on their maps. If the map presents every farm and road-stop, it is more difficult to make such a change, as it contradicts the visual evidence before them. Similarly, sometimes a map can tell too much, especially when the players see so many places they want to visit that they may stray from the intended path because of all the options displayed on the map.

Maps can be easy to make (a quick drawing on a sheet of scratch paper), meticulous (done on graph paper with a key and legend), using a graphics program, or using one of the many online mapping programs. Programs allowing for layouts of houses and homes can prove invaluable in modern games, allowing the gamemaster to create isometric and top-down maps, to scale, complete with furniture and landscaping. A gamemaster with an artistic flair may choose to create maps hand-drawn in colored inks on parchment, artificially weathered through various means, or can find a quality map from some online source and alter it with a graphics program, and even print it onto fancy paper.

Ultimately, if you're using a map, find a level of detail that seems comfortable and allows for some flexibility. Not everything needs to be set in stone from the first session, and you should be able to add detail when it is required.

Integrate the Characters into the Story

Now that you know who the player characters are and their goals (if any). You should look at the adventure (or the campaign) and figure out how to involve them. It's usually important to provide a reason why player characters care enough to embark on the adventure at hand. Why do they feel that they must do this thing, and why are they present in the initial scene? This is important, because it provides motivation for them to stick around and see the adventure through to its conclusion. If the player characters don't feel compelled to be in the initial scene, it will be that much more difficult to keep their interest throughout the adventure.

There are countless ways to begin an adventure (or campaign), with these as common choices:

- The characters already know one another and have been hired to do a particular task. You can begin as they're hired, or assume they accepted and begin as they're planning or executing the task.
- The characters encounter for the first time at cross purposes, such as each having their own reasons to be in a particular place at a particular time, but quickly the circumstances change, and they are forced to work together to survive.
- The characters don't know one another but are asked by different patrons to perform a particular task. Things are not as they seem, and they must find a common cause quickly.

- The characters are thrown together in the same misfortune, either being captured by enemies, caught up in the middle of a greater conflict, or just in the aftermath of a natural disaster. They need to put aside any differences and work together to get out.
- The characters are unrelated, but at the same time and place when something dramatic happens or an opportunity arises. Their reactions shape what happens next.

A great method with maximum player freedom is to present an opening scene and ask the players why their characters are there. The players can then come up with their reasons, including subplots or past relationships they may have with the nonplayer characters, each other, and the overall premise. This method requires some improvisation, but often is more rewarding to the players, as their motives are their own.

You should be prepared to help players who aren't able to improvise on the spot, and you may have to veto any outlandish reasons or those that contradict your background and premise too much. One of the best methods for dealing with this is to ask for a compromise, but give them something in return, such as an interesting piece of information that they'd normally have to discover through and nonplayer character. That way, you can shift some of the story work to one of the players, rather than a nonplayer character, and you can give the player some personal stake in the story.

This sort of integration can continue well into the adventure and the campaign. If possible, make contacts and nonplayer characters known to the player characters, and maybe even suggest some history with them, so that they react more interestingly than to total strangers. This process makes the setting seem more alive, and the player characters a more important and integrated part of it, rather than just visitors with no personal history or connections. On the other hand, if it's a "stranger in a strange land" sort of game, it would be strange for the player characters to know too much about the area or the people, so only use this method if appropriate.

It is also useful to try to spread any contacts around the group of player characters, and make sure each of them has some integration with the adventure. If it's a longer campaign, this doesn't have to be a part of the first adventure, but players often get frustrated if one player dominates all the time and is integrated into the world far more than they are. Generally, it's a bad idea to concentrate all gameplay or world interaction through a single character. Spread the riches around!

Connecting the Characters to Each Other

One of the most challenging parts of dealing with a group of player characters is finding reasons to keep them together and to get them to work with one another in a way that makes sense. Some settings and campaign structures lend themselves immediately to groups, such as having all the player characters already part of the same team, organization, or faction. Some or all the player characters can be close or distant relatives, old friends, co-workers, classmates, colleagues, or connected through other affiliations. Depending on what is expected of them in the campaign, the player characters can have been assembled by a mysterious benefactor or hired for a specific purpose. These last two lend themselves well to some missions, though this often stretches incredulity and assumes that the player characters are for hire or willing to work with one another.

There are many ways that the connections between player characters can be developed, and sometimes the players themselves are happy to help with this. At the beginning of the game, you might ask players to identify one other character that they have some connection to (personal history together, past rivalry, friendship, etc.) and a nonplayer character that they know through that other player character. These connections do not have to be mutual, and it is often preferable if they aren't. When this is done, each player character has a connection to one or more of the other player characters, and a nonplayer character or more that they both know. This helps to connect the player characters to one another, and to the world. You should ultimately approve or disallow any connections or nonplayer characters that don't work for the campaign or scenario, but it's best to guide any player choices toward something that works, or accommodate them, rather than vetoing them outright. If you're using passions (page 214), these nonplayer character relationships might be represented as Loves or Loyalties.

However, if this method isn't useful, skip it. Sometimes it's best to let the players figure out why their characters need to stick together, and why they shouldn't be left behind or otherwise shunned. In these cases, work with your players and make sure that they're not excluding anyone in the group.

Set the Initial Scene

The opening scene is often crucial, because it sets the tone for the rest of the adventure or campaign and gets the players (and their characters) interested in what is happening and eager to continue.

There are many ways to do this, but an initial scene almost always needs to consist of the following elements:

- **Location:** A location that is either symbolic of the challenges the adventure presents, or a natural starting spot. The more interesting or dramatically appropriate the initial location is, the better. It sets the tone for the rest of the campaign.
- **Introductions:** Describe any nonplayer characters present, but more importantly, each player should describe their character as they appear to the others present. The players might do full introductions, giving their names, professions, important skills, etc., or keep those 'secret' for now, and reveal them later through play.
- **Motive:** Why are the player characters there? As noted prior, either provide a reason for the player characters to be involved or let them come up with their own reasons.
- **'The Carrot':** As in 'the carrot or the stick', a carrot is some clue or spark of action that provokes the player characters to engage in what's happening. If you don't use a carrot (letting 'hunger' drive the characters), you should use a stick (see below).
- **'The Stick':** This is a threat, either to the characters, their loved ones, people they feel responsible for, or the world at large. Usually this means an attack or the looming potential for violence, usually connected to the antagonist in some fashion. If it is not a person, then it's a threat of the environment that prompts the characters to action.
- **Drama:** Usually, the initial scene needs to really kick off the adventure with some sense of the stakes. A strong visual or emotional conflict, setting up a required payback, is always helpful. Unless there's a reason to begin in a mundane fashion, it's usually best to start by interjecting drama into an initial scene to sell it to the players that they're here to have an adventure!

Once these elements have been introduced, let the scene play out to its natural conclusion, and make sure there are clear avenues to proceed from there. If this is the first time the players have played *Basic Roleplaying*, take things slowly and introduce rules systems gradually. Combat and actions may take longer to resolve than they will later, as players may spend a bit of time figuring out how the system works as well as how their characters should act.

From here, you're ready to move onto the following scene or scenes. Depending on how much information you've provided and the nature of the adventure and setting, this may be a guided progression to a single location, or you may favor a more free-form approach allowing the players to find their own way around the adventure, taking the

encounters in the order that they choose. Some styles of gamemastering favor the first sort of plot structure. At its worst, this is called 'railroading', where players feel that they're stuck on a track and cannot deviate from it. Other gamemaster styles allow for more freedom, such as the sandbox approach mentioned above.

Keep Things Moving

Regardless of how you're running the game, it's vitally important to keep things moving. The adventure doesn't have to be like an amusement park ride, but you should try to keep the players from getting bogged down in overlong discussions or rules debates. These can lead to boredom, which dampens enthusiasm. It's contagious: if one or more players have 'tuned out' of the session, you should try to shift gears to keep things interesting for everyone.

One method for this is to have something unexpected happen, or someone unwanted show up, a twist no one saw coming, a dead body where there shouldn't be, etc. This sort of sudden interjection of drama can break a slow portion of a game and make the players get more active. However, you shouldn't do this so often that the players feel like their characters are at the whim of some giant broom that continually sweeps them along.

House Rules

If there's a rules argument, don't be afraid to say something to the effect of *"For now, let's do it this way. Later, if we learn differently, let's use the new rule."* You're the gamemaster, and one of your duties is that of a referee. You are expected to make calls when there's a dispute. Do so fairly, and try to be consistent, from instance to instance, and from player to player.

There will be situations that aren't covered in these rules, so from time to time you may need to make up a rule or just decide how something goes. If a similar rule isn't obvious, don't be afraid to make up a new rule. If it works, write it down. This becomes a 'house rule', like those used in card and board games, where the rule essentially applies only in the house (or with the group) it originates.

You can tell other players and gamemasters about your house rules, perhaps online, but don't expect any of them to use these house rules. Often, you can find house rules on forums and discussion groups relating to your game. *Basic Roleplaying* has been around for a long time and there are many places online where you can house rules and eager players and gamemasters to discuss those rules.

Nonplayer Characters

One of your most important jobs as gamemaster is to be "the rest of the world"—meaning every nonplayer character and creature the characters may encounter. This is perhaps the most challenging task, presenting a variety of characters with different personalities and goals, each interacting with the player characters in a slightly different manner. You should play each significant nonplayer character as if they have an agenda and potential goals, when appropriate. If it doesn't make sense for a nonplayer character to fight to the death, they should surrender or flee. However, you should always keep in mind the difference between important and unimportant nonplayer characters. Usually, the act of giving a nonplayer character a name is all you need to make the distinction. A fully developed nonplayer character with a name is important, while 'Guard #3' may be all the name that particular nonplayer character needs.

Some of the ways you can make your nonplayer characters more distinctive is to give each of them some quirk or individual aspect that makes them stand out, like a peculiar accent, a distinctive physical characteristic, a striking bit of gear or costume, or a vocal tic or catchphrase. Feel free to use the distinctive features (page 25) to characterize them. When you're thinking of your nonplayer characters, it helps to tell the players about any of these mannerisms or visual elements that they would notice right off. The more you do this, the more your players think of nonplayer characters as unique individuals, and that makes your job that much easier.

A couple of quick methods exist for this: basing a nonplayer character off someone you know, or some actor (or a role played by that actor). If it's a real person, try to avoid someone too obvious that the players know, as the character disappears, and it just becomes the person they know. If using an actor or their character, you can describe them physically and use those mannerisms, but be careful, though, as it can lead to too many in-jokes or doing impression rather than an actual character.

Remember, though, that it is the player characters, not the nonplayer characters, who are the leads in the story. They may not be the most important people in the world, but they are the protagonists of the story you're creating together. Gauge the number and presence of nonplayer characters accordingly. You should probably try to avoid too many random nonplayer characters on hand, or having extended periods where the players are sitting around listening to nonplayer characters explain things (or, even worse, having two nonplayer characters discussing things to one another).

Nonplayer character followers who are more competent and steal the spotlight from the player characters are rarely a good idea, unless the point is for them to lull the player characters into a false sense of security, and then get out of the way quickly and thrust the player characters into adventure. Whenever you can give an active role to a player character in place of a nonplayer character, do so. You can provide any background information on a note card or feed it to the player when they make successful Knowledge rolls (or some equivalent).

In addition to the acting challenge of evoking all these different nonplayer characters, you must represent them on a mechanical level. You roll for them, determine what actions they take, and note how injured they are during the course of a combat. You should have key attributes for important nonplayer characters, if they're essential, using those in *Chapter Eleven: Creatures* if needed. Usually, in a nonviolent encounter, you need only a few characteristics (INT, POW, CHA) and relevant Communication-based skill ratings for a nonplayer character. For combat, you need the opposite set of attributes, with characteristics like (DEX, CON, STR), other statistics like hit points, power points, armor value, any combat-oriented skills, and any applicable weapons and/or powers (and their levels).

A great and subtle trick for a gamemaster to do is to make copies of the player character sheets, and use these as the basis for nonplayer characters, making changes where necessary to disguise their origin. Often this is a great source of well-designed characters who are the relative equals of the player characters.

Absent Player Characters

Sometimes a player misses a session but their character is still present, such as when you are continuing an adventure from a prior session. You can handle the player character as if they were a nonplayer character, or let another player handle that character, whichever works best. If a player isn't present, any successful rolls their character makes do not yield experience points.

Alternatively, you might find it easier to come up with an in-game reason why a player character has suddenly disappeared. This can range from them simply being called away on an unrelated matter, falling through a collapsing floor, being swept away suddenly, disappearing mysteriously, teleported away, or even being captured, depending on the setting. Their rescue can be the source of a future session, or it might simply resolve itself when the player is available again. It's not advised to begin a session with one player character incapacitated and waiting for the others to get to them before they can do anything.

Take a Break if You Need It

You may find that the players are overwhelming you with requests, or things have become exhausting. It's always a good idea to take a quick break (anywhere from five to fifteen minutes) every so often during a long play session. For the gamemaster, this may give you a chance to regroup and plan for the next part of the game. If the players have surprised you by going beyond what you were expecting, and you find yourself needing a few minutes of downtime to get your own notes in order and decide what you want to happen, call a break.

It's also just good to get up and stretch. Tabletop gaming, or online gaming, is sedentary, insomuch as it involves sitting at a table or some other more comfortable seating arrangement, talking to one another. You may do a lot of gesturing, but this isn't very much physical activity. Every hour or two, you may want to just call a quick break for people to stand up, stretch, move around, refill their beverages or snacks, and even go to the restroom. Sometimes if things bog down too much, a quick breather is just the trick to break a slow point and have players return to the table refreshed. Breaks can also provide players a chance to do some of their own bookkeeping, and make plans of their own, and you should probably allow players to call breaks if they feel that one is required.

You might even start a break with a cliffhanger or at the beginning of a big endeavor. You should assume that the game world just pauses, with no time whatsoever passing between the beginning and end of the break, or you can use the break as a good way to indicate a break in the game time. For example, you may tell the players *"You arrive in town just before dark. It's quiet, but you find an inn with some open rooms. Your innkeeper warns you to stay off the streets, as it can get a bit dangerous. Let's take a break now. When we get back, you can tell me what trouble you get into before morning."*

If a break indicates a lot of time has passed, it might be time to handle healing (page 136), experience checks (page 119), and training (page 119).

Set the Tone and Mood

There are many ways to establish a tone and mood for your game, varying greatly by setting. Here are suggestions for some easy ways to evoke the desired setting through more than just narration.

Music and Sound Effects

You may want to have some music playing in the background, like a television or movie soundtrack. Choose carefully, based on the setting and your players. You might use ambient music and run it indefinitely in the background, or specific pieces of music for scenes of importance. You may even have a campaign theme, played at the beginning of the session, such as a television show's intro. Online music services allow for customized playlists and very specific sound landscapes, including a vast number of music services specific to roleplaying game sessions. It is possible to put together highly customizable soundtracks for an adventure, but should be used with caution, making sure not to distract from gameplay with inappropriate pieces of music for particular scenes.

Similarly, there are many sound effects libraries available online to spice up scenes or events, and some ambient sound sites offer environmental background loops, which can be layered or customized.

Props

Sometimes, having a few tiny props on hand might help evoke the setting, such as strange dusty old books in stacks next to the gamemaster for a Lovecraft-inspired game involving horror at a remote and antiquated university. For a martial arts game set in modern China, some Chinese coins scattered across the table might be enough. Try stacking some old disk drives, circuit boards, cables, and various adapters around the play area to provide flavor to a cyberpunk game or light the table only through laptops and computer monitors.

The Game Environment

This is perhaps the most optional of all the methods of evoking a mood, as it is the most labor intensive. You can alter the play area in subtle ways to evoke your setting, putting posters up related to the setting, or colored lights to evoke strange environments. If playing online, a virtual background of the setting always helps. A visit to a party supply store provides many cheap and easy means of decorating your play area. If you and your group play together in a physical space, you may serve a meal appropriate to the setting or have everyone bring thematically appropriate snacks or drinks (within reason).

However, don't go so far that it's distracting to the actual play, and be considerate of the players comfort and convenience. Don't expect people to splurge on expensive foods or make them uncomfortable for the sake of ambience. Mood lighting is great, but when players can't see their character sheets, it's a problem. Do what's comfortable for you and your players, and no more than that.

Note Taking

You should try to take notes or even ask a player to help with it. This helps keep track of who the players talked to, what they learned, who they killed, and what the general situation was when you left off, if you're going to continue. This can be done during the session or afterwards by reviewing the game notes. It is often useful to provide a brief "Previously..." overview at the beginning of a new session, refreshing everyone's memories. You might have a shared online document to update during or between adventures, with notes about things the players need to keep in mind or bookkeeping they need to do before the next session. You might handle this via email or a shared online repository of game-related documents, maps, images, and references.

There's no right or wrong way to do this, no correct amount of documentation, so use whatever method—or none—that feels best to you.

Wrapping Things Up

At the end of a session, try to bring things to some sort of dramatic conclusion. If there's been a big fight at the end, you might want to stop right afterwards, or if the story arc has wrapped up, conclude with a scene of reward or epilogue. Players should get a feeling that things are either going to continue or that they're finished, and if there is a continuation, some clues as to what might come next are always useful.

If there's any 'homework', now is the time to assign it. This might include doing experience checks, planning what happens between sessions, or doing some other form of wrap-up. If a big story ended, you might want to provide a short coda to the adventure, letting players know how the story flowed from the final scene. Keep in mind also that not everyone can do work on a game between sessions, and that you should always allow for some time at the beginning of one session to take care of anything that didn't get done between sessions.

Something you might do periodically is to informally ask the players how they felt about the session. What sort of things they liked, disliked, or anything they weren't expecting. This doesn't have to be a critique but can instead serve as a barometer of what went right. If you're the sort of gamemaster who doesn't take criticism well or have players who aren't comfortable talking about things they didn't like, don't bother with this wrap-up.

If an adventure is over, but the campaign is continuing, you might also ask the players what they'd like to see happen in the next session or adventure. Sometimes player feedback can push you in interesting directions and provide unexpectedly rich content. As noted, this is entirely optional, and should be casual. You could even do this via email

or one-on-one later, as appropriate. Oftentimes, post-game chatter is almost as much fun as a game itself, which is a reason games sometimes tend to run long!

If you're meeting in person, you might ask to collect the character sheets at the end of a game session, or scan them so you have copies. This insures against lost character sheets, or absent players when you need to run their character for them. If you're doing things electronically, you might ask the players to update their characters in the online repository. Virtual game platforms can store character sheets, as well, letting you update them electronically, with no paper involved.

To be Continued…?

At the end of a successful game, you should determine with the players whether you'll continue. Sometimes a one-shot can turn into a campaign, and sometimes a campaign doesn't really go as well as hoped and turns into a one shot. You might ask your players at the end of an adventure if they'd like to continue if it hasn't been established already. If you already know the answer, don't bother, but it's always good to know how interested your players are in continuing the game you're running. Naturally, if you're not continuing, you shouldn't bother with experience checks, notes, or trying to establish continuity, but if there's a chance of coming back to the same group of characters and the setting, you should make sure that the possibility exists, so don't accidentally destroy or discard your notes or the character sheets.

GAMEMASTERING TECHNIQUES

The following aren't rules or even guidelines, but suggestions to aid you in the complicated and incredible task of game mastering. None are required, and some may run contrary to your style. Take these suggestions for what they are: tools in your gamemaster toolbox.

Introduction

A good introduction can set a campaign off to a bang. This is where you read a short, scripted introduction, giving a bit of relevant background or framing the current sequence. In movies this can be a 'title card' or an 'opening crawl' of text providing the information about the setting and bringing the audience up to speed. It's different from the initial scene in that it's usually not roleplayed through and is often just narrative. Ideally, you want to keep it short (not more than a few sentences) and if one of your players has a good voice and talent for that sort of thing, ask them to do it.

The Player Characters Are the Stars

The player characters are the stars of the adventure. This doesn't make them the most important people in the universe, but it makes them the most significant people in the game. Their actions should be significant, and unless there's a good reason for it in the setting or adventure, they should be the ones who get to shine. Having nonplayer characters around who are more competent and heroic than the player characters is fine, but making the players feel like they're watching someone else's adventures from the sidelines is usually a surefire way to lose player investment.

Encourage Player Investment

Do what you can to get the players to contribute to the campaign and their characters. Encourage them to create things that will enrich the game experience without affecting it directly, such as in-character journals, illustrations of their characters or nonplayer characters, or even performing real world tasks such as aiding you with some of the notetaking and bookkeeping. This could also be basic things like agreeing to host the game sessions, contributing to the group's food and drink, or running the shared online group document. If the reward of

simply making the game better isn't enough, offer small rewards such as free experience checks in relevant skills, so long as they don't become too much of a distraction and are distributed fairly.

Show, Don't Tell

Whenever you can, be as visual as possible with descriptions of locales, nonplayer characters, and events. When coming up with your plots, always ask *"Is this something the players can experience firsthand?"* For an event that the characters need to be aware of, if you can get them on the scene to experience it firsthand, the experience will be much more important and significant to them. Rather than their characters being told about something that happened and asking them what they want to do about it, put them in the middle of it and let them experience it viscerally. This doesn't have to be a full-fledged scene. You can easily begin with such a scene, summarize how it resolved, then jumping to the point where the characters can act.

Flashbacks

You can even have the players play through an earlier event or prologue, where they enact the roles of other (likely pregenerated) characters. You might even split a flashback adventure between a modern setting and a historical one, with parallels between the two, with players taking on the roles of their modern characters and their ancestral forebears. For a variation on this, you might have the player characters transported to another time and place in some strange fashion, where their dreaming selves must enact a scene in the past. Or you could do a 'flash forward', where you give the players a glimpse of what is to come with their player characters in the near or distant future, or some alternate branch of history. *Basic Roleplaying* has all the tools for play in different periods, genres, and even alternate realities, all in the same campaign.

Cutscenes

These are commonly used in films, but they can be used in a tabletop setting to great effect. Essentially, a cutscene occurs away from the characters (hence, we 'cut away' from them) and involves other significant characters. In a game, this is a scene that occurs elsewhere, and involves one or more nonplayer characters, usually doing something significant to the plot or adding foreshadowing to the player characters' future.

The challenge of cutscenes is that they usually focus on out-of-character knowledge, and it requires the players to watch while the gamemaster tells a little story or enacts a scene. A great technique for introducing a cutscene is to have the players read a scripted version of that scene, roleplaying it as if it were their own characters, or as a news broadcast with multiple anchors and interviews, etc.

If you're a story-based gamemaster who wants the players to feel like they're the active parts of a narrative, then this might work well for you. If you're more episodic with your adventure(s), you might not bother with this trick. It can also be used to great effect in a light-hearted or comedic game, where out-of-character knowledge can be explained away easily, and it can give players a chance to inhabit outrageous or extreme characters other than their own.

'Jobber' Sequences

This storytelling trick and term comes from professional wrestling, introducing a formidable opponent (or several) and emphasizing how frightening or powerful they are. Then, a newcomer arrives and dispatches them, demonstrating the newcomer's prowess. To 'jobber' is to make someone else look competent at one's own expense. This can work for heroes or villains, protagonists, or antagonists.

You can also let the players suggest their own 'jobber' sequences as part of their introductions, showing them shining in their field of expertise. This can extend to any specialty or skill. If appropriate, let each player give themselves such a sequence while the other players watch (or pitch in). You don't even need to roll the dice for such a scene, as it should be a foregone conclusion that the character triumphs and makes it to the next, or initial scene.

Bait-and-Switch

This is a classic storytelling trick, where the players are given one premise (a setting, an adventure, etc.) and then quickly discover that they are in the middle of another premise. Usually this is a dramatic discovery, causing them to reevaluate everything that they know or have experienced so far. This can be used to comedic effect, or to completely transform an adventure. It should be used carefully, however, as some players can balk if they feel they've been sold one thing and had another substituted. This is especially true if you've had them involved from the start in crafting the sort of campaign you want, then abandoning it. You can ask if you feel it's going to be a problem, or warn them ahead of time that things are not always what they seem.

Recognize Your Players

Players goals can differ tremendously, even within the same groups. If you know them, you might identify what they enjoy in games, and why they play. For ease, you could classify players based on the following general types, codified by Robin Laws in his excellent gamemaster advice book, *Robin's Laws of Gaming* (Steve Jackson Games, Inc., 2002):

- **The Leader:** This player ends up leading and creates characters who command respect and authority from the existing power structure (police officers, government agents, military officers, etc.). This sort of player usually seeks attention, often from the other players as well as from the gamemaster.
- **The Specialist:** The player creates characters that are secondary, almost at the level of background characters, but extremely skilled in a narrow field, whether it be weapons, computers, piloting, etc. When in their field of specialty, the player wants to succeed, and succeed well.
- **The Power Gamer:** This player creates characters who are extremely powerful (sometimes with judicious rules application). Such characters are often after more power, whether the most powerful magic weapon, the most terrifying spell, etc.
- **The Method Actor:** This player will create elaborate backstories and focus on their character as if they were from some other medium, even taking on unnecessary flaws and disadvantages just because they feel 'right'.
- **The Follower:** This is the simplest type of player. Often, they are just content to hang back and watch the fun, rolling dice or acting when required. They might enjoy being in the spotlight now and again, but usually don't require, or even want, attention.

Not every player is the same type in every campaign. Sometimes a player is always one type, while other times, they may choose their role based on the setting and the campaign. Players can also act like more than one of these types from session-to-session. However, once you have a good idea about what these roles usually are after, you can see that preferences and needs are being met in the game and adjust accordingly.

PERSONALITY TRAITS (OPTION)

You can describe a nonplayer character's personality numerically, just like a skill or passion (page 214). An easy method to do this is a personality trait scale, where a trait is described as a percentile value of 0 to 100. A value of 0 indicates that the personality trait is nonexistent, and a 100 is always representative of that character.

Personality traits are paired with an opposite, such as Aggressive vs. Passive, and the value of the opposite trait is equal to 100 minus the initial personality trait. A quick means of shorthand for this pairing is 'Aggressive 90 | 10 Passive', for example. Someone with 50 | 50 in a trait the Personality Traits sheet below helps make this easy to keep track of these traits for nonplayer characters. You can use some, many, or all these to define your nonplayer characters.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

Initial Trait	Value | Value	Opposing Trait
Aggressive	__ | __	Passive
Impulsive	__ | __	Cautious
Extrovert	__ | __	Introvert
Optimistic	__ | __	Pessimistic
Stubborn	__ | __	Receptive
Physical	__ | __	Mental
Patient	__ | __	Nervous
Emotional	__ | __	Calm
Trusting	__ | __	Suspicious
Leader	__ | __	Follower
Greedy	__ | __	Generous
Energetic	__ | __	Lazy
Honorable	__ | __	Dishonorable
Brave	__ | __	Cowardly
Curious	__ | __	Incurious
Dependable	__ | __	Unreliable
Pious	__ | __	Irreligious
Honest	__ | __	Dishonest
Clever	__ | __	Dull
Humorous	__ | __	Dour
Conservative	__ | __	Innovative

***For example**, a nonplayer character is highly aggressive, with a value of 90 on their Aggressive personality trait. The opposing trait is Passive and thus has a value of 10 (100–90=10). A nonplayer character with an Aggressive 90 is ready to pick a fight, answers any challenge, and usually escalates to violence, while someone with Passive 90 usually backs down from conflicts and avoids any direct confrontations.*

You do not need to determine all the personality traits for your significant nonplayer characters. Instead, choose one or a few relevant ones and assign values to them. You don't even need to determine the opposing trait's value, as it's apparent. Assign values as desired or pick relevant ones and divide a D100 roll by 2 and add 50 to the result, for a spread of 51–100. Or roll 3D10+70 for extreme cases.

Personality traits can guide your roleplaying of the nonplayer character by simply looking at the value, or you can roll to see how the nonplayer character behaves. Success with one trait means they act on that character trait, while failure means that the opposite trait is followed. You may also choose to utilize special or critical results for these rolls, but only in a general sense.

***For example**, the characters meet the nonplayer character with the 'Aggressive 90 | 10 Passive' personality trait spread, and one of them behaves rudely to the nonplayer character. You know from the spread how they're likely to react, but you decide to roll, just to see what happens. Any roll of 01–90 and the nonplayer character reacts aggressively, while a roll of 91–100 indicates a passive response. Perhaps they're distracted or unwilling at this time to get into it with the characters?*

Skills and Personality Traits

The Insight skill may be used to quickly determine a nonplayer characters personality trait spread in a general sense, or Psychology might be used for long-term analysis. Don't reveal the actual values, but rather a particular strongly lean in one direction or the other.

Though it is extremely unlikely to have a player character performing Psychology on a nonplayer character for an extended period, you may allow a successful Psychology roll to affect a single paired personality trait in the same fashion that it restores lost SAN. Roll to see whether SAN points are restored, but instead of adding SAN, instead use the result to shift a particular personality trait by that many points in the desired direction. Treatment time is identical. This way, through patience and therapy, a successful Psychology roll can 'help' a nonplayer character change their natural inclinations towards a desired personality trait.

Personality Traits and Player Characters

You can also use personality traits for player characters, if desired, treating them as you would for nonplayer characters. They become like passions (page 214), augmenting activities or being consulted when provoked, with experience checks if successful. The player always has control over what their character does, but if they make a successful roll on one trait and decide to act according to the opposing trait, you should have them automatically make an experience check for that opposite trait. When one trait increases, the other is decreased. If they wish to seek treatment for this trait, see the rules for Psychology (above).

SETTINGS

This chapter discusses settings—the times and/or places where your adventures happen. Usually, the setting is the genre—Western, science fiction, techno-thriller, sword-and-sandle, high fantasy, or many others. This chapter also includes optional rules for allegiance, passions, and insanity.

MAKING THE SETTING

Basic Roleplaying is designed to help you, the gamemaster, create a setting of your own, whether original or adapting something that exists. Following are some popular settings that all follow the same format, and some notes about each. Each comes with suggested character types (though these are not restrictions), powers that make sense in the setting, technology to help select equipment, prompts for adventure types, and suitable optional rules.

Prehistoric Age

Any prehistoric or primitive tribal environment before the dawn of civilization, or somehow set apart from it. Life is short and brutal, and usually the only social organization is the family or tribe. Prehistoric mammals are usually the main threat, though alternate histories sometimes include dinosaurs.

- **Character Types:** Crafter, Farmer, Hunter, Shaman, and Tribesfolk.
- **Powers:** Primitive shamans might use magic, and mutations and psychic abilities may exist.
- **Technology:** No manufactured items are available in a prehistoric world, with everything being shaped from primitive resources such as wood, stone, bone, leather, fur, feathers, and clay—whether clothing, tools and weapons, and religious totems or keepsakes. Though a skilled crafter may make better stone axes and shape better talismans, there is not much beyond that. Most items are of poor or average quality, and there is no wealth.
- **Adventures:** Tribal conflict between groups of hunter-gatherers over prime hunting spots, adverse weather, aggressive animals, or even great hunts can form the core of prehistoric adventures. Alternate prehistories might include ancient creatures from the Cthulhu Mythos, aliens bent on enslaving primitive humanity, or even divergent evolutionary paths where intelligent dinosaurs or apes have become the dominant species, and humanity their fodder.
- **Options:** None.

Bronze Age

The era of kingdoms such as Sumeria, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Persia, and other mighty empires, from the Mesopotamian epoch to Biblical antiquity, classical Greece, until the fall of Rome and the subsequent chaotic breakdown of Europe. Alternately, this might be a sword-and-sandal fantasy setting set in an imagined ancient world.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery, likely divine in origin. Psychic powers may exist, and monsters may have mutations. Demigods or legendary heroes may have superpowers.
- **Technology:** The heyday of the Bronze Age and the flowering of the Iron Age, in which metalwork has transformed culture and commerce. This is the flourishing of artistry and the birth of civilization.
- **Adventures:** This era suits gritty fantasy epics as well as grander mythological themes with strong emphasis on culture and worship.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Dodging Missile Weapons, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Iron Age

After the fall of the Roman Empire, much of Europe is in disarray. Though there are social advances and improvements to overall quality of life, this is often characterized as a brutal and unenlightened time. This includes the rise of the Norse (Viking) culture, and regional wars across Europe to fill the vacuum left by Rome. This could also be a fantasy setting, including nonhuman races such as elves and dwarves, or even mythic animals and monsters.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician. Politicians are often Nobles and Writers are usually Priests or may be poets.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature.
- **Technology:** Despite sometimes being called the 'Dark Age'—there are scientific developments, improvements in mechanical engineering, and treatment of disease. Study of the physical world flourishes, and creating books and preserving knowledge becomes prevalent among the nobility and clergy. Sailing ships grow in sophistication.
- **Adventures:** Europe after Rome is a veritable post-apocalyptic wasteland, and life was hard for the commoners. Petty wars and oppression are commonplace. The division between the religions is rife with conflict and turmoil.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Education/ Knowledge Roll, Fatigue Points, Hit Points per Location, Literacy, Passions, Reputation, Sanity.

High Medieval

This is a feudal era. Nobility, knighthood, and dynastic governments and social structures characterize the period. Idealized romance drives the chivalric world, contrasted by brutal and grim reality. Magic is believed to be deviltry, and the divine is considered as real as the infernal. This might also describe a far-off post-apocalyptic world where the last vestiges of civilization have fallen to neo-feudalism.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician. Writers are usually Priests or may be poets, and Scientists are likely Priests with an interest in the natural world.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature.
- **Technology:** Mass production of goods, early guild structures, extended trade, and widespread distribution of goods have transformed the world. Generally, the lack of widespread literacy limits the availability of books and advanced knowledge. Armor and weaponry continue to grow more effective, then baroque.
- **Adventures:** Arthurian or Carolingian adventure, questing knights, etc.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Nonhuman Characters, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

High Fantasy

Similar to the High Medieval setting, this differs in that nonhumans such as elves, dwarves, etc. exist alongside human beings, frequently allied with humans against orcs, trolls, goblins, etc. The gods may be active and their worshipers gain divine abilities. Magic is prevalent, with magic items such as healing potions, magic swords, enchanted armor, etc. commonplace. Ancient ruins abound and dungeons sprawl belowground.

- **Character Types:** As with High Medieval (above).
- **Powers:** Any. Magic and sorcery may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature. Mutations may be found among certain types of monsters, and there may be races that use psychic abilities. Powerful supernatural beings may use superpowers in the guise of divine or infernal abilities.
- **Technology:** As with the High Medieval, but less realistic.
- **Adventures:** Dungeon raids, quests for magic items, war, exploration, etc.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Nonhuman Characters, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Imperial Asia

A general term for historical Japan or China, also including the fantastic world of the martial arts. This category can also describe Mughal India.

- **Character Types:** Any other than Journalist, Scientist, or Technician. Writers are likely poets.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery are common and may be based on elemental principles. Intense study of esoteric martial arts disciplines allows abilities like psychic or superpowers.
- **Technology:** The arts and sciences of China and Japan developed far beyond that of the Western world in the same era, with printing presses, gunpowder, etc., paired with a flourishing of institutionalized learning and bureaucracy.
- **Adventures:** These can range from battles for clan or regional leader, and can even incorporate anachronistic elements such as found in manga or anime.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/ Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Arabian Nights

The ancient Arabian or Persian world, generally a world defined by deserts and daring adventure.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician. Writers are usually Priests or may be poets, and Scientists are likely Priests with an interest in the natural world.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery, though supernatural beings may have superpowers.
- **Technology:** Knowledge of the physical world—mathematics, chemistry, astronomy, medicine, other sciences—were highly developed and generally wealth was able to purchase quality of life and freedom of action.
- **Adventures:** These could resemble fairy tales or those found in classic tales from the era, exploration or ancient curses, bargains with mythical beings, and plucky characters from the lowliest of thieves to noble princes or princesses.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Enlightenment and Renaissance

Primarily about Europe in the Renaissance era, though it could also incorporate fantasy and fanciful reality, such as widespread use of the inventions of Leonardo da Vinci. A time when the arts and the sciences grew dramatically, patronage encouraged artistic development, with a notable influence from the classical world of antiquity.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery may exist but be forbidden by religious institutions. Alchemy (creation of magic items and elixirs) is a popular pursuit for scholars.
- **Technology:** As with the High Medieval era, it is the height of skilled craftsmanship, science, and invention: with clockworks,

gunpowder, and precision tools, and principles such as steam, water, and wind power being explored. The introduction of the crossbow has virtually eliminated the use of body armor.

- **Adventures:** A baroque political atmosphere and a profound schism between the Church and the Enlightenment create a dynamic setting where characters can be patrons of the arts drawn into intrigue, or they can be wayward inventors whose discoveries lead them into trouble. Alternately, they can take to the high seas or voyage to the New World.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Reputation.

Age of Exploration

This period is marked by expansion outward from Europe, into North and South America, Africa, India, China, etc. primarily for colonizing, religious conversion, territorial annexation, and opportunism. This inevitably goes badly for the indigenous peoples, victimized, exploited, and even enslaved, their cultures pushed aside, criminalized, or even eradicated. In England, Queen Elizabeth I's reign is considered a golden age: an outpouring of poetry, literature, fashion and theater. Continental Europe, however, is torn by war. Swashbuckling adventure is a convention of the period.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Sorcery, if it is practiced, is likely based on infernal origins. Less technically advanced native cultures may use magic or sorcery in the form of shamanic knowledge or witchcraft.
- **Technology:** Mostly marked by an improvement and refinement of that provided in the Renaissance. Gunpowder becomes prevalent in warfare, with early machinery defining the period. The indigenous people whose lands are annexed in during this period were generally less technologically advanced, overcome by superior firepower.
- **Adventures:** This is a challenging period due to the institutions of slavery and exploitation that come hand-in-hand with colonialist expansion. Adventures within the European mainland are less likely to deal with these topics, such as swashbuckling exploits or military campaigns between the warring churches or nobility.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Age of Sail

The early 19th century is marked by seafaring and naval battles, matched by land wars across Europe. It is a time of soldiers and officers on each side of the battlefield, pawns in futile wars, while life in court remains largely untouched.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Sorcery, if practiced, is likely to be banned by the Church.
- **Technology:** Technologically, this period is nearly identical to the Colonial era, though there were advances in ship-making and large-scale warfare devices.
- **Adventures:** Some of the world's greatest land and sea battles are being fought, providing ample grist for military-themed engagements. Adventures might delve into baroque political escapades, secret missions, ingenious spy-craft, court intrigues, or duels of honor.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Industrial Age

This era corresponds with the Victorian Age and is rife with invention. Defined almost entirely by technological and manufacturing advances that transforms the prior world into the precursor to the modern age, the Technology section below is the most informative description of the setting.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** This age saw another divide between spirituality and modernization. Magic and psychic abilities would represent one side of the struggle, while technology may offer a variety of superpowers in the form of unusual and experimental technology.
- **Technology:** Mass-production and factory-style manufacture have made standardized goods more widely available and cheaper than at any point in human history prior. Steam, coal, gas, and other energy sources are widely-known and utilized in home and cities, with cities illuminated by gaslight, steam engines racing across the United States and Europe, and the oceans traversed by great ships with coal-burning, steam-powered engines. Chemistry is being refined, and scientists are beginning to discover many of the secrets of the universe. Soon comes the automobile, radically transforming human travel and cities. Alternate histories often focus on steampunk, mixing steam power and Victorian aesthetics, and retro-futurism.
- **Adventures:** Emblematic adventures should reinforce themes of industry versus spirituality, with exploration and new technology coming into dramatic contact with old ways of life.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation.

Victorian Age

The height of the British industrial revolution and the greatest influence of the British Empire, the Victorian Age is characterized by a yawning disparity between social classes and aggressive imperialist expansion throughout Asia and Africa. It is also as a time of great austerity in personal expression.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery may be practiced by occultists and intellectuals seeking the outer limit of experience, while native cultures use these same powers in their religions. Strange, blasphemous creatures might be mutants, and the era's burgeoning interest in mentalism utilizes psychic abilities.
- **Technology:** Identical to that described in the Industrial Age (above).
- **Adventures:** The Gaslight period presents a great dichotomy between rich dilettantes living side-by-side with a seething dark underbelly containing some of the most unjust, inhumane conditions humanity has been able to inflict upon itself.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation, Sanity.

Wild West

This era in occurs in the U.S. during and in the aftermath of the Civil War, complete with cowboys, gunslingers, range wars, the Gold Rush, and frontier expansion. The West is being transformed by new rail tracks upon which arrive a steady influx of Easterners, Europeans, Chinese, and freed slaves, all seeking to make a place in the wild new world. Dangers include the various Native American nations fighting for their very survival, and the vast, untamable environment itself.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Magic or sorcery might simulate Native Americans shamans, witchcraft, voodoo, or other magical traditions that could exist.
- **Technology:** The Industrial Age has resulted in trains crossing the country, telegraphs forming a network of communication,

photography, widespread print media. The end of the era sees the first automobiles, early submarines and submersibles, and even flying machines. Electrical current replaces gaslight as the modern world begins here.

- **Adventures:** The mythic Wild West includes with legendary gunfighters enacting tales of vengeance and heroism against a stark backdrop. The horrors of slavery and the atrocities committed against Native Americans looms over this era, however, the it is advised not to dismiss these aspects and their seriousness.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation.

Pulp Era

Named after the cheap newsprint of adventure magazines that defined the era, pop culture about time between the first and second World Wars is one of mass entertainment, international travel to exotic locales, organized crime, technological innovation, treasure-hunting, rugged individualism, as well also weird horror and masked crimefighters.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Any.
- **Technology:** Pulp often features strange science, such as death rays, giant robots, flying machines, mind-altering devices, and earth tunnellers, as well as amazing marvels such as ships capable of interstellar flight, jet packs, wrist radios, flying cars, and the like. Anachronistic technology is a staple of the pulp era.
- **Adventures:** Mysteries; thrillers; grisly horror; exploration of the unknown, of space, and the hollow earth; lost cities still inhabited; aerial adventure; cliffhangers; weird and lurid tales of strange crime; square-jawed heroes fighting sinister criminal overlords and their minions; alien invasion; and even masked avengers dispensing cold justice . . . all of these are elements of possible pulp adventures.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Power Use in the Action Phase, Passions, Reputation, Sanity, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Planetary Adventure

This setting focuses on journeys to strange worlds, seen through the eyes of humans sent to them through mysterious means. There, they inevitably encounter alien species, strange customs, ancient ruins, and baroque super-technology, often side by side with sword-and-sandal adventure.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Usually mutations or psychic abilities, or even superpowers.
- **Technology:** Usually a mix of ancient and nearly forgotten technology of incredible power and utility, side-by-side with super-science from ingenious inventors. Warriors might carry energy pistols along with swords, fly airships and ride alien mounts.
- **Adventures:** Characters are usually sent to these worlds by unexplained means and often struggle to understand their new environment and its challenges. They must navigate strange customs and ancient traditions, can be agents of change in these bizarre alien places. Betrayal, epic love, dramatic betrayals, sudden reversals of fortune, alliances with strange creatures, lost cities full of ancient and forgotten technology… these are all staples of planetary adventure.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Nonhuman Characters, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

World War II

World War II and the years before and after were marked by nationalistic fervor, uncertainty, global conflict, and espionage. This is also a good setting for war-era superhero activity.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Hitler's Third Reich believed in magic as a means to power, and they may have been onto something. Also, many such settings have the era as the dawn of the world's first costumed superheroes.
- **Technology:** New developments in war technology included bigger and better battleships, more sophisticated submarines, tanks, and airplanes, etc. but all were shadowed by the emergence of the atomic bomb, which fundamentally defined the course of science and politics forever.
- **Adventures:** Characters can be resistance fighters in Occupied Europe, Allied soldiers or agents on the battlefield, spies behind enemy lines, crime-fighters and government agents fighting saboteurs back home, or even costumed superheroes battling at home and abroad.
- **Options:** Education/Knowledge Roll, Fatigue Points, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Sanity.

Noir

Noir is almost always urban and defined by a bleak outlook, with world-weary heroes, seductions, insidious criminality, amoral socialites, moral corruption, inevitable betrayals, etc. Usually, the protagonists are haunted by inner demons and must struggle to survive, alone against a hostile and uncaring universe, often still traumatized by World War II.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Usually none, but magic noir has protagonists who either oppose sorcery or use it.
- **Technology:** Equivalent to postwar America and Europe.
- **Adventures:** Inevitably, mysteries dealing with ethical and moral quandaries, often 'no way out' scenarios where normal people are trapped by bad circumstances and must resort to desperate measures.
- **Options:** Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions.

Modern

The now, dawn of the 21st century, with an advanced societies, global informational structure, unchecked capitalism, and unbounded technology, all progressing at an unimaginable pace towards a near-certain global collapse. This setting is also the default era for thrillers and modern horror. This can also cover the Cold War.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Any.
- **Technology:** Can be realistic or super-advanced, as desired.
- **Adventures:** Any, from horror, thrillers, military action, spies, corporate intrigue, near-future sci-fi, dystopian, international intrigue, conspiracy, superhero, etc.
- **Options:** These can vary by genre.

Super World

Our world but with costumed superheroes, and the ramifications of superheroes, are a part of history and modern life. A superhero setting can incorporate alt-history, parallel realities, time travel, aliens, magic, conspiracy theories, or anything desired.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Any, and many characters have more than one power type.
- **Technology:** As modern. Though super-science is known, it has yet to make a meaningful impact on the lives of most normal humans.
- **Adventures:** Tales of heroism and challenges, exploration of strange parallel dimensions, etc. Superheroes often wrestle with alter egos

and secret identities, and complex issues of right and wrong. A super world campaign can vary from a flashy four-colored world with vaguely ridiculous villains, a near-mythical treatment of superheroes as modern demigods, giddy exploration of the galaxy and strange corners of the earth, gritty street crime distinguished only by lycra bodysuits, or even a paramilitary framework for world-changing superhero intervention.

- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Nonhuman Characters, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Postapocalyptic

A catastrophe has forever shattered the modern world, plunging it into a state where humankind must struggle to survive. The cause could be a limited nuclear exchange, science gone wrong, alien invasion, the Elder Gods awaken, society breakdown, pandemic, an environmental catastrophe, or zombies… or more than one of these. The setting may include mutants, scavenged technology, and raiding gangs. Some postapocalyptic settings are like Westerns, with small enclaves of suspicious townsfolk and wandering loners who must rely on their wits and weapons to survive.

- **Character Types:** For a recent apocalypse, survivors may be from any profession, while later, options become more limited.
- **Powers:** Mutations in settings with radioactivity, while psychic abilities and superpowers may also have developed from the fallout. Centuries later, people may have rediscovered magic or sorcery as well.
- **Technology:** Depending on the nature of the catastrophe, technology can be antiquated compared to that of the modern world, identical, or it can feature scientific advances far removed from our own era. If it's aliens, there may be alien technology.
- **Adventures:** Post-apocalyptic stories usually dealing with the brutality and cost of survival, or the efforts at rebuilding society. There may be the need to scavenge old technology and learn what can be found within the ruins.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Fatigue Points, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Nonhuman Characters, Sanity.

Near-Future/Cyberpunk

Humanity has continued to interface with technology and lost much in the process. Mega-corporations have assumed governmental levels of control over citizens, and knowledge is the most valuable currency. Life is quick, convenient, cheap, and readily disposable. The union of humanity and machines has led to astonishing developments in genetic manipulation. The Dataspace is as real, if not more so than the dystopian material world.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Any, usually simulated by technology.
- **Technology:** The modern world on overdrive. Space travel may have become commonplace, and virtual worlds are limitless.
- **Adventures:** Rebellion and the quest for identity are usual themes in these adventures, and characters can find themselves running for their lives, trying to stay ahead of monolithic, impersonal foes that seem to be everywhere.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Education/ Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Sanity, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Space Exploration

In this hard science fiction setting, space exploration at a large scale is either underway or has been recently established. Life on and off Earth

continues much as it did before. Political conflicts shape the spread across the stars, and the search for habitable planets or resources dominates much exploration.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Mutations and psychic abilities may exist, but often be freakish and terrifying.
- **Technology:** Generally, this setting has a scientific approach to spacefaring, and technology is easily extrapolated from modern technology.
- **Adventures:** Many human dramas and conflicts can play out in the sea of space and presents the greatest challenge to survival. Environmental challenges or epic endeavors can be notable adventures, and exploring the edges of the Solar System may put humanity face-to-face with other mysteries, such as a first contact with alien life. Will it be horrific or wondrous?
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Increased Personal Skill Points, Nonhuman Characters, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Space Opera

This fusion of space travel and pulp adventure is writ against a galactic background, rife with aliens that work and live alongside humanity, to various degrees of cooperation. There may be some all-defining galactic conflict, or it may be a case of an epic threat to Earth (or another planet). In some space opera settings, mystical powers may exist—psychic or alien belief systems that give strange powers to their users.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Aliens might be created using mutations, psychic abilities might represent mystical powers or emergent powers, and superpowers might model cybernetic implants. In some space opera settings, sorcery or magic might also exist, drawing on scientific principles rather than supernatural forces.
- **Technology:** The technology level differs wildly from planet to planet: some may have only primitive weapons and engineering, while others will be more technologically advanced than the default. Energy weapons, lasers, personal spaceships, energy shields . . . these are all available.
- **Adventures:** This is often heavily layered with another archetypal setting, such as pulp or sword & sorcery. Characters in space opera settings will embark on high adventures and strive for grand goals such as kingship, righting wrongs, or restoration of a previous, golden age.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Nonhuman Characters, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

HYBRID SETTINGS

Any of the above sections can be combined with another, or introducing with some new element, creating a unique setting full of interesting and exciting opportunity. One could add superheroics to an ancient world setting for a campaign featuring the mythic offspring of gods, or into a sword & sorcery setting for something approximating anime. Another option is to add something new and unexpected to an existing setting, a "It's like X, but with Y…" approach, introducing aliens, zombies, vampires, or even the Cthulhu Mythos to a non-traditional choice for one of the above settings.

ALTERNATE HISTORIES

You could also take one of the settings described above and add one critical detail that's different—some technological development occurs centuries earlier, some famous battle goes a different way, a pivotal figure behaves other than history had them, or some major endeavor has an outcome other than what happened—creating what's called an 'alternate history,' like "What if the US lost the Revolutionary War?" or "What if Genghis Khan's hordes didn't turn back and instead conquered all of Europe?" Extrapolating from there, one can create an intriguing variant setting where familiar elements have been reshaped by altogether different history. This sort of setting works wonderfully on its own but can also be combined with parallel realities or even time-travel. Is there anything the characters can do to restore a world they never knew?

MULTIPLE SETTINGS

Because *Basic Roleplaying* is suitable for many different settings, you may even use them all, moving the characters through strange portals, time travel, or some other method that allows them to jump between worlds, with all of time and space as their playground. There may be only a single parallel reality that is a completely different setting (perhaps a variant of their own Earth) or it might be several parallel worlds with their own distinctive features. Alternately, characters could be essentially immortal and begin in some distant and prior epoch, having adventures that span all human history, allowing full use of almost every setting in this chapter.

POWERS AND SETTING

Chapter Four: Powers presents five different systems for powers of various types without much context—such as what settings these powers are suitable in. Each setting description above includes powers it's traditionally associated with. More novel settings can come from combining powers in settings other than the ones they're traditionally associated with.

> ***For example**, adding mutations to the Dark Ages setting, with the characters bearing these strange stigmata. Are they of divine origin, or infernal? The Church might think these strange abilities and deformities are the result of demonic blood, while the characters might believe them gifts of Heaven, and use their abilities for good, fighting to protect a word that fears and hates them.*

ADAPTATION

You can also adapt a setting from fiction, movies, television shows, comic books, other games, or some other media into a setting using these rules. There are many licensed games available, but the most obvious reason is where a setting appeals to you and the players, but there is no set of rules available. There are many methods you may choose to use to adapt a setting using *Basic Roleplaying*, with the amount of work almost entirely up to your ambition and time you're willing to do it. Following is an outline of one way to adapt a setting from another medium into a playable game:

Fidelity

How slavishly are you going to be with the setting? Are you going to try to emulate it exactly, treating it as unchangeable canon, or will you use it as a source for your own purposes? Some settings are remarkably open for creative expansion, while others are more limited. You should decide how much effort you're going to put into evoking the exact feeling of the setting, or if you will allow your own tastes and ideas to dominate. Neither way is better than the other—they just appeal to different styles of gamemastering and different player expectations.

Copying the setting exactly is appealing to fans of the original setting, which hopefully has enough leeway to let the player characters do something. The appeal is obvious: they like world and want to feel immersed in it. Player familiarity and 'buy in' helps immensely. This decision influences how you should handle the characters, described in **Characters in an Adapted Setting** (page 211).

Treating a setting as a springboard for your own creativity is best for settings that allowance for new ideas and concepts from different creative personnel, such as comic book worlds, serialized television, or multi-author book series. They can avoid the trap of too much backstory or canon, and let the players feel free to shake things up, but if they go too far from the established setting, the appeal of using that setting might be watered down.

Ask the players themselves what they'd like to see in an adapted setting and find out what level of freedom they want to have.

> ***For example,*** *for a Robin Hood campaign, you and your players might want to maintain overall theme of embattled bandit-heroes striking against the villainous authorities, trying to win the hearts and minds of the people of Nottingham. Do they want to be part of Robin Hood's band, taking orders from him and fighting alongside Will Scarlet, Maid Marian, and Friar Tuck, or do they want to replace the band entirely, with Robin Hood being little more than a fictional identity they all use. Perhaps King Richard anoints them as the wardens of Sherwood Forest and they serve to defend it against supernatural enemies of the realm, a world complete with werewolves, the dwindling denizens of Faerie, and ancient pagan gods.*

Ideally, your players and you can find common ground in playing in an adapted setting, and everyone will be happy. Having everyone invested in the setting and eager to explore it makes all the difference in play, and you may make a point of periodic check-ins to ask players how they're feeling about the game. (This is generally a good idea for any time of campaign.)

Characters in an Adapted Setting

Adapting source material into a setting is easier if you first determine what how the player characters fit into that setting. If the source material is strongly character-based, do you want the player characters to be like them, to replace them, or to cross paths with them? These are three entirely different ways to handle this.

- **Inspired By…:** Often, the main reason for wanting to use a particular setting is to play through adventures like in the source material, so having the characters be like the originals is usually a safe bet. The player characters can be original, but cast in the same mold, or serving similar roles.
- **Replacement Heroes:** Sometimes players don't want to feel like they're second-class figures, living in the shadows of a much more famous group of characters, so in this case, have them actually have the player characters replace the original figures,, either creating new characters who fill the exact same spots, or simply using the original characters as their own player characters.
- **Friendly Rivals:** Another option with huge appeal is to have the player characters exist in the same world as the original protagonists. They may know them, be related to them, or may even cross paths with them. In cases like these, it's important to make sure the players don't feel like their characters play second-fiddle to the 'real' movers and shakers.

Describing the Setting

Once you know what the players will be doing in the world it's time to move onto the setting itself. First, you should become familiar with the tone and broad level of details of the original setting, taking notes on any information that may be important. You might find a fan wiki or resource that makes things easier. There's rarely a need to note every single minor character or thruway detail, but you should pay attention to things that the players will find important.

Here's a list of sections you could use to organize the information about the setting:

- Character options, professions, powers, etc.
- Powers, if any
- Cultures or significant creatures
- Traditions or cultural beliefs
- Environments, points of interest, sacred places, etc.
- Vehicles and notable technology
- Religions or social organizations and tenets of note
- Society, mode of government, etc.
- Historical events of note
- Important figures like kings or queens, presidents, religious leaders, historical figures, etc.
- Groups, organizations, societies, orders, etc.
- Weapons and armor, if relevant
- Flora and fauna of note
- Adventure seeds, if the players are expected to seek out their own plots

This is also a time to define any high level 'rules' of the setting, if any. What power level (page 9) best represents the setting? What's the overall moral universe, such as 'good will inevitably prevail', or 'humankind is an aberration in a cold and merciless universe'.

Some settings won't require all these, and you should only note enough to run your games and answer any questions the players have. And you don't need to do it up-front. You can always tell the player that you'll think about a question you don't know the answer to and get back to them, or you can field it with the players and decide as a group.

You might even create a wiki or a shared online document when developing your setting, even opening it up to your players. If they're interested, let them contribute to the setting's creation.

Keep in mind, though, that if you're spending more time on creating or adapting the setting then will actually see play, you might want to step back and assess what's necessary vs. what's totally optional. You might thrive on exhaustively cataloging all of the elements from a setting, while others will read (or view) it once and decide "I know enough now to run this. Let's go!" Figure out which of these extremes you're closest to and act accordingly.

This process can also be followed for any original setting, only in this case, you (and potentially your players) get to make up these details.

ALLEGIANCE (OPTION)

Many settings include belief in higher powers. These could be gods, angels, saints, devils, divine principles, or even abstract philosophical concepts. A character who consistently behaves according to their beliefs has an **allegiance** to it, measured with the **allegiance score**. Acting or behaving as favored by one's deity (or deities) can earn **allegiance points** that indicate dedication. Allegiance can change during in play and new allegiances can appear as new forces become important.

Characters may earn allegiance points from more than one entity or god. People don't always behave consistently from one day to the next, and even the most moral and ethical person can commit acts of incredible evil. The system of allegiance allows a character to have allegiance scores towards opposed or multiple forces.

When one allegiance score is 20+ points higher than any other allegiance score, the character is considered **allied** with that force, and may achieve certain benefits because of that allegiance. The character must consciously acknowledge this allegiance however, regardless of the score. While an allegiance may seem obvious, they do not enjoy its benefits if they do not acknowledge it.

Allegiance points are almost never lost. They are always positive or 0. If reduced, they cannot go below 0. Allegiance points are a reward for behavior of one type or another, thus having multiple (or at least opposed) forces is ideal. Behavior that would be punished in one belief system is often rewarded in another, so that the character is not being penalized points by acting against the divine force they favor, but is instead being awarded points by the force that opposes their favored allegiance.

As an allied character gains higher levels of allegiance, they may attain status within the associated cult or church (if any), represented in titles, powers, or responsibilities.

Starting Allegiance

If allegiance is used, roll 1D6–2 (minimum 0) a number of times equal to the number of available allegiances to represent allegiance points earned prior to the beginning of the game. The gamemaster can choose one of the following for the player to do:

- Assign allegiance totals in the order they're rolled.
- Assign allegiance scores as desired.

For each (if any) power type tied to any spiritual force, add +1 point to each appropriate allegiance. Similarly, add +1 for each mutation for an appropriate allegiance. Characters of the occultist, priest, or shaman professions add allegiance points equal to ½ POW (round up) distributed as desired.

Increasing Allegiance

Actions that favor the allegiance increase the character's allegiance score. See **Creating Allegiances** (page 212) for a list of potential actions that may grant allegiance points. After an adventure, provided that the character has behaved in a manner favored by the force, ask the player to perform an allegiance test. This is identical to an experience check (see **Skill Improvement**, page 118). If successful, the character's allegiance score increases by +1D6 points.

If the character has performed actions encouraged by multiple allegiances, call for experience tests for all allegiances that apply, each gaining +1D6 points if successful.

Multiple Allegiances

No matter what guidelines are favored by their allegiance, every character has free will and can act as desired. A character can have scores in all, some, or none of the available allegiances. However, the character's alliance is only with the highest of the scores if that score is 20+ points higher than the next highest, and then only if the character acknowledges the allegiance.

Maintaining Allegiance

When an allied character acts contrary to the interests of their allegiance, you may require the player to succeed in roll of D100 to test that allegiance. If the roll is above the character's current allegiance score, you should increase the character's opposed allegiance score by an amount equal to 1D4 through 1D8, depending on the degree of the aberrant behavior. If the roll is equal to or less than the character's current allegiance score, there is no consequence.

If the character has an allegiance score of 100+ and has made commitment to that cause, you should warn the player that any actions taken against that allegiance are at the character's peril. A character with a strong allegiance may lose the benefits of the allegiance and be considered an enemy to fellow believers. There may be a divine or karmic punishment inflicted, or they may have to undertake penance to see their benefits reinstated. Penance might be fasting and prolonged meditation, a quest, an act of contrition, a sacrifice of some sort, or a ritual of purification.

Creating Allegiances

You should define the allegiances and establish what each stands for. It is best to have at least two forces vying for a player character's allegiance, to emphasize the struggle between one course of belief vs. another.

The next step is to determine how many allegiance points are awarded for various actions. The easiest way to do this is to create a checklist of actions likely to occur in the game and decide which force awards allegiance points to each action. Following are some suitable actions:

- Aiding someone weaker than yourself
- Behaving dishonorably
- Behaving honorably
- Charity towards the weak or destitute
- Creating something to honor your allied force
- Destroying a supernatural being
- Destroying something sacred to another force
- Freeing someone from imprisonment
- Invoking your allied force disrespectfully
- Invoking your allied force with respect
- Killing someone in cold blood (murder)
- Killing someone in self-defense
- Major service to your allegiance
- Minor service to your allegiance
- Protecting someone
- Saving someone's life
- Theft

For each action, it is suggested that you list the allegiance reward for an opposed action, such as 'Aiding someone weaker than yourself' might be opposed by 'Exploiting someone weaker than yourself'. Major actions are worth 3 points of allegiance, significant ones worth 2, and minor ones worth 1 point.

After this, you must decide whether allegiance offers any particular rewards or whether the allegiance points will merely be a measure of devotion to that force. These can be drawn from **Benefits of Allegiance** (following) or can be more specific to the nature of the divine force.

When the character reaches 100+ with a specific allegiance they may be considered to have become an **apotheosis** of the allegiance (page 213), a paragon of that divine force's will in the world.

A campaign incorporating Christian theology would have Heaven and Hell as the two opposed allegiances, with the highest allegiance being a strong indicator as to where the character will go when they die. A campaign setting with a pantheon of gods lets the character have allegiance to multiple gods.

Allegiance does not necessarily have to be tied to divine beings from fantasy worlds, or even religions. In a science fiction setting, allegiance could be to something as abstract as a mystical force binding all living things together, with opposed bright and shadowy sides. Allegiance in a superhero setting could be towards Law or Anarchy, or Right and Wrong. Superheroes allegiance by defeating evildoers and saving the innocent, while super villains are rewarded by committing crime and escaping justice.

Benefits to Allegiance

Decide whether there are any real benefits to allegiance, and what those are. If one allegiance grants a benefit, the others should offer equivalent benefits, such as any of the following:

- Once the character's power points are expended, they may, upon a successful allegiance roll, instantly gain up to 1/10 (10%) of their current allegiance score (round up) as an extra reserve of power points. The allegiance points do not change with this benefit. These points must be drawn as the character's last power

points are spent, otherwise they will fall unconscious. The points are otherwise identical to normal power points. This can be attempted up to three times during a game session. If using this ability, the character can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.

- With a successful allegiance roll, the character can use up to 1/5 (20%), rounded up, of their current allegiance score as temporary hit points, once per game session. The allegiance points do not change. These hit points are expended before the character's normal hit points and are not regenerated or restored in any way if lost. At the end of the session, any hit points over the character's regular hit point total disappear. If the character uses these extra hit points, they can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.
- With a successful allegiance roll, the character can create a pool equal to their entire current allegiance score as a reservoir of extra skill points that can be added to existing skill ratings for specific rolls. This can be done up to three times per session. Allegiance points do not change with this benefit. The player can choose which skills to add these points to, and how many points to add. The increases to these skill points must be declared before rolling, and the adjusted numbers are utilized if determining special successes, etc. These points can only be used for skill checks, and not resistance rolls, characteristic rolls, allegiance rolls, experience rolls, etc. A successful skill roll using these points is not eligible for an experience check. After using these extra skill points, , they can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.
- Any character who is allied to a power (20+ more than the second highest allegiance) can call for **divine intervention**. The chance of success is equal to that of a critical success. If a critical success is rolled, the power intervenes in some fashion, whether directly, through an agent or proxy, or through some clearly miraculous manifestation of the natural world. Generally, most deities have virtually unlimited power, so this aid can be extraordinary. The character can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.

Similar benefits might be created to provide fatigue points, Sanity points, or even allow for divine inspiration in the form of Idea rolls.

Apotheosis

As noted above, if the character reaches a total of 100+ with an allegiance and is allied with that allegiance, they may be asked in a vision (or some other divine message) to serve it, to become its apotheosis. Scores in other allegiances do not matter. Apotheosis is not automatic. The character must demonstrate through their faith and actions that this is warranted. If the offer is accepted, an apotheosis occurs, changing the character into a living avatar and steadfast champion of the force.

Benefits to allegiance continue to accrue. The character maintains free will and can even betray the force they serve. If the character refuses apotheosis, their allegiance points continue to increase normally until death or retirement.

Accepting apotheosis may confer one or more significant benefits to the character. You are encouraged to craft suitable rewards and benefits. Following are examples of what apotheosis might bestow:

- Achieving some monumental personal goal, such as meeting their one true love, or finding a spiritual retreat where it is possible to achieve perfect happiness and escape from the turmoil of the world. This could even end tragically, as well, with the character achieving an epic destiny where the only suitable outcome is death.

- A limited immortality where the body does not age normally or suffer from disease or other afflictions. The character's healing rate does not change and they can still be slain by weapons or other injury. Twisted gods may choose to make this immortal body a mixed blessing, such as hideous scarring, endless pain, or some supernatural marking that cannot be removed.
- An increase of permanent hit points to CON+SIZ (or simply doubling current hit points). If hit locations are used (page 21), these are also adjusted accordingly. If total hit points (page 20) are used, double them.
- Double the skill ratings of any three skills of the player's choice, suitable to the nature of the allegiance.
- A weapon, item, or significant artifact is provided through divine means, either as the result of a quest or some other means of gaining it. This item is incredibly powerful and recognizable by any who share or opposed to the character's allegiance.
- Being consumed entirely by the divine force and reborn as its living avatar, losing or gaining characteristic points as appropriate, with maximum power points doubling (though the POW characteristic remains unchanged). The character may even become a divine being akin to an angel (page 233) or demon (page 234).

At this point, the player character has a POW×3 chance of initiating direct and immediate communication with the force. The force dominates the character's life, communicating with them frequently and directly. This may even become a hindrance; with the force interfering in actions that do not further its will.

PASSIONS (OPTION)

Adventures are often full of intense emotion, which can lead to heights of heroism and depths of tragedy. These are defined as **passions**, distinct emotional connections to various entities, groups, places, or even oneself. Love, Hate, Fear, Devotion, and Loyalty are often placed in terrible conflict with one another, as well as challenging personal codes of honor. These are rated like skills and rolled on D100, allowing the character to become **inspired**, their actions charged by their beliefs. Inspired characters are more able to overcome challenges with superhuman effort and a likelihood of success. Failing such a roll may lead to **despair** or depression.

Like skills, passions increase through successful use with experience, and some of them can be reduced through actions contrary to the passion. Players always control their characters' behaviors: passions merely inform how the character is feeling about the subject, no matter how differently they act.

Basic Passions

The most common passions are described here, though this list is not exhaustive. Like a skill specialty, a parenthesis after a passion indicates that a suitable focus must be chosen.

Devotion (deity)

Devotion to a god or divine force represents a personal devotion of one's life to a deity or some divine force or entity. This indicates a sincere emotional dedication and strong faith. When used for inspiration, that faith manifests within the character, imbuing them with some small measure of courage.

Fear (type or individual)

Fear is perhaps one of the strongest passions, driving all manner of behavior, for better or worse. Fear can cause an individual to flee from the subject or act irrationally to escape its presence, or it can even cause an adverse reaction.

Common Fears can be focused on a particular group or an individual, such as a former enemy or treacherous relative. Fear cannot be defined towards general concepts or forces, such as 'old age' or 'earthquakes', and is generally not useful when the subject is something any reasonable being would fear, like death.

To inspire the character, the subject of the Fear must either be present, or their presence imminent. One cannot by motivated by Fear subject is hundreds of kilometers away and shows no sign of arrival. The threat of confronting the subject must be real and immediate.

The resulting behavior from being inspired by Fear can be to aid some form of avoidance, flight, or defense from the subject, or even to spur violent opposition when cornered. At times, though, the gamemaster may ask the player to roll for their Fear passion if the character is embarking on a course of action that would put them into contact with the source of fear.

Hate (group or individual)

Hatred unfortunately motivates many people, whether through racism, bigotry, or based on a particular hatred for a past wrong, real or imagined.

When used for inspiration, Hatred can only be used against a specific subject or type of subjects and does not apply to those allied with the subject of the hatred. Hates can also be aimed at specific people, usually for specific personal reasons.

Honor

Honor is a martial virtue, a personal code of dignity, integrity, and pride. Personal honor is not a slippery issue, subject to interpretation. The difference between honorable action and dishonorable action is clear to everyone, no matter how they behave. The **Dishonor** table lists things that most people agree are dishonorable actions for an average person. Performing these deeds diminishes honor.

DISHONOR

Dishonorable Act	Honor Lost
Attacking an unarmed foe	−5%
Cowardice	−5%
Desertion from battle	−5%
Refusing to offer mercy when it is deserved	−5%
Plundering a holy place of your religion	−5%
Discourtesy to someone under your protection	−10%
Flagrant cowardice	−15%
Treason against your allies	−15%
Breaking an oath	−25%
Attacking or stealing from the weak	−25%
Killing someone weaker than oneself	−35%
Rape or sexual assault	−50%
Killing family members	−50%

Honor is specific to the character and does not include other social obligations. One's Honor is not abused if someone insults their family—Love (family) covers that. Likewise, someone insulting one's god should consult the Devotion (deity) or Loyalty (temple) Passion, not Honor.

Honor can include almost anything that a character chooses it to, and their own individual code of honor should be developed when this passion is taken. Someone with an extremely high Honor may be offended by anything that anyone says that could be construed as an insult, while a character with low or no Honor may not care what is said of them.

Love

Love is an emotional bond or attraction felt by one individual for another individual or group. A character may have many loves.

- **Love (family)** is a natural emotion common to humankind in any age or culture. One's close family is often the first and most important community one belongs to. Family members are expected to support, protect, and avenge each other.
- **Love (individual)** indicates a deep feeling and attraction for another person. It usually implies physical and carnal commitment, although it may also include unrequited love.

Loyalty (group or place)

Loyalty is the cornerstone of all of society beyond the family. It is the social bond which members of a community feel for each other. With it, one can call upon that community for support.

A character with conflicting loyalties may use their respective Loyalty ratings to determine an appropriate course of action. The player can choose based on the higher Loyalty rating or test them as an opposed roll. Thus, a player can use an opposed roll to determine if their character will obey their hometown loyalty or to an individual if those loyalties are in conflict.

- **Loyalty (community)** is the measure of the bond a character has with their culture. It typically includes an obligation to avenge slights or injuries against that community or its members. Loyalty (community) is used to gain the support of the community in question.
- **Loyalty (location)** is the measure of one's willingness to live, fight, and die for a location they feel immense attachment to. This can be a hometown, a city, or even a country.
- **Loyalty (individual)** is the measure of a character's bond to specific individual, such as ruler, boss, or another patron. A warrior owes personal loyalty to their leader; in return, the leader rewards their followers with compensation, support, or other privileges. Loyalty (individual) is also used to gain the personal support of that individual.

Other passions may exist, such as Distrust (individual or group), Respect (individual or group), or Greed, which works like Honor and can spur avaricious behavior. You can work with your players to devise other passions, as desired, but if personality traits are being used, be careful not to overlap too much with those.

Starting Passions

The easiest way to determine starting passions is to let the players define them. When characters are created, let each player pick three passions their character starts with one passion at 80% and two at 60%.

If desired, passions can be assigned or modified based on the character's culture or place of origin.

Using Passions

Passions define a character's life intentions and serve to inspire them. The gamemaster may call for a passion roll. At other times, the player may suggest and request one, with the gamemaster's approval. Here are some of the ways that passions can affect play.

Roleplaying Guidelines

At their most basic, a passion is a numerical rating of the degree of intensity a character feels for the subject of the passion, and can be used by the player when there is a question of how the character would act. The higher the passion, the more likely the character is going to act on it. The lower a passion, the more the character can ignore it.

Players always have control over their characters, but passion rolls can be used when a clear course of action is not obvious, or when the gamemaster thinks the character is behaving drastically 'out of character'. While the player is still in charge, the gamemaster might portray going against a passion (rolled or a high score) with comments like "Your character has a bad feeling about this but pushes on" or something to that effect.

Demonstration and Support

A character with Loyalty might be called upon to roll it convincing someone else that they both share the same fealty. Trying to demonstrate one's Devotion, Hatred, Love, or Loyalty to sway others and be a good example are great ways to use passions in play. Succeed, and mutual support and aid may be offered; fail and the character may be turned away as a poseur and fraud.

Inspiration

A character may attempt to be inspired by their passion and request a roll to augment a skill, with the gamemaster's approval. Only one attempt at inspiration can be made in a situation or 'scene'—such as the duration of a fight, social gathering, an action sequence, etc. The character does not get to make an inspiration roll every time the same action is attempted. The inspiration lasts for the time it takes to complete the activity, such as the duration of the combat or battle (with a maximum duration of one day). If in doubt, the gamemaster determines the duration of the inspiration. It does not take any time to attempt an inspiration based on a passion—they can happen as part of another action.

The gamemaster has the final say on whether a passion roll for inspiration can be attempted. Players are warned that passion rolls can be extremely risky as well as rewarding: a fumbled passion roll results in despair! If the character has already rolled to be inspired by a passion during the situation at hand, they cannot try to be inspired again, even by a different passion. Additionally, the bonus from inspiration cannot be combined with an augment from another skill. (page 38)

Remember that the gamemaster has the final say on the appropriateness of attempting Inspiration and its duration. The player must roll against the passion's rating on a D100:

- **Critical Success:** One chosen skill temporarily receives a +50% bonus for the duration of the task or situation. An experience check is gained in the passion.
- **Special Success:** One chosen skill temporarily receives a +30% bonus for the duration of the task or situation. An experience check is gained in the passion.
- **Success:** One chosen skill temporarily receives a +20% bonus for the duration of the task or situation. An experience check is gained in the passion.
- **Failure:** The character is despondent, modifying all further rolls made in the situation or scene by –10%. This penalty ends with the next scene.
- **Fumble:** The passion is immediately modified by –1D10% and the character is overcome by despair (see the Despair table, following). For the duration of the despair, the character is effectively incapable of doing anything more than running away or hiding, though the gamemaster may allow some degree of action beyond this in the right circumstances.

DESPAIR

Result	Duration of Despair
1–3	1D10 combat rounds
4–7	4D10+10 combat rounds
8–9	Until sunset, sunrise, or similar length of time
10	1D3 game days

If a passion is ever reduced to 0%, removed it from the character sheet. A passion cannot go below 0. Additionally, the character can never regain a passion that has been lost in this fashion: it has been exhausted and cannot be renewed unless the gamemaster determines that an extraordinary set of circumstances or behavior merits its return.

Mandatory Rolls

Passions at 80% or higher represent staunchly held beliefs and connections and are not to be taken lightly or used only when convenient. Such extreme passions can require the player to make mandatory rolls due to these beliefs, if the gamemaster chooses. In general, the gamemaster has several options if the player has their character do something inappropriate for their rating in a relevant passion, such as a character with Hate (Nazis) 95% letting some Nazis go after a fight.

- Reduce the passion to below 80%.
- Oppose the passion with another passion as an opposed roll. If the opposed ability wins the contest with the Rune or passion, the player can act in a different manner without modifying the primary passion. In this case, the conflicting passion won out.

Gaining a Passion

Passions may easily be gained during play. Characters should get many opportunities to gain enemies, loved ones, allies, and loyalties. Both the player and gamemaster should agree upon introducing a new passion. When something significant occurs to the character, the gamemaster or player may suggest that a passion has been generated. Generally, the starting value is 60%, but might be higher based on circumstances.

Voluntarily Reducing a Passion

A character with a passion 80% or higher who performs an action that directly contradicts that passion may either simply lower the passion to 80% (or lower) or try to oppose that passion with another one. However, the character may wish to reduce a passion in the following manner:

- When experience is determined, pick a passion to be lowered. If has an experience check, it cannot be lowered at this time. If it has not been tested and the player wishes to lower it, roll as if checking for experience. If the experience roll is unsuccessful, reduce the passion by –1D6.
- A passion 50% or lower can be largely ignored in play, as it represents ambivalence about the subject. It can be removed from the character sheet, as desired.

REPUTATION (OPTION)

Reputation measures a character's fame, notoriety, and renown. It includes one's family background, if relevant, and any actions they've done to earn a reputation. As a character's Reputation increases, people grow increasingly aware of them, knowing more and more about them.

Gaining Reputation

Reputation is gained by doing things that gain the attention of others. Getting into the news, getting elected to office, doing something big and noteworthy, becoming a celebrity, helping someone famous, owning a famous item—these are all examples of things that can increase a character's Reputation.

Reputation does not increase because of experience checks. Instead, it is increased at the gamemaster's discretion, based on achievements and events that occur during play. Reputation can also increase through negative deeds. It does not decrease as passions do: behaving dishonorably, doing evil, failing spectacularly can make one just as famous (or even more so) than epic accomplishments.

The **Reputation Gains** table (below) provides examples about how Reputation might increase. Note that actions must be known to others—Reputation is not gained for actions taken in secrecy or obscurity. The gamemaster is encouraged to use these examples as listed or to use them as guidelines for other increases.

Reputation from a single act provides only one gain, though the gamemaster may modify it for multiple occurrences of the same action, up to the total of the possible roll. If you're using passions (page 214), it's possible to gain Reputation for an act and lose Honor for it at the same time.

Tracking Reputation

The player should track the sources of their character's Reputation and how much has been gained. Again, once Reputation has increased, it does not decrease. One merely becomes famous for different things. The gamemaster may, however, modify its chance of success (see **Reputation Modifiers**, page 218).

Using Reputation

Reputation is used in two ways: to identify someone, or to impress others (essentially saying "Do you know who I am?").

Identifying Someone

Reputation may be used by the gamemaster to have nonplayer characters identify a character and the reason they're famous, or the players can roll to see if their characters have heard of a particular nonplayer character.

Apply any appropriate Reputation bonuses or penalties (see **Reputation Modifiers**, page 218) and roll. This is different than usual skills or characteristics, in that rolls are against the subject's Reputation, not one's own. A character may try to augment their Reputation (or someone else's) with some sort of Communication skill, essentially talking someone up. If appropriate, a Knowledge or Lore skill might be used to augment a subject's Reputation if they are notable in that field.

If the roll succeeds, the one whose reputation was rolled against is recognized. This likely affects how the nonplayer character reacts to the character. Better qualities successes yield more information. Failure means they're not known, and a fumble means a disastrous misunderstanding or case of mistaken identity.

Someone can always try to deny who they are, but this grows increasingly difficult in more modern settings.

Impressing Others

Reputation may be used to try to augment some Communication skills, if appropriate. Similarly, the gamemaster may allow the character to attempt to sway a nonplayer character's reaction to the character.

To use Reputation to augment another skill, roll against the character's Reputation:

- **Critical Success:** The character's Reputation adds a +50% bonus to the Communication skill to be used.
- **Special Success:** The character's Reputation adds a +30% bonus to the Communication skill to be used.
- **Success:** The character's Reputation adds a +20% bonus to the Communication skill to be used.
- **Failure:** The character subtracts –20% from the Communication skill to be used.
- **Fumble:** The character subtracts –50% from the Communication skill to be used.

REPUTATION GAINS

Deed	Gain	Examples	
Notable	+1D3	• Swearing an oath of some import. • Defeating an equally powerful foe. • Outstanding use of a skill; achieving success in a noteworthy endeavor. • A noteworthy marriage. • Taking part in a great journey. • Becoming a parent in a fortuitous birth. • Having an important guest in your home or hall. • Making a shrewd alliance. • Taking an important part in a worship ceremony. • Having some local media (newspaper, scribe, minstrel, etc.) talk about you.	• Having a popular blog, writing a book, being a minor celebrity, etc. • A weird accident or stroke of luck. • Lying and being discovered. • Minor criminal acts. • Breaking an oath of import. • Acting discourteously to guests in your home or hall. • A particularly significant fumble or visible failure. • Losing a family member or ally. • Breaking an alliance. • Minor sacrilege. • Bringing minor shame upon one's family.
Extraordinary	+1D6	• Swearing an epic oath. • Defeating a superior foe (or number of foes). • Critical use of a skill when it is important. • An outstanding success in an extraordinary endeavor. • A prestigious marriage. • Having twins/triplets/etc. • A major alliance. • Being the subject of a popular tale, well-known song, or a major news story. • Publishing a popular book or releasing a popular piece of music. • Featured in a very successful media performance.	• A freak stroke of luck. • Earning a major enemy. • Significant act of sacrilege. • Betraying or bringing harm to someone under your protection (such as a guest). • A major criminal act. • Breaking a major oath. • Kin-slaying. • A spectacular fumble or highly visible failure. • Bringing major dishonor upon one's family.
Heroic	+2D6 or more	• Achieving a legendary success at a nearly impossible endeavor. • Leading an army to victory or defeating one single-handedly. • Defeating an enemy of divine or immortal nature. • Marrying a king or queen or becoming one. • Being the focus of a divine prophecy.	• Featured in a popular book or documentary. • Building something epic like a new major temple or palace. • A spectacular defeat. • Slaying one's parents or children. • An act of the darkest treachery or infamy.

Reputation Modifiers

Reputation is modified by the social distance of the audience. Usually, Reputation among family, place of employment, and neighborhood or home area is increased. On the other hand, Reputation diminishes with strangers and outsiders. Famous politicians, heroes, and celebrities might be completely unknown in distant places. Similarly, as time goes on, Reputations become less relevant. Add modifiers to a character's Reputation based on the observer's social proximity to them.

REPUTATION MODIFIERS

Observer is...	Modifier
...from the same family, company, or locality, or has mutual acquaintances.	+25%
...well-traveled, follows gossip/news, is well-connected.	+10–25%
...from the same culture or region.	–
...from outside the character's social network or cultural group, or is out of touch with recent news.	–25%
...from outside the area where the character earned their Reputation, but within the same geographical region, or is of a different generation.	–50%
...from outside of the geographical region where the character earned their Reputation, or many years removed from the character.	–75%

SANITY (OPTION)

There are many ways characters can become injured physically, through violence or accidents, but for some games, the most potent threat is that posed to the stability of the human mind. As defined in *Chapter Two: Characters*, characters have an optional characteristic called **Sanity**, represented by **Sanity points** (SAN). The more Sanity points a character has, the more psychologically stable they are. Sanity points are lost through trauma: encounters with horrific or unearthly monsters, witnessing death or violent events, or undergoing deliberate physical harm like torture. When exposed to Sanity-challenging events, characters roll against their current Sanity point total. Failure means a loss of SAN points, while success sometimes means only less SAN is lost. Sanity points can be regained through counseling, successfully defeating the source of the SAN loss, or by personal betterment.

These rules are a radical simplification of the Sanity system as presented in Chaosium Inc.'s *Call of Cthulhu* game line; players or gamemasters wishing for more of a robust system are encouraged to seek out that line of games.

As a note, this system is an abstraction specifically for the purpose of gameplay and does not intend to approximate or dimmish the reality of mental illness or trivialize it in any fashion.

Sanity Mechanics

Each character has a Sanity characteristic, abbreviated as SAN. A character's initial SAN equals their POW×5. A character's SAN does not change because their POW later changes. Half the character's starting SAN is their **temporary insanity score** (TIS). Though SAN will vary dramatically throughout gameplay, their TIS never changes. At the gamemaster's discretion, a game featuring normal humans may have the TIS equal to POW, yielding a much higher chance of temporary insanity.

Occasionally, a character must make a successful SAN roll on D100 or lose SAN. The chance of success is equal to or less than the character's current SAN. The gamemaster will roll for how much SAN is lost if the roll fails. In some cases, an especially horrible or freakish experience may cost SAN even if the roll is successful, though this is likely a fraction of the total possible SAN loss.

Each character sheet includes an area to note current SAN and TIS; starting SAN and TIS should be marked permanently. Current SAN should be written in pencil (if a paper sheet), like hit points or power point, as it changes with every loss.

If a character ever loses SAN greater than or equal to their TIS in a 5-minute period (equal to one turn), they then go temporarily insane. Roll 1D6 for the character on the **Temporary Insanity** table and roll 1D8 on the **Temporary Insanity Duration table** (both following). The first table shows how the character is affected, and the second shows for how long it lasts.

When suffering temporary insanity, tell the player what their character is undergoing and ask them to roleplay it, if appropriate.

Time, counseling, potent drugs, some powers, or even divine intervention might heal temporary insanity. Appropriate drugs might be either made with an appropriate skill or purchased, if available. Additional means of dealing with temporary insanity can exist, at the gamemaster's discretion.

TEMPORARY INSANITY

Result	Description and Effects
1	Catatonia; the character assumes a fetal position.
2	Stupefaction; the character babbles incessantly or stares into space without seeing anything.
3	Paranoia; the character is lucid but convinced of unreasonable suspicions about almost anything.
4	Phobia; the character stricken by great fear of something related to the source of the insanity.
5	Amnesia; the character cannot remember who they are or what happened to them during or around the time of the SAN loss.
6	Suicidal despondency* or a death-wish; the character is convinced that their own death is their only means of escaping the mental torment.

* The character can never be forced to perform a suicidal act, and the gamemaster should use this result carefully, paying attention to the sensitivity of the player(s) involved.

TEMPORARY INSANITY DURATION

Result	Time Affected
1	Five minutes (one turn)
2	One hour
3	Two hours
4	Twelve hours
5	One day
6	Two days
7	One week
8	Two weeks

When a character's SAN reaches 0, they are considered permanently and completely insane, and are now either retired from play or become a nonplayer character to be controlled by the gamemaster. The only cure for permanent insanity is divine intervention or some other major process (extensive psychological reprogramming, years of therapy and meditation, etc.) to be determined by the gamemaster, if at all possible. If so, the amount of SAN restored should be decided accordingly.

Maximum Sanity

Certain skills, such as the Blasphemous Lore specialty of the Knowledge skill (page 45) may reduce the maximum possible Sanity. As this skill increases, subtract it from 100, the result being the maximum Sanity the character may ever have, even if this is less than their original starting SAN.

***For example**, someone with starting SAN 75 (POW 15×5) with Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 43% has a new maximum Sanity of 57% (100–43=57).*

Restoring Sanity Points

A character can regain lost SAN, but never to an amount exceeding their starting maximum Sanity total. Following are some ways SAN can be restored:

- **Success:** Defeating or destroying a cause of SAN loss can be worth an amount equal to half the potential SAN loss the cause threatened. The gamemaster should interpret the conditions for 'defeating' and determine the exact amount restored. This can be rolled or awarded as a blanket amount to anyone taking part in the defeat, not just those who lost SAN.
- **Counseling:** See the Psychotherapy skill (page 48). Generally, a successful skill roll regains 1D3–1 SAN.
- **Drugs:** Some drugs or substances can, at the gamemaster's discretion, restore lost SAN.
- **Powers:** Several psychic abilities and the Transfer superpower may restore lost SAN.
- **Self-improvement:** Attaining a 91% rating in a skill instantly restores 2D6 SAN points, representing the self-confidence and discipline associated with mastering a skill (this is a one-time bonus). If a character begins with this skill rating or higher, there is no SAN gain.

All Sanity gains are entirely at the discretion of the gamemaster, the sole judge of the situation and of what is appropriate.

Sanity Costs by Situation

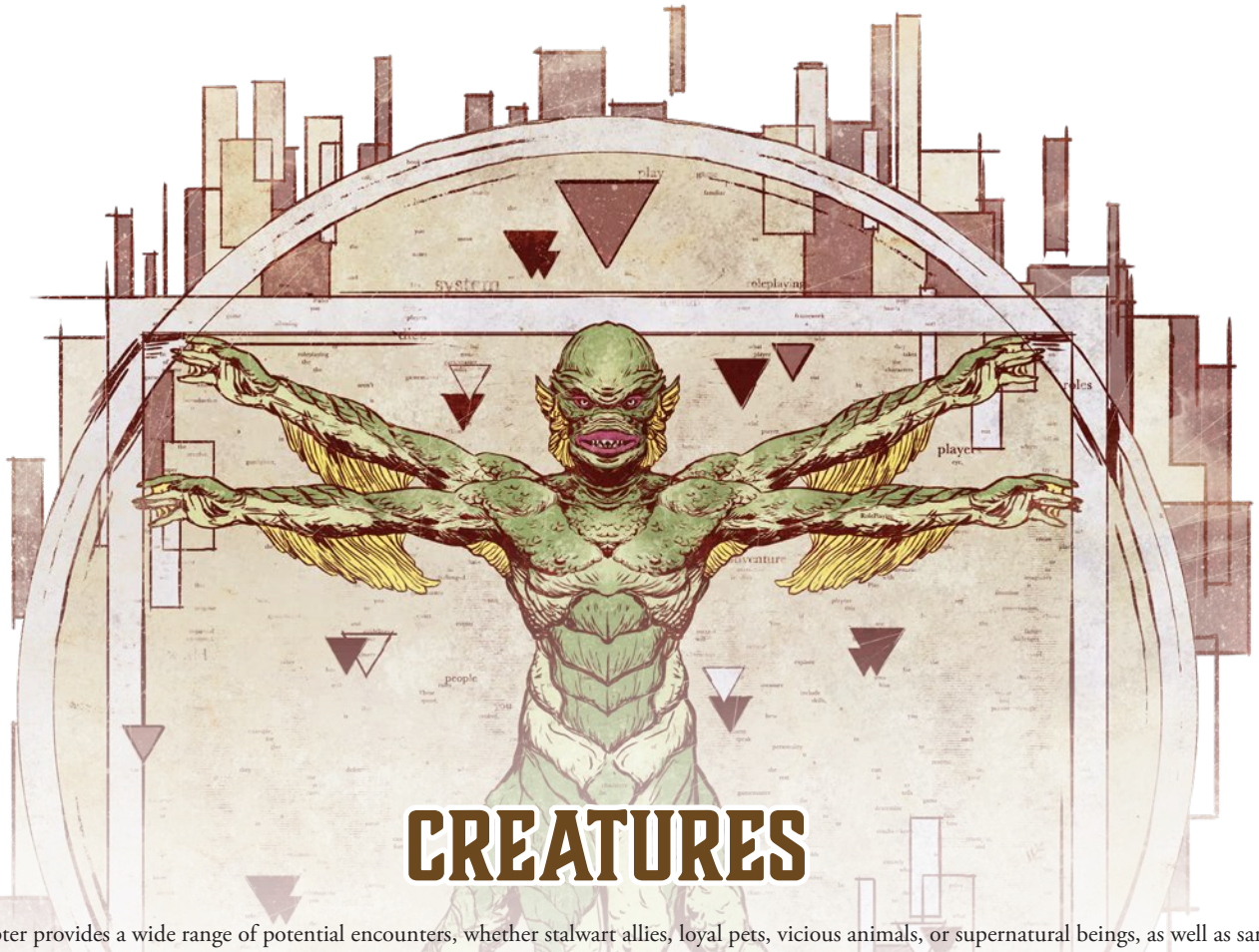
The following entries discuss those sanity-shaking situations which may occur in play. The gamemaster should determine additional situations. The value in front of the / is the amount if a successful SAN roll is made, while the amount on the other side of it is the amount rolled if the roll fails.

SANITY LOSSES

Source of SAN Loss	Potential Loss
Something unsetting and grotesque, or a sudden scare	0/1
Minor unnatural creatures (zombies, werewolves, vampires, etc.)	0/1D3+
Scene of a violent death, finding a dead body	0/1D3
Finding a mutilated or mangled body	1/1D4
Witnessing a gruesome death	1/1D6
Suffering minor torture	1D3/1D6
Reality-challenging visions (Chaos, unnatural corruption, etc.)	0/1d8
Freakish and horrible monsters	1D2+/1D6+
Being afflicted by some horrible transformation	1D6/2D10
Monstrous alien gods	1D10/1D100

In the event of multiple exposures to the same source of SAN loss, the gamemaster may lessen the effects of later exposure (perhaps only allowing multiple exposures to add up to the total possible rolled) or ignore the need to roll again altogether if the character has become familiarized or desensitized to the sanity-harming experience.

TIME
EXPIRED



CREATURES

This chapter provides a wide range of potential encounters, whether stalwart allies, loyal pets, vicious animals, or supernatural beings, as well as sample characters from the past, fantasy settings, the modern world, and the future. There is no difference rules-wise between a creature and a nonplayer character—the gamemaster characterizes them with description and roleplaying. They all follow the same rules as characters. However, they each represent an appropriate specimen and are not balanced in the same fashion as a player character. You can use these creatures 'as is' or customize them as desired. No optional rules are used in these descriptions, though you can add or modify those as required (see Customizing Creatures and Nonplayer Characters (page 246).

All entries are described as 'creatures' for convenience, though they might be human or unliving machines.

FORMAT FOR ENTRIES

Nearly every creature and nonplayer character follows the same format, though natural animals are in an abbreviated table.

- **Name:** A generic title.
- **Description:** Brief information about the entry.
- **Characteristics:** Characteristics are presented in both a rolled range and an average (below). Some entries may have missing characteristics: it is either negligible or not applicable (see Creatures Without Characteristics, page 221).
- **Hit Points (HP):** Usually the average of SIZ and CON, for some entries, hit points may be figured differently, such as by POW or another characteristic. At 1 hit point a living creature is unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, and when it reaches or goes below 0, it dies.
- **Movement Rate (MOV):** The primary means of movement is listed first. Creatures that are immobile have no MOV rate.
- **Damage Modifier (DM):** The average for the average creature, if any. Recalculate if necessary for larger or smaller specimens.
- **Armor:** The armor value and type of armor, if any.
- **Attacks:** The attack type, the skill rating, and damage roll. For attacks, '+dm' means it is included, and '+½dm' is when damage modifier is halved. Special combat abilities or conditions are noted here. All available attacks occur on the same DEX rank, unless specified otherwise. Generally, a claw attack does 1D6+dm, and a bite or horn does 1D3+dm.
- **Skills:** The most relevant skills for an average encounter. For unlisted skills, humans have the base chances as a default, and additional skills should be determined by the gamemaster as appropriate (see Measuring Skill Ratings, page 34).
- **Powers:** Any powers an average specimen possesses, with types specified if necessary.

Power points are not listed but are equivalent to POW, where applicable.

Creatures Without Characteristics

Some creatures have a '—' in place of certain characteristics, meaning it is not applicable or has a value of 0. A creature without a characteristic cannot be affected by attacks against or conditions that affect that characteristic. Following are guidelines for creatures lacking specific characteristics:

- **Strength (STR):** A creature without STR cannot interact with physical objects, other than moving around them.
- **Constitution (CON):** A creature without CON is immune to disease, radiation, poison, and other attacks requiring a resistance roll versus CON. It is never tired or fatigued. If it has SIZ and a material presence, its hit points are based on a different characteristic.

CREATURES AS PLAYER CHARACTERS (OPTION)

Players may want to experience the game by role-playing members of non-human races (this bestiary calls every non-human a "creature"), especially in settings where they're appropriate such as fantasy or science fiction. Wanting to play radically different creatures from humankind is a natural desire for role-playing, and if doing so fits the gamemaster's choice of setting, it should be allowed. However, certain creatures are easier to role-play than others.

Incomplete creatures (those without a value in one or more characteristics) are often too limited for enjoyment. Additionally, it may be less enjoyable for a player attempting to role-play a creature whose INT characteristic is generated with a roll of less than 3D6 (or 2D6+6).

The gamemaster may also discourage players from trying to role-play extremely powerful or philosophically unappealing beings, based on the setting and the particular campaign. For example, in a fantasy setting where the majority of the player characters are playing elves, the gamemaster may not allow players to create trolls or dwarf player characters due to the strife that these (traditional) elf-enemies will bring to the player character group. Additionally, a modern horror campaign where players are fighting occult threats may be wholly inappropriate for a demonic or angelic player character (despite their appropriateness to the setting). Similarly, if the creature would create undue difficulties due to its very nature, such as extreme size, social enmity, or cultural role, the gamemaster should disallow players to choose to run it as a player character race. All such decisions are at the gamemaster's discretion, and the player should ask the gamemaster if permitted to run a particular type of creature in the campaign.

These warnings aside, all creatures in this chapter are presented in as much detail as is required for use as a player character, though the gamemaster may wish to expand these entries to suit their particular setting and campaign. It is assumed in most cases that these statistics represent full-grown or mature versions of the creatures, meaning that the gamemaster should be able to limit the range of powers available to a player character version of the creature, with the assumption that in time, the player character creature may learn these additional powers and special abilities.

To choose whether or not a particular creature is suitable for the campaign as a player character, the gamemaster should ask three questions:

- **Is a player character version of this creature inappropriate for the campaign setting?**
- **Will this creature cause difficulties for other players over the course of the campaign?**
- **Will this creature unbalance the rest of the campaign?**

If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes", the gamemaster is advised to disallow the creature for use as a player character, or to do so with the most stringent of conditions or special allowances.

- **Size (SIZ):** A creature without a SIZ lacks a physical body or has a microscopic one. It usually cannot interact with physical objects. Its hit points are likely based on CON, if it has any conventional hit points at all.
- **Intelligence (INT):** Intelligent, sentient creatures have the normal range of INT, while animals and other non-sentient creatures possess 'fixed' INT, generally a rating of 3–5, and are ruled by instinct, not reason. A creature with fixed-INT or with no INT is unaffected by powers that affect rational thought, though it may be affected by powers that manipulate emotions.
- **Power (POW):** Even without POW, a creature may still have power points, but it does not regenerate them normally. Instead, it has some power or special ability letting it gain power points. Like living creatures, when it reaches 0 it is 'unconscious' until it somehow regains at least 1 power point.
- **Dexterity (DEX):** A creature without DEX is either immobile or is essentially stationary. If it has an attack, it occurs on DEX rank 1.
- **Charisma (CHA):** Though all creatures have some form of CHA, it is rarely relevant to those not of the same species. If necessary, assign CHA based on 1D6 for plain and featureless creatures, up to 6D6+ for beings of divine beauty. If relevant, temporarily modify the CHA of a creature from another species by –10 while dealing with those outside its species.

NATURAL ANIMALS

These creatures are familiar to most players and thus their descriptions only focus on game mechanics. These represent generic examples rather than specific breeds or species, and can be modified as desired.

NOTES ON NATURAL ANIMALS

Most natural animals have rudimentary intelligence (INT 3–5), rarely fight to the death, and are generally territorial in behavior. If a special success is rolled for any attack, bites and claws are slashing (rarely impaling), tentacles and constriction are entangling and crushing, tramples or kicks are crushing and potentially do knockbacks (based on the creature's SIZ). For creatures with poison, see page 151. Attacks are presented in the order of preference. Creatures with no Dodge skill either do not Dodge or the skill is not applicable. Damage modifiers are average; modify if the STR or SIZ indicate so.

Alligator or Crocodile: Alligators are smaller and weaker (–1D6 to STR and SIZ), have smaller jaws (1D8+dm), and are less aggressive than crocodiles.

Bear: Bears can attack twice in a round, using either two separate claw attacks or one claw and one bite attack. Grizzlies are larger,

NATURAL CREATURES

Name	STR	CON	SIZ	POW	DEX	MOV	Armor	HP	DM	Attack and %, Damage	Skills
Alligator or Crocodile	4D6+12 25w	3D6+6 18–19	4D6+12 25	3D6 10–11	2D6 7	Walk 7 Swim 6	5 pt. hide	22	+2D6	Bite 50%, 1D10+dm	Dodge 30%, Hide 50%, Search 35%, Sense 30%, Stealth 75%, Track 15%
Bear	3D6+10 20–21	2D6+6 13	3D6+10 20–21	3D6 10–11	3D6 10–11	Walk 12 Swim 2	3 pt. fur	17	+2D6	Bite 25%, 1D10; Claw 25%, 1D6+dm	Climb 35%, Move Quietly 35%, Search 35%, Sense 35%
Brontosaur	4D10+40 62	2D10+30 41	4D10+50 72	1D6+8 11–12	1D6 3–4	Walk 7	14 pt. hide	57	+7D6	Tail Lash 50%, 1D6+½dm; Trample 75%, 7D6+dm	Listen 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 35%
Condor, Eagle. etc.	3D6+12 22–23	3D6 10–11	3D6+6 16–17	2D6+6 13	2D6+12 19	Fly 14 Walk 2	1 pt. feathers	14	+1D6	Bite 45%,1D6; Claw 45%, 1D6+dm	Dodge 50%, Sense 25%, Search 90%
Dog	2D6 7	3D6 10–11	1D6+1 4–5	2D6 7	2D6+6 13	Walk 10 Swim 6	–	7–8	–1D4	Bite 30%, 1D6+½dm	Dodge 55%, Listen 75%, Sense 90%
Elephant	6D6+34 55	3D6+16 26–27	6D6+42 63	2D6+6 13	3D6 10–11	Walk 10 Swim 2	4-pt. skin	45	+6D6	Trample 50%, 4D6+dm; Plunge 25%,6D6+dm; Trunk 50%, constriction; Gore 25%, 2D6+dm	Listen 65%, Search 35%, Sense 55%
Gorilla	4D6+12 26	3D6+6 16–17	2D6+12 19	2D6 7	3D6+6 16–17	Walk 12 Swim 2	3-pt. fur	16	+2D6	Bite 45%, 2D6; Wrestle 45%, 3D6+dm	Climb 70%, Hide 40%, Listen 35%, Move Quietly 60%, Search 30%, Sense 40%
Hawk	1D3 2	2D4 5	1D2 1–2	2D6 7	3D6+18 28–29	Fly 12 Walk 1	–	4	–1D6	Claw 45%, 1D4+dm; Bite 30%, 1D3+dm	Dodge 75%, Spot 100%
Horse	3D6+18 28–29	2D6+6 13	4D6+12 26	3D6 10–11	3D6 10–11	Walk 12 Swim 2	1-pt. hide	20	+2D6	Kick 20%, 2D8+dm; Plunge 10%, 2D6+dm; Bite 10%, 1D6	Dodge 45%, Hide 25%,Move Quietly 25%, Sense 80%
Insect Swarm	–	–	–	–	–	Fly 12 Walk 10	–	–	–	See description.	Search 50%
Lion	2D6+12 19	3D6 10–11	3D6+6 16–17	2D6+6 13	2D6+12 19	Walk 10 Swim 2	2-pt. skin	14	+1 D6	Bite 40%, 1D10; Claw 60%. 1D6+dm; Rip 80%, 2D6+dm	Dodge 20%, Hide 20%, Listen 30%, Sense 40%, Track 15%
Rat Pack	–	–	–	–	–	Walk 10 Swim 6	–	–	–	# of packs ×5%, 1D3 damage	Climb 75%, Search 75%, Swim 75%
Shark	3D6+12 22–23	2D6+9 16	3D6+12 22–23	3D6 10–11	2D6+3 10	Swim 10	5-pt skin	19–20	+2D6	Bite 75%, 2D6+dm; Fin Slash 50%, 2D3+½dm	Sense 95%, Swim 100%
Snake (Constrictor)	3D6+12 22–23	2D6+6 13	5D6 17–18	3D6 10–11	2D6+6 13	Slither 6 Swim 4	1-pt. skin	15–16	+1D6	Bite 65%, 1D4+½dm; Constrict 40%, 1D6+dm; Swallow 100%, special	Climb 85%, Dodge 60%, Hide 75%, Sense 75%, Stealth 90%, Swim 70%
Snake (Venomous)	2D4 5	2D6 7	2D4 5	1D8 4–5	3D6 10–11	Slither 6 Swim 4	–	6	–1D6	Bite 70%, 1D2+1/2dm (impaling) + poison (see page 151).	Climb 50%, Dodge 50%, Hide 80%, Sense 65%, Stealth 90%, Swim 70%
Squid (Giant)	10D6 35	2D6+6 13	10D6 35	3D6 10–11	2D6+12 19	Swim 10 'Walk' 4	2-pt. hide	24	+3D6	Beak 45%, 1D10+½dm + poison (see page 151); Tentacle 45%, 1D6+dm	Hide 70%, Swim 100%
Tiger	3D6+12 22–23	3D6 10–11	3D6+6 16–17	3D6 10–11	2D6+12 19	Walk 12	2-pt. skin	13– 14/	+1D6	Bite 45%, 1D10+½dm; Claw 70%, 1D8+dm; Ripping 80%, 2D8+dm	Dodge 45%, Hide 80%, Jump 55%, Stealth 75%, Sense 70%, Track 50%
Tyrannosaurus Rex	10D6+32 67	4D6+21 35	6D6+32 53	2D6+6 13	2D6+9 16	Walk 12	10-pt. hide	44/	+6D6	Bite 50%, 2D6+dm; Foreclaw 35%, 1D4+½dm; Kick 45%, 1D6+dm	Jump 50%, Listen 45%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%, Track 50%
Wolf	2D6+6 13	3D6 10–11	2D6+1 8	3D6 10–11	2D6+6 13	Walk 10	2-pt. fur	9–10	–	Bite 30%, 1D8+½dm	Dodge 35%, Listen 75%, Sense 90%, Spot 60%, Track 80%

stronger (STR +1D6, CON +2, SIZ +2, +1 armor), and fiercer (+10% to combat skills). Polar bears are larger and more powerful (STR +2D6, CON +1D6+2, SIZ +2D6, +3 armor, +20% to attack skills, Swim 80%).

Brontosaur: Brontosaurs can attack once per round, using a tail lash or a trample if they are moving. The tail lash is an area-effect sweep attack (page 154). Trample is only used against targets who are prone or have a SIZ of less than 1/3 the brontosaur's SIZ.

Dog: Wild dogs form packs of 1D8+3 or more. For larger dogs, use the statistics for wolves.

Elephant: Though they prefer to merely charge or trample, an elephant can attack with its trunk. If so, no damage is done. Instead, the target must make a resistance roll of their STR versus half the elephant's STR. If they fail, they are placed in position to be automatically trampled on the next round. Alternatively, the elephant may fling the victim away, doing falling damage based on one meter per 3 points of the elephant's STR. For every 6 SIZ points the victim has over 16, they drop two meters closer and take less damage.

Gorilla: A gorilla can attack twice each round. It may strike twice with its fists, bite and strike, or bite and grapple. If a grapple succeeds, it grips its target and does its full damage modifier each round. If grappling, it may continue to bite, an *Easy* attack. Female gorillas are smaller than males (–1D6 to STR and SIZ).

Hawk: A hawk attacks with both claws simultaneously and bites 5 ranks later.

SANITY LOSS AND CREATURES

This chapter contains many creatures that might cause characters to lose sanity if viewed (see Sanity, page 218). The following creatures and can cause these SAN losses when a sanity roll is made.

Creature	SAN Roll Succeeds	SAN Roll Fails
Alien, Grey	0	−1D6
Alien, Xenomorph	1	−1D8
Angel	0 (or +1D3 SAN)	−1D3
Blob	1	−1D20
Cyborg (Grotesque)	0	−1D4
Demon, Greater	1D3	−2D6
Demon, Lesser	1	−1D6
Elemental	0	−1D4
Ghost	0	−1D4 (or more)
Ghoul	0	−1D6
Mummy	1	−1D8
Mutant (Grotesque)	0	−1D4
Robot, Killer	0	−1D4
Skeleton	0	−1D6
Vampire	1	−1D4 (or more)
Werewolf	0	−1D8
Zombie	1	−1D8

Some natural creatures may cause SAN loss, depending on the circumstances. SAN loss also depends on the setting, as supernatural creatures are unremarkable in a fantasy setting.

Horse: Horses not trained for combat flee when encountering blood, fire, gunfire, screams, or explosions. Warhorses are trained for violence and hold ground if the rider succeeds with a Ride check. Warhorses are usually bred for ruggedness (+2 to STR, CON, and SIZ).

Insect Swarm: The size of the hive determines the number of stings inflicted each round. A tiny wasp nest can sting 1D6 times per round, scaling up to a huge beehive or anthill doing 8D6. The dice type may be adjusted based on the severity of the venom (1 pt. for minor irritation all the way up to D10 for vicious predatory insects). Each character attacked by swarm is automatically stung the rolled number of times each combat round until they escape, deter, or destroy the swarm. An insect swarm attack for 2D6 combat rounds before giving up. Unless the targets are completely covered or enclosed there is no protection against an insect swarm. A *Difficult* Dodge roll can avoid an insect swarm, or other means (fire, smoke, poison, etc.) can be used to drive them away. Any protective gear the character may be wearing will reduce the number of stings per D6, with light gear reducing each die by –1, beekeeper gear by –4, and complete covering meaning no stings whatsoever. Once stung, the venom factor is based on the type of insect: bees are 20, wasps 15, army ants 10. Divide the total number of stings by the venom factor to get the venom potency (POT). After 1D6 hours, each

stung character must make a resistance roll of CON versus the venom's POT. If successful, they resist the venom's POT and take half the venom's POT (round up) in hit point damage. If they fail the resistance roll, they take the venom's full potency as hit point damage. Successful intervention with an antivenom or equivalent treatment can reduce the number of stings by another 1D4–1 per 1D6, with a successful First Aid roll and the proper medical supplies. A character with a successful First Aid check can make a second *Difficult* Chemistry roll to improvise an antivenom from available chemicals or substances (see Poison Antidotes, page 151).

Lion: A lion can make one claw attack and one bite attack each combat round. If both attacks hit, the lion hangs on for the next round, continuing to bite. Instead of clawing, it rakes with its hind claws.

Rat Pack: Each 'pack' consists of ten rats. Multiply the number of rat packs by ×5: this result is the attack chance for each pack each combat round (roll for each pack). Each successful attack does 1D3 damage to the leg and/or abdomen hit locations (if hit locations are used). Special successes do slashing damage. A rat pack attack can be Dodged but not parried. Attacks against them are *Difficult*, but successful attack automatically kills one rat and chases away the rest of that pack, lowering the effectiveness of further attacks. Rat bites may also be diseased (see Disease, page 146).

Shark: If a shark's bite misses or is dodged, it attempts a fin slash five DEX ranks later. If a shark's bite is parried or hits, it does not attempt a fin slash. After a successful bite attack, some sharks (like great whites) keep biting and thrashing around for subsequent combat rounds (an *Easy* attack for the same damage) until dislodged or the death of the target. A giant shark has STR and SIZ 6D6+24, CON 4D6+18, 39 hit points, and a +5D6 damage modifier.

Snake (Constrictor): A constrictor can attack twice in a combat round, first biting and then attempting constriction 5 DEX ranks later. If the constriction attack hits, the target is wrapped in the constrictor's coils. The target can gasp but cannot yell or shout. Each round of constriction does damage to the target's hit points (chest hit location). Only rigid chest armor (if armor by hit location is being used) reduces this damage. If a limb is free, the target can make *Difficult* attacks against the constrictor. If no limb is free, the target cannot attack under most circumstances (gamemaster's discretion). To become completely free from constriction, the target must make a successful resistance roll of their STR against the constrictor's STR, instead of attacking in a round. For partial freedom, a *Difficult* Agility roll frees a single arm or other limb. A constricted target must succeed in a Stamina roll or fall unconscious. Once a target is either unconscious or dead, the constrictor swallows them whole. Unless wearing breathing apparatus that survived being crushed, the target suffocates (page 145). A giant constrictor adds +2D6 to STR and SIZ, has 19 hit points, a +2D6 damage modifier, and 4-point scaled hide.

Snake (Venomous): Consult the sections on poison (page 151) and sample poisons (page 186) for more information about various types of venomous snakes. A giant venomous snake has STR and SIZ 4D6+12, 17 hit points, and a +2D6 damage modifier.

Squid (Giant): A squid can attack up to five different targets simultaneously with its beak and ten tentacles. A squid's poison has a POT equivalent to its CON. The first tentacle successfully striking a target holds onto it, and when a second connects, the two constrict the target until the target can escape or cut free (each tentacle has 2 hit points). Each tentacle remaining around a target does normal damage each combat round. To escape from a tentacle, make a successful resistance roll of STR vs. the squid's STR, or a *Difficult* Effort roll to get a hand free to attack. Attacks against a squid while being held by its tentacles are *Difficult*. A leviathan-sized squid capable of taking on boats and whales has SIZ and STR +1D6 per meter of increased span from tentacle tip to tip, increasing hit points and damage modifier accordingly.

Tiger: A tiger can make two simultaneous claws and one bite each combat round. The bite comes 5 DEX ranks after the claw attacks. If both claws successfully strike the target, the tiger hangs on and rips with its hind claws on the next round while continuing to bite.

Tyrannosaurus Rex: A tyrannosaurus attacks first by biting. If successful, 5 DEX rounds later it attacks with both foreclaws to seize the target for further tearing. For larger targets, it substitutes the foreclaw attacks for a single kick attack, sometimes even climbing on to the target and attacking with bite and two kicks in the next combat round.

Wolf: Wolves hunt in packs ranging from a dozen to 40 or more. In combat, wolves will often fight cooperatively. Several wolves may attack the same target simultaneously, ensuring that some are not parried or Dodged. One or two large wolves may attempt to knock their target down (see Knockdown, page 149). When the target is prone, others rush to tear at them. The gamemaster may also use these statistics to represent a large dog.

FANTASY CREATURES

These are common to fantasy and horror settings, and can be used as allies, foes, or even player characters, modified as desired.

Centaur

Half-human, half-horse, said to be wise and pastoral beings, keepers of lore, fine craftsmen, great musicians, and fierce warriors. They dwell in plains or forests, and freely intermingle with humans, sometimes serving as mentors or guardians.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+6	3D6	4D6+12	2D6+6	3D6	3D6+3	3D6
16–17	10–11	26	13	10–11	13–14	10–11

Move: 12 **Hit Points:** 19

Damage Modifier: +1D4 (human); +2D6 (horse)

Armor: 1-point hide (can wear armor)

Attacks:

- Composite Bow 45%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Lance 35%, 1D10+1+dm (impaling)
- Bastard Sword 40%, 1D10+1+dm (slashing)
- Target Shield 50%, 1D2+dm (knockback)
- Kick 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Rear and Plunge 35%, 2D8+dm (crushing)
- Trample 25%, 2D6+dm (crushing)

A centaur can kick 5 DEX ranks after striking with a melee weapon, though not when charging with lance. Their damage modifier with melee weapons is based upon STR ×2, but normal for kicks, tramples, or charges.

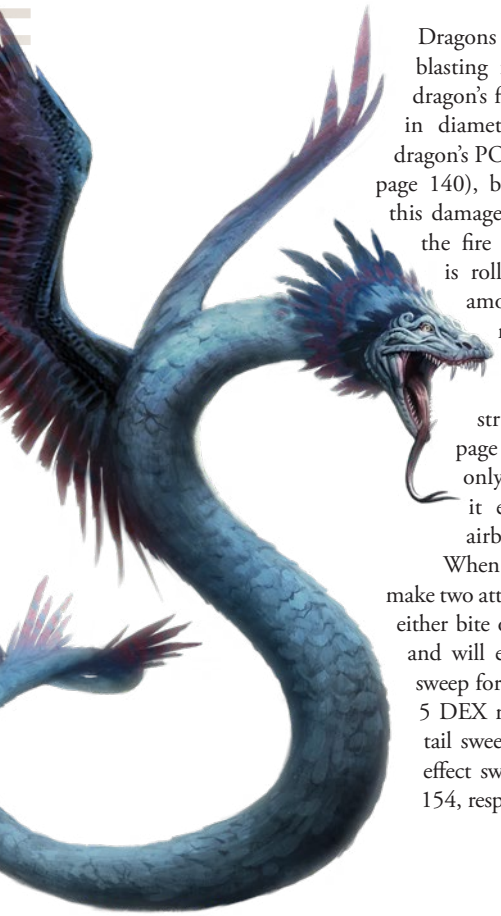
Powers: Centaurs prefer magic to sorcery. A centaur with enough POW for magic has the following spells: Enhance 35%, Heal 60%, Illusion 45%, Perception 40%, and Vision 50%.
Skills: Appraise 50%, Bargain 35%, Command 25%, Dodge 35%, Etiquette 35%, Insight 40%, First Aid 40%, Jump 60%, Knowledge (History) 50%, Listen 35%, Perform (Lyre) 35%, Sense 50%, Spot 40%, Swim 35%, Track 25%.

Dragon

Gigantic, flame-breathing flying reptiles with huge claws and teeth, tough armored hides, dragons are solitary creatures, living alone and devastating their surrounding countryside. Some dragons are intelligent, but many are merely cunning beasts. They are often hoarders, collecting gold or other treasures within their lairs. These statistics represent a bestial dragon. Dragons may be of different types, distinguished by color and breath weapon (see below). Some dragons may even be flightless or have significantly different characteristics.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
20D6	10D6	20D6	10	4D6+6	3D6
70	35	70	10	20	10–11

Move: 4 (10 flying) **Hit Points:** 53
Damage Modifier: +8D6 **Armor:** 12-point scales
Attacks:
- Breathe Flame 75%, 4D6+special (see below)
- Bite 65%, 3D6+dm (impaling)
- Claw 50%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Tail 50%, 1D6+½dm (crushing)



Dragons attack by flying overhead and blasting fire down at their targets. A dragon's fire covers an area three meters in diameter with range equal to the dragon's POW in meters (see Area Attacks, page 140), but armor will protect against this damage. If the hit locations are used, the fire affects all hit locations: 4D6 is rolled once; and divide damage among hit locations. A dragon must spend 1D6 power points (or fatigue points) to belch flame. Additionally, any target struck is likely set on fire (see page 148). When flying, a dragon only has its breath attack unless it enters close combat with an airborne target.

When on the ground, a dragon can make two attacks each combat round: it may either bite or breathe flame for one attack and will either use a claw strike or tail sweep for the other. The second attack is 5 DEX ranks after the first. A dragon's tail sweep attack is handled as an area effect sweep attack (see pages 140 and 154, respectively).

Skills: Dodge 35%, Fly 100%, Listen 65%, Sense 50%, Spot 60%, Track 45%.
Powers: Dragons are intensely magical beings. Intelligent dragons have an INT of 4D6 and know magic or sorcery. If so, the dragon has additional skills such as Speak Language, various Knowledges, and even Appraise. Dragons may also have breath weapons other than flame (see Energy Projection, page 99).

Dwarf

Dwarves traditionally live underground in caverns and underground catacombs. They're famed for short tempers, fine craftsmanship, ancient grudges, excessive drinking, and long beards. They pride themselves on their ancestries, and differences between the various tribes of dwarves are significant.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6	1D6+12	1D4+4	2D6+6	3D6	3D6	3D6
14	15–16	6–7	13	10–11	10–11	10–11

Move: 6 **Hit Points:** 12
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** 8 points (chain and a light helm)
Attacks:
- Hammer 35%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Battleaxe 50%, 1D8+2+dm (bleeding)
- Heavy Crossbow 40%, 2D4+2 (impaling)
- Buckler 50%, 1D2+dm (knockback)

Skills: Appraise 50%, Bargain 45%, Brawl 50%, Craft (blacksmithing) 45%, Dodge 40%, Grapple 45%, Knowledge (Dwarf-lore) 35%, Language (Human) 35%, Language (Dwarf) 65%, Listen 45%, Repair (weapons and armor) 35%, Spot 45%, Status 35%, Throw 35%.
Powers: Traditionally, dwarves shun magic, though some use magic or sorcery. Dwarves have a natural ability like Super Sense (Dark Vision) (page 105), with levels equivalent to ½ (round up) their POW.

Elf

Elves are traditionally forest dwellers with a strong connection to nature and the wild. They are long-lived, sometimes even immortal, and are often aloof and mysterious. There are many types of elves, from those who dwell in the wild woods, ascetic high elves, and those who ply the seas.

Humans and elves sometimes form relationships, though offspring are uncommon. Half-elves inherit traits from either parent. To create a half-elf, roll each characteristic as if for both races and average the result (round up). Any inherent powers from the elf lineage are halved or averaged, as appropriate.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+2	3D6	2D4+4	3D6+6	2D6+6	3D6+3	3D6
9	10–11	9	16–17	13	13–14	10–11

Move: 11 **Hit Points:** 10
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** 1 point (soft leather)
Attacks:
- Longbow 55%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Short sword 45%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Short Spear 40%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 55%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)

Skills: Climb 65%, Dodge 55%, First Aid 45%, Hide 35%, Jump 45%, Knowledge (Elf-lore) 45%, Language (Human) 40%, Language (Elvish) 85%, Listen 55%, Perform (Sing) 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 45%, Stealth 45%, Swim 35%, Track 40%.

Powers: Elves commonly use magic and have a natural ability like Super Sense (Night Vision) (page 105) with levels equal to ½ their POW (round up). Common magic for an elf is Dispel 45%, Heal 50%, Illusion 35%, Perception 60%, Resistance 50%, and Vision 60%.

Ghost

A ghost is the spiritual remnant of a living being still attached to the world of the living, aware or unaware of its deathly nature. They haunt locations (castles, mansions, graveyards, etc.), objects (weapons, vehicles, etc.) or even a specific person, usually connected with its death or former life. Most ghosts are malignant and hate the living. Ghosts are frequently insane, driven by a desire to right whatever wrong they feel was committed against them so that they might be allowed to 'pass on' to a higher plane. A ghost may not even understand this compulsion.

Ghosts can appear as wispy humanoid figures, glowing manifestations, solid-looking creatures, cloudy figures, headless things, vehicles, animals, etc. They are known by any number of names: spirits, shades, spooks, haunts, poltergeists, apparitions, phantoms, specters, phantasms, etc.

Ghosts are often shaped by the circumstances of their death and their environment. Following are some options and suggestions for utilizing ghosts in a setting:

- Ghosts of redemption may appear as figures from a character's past, uttering omens. Or it may be drawn to protect someone it loved in life, providing aid and assistance in a time of great need.
- A ghost may appear as a spiritual advisor, relaying messages from a higher power. These rarely threaten or harm the living and may even provide guidance and mentorship.
- A poltergeist can be violent, throwing items and victims telekinetically around a room and using objects as improvised weapons.
- Ghost vehicles tend to appear at the same spot at the same time and date repeatedly. Boarding a ghostly train or ship is usually a method of transportation to another dimension or time. Characters who do this may disappear forever or may have to solve the haunting before being released.
- An entire building may itself be a ghost. If the building's mystery or dark secret is discovered, the building itself may disappear forever.

Ghosts usually possess only INT and POW, though some ghosts may have CHA. A ghost may, however, be solid, and have characteristics (STR, SIZ, and DEX) as a living being, though it will never have a CON value. Some material ghosts may not even know they are dead.

INT	POW	CHA
2D6+6	4D6	3D6
13	14	10–11

Move: 14 (equal to POW) **Hit Points:** None
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** None (immaterial, see below).
Attacks:

- Ghostly Combat POW vs. POW, 1D3 power points (see below).

Powers: Ghosts can attack in ghostly combat, a POW vs. POW resistance roll. This looks as if the ghost is clawing at, enveloping, or otherwise physically attacking the target. If the ghost overcomes the target's POW, the target loses 1D3 power points (some ghosts can inflict hit point damage instead). If the ghost is overcome, it loses 1D3 power points. More powerful ghosts may drain 1D6 power points (or more) from a target, but only lose 1D3 power points if overcome by the intended target. This combat continues each combat round until the target is unconscious, or either side has fled. Unlike vampires, the drained power points are simply lost. A ghost flees before it reaches 0 power points. If a ghost reduces a target to 0 power points, it may possess them, usually causing the target to commit suicide or harm another person. Even if a ghost possesses a target, it remains tied to the site of its haunting and cannot leave.

In addition to ghostly combat, a ghost may have other powers suited to its former existence and role in the setting. Ghosts are immaterial and are not subject to the limitations of the Intangibility superpower (page 101). Traditional powers include psychic powers such as Cryokinesis, Mind Blast, Mind Control, Pyrokinesis, Telekinesis, or superpowers such as Drain, Energy Control, Invisibility, Teleport, and Weather Control. Ghosts may be vulnerable to magic, sorcery, psychic powers, or superpowers.

Skills: As appropriate.

Ghoul

Ghouls are hideously deformed humans who feed on the dead, caught between life and death. They are bestial in temperament and have little guiding intelligence. Most ghouls lack POW, being formed when a malignant spirit possesses a freshly dead corpse. The corpse is transfigured, animated, and must now devour flesh (living or dead) for sustenance.

Ghouls gain power points by consuming corpses, at the rate of 1 power point per 3 SIZ points devoured. A ghoul must expend 1 power point every morning or collapse, its spirit forced to return to the otherworld. If this happens, the ghouls' corpse rapidly decomposes, upon which it is finally dead. Additionally, every hour of exposure to sunlight forces a ghoul to spend 1 power point. Under normal circumstances, a ghoul will have 2D6+6 power points stored.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	DEX
4D6	3D6	2D6+6	3D6	3D6
14	10–11	13	10–11	10–11

Move: 8 **Hit Points:** 12
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None (may wear armor)

Attacks:
- Claw 30%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Bite 30%, 1D6+dm (bleeding) + venom (see below)
- Howl 100%, special (see below)

A ghoul attacks simultaneously with both claws and a bite. When it bites, the ghoul injects the target with venom with POT equal to its CON. The target must make a resistance roll of their CON vs. the venom's POT. If the target loses, the venom's full POT enters their system. If they successfully resist, only 1D3 of the venom's POT is injected. When the total POT injected is equal to or greater than a bitten character's CON, they are paralyzed until an antidote counteracts the venom. The unfortunate character will remain in this state for as many days as they have points of CON, losing 1 point of CON each day. A character bitten by a ghoul (but not paralyzed) purges the venom from their system at the rate of 1 POT per day.

Ghouls use a blood-chilling howl in combat against anyone within ½ the ghoul's CON in meters (round up). When a ghoul howls, make a resistance roll of its current power points versus each target's INT. If more than one ghoul howls, use the power point total of the ghoul with the most power points. If a target is overcome, they are stunned until all howling stops. If a character resists the howl's effects, they must try again on the next round. A character that successfully resists for five successive combat rounds becomes temporarily immune to its effects (gamemaster's discretion). The ghoul's howl costs 1 power point to use. The magic spells Countermagic and Resist Magic do not protect against ghoulish howling.

Skills: Climb 60%, Dodge 45%, Grapple 50%, Hide 35%, Jump 50%, Listen 60%, Sense 40%, Spot 50%, Stealth 60%
Powers: More intelligent ghouls may know sorcery. All ghouls have a natural ability like Super Sense (Night Vision) (page 105) with levels equal to ½ the ghoul's INT (round up).

Giant

Giants are huge, ugly humanoids with a taste for human flesh. They are surly and untrustworthy creatures and usually only marginally less destructive than a tornado. Traditionally giants have several different cultures, based on their environment, such as hill giants, sea giants, mountain giants, fire giants, frost giants, etc. These types usually differ dramatically in intelligence, size, and behavior. Some of them have societies, courts, and their own languages.

The following is a fully-grown, 16-meter tall 'generic' giant. Giants have lifespans like humans and grow 1D6+6 SIZ and 1D6+6 STR every five years. For a less powerful giant, subtract age until it is the desired STR and SIZ.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
24D6+48	16D6+48	24D6+48	3D6	3D6	3D6	2D6
132	104	132	10–11	10–11	10–11	7

Move: 18 **Hit Points:** 118
Damage Modifier: +15D6 **Armor:** 21-point skin (see below)
Attacks:
- Club 35%, 3D6+dm (crushing + knockback)
- Kick/Stomp 35%, 1D6+dm (crushing + knockback)
- Thrown Rock 35%, 2D6+½dm (crushing)

Giants use enormous clubs or tree trunks in battle and specialize in sweep attacks (page 154). A giant's club has hit points equal to 10+ its damage modifier dice.

Powers: Some powerful and older giants use magic or sorcery.
Skills: Sense 60%, Spot 40%, Throw 35%

Giants have tough skin worth 6 points plus their damage modifier in D6s, thus a giant with a 15D6 damage modifier has 21-point skin. Some giants wear leg armor (often plate), which adds to the armor value on those locations. If hit locations are used, normal-sized characters fighting giants should roll only 1D10 to determine the location struck, unless they are using missile weapons.

Griffin

Griffins are chimerical creatures, combined of the body and rear legs of a lion, and the head, forelegs, and wings of an eagle. These flying predators traditionally have mountaintop nests and are often depicted in heraldic imagery.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
10D6	3D6+12	10D6	6	3D6+6	3D6+12
35	22–23	35	6	16–17	22–23

Move: 8 (12 flying) **Hit Points:** 29
Damage Modifier: +3D6 **Armor:** 6-point hide
Attacks:
- Bite 70%, 1D6+dm (impaling)
- Claw 70%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)

A griffin attacks with two claws simultaneously and bites 5 DEX ranks later.

Skills: Dodge 30%, Fly 100%, Listen 50%, Sense 65%, Spot 75%.

Halfling

Halflings are small human-like beings, generally peaceful and civilized. Traditionally, they are fond of eating, pipe-smoking, and drinking, and have quiet professions such as farming, crafting, and innkeeping. Halflings usually live in small rural communities in farmhouses or underground warrens. They often forsake wearing shoes.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6	2D6+12	1D3+3	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+10	3D6
7	19	4–5	13	10	17	10–11

Move: 6 **Hit Points:** 12
Damage Modifier: –1D6 **Armor:** None (may wear armor)
Attacks:

- Short Sword 35%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Sling 35%, 1D8+½dm (crushing)
- Thrown Rock 50%, 1D4 (no damage modifier, crushing)
- Halflings are expert at throwing rocks and do not suffer their negative damage modifier.

Skills: Appraise 35%, Bargain 35%, Craft (farming) 75%, Dodge 60%, Drive (wagon) 45%, Grapple 35%, Hide 65%, Knowledge (Halfling-lore) 35%, Language (Halfling) 75%, Language (Human) 65%, Listen 65%, Sense 45%, Spot 50%, Throw 50%.
Powers: Traditionally, halflings shun magic, though some rare few use magic. Fewer still use sorcery.

Minotaur

Minotaurs are humanoids with bull's heads and hoofed feet. Surly and violent, they have little civilization of their own, preferring to dwell in ruins or in the wild. Some can speak, while others are bestial and have no language abilities.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+12	1D6+12	3D6+12	2D6	3D6	3D6	2D6
22–23	15–16	22–23	7	10–11	10–11	7

Move: 6 **Hit Points:** 19
Damage Modifier: +2D6 **Armor:** 3-point hide (can wear other armor, usually leather)
Attacks:

- Great Axe 55%, 3D6+dm (bleeding)
- Head Butt 35%, 1D6+dm (knockback)
- Brawl 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

A minotaur can use either a head butt or weapon attack in combat round. A minotaur can only use both in a round if it is otherwise capable of making two attacks in a round.

Skills: Dodge 40%, Listen 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 35%, Track 55%.
Powers: Minotaurs normally disdain magic of any sort, and only the rarest knows any spells. If a minotaur is wounded or achieves a special success while striking an opponent, it goes berserk for 24–CON turns. This is like the sorcery spell Fury (page 84). A berserk minotaur can attempt to shake off the rage by making a successful roll of INT×1. After this berserk rage, it is considered fatigued (if fatigue is not used, all rolls are *Difficult*) until it has had a chance to rest.

Mummy

A mummy is an undead creature formed from a preserved, dried corpse, brought back to a semblance of life through a curse or powerful necromancy. Some cults keep mummies in their temples as guardians, while other mummies rise from the dead to protect their tombs from grave robbery. Some mummies speak, while others remain silent. Not all mummies are wrapped in bandages—some wear jewelry and items of great value as befitted their status in life.

Because of the dry, desiccated state of their flesh, fire is particularly effective against mummies. It is twice as easy to set a mummy afire as it is another normal target, and though damage is normal, the fires are more difficult to extinguish (lower the chance the fire will die out by half). Powers that use fire also have this effect.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
6D6	4D6+3	2D6+6	3D6	1D6+12	2D6	–
21	17	13	10–11	15–16	7	–

Move: 8 **Hit Points:** 15
Damage Modifier: +1D6 **Armor:** 3-point skin (may wear armor)
Attacks:

- Fist 70%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 25%, special
- Short Sword 45%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)

A mummy can attack with two fist attacks each combat round. If it succeeds with both attacks, it attempts to grapple and choke its target in the next round. A mummy may use ancient weapons appropriate to the era of its former life.

Skills: Language (ancient tongue) 90%, Listen 50%, Sense 45%, Spot 50%, Stealth 50%.
Powers: Mummies may remember sorcery from their former existence. A mummy sorcerer might have these spells in memory: Brazier of Power (4), Gift of the Earth (4), Pox (1), Sorcerer's Talons (2). If a mummy's tomb is intact, it likely has access to its grimoire, spell scrolls, and many magic items.

Orc

Orcs are savage, bestial humanoids who despise humanity, elves, dwarves, and nearly any other people they encounter. They usually have greyish skin, fangs, and pointed ears, and are sometimes referred to as goblins. Orcs prefer darkness but can function well enough in daylight. They have a rough civilization based almost entirely on brutality and enslavement of their own as well as any unlucky captives. They even practice cannibalism on weak or unlucky members of their own species. Orcs often serve the forces of darkness, or prey upon others for their own amusement and enrichment. Some orcs ride giant wolves, bred as mounts. Many types of orcs could exist, based on environmental, cultural, regional, or other variances. Common types are the formidable 'greater' orcs (STR 5D6, CON 3D6+3, and SIZ 3D6+6) and pestilential 'lesser' orcs (STR 3D6, SIZ 2D6).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6	3D6	2D6+2	3D6	2D6+3	4D6	2D6
14	10–11	9	10–11	10	14	7

Move: 8 **Hit Points:** 10
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** 6-point ring and light helmet

Attacks:
- Scimitar 35%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)
- Composite Bow 35%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Short Spear 35%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 35%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Spiked Shield 35%, 1D3+dm (impaling)

Skills: Climb 55%, Dodge 40%, Hide 35%, Knowledge (Orc-lore) 35%, Language (Human) 25%, Language (Orcish) 60%, Listen 50%, Ride (wolf) 50%, Sense 35%, Spot 45%, Stealth 40%, Track 30%
Powers: Sorcery is the most fearsome power in orc society, with orc sorcerers often serving as priests or leaders. A sorcery-using orc has a POW of 16+ and may know the following spells: Cloak of Night (2), Pox (1), Rat's Vision (1), Sorcerer's Razor (1), Sorcerer's Speed (2), Ward (3).

Skeleton

Animated skeletons are either created or summoned by magic or the result of an ancient curse. Most are human remains, but skeletons of other species exist. Animated skeletons are almost always encountered guarding some treasure, ancient tomb, or some other place of ill omen. Skeletons move at the same speed they did in life but cannot swim. They have no fatigue points and never tire.

STR	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
3D6	2D6+6	3D6	1	3D6
10–11	13	10–11	1	10–11

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 13 (see below)
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** None (may wear armor, also see below for immunities)

Attacks:
- Broadsword 55%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)
- Self Bow 50%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Large Round Shield 55%, 1D4+dm (knockback)
- Skills: Dodge 40%

Skeletons have no CON, and their hit points equals their SIZ. They are immune to the special effects from bleeding and impaling hits. They take no damage whatsoever from thrusting weapons, unless the hit was a special success or critical hit, in which case, the damage is taken but the secondary effects are ignored.

Dried bones are brittle, and snap and splinter easily from a heavy blow. Regardless of the skeleton's current hit points, any blow striking a skeleton has a percentage chance of destroying the skeleton equal to the damage done multiplied by ×4, in addition to the normal hit point loss. If the roll is successful, the skeleton instantly shatters to shards of bone.

Troll

Trolls are huge, flesh-eating humanoids with rough greenish-black hide, hairy shoulders and arms, and long claws. They traditionally dwell in mountains and forests, preferring to live in caves or sometimes beneath bridges. Some trolls can speak, while others are bestial and cannot. They are nocturnal creatures and shun sunlight whenever they can. There may be other species of troll, usually named for their environments (stone, ice, wood, rock, hill, mountain, sand, sea, lake, swamp, bog, etc.), differing in coloration and other ways. Smarter trolls use more sophisticated weapons, while some will even wear heavy armor.

Most trolls encountered are males, while female trolls (called trollwives) are smaller and weaker (–6 to STR and SIZ) but smarter and faster (+1D6 to INT, POW, and DEX).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+12	2D6+6	4D6+12	2D6	2D6	2D6+3	1D6
22–23	13	26	7	7	10	3–4

Move: 6 **Hit Points:** 20
Damage Modifier: +2D6 **Armor:** 3-point skin
Attacks:
- Tree Trunk Club 45%, 1D10+2+dm (crushing)
- Claw 50%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 50%, special

A troll's usual tactic is to strike with its club then hit with a claw, but the troll cannot parry if it does so. Like a giant's club, a troll's tree trunk club has hit points equal to10+ its dice in damage modifier.

Powers: Trolls regenerate rapidly from injuries, healing 1D3 hit points per combat round, unless they are dead. If the hit locations are used, trolls heal 1 hit point per wounded hit location per combat round. If a troll is in sunlight, or if the damage was done by fire, these wounds do not regenerate. Trolls can see in the dark as if they have the Super Sense (Night Vision) power with levels equal to ½ the troll's POW (round up). Trollwives are almost always sorcery-using witches, equipped with spells such as Curse of Sorcery (4), Pox (1), Undo Sorcery (2), and Witch Sight (3).
Skills: Dodge 35%, Sense 55%, Spot 55%.

Unicorn

The unicorn is a horse-like magical animal with smallish hooves and a single long straight horn protruding from the center of its forehead. Unicorns are almost always white, though black or grey ones are not unheard of. They are solitary, peaceful forest-dwellers, and are highly sensitive to magic and their environment. It is believed that they are immortal unless killed or their horn removed, and for this reason their horns are thought to grant immortality. Unicorns are often featured in heraldry and are a sign of chivalric and maidenly virtue. They are especially trusting of maidenly human or elf women.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+24	2D6+6	2D6+18	2D6+6	2D6+12	2D6+6	4D6
31	13	25	13	19	13	14

Move: 12 **Hit Points:** 19
Damage Modifier: +2D6 **Armor:** None
Attacks:
- Horn 75%, 1D10+dm (impaling)
- Kick 40%, 1D8+dm (crushing)
- Rear & Plunge 40%, 2D8+dm (crushing)
- Trample 75%, 2D6+dm (crushing)

A unicorn can attack once a round, preferring to use its horn. A unicorn can parry with the horn as well as either simultaneously kick or gore with its horn.

Skills: Dodge 35%, Hide 65%, Insight 50%, Jump 90%, Listen 70%, Sense 80%, Spot 75%, Stealth 50%.
Powers: A unicorn can heal wounds with its horn by touching the wound and expending 1 power point per hit point to be restored. This healing can even reattach a severed limb, if at least 6 power points are spent. Attribute points lost through poison or disease can also be cured, but this takes 1 point of permanent POW per point cured, so unicorns are reluctant to perform this. Additionally, a unicorn can detect poison with a touch of its horn. If a unicorn horn is made into a cup, it shatters if poison is placed into it.

Vampire

Vampires are undead who survive by drinking the blood of the living. Created when they share blood with a vampire and are killed, they reawaken as ravenous creatures. However, many vampires regain their former intelligence and can move undetected through human society, immortal, remaining careful when they feed. Some are urbane and civilized and feed on lesser animals or use other means of procuring blood. Others are like wolves, killing with impunity.

Like ghosts, there are many types of vampires, ranging from beautiful, urbane, intelligent, and reclusive dilettantes to horrifically ugly monsters with bat-like features and protruding fangs, living in sewers and barely sentient. Some vampires may even strive to atone for the misdeeds of their previous life and the killings they committed. Following are qualities or aspects ascribed to vampires, true or false.

- A vampire casts no reflection.
- The third bite from a vampire causes the victim to die, and then to become one of the undead. When a character is turned into a vampire, their STR and CON double.
- Vampires have hairy palms, repulsive breath, and cry tears of blood.
- Killing the original or 'chief' vampire cures its victims of their vampirism. Alternately, killing the lead vampire instantly kills all those vampires it has created.
- Vampires cannot cross moving water such as a river.
- Garlic wards off vampires. Garlic has a POT of 2D6+6 (to vampires only) and must be resisted by the vampire's current power points. If the vampire succeeds, it can act against the garlic-holder. If it fails, the vampire is stunned until it is no longer in the presence of the garlic. If a vampire eats garlic, it takes 1D2 hit points damage per clove consumed.
- Vampires employ human servants to guard their secrets and protect them during daylight hours.
- A vampire cannot enter a home or residence uninvited.

Some vampires organize themselves into clans, with each having different appearances, tendencies, and even powers (see Powers, following).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6×2	3D6×2	3D6	2D6+6	(13)	3D6	3D6
20–22	20–22	10–11	13	(13)	10–11	10–11

Move: 12 **Hit Points:** 15–17
Damage Modifier: +1D6 **Armor:** None (can wear armor)
Attacks:

- Bite 50%, 1D4+½dm (bleeding) + Blood Drain (see below)
- Claw 50%, 1D4+dm (bleeding) + Chill Touch (see below)
- Hypnotic Gaze, POW vs. POW, (special see below)
- Grapple 75%, special

A vampire can make one bite and two claw attacks per round, or it may attempt a single claw and a hypnotic gaze attack. If it succeeds in both claw attacks and a bite attack, it grapples its target and drains their blood each round until the target is incapacitated. A vampire cannot attempt to Dodge during a round it bites or uses hypnotic gaze. These powers are described below.

Skills: Dodge 50%, Etiquette 50%, Fly 90%, Hide 70%, Insight 60%, Jump 75%, Knowledge (History) 75%, Language (ancient) 75%, Language (modern) 50%, Listen 60%, Persuade 60%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%, Stealth 80%, Track 75%.

Powers: Vampires have a wide range of powers attributed to them. The following are the ones that almost all vampires have.

- **Blood Drain:** A vampire that successfully bites and damages a target can drain 1D6 STR or 1D6 power points from that target on each subsequent round it stays attached, grappling with them. If the target has lost all their STR, the vampire can choose instead to drain CON. At 0 CON, the victim dies. If the victim survives, these characteristic points regenerate 1 point per day of rest, or twice that time if active. If more than one characteristic is drained, alternate recovery each day to recover 1 point of STR, then 1 point of CON, etc. Power points regenerate normally. A vampire uses Blood Drain to recoup its own power points—it has no POW of its own and cannot regenerate them normally. STR, CON, or power points drained are transferred by the vampire as an equal number of power points. A vampire cannot store more power points than its CON. Any points beyond that are lost.
- **Chill Touch:** A vampire that touches a target can drain power points instead of blood. The vampire must have succeeded in a claw attack against the target (or touched an incapacitated or unaware target). On the subsequent round it makes a resistance roll of its current power points vs. the target's current power points. Armor does not protect against this attack. If the vampire succeeds, it drains 1D3 power points from the target, which are transferred to its current power point total. The vampire must remain in contact with the target each round to continue this drain and must succeed in a resistance roll each combat round. The target recovers these lost power points normally.
- **Hypnotic Gaze:** If a vampire overcomes a target's POW with its current power points in a resistance roll, the target is hypnotized and can be made to follow simple instructions. If these instructions are self-destructive, at the start of the round the target can attempt an Idea roll to snap out of it.
- **Night Sight:** Vampires have a natural ability combining the Super Senses of Dark Vision, Infrared Vision, and Night Vision (see page 105) at a level equal to half the vampire's INT (round up).
- **Regeneration:** Unless it is killed by a traditional method (see below), a vampire regenerates 1D3 hit points per combat round. If it is in direct sunlight or in the presence of a holy symbol, it does regenerate this damage and must heal normally (it also takes damage from these sources, see Weaknesses, following). Additionally, the damage from holy water, a holy symbol, sunlight, or fire cannot be regenerated and must heal at the vampire's normal healing rate.

In addition to the above, vampires are said to have other powers, which may or may not be true.

- **Legions of the Night:** Vampires can control lesser creatures such as bats, rats, and wolves. The vampire can summon 1D6 rat or bat swarms (see page 223), treating bat swarms as rat swarms but with Fly 100%), or 1D6 wolves. Each swarm costs 1 power point to summon and, and each wolf costs 3 power points to summon and control. These creatures may be created as sidekicks (page 103 but use the vampire's current power point total instead of POW when determining control or can be handled through sorcery spells such as Bird's Vision (substitute a bat for a bird) and Rat's Vision.
- **Mist Form:** The vampire can transform itself into a mist, able to move through the tiniest of cracks and float through the air effortlessly. A vampire with this power may be forced into mist form when it is reduced to 0 hit points, but is not slain in the traditional manner. This could be the magic spell Change or the superpowers Alternate Form or Intangibility. While in mist form, the vampire has MOV 5 and is immune to most forms of physical damage, though magic may still affect it.
- **Shape Shifting:** The vampire can transform itself into a wolf, a bat, or even a swarm of rats at a cost of 3 power points. As with Mist

Form, the power is identical to either Change or Alternate Form. Use the statistics for a wolf or rat swarm for the vampire's abilities in either of these forms, using the same game effects for rats as bats (though with Fly 100%).

- **Spellcasting:** Vampires are powerful spellcasters, with an assortment of spells ready for use. With their incredible lifespans and their access to forbidden tomes, scrolls, and unholy lore, vampires know many sorcery or magic spells. A vampire can know up to twice normal human capacity for magic or sorcery spells. Vampires use their current power point total to overcome targets or for their magic.

Weaknesses: Vampires, as cursed and unholy undead, have many weaknesses that set them apart from the living and other forms of undead. Following are traditional vampire weaknesses, of which all, many, of none may be true.

- **Blood Thirst:** A vampire loses 1D6 power points every day through simply being, spent when the vampire first arises. If the vampire reaches 1 or 2 power points, all its rolls are Difficult due to its weakness and its roaring thirst.
- **Daylight:** Vampires suffer 1 damage per combat round of exposure to direct sunlight. While in direct sunlight, a vampire cannot regenerate, shape change, turn into mist, or use its hypnotic gaze. Sunlight may cause additional problems for vampires, such as making all skill rolls *Difficult*. For this reason, vampires are traditionally nocturnal.
- **Decapitation:** A vampire who has been decapitated is dead, will not regenerate, and can never rise from the dead.
- **Fire:** Vampires take double damage from fire, whatever its source. Vampires are flammable, if attempts are made to set one afire.
- **Holy Symbols:** Vampires presented with a holy symbol in the hands of a character with true faith (perhaps the Devotion Passion at 80% or more or 50 allegiance to a 'good' aligned god) are inflicted with intense pain, losing 1D3 power points for each round the character with the holy symbol succeeds in a resistance roll of POW vs. the vampire's current power points. The character must be concentrating on this and can perform no other attacks each round. The vampire suffers 1D3 points of damage for each round if it comes into actual physical contact with the holy symbol. A vampire cannot attempt its hypnotic gaze power versus a character that wins in this resistance roll.
- **Holy Water:** Holy water counts as strong acid against vampires (see Acid, page 140), doing 1D4 damage per combat round. A character with at least 50 Allegiance (page 211) to a benevolent deity may create holy water by spending one full turn in prayer and spending 1 power point over that water. The amount of water to be blessed is limited by the character's POW in SIZ.
- **Sacred Earth:** A vampire loses 3D6 power points each day it does not spend at least four hours in a coffin (or equivalent) lined with earth from its homeland; a penalty exacted at sunset. Thus, an ill-prepared vampire could lose 4D6 power points each evening if denied sacred earth and due to blood thirst (see above). If a vampire reaches 0 power points it becomes comatose, not dead but unable move or function until someone transfers power points to it using a power.
- **Stakes:** If a wooden stake is driven through a vampire's heart and causes at least 1 point of damage, the vampire immediately disintegrates into dust. In combat, this is whenever a wooden weapon achieves an impaling or critical result on a *Difficult* attack, or an aimed shot at the chest hit location. A traditional wooden stake does 1D3+dm and has 6 hit points, with a base chance of 15%. Alternately, this merely prevents the vampire from acting and regenerating, and the vampire must be decapitated, the head and body burned separately to be destroyed utterly.

Werewolf

Werewolves are shape-changers able to transform from human, to wolf, with an intermediary hybrid form. This condition is called lycanthropy. Some wolves can make this change voluntarily, while others transform involuntarily on nights when the moon is full. This latter type of werewolf becomes a pure beast then, with no conscious control or even memory of their actions while in were-form. Traditionally, someone who survives a werewolf's bite will become a werewolf at the next full moon—a condition that is supposedly inescapable. Some types of lycanthropy are magical in nature (usually a curse), while other types are like a disease, up to the gamemaster's discretion.

In human form, a werewolf is outwardly normal and has normal human characteristics. Following are statistics for the hybrid (wolf-man) and wolf forms.

Hybrid Form

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
6D6	2D6+6	3D6	2D6+6	2D6+6	2D6+6
21	13	10–11	13	13	13

Wolf Form

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
6D6	2D6+6	3D6+1D3	1D4+2	2D6+6	2D6+6
21	13	12–13	4–5	13	13

Move: 12 / 13
Damage Modifier: +1D4 / +1D6

Hit Points: 12 / 12–13
Armor: 1-point fur (immunity to normal weapons, see below)

Attacks (hybrid form):

- Bite 50%, 1D4+½dm (bleeding)
- Claws 65%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)

Attacks (wolf form):

- Bite 65%, 1D8+½dm (bleeding)
- Claws 45%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)

In either form, a werewolf can make one bite attack and two claw attacks each combat round.

Powers: Werewolves have the following powers:

- **Immunity:** Werewolves are immune to most forms of damage other than magic, fire, or silver. Other attacks simply bounce off, regardless of the result. Magic, fire, and silvered weapons do full damage. A weapon with a spell cast upon it, such as Sorcerer's Razor, does its magical damage but not the weapon's damage or the attacker's damage modifier. An outright magical weapon does normal damage. The gamemaster should determine if energy weapons or other similar attacks can damage a werewolf.
- **Regeneration:** Werewolves can regenerate 1 hit point each combat round unless that damage was done with a silver weapon. Werewolves heal from damage inflicted by a silver weapon at their normal healing rate.
- **Transformation:** Werewolves can assume one of three different forms; human, hybrid, and wolf. Shifting from one shape to another takes 5 DEX ranks and costs no power points. The werewolf can switch from any of these forms to another.

Skills: Climb 75%, Dodge 65%, Hide 60%, Jump 80%, Listen 70%, Sense 90%, Spot 70%, Track 90%.

Zombie

Zombies are animated corpses resurrected by necromancy, voodoo, demonic possession, or modern causes such as toxic chemicals, radiation, or biological plague. Whatever their origin, zombies thirst for human flesh (some prefer brains) and do little else than seek to feed. Zombies are usually incapable of speech and stalk the living in mobs. They are not particularly bright and are easily fooled.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6×1.5	3D6×1.5	2D6+6	6	1	2D6	1D6
15–17	15–17	13	6	1	7	3–4

Move: 4 **Hit Points:** 14–15
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None (see below)
Attacks:

- Bite 30%, 1D3+½dm (bleeding)
- Claw 25%, 1D3+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 35%, special
- Large Club 35%, 1D8+1+dm (crushing)

A zombie's skill with a weapon is equal to its DEX×5. Zombies never attempt to Dodge or parry.

Powers: Most slashing, crushing, and impaling weapons do only half damage to zombies. Fire does full damage. Some types of zombie can only be killed by a special success that damages the skull. This is whenever a weapon achieves a special or critical result on a *Difficult* attack, or a hit to the head hit location that does enough damage to incapacitate it. Some types of zombies are infectious—a successful bite turns the victim into a zombie in a number of turns equal to their CON, without exception.
Skills: Sense 50%.

SUMMONED CREATURES

These entities are not native to this world or are summoned into existence when called. Theological entities like angels and demons should only be encountered in settings where allegiance is used (page 211), while elementals should only appear if the relevant powers exist to summon them.

Angel

An angel is a holy being, emissary of a divine power. They have many forms; their appearance being based on the pantheon they inhabit. Angels serve as messengers, guardians, soldiers, mentors, or as harbingers. This example is a winged humanoid equipped with a breastplate and a flaming sword.

As noted in Sanity Loss and Creatures (page 224), a pious character may receive SAN when viewing an angel if their sanity roll is successful.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6+12	2D6+24	2D6+6	2D6+6	4D6+12	2D6+12	4D6+12
26	31	13	13	26	19	26

Move: 10 (12 flying) **Hit Points:** 22
Damage Modifier: +1D6 **Armor:** 10-pt. plate breastplate + 10-pt. divine radiance
Attacks:

- Flaming Broad Sword 200%, 1D8+1+dm (slashing) +2D6 (fire)
- Holy Fire 100%, 10D6 (fire, see below)
- Voice of Heaven 100%, special (see below)

As divine beings, angels are capable of exceeding skill levels of 100% even if this option is not used for player characters (see Attacks and Parries Over 100%, page 131). An angel can never be separated from its sword, and the sword cannot be broken.

Powers: Angels are said to have a host of powers, of which any individual angel may have some, all, or none:

- **Divine Radiance:** Angels can emit a radiance of light that protects them from injury, serving as 10-pt. armor against any source of damage, including from powers.

- **Flight:** Whether winged or wingless, angels can fly at great speed. Angels possess the Flight superpower at levels equal to their POW, though it does not cost any power points to use. An angel may appear wingless, then manifest great birdlike wings that suddenly grow and unfold from its back.
- **Healing Touch:** Angels can lay hands upon and heal the sick, infirm, and wounded. Beyond restoring hit points at a cost of 1 hit point per power point, the angel can remove any illness, disease, major wound, or infirmity by spending 1 point of its own permanent POW per infirmity. If the angel's power points reach 0, it returns to its plane of origin until bidden or allowed to return (at least one week, after which it is fully restored).
- **Holy Fire:** Angels can summon holy fire, a flame strike from above with an area of effect of three meters square. If caught in this flame, pious characters whose allegiance aligns with the angel may make a roll of their allegiance as a %. If successful, the character takes no damage from the holy fire. Failing, or non-pious, targets are engulfed in flame, doing 10D6 damage (divided amongst hit locations, if used). Unlike normal fire, holy fire does not linger. Its effects are nearly instantaneous, disappearing at the end of the combat round it was summoned. This costs 10 power points and can be summoned once per day.
- **Invisibility:** Angels can become Invisible at will as per the superpower, with equivalent half their POW in levels (round up). This costs only 3 power points per use.
- **Voice of Heaven:** An angel can speak with the voice of Heaven (or an equivalent). This is an area of effect attack ten meters in diameter from the angel, it may warn those within range to cover their ears, and any who obey are spared. This voice, booming and regal, stuns anyone in range if they fail a resistance roll of their POW vs. the angel's POW. Success means that they are unaffected this combat round. This power costs 3 power points and takes the place of any physical attack.

Spells: Angels may use magic or superpowers. Magic spells commonly used are Countermagic, Dispel, Enhance, Light, Speak to Mind, and Teleport, all at 100%. Angels rarely use sorcery and are never mutants. They may have psychic powers or the equivalent.
Skills: Command 100%, Dodge 100%, Flight 100%, Insight 75%, Knowledge (any) 100%, Language (any) 100%, Sense 90%, Spot 90%, Teach 90%.

Demon, Greater

A demon is an infernal being, summoned or on this plane for terrible purpose. A greater demon is no mere guardian or servant—it is encountered because something monumental is at stake. Depending on its personality, it may be bestial and focused only on destruction, or it may be witty, urbane, charming, and persuasive. These statistics represent a combat-oriented demon, clawed and horned, ready to wreak havoc upon any who defy it.

While viewing an angel can potentially restore SAN points to a pious believer, those who worship the infernal powers are not nearly so lucky. A character viewing a greater demon is at risk for SAN loss, even if they summoned it in the first place.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+24	3D6+12	3D6+12	3D6	3D6+6	3D6+6	3 or 21
34–35	22–23	22–23	10–11	16–17	16–17	3 or 21

Move: 10 (12 flying) **Hit Points:** 22–23
Damage Modifier: +2D6 **Armor:** 8-pt. tough hide (may wear armor)

Attacks:
- Great Sword (used one-handed) 150%, 2D8+dm (bleeding) +2D6 flame (special)
- Whip 90%, 1D3–1+½dm (entangle) +1D6 fire (special)
- Flame Breath 100%, 6D6 fire (special)
- Claws 150%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 150%, special

A greater demon usually begins with a blast of fire from its mouth before engaging in physical combat. It can make two (or more) attacks per round, preferring to use the whip first to immobilize a foe then strike with the great sword 5 DEX ranks later. Its flaming great sword can ignite flammable materials. It fights two-handed with a long whip, also aflame. If either weapon is lost, it resorts to using its claws or grappling. Unlike the weapons of an angel, a greater demon's weapons have double hit points but can be broken or otherwise destroyed (they are immune to fire, however).

Skills: Climb 90%, Dodge 75%, Fly 100%, Jump 75%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%, Throw 75%.
Powers: Demons are said to have a host of powers, of which any individual demon may have some, all, or none:
- **Aura of Terror:** The greater demon has a radiance of malevolence and hatred that manifests in an aura of terror. Anyone coming within the demon's POW in meters must make a POW vs. POW resistance roll to avoid being overcome with terror. Failure means the character is stricken with fear and all attacks and other actions become *Difficult*. Affected characters can attempt a new resistance roll at the beginning of the next combat round, though for this resistance roll their POW is halved (round up). The demon can activate this aura for 1 power point, and it lasts for the demon's POW in combat rounds, or until the demon chooses to stop the power. Anyone on the demon's 'side' or those of the same allegiance are exempt from this power unless the demon wishes it to affect allies. If a character fails the resistance roll and sanity is used, the character loses the full amount of possible SAN from seeing the greater demon.
- **Blight:** The demon's overall presence causes an area to become tainted, twisted with the dark evil in the demon's soul. This is not useful in combat, but contaminates an area over time, until it has a foreboding and lingering presence of evil and malice. Living plants wither or grow twisted and bitter, the soil becomes dry and bleak, and the very atmosphere takes on an unhealthy aspect. The radius of this effect is equal to the greater demon's POW×100 meters. It costs no power points to activate, is automatic and beyond the demon's control (the presence cannot be masked or hidden). It takes 30 days minus the demon's POW for this presence to become manifest, and the demon's POW in months for an area to recover once it has become blighted.
- **Flame Breath:** A demon can breathe a blast of fire with a range equal to its CON in meters. This blast is an area attack three meters square. Any caught within this blast will take 6D6 fire damage (regardless of their allegiance), damage divided between all hit locations, if used. This fire lingers and continues burning for three subsequent rounds. Consult the rules for fire (page 148) for more details. This fiery blast costs 6 power points per blast.
- **Flight:** The greater demon has huge batlike wings and can fly, tirelessly and effortlessly.
- **Regeneration:** A demon has hellish vitality and can regenerate 1D6 hit points per combat round at no power point cost. If hit locations are used, the demon heals 1D3 hit points per hit location per combat round.
- **Sheath of Smoke and Fire:** The demon can sheath itself in a flaming radiance that causes 1D6 points of fire per combat round to any

creature that gets within two meters of it, such as in physical combat. This sheath can ignite any flammable substance around the demon. It serves as 1 point of additional armor against any wooden missile weapon directed at it, such as an arrow or crossbow bolt. This sheath may be activated at will and costs 1 power point per round to maintain.

A greater demon may have one or more chaotic features, as well (see page 236).

Demon, Lesser

A lesser demon is much smaller than a greater demon and has been summoned by a sorcerer (see the Summon Demon spell, page 87) or sent as an emissary or agent of corruption. This lesser demon is a grotesque creature, like an emaciated gargoyle with claws, wings, and horns. It is not cowardly but prefers to serve through means other than combat. When destroyed, it returns to the infernal realms, where it is bullied and tormented. Thus, it wishes to prolong its freedom in this world for as long as is possible.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+3	3D6	1D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+6	3D6+3	1D6+3
10	10–11	9–10	10	13	13–14	6–7

Move: 8 (12 flying) **Hit Points:** 10
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** 1-pt. scaled hide
Attacks:

- Claw 50%, 1D3+dm (bleeding)
- Bite 35%, 1D3+½ dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 45%, special

A demon can make two claw attacks in a combat round. If successful with both, it attempts to grapple and bite on the next combat round.

Skills: Bargain 55%, Climb 65%, Dodge 50%, Fast Talk 40%, Fly 75%, Hide 45%, Knowledge (Region: Hell) 35%, Listen 40%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%, Stealth 35%.
Powers: Lesser demons are not particularly powerful, though one may have a few sorcery spells if its POW is high enough. Common spells are Curse of Sorcery (4), Flames of the Sun (4), Midnight (1), and Pox (1). A sorcerer summoning a lesser demon may choose which spells the demon knows if adequate research is done beforehand. The demon may also have one or more chaotic features (see page 236).

Elementals

Elementals are primal elemental spirits manifest in bodies composed of the element of their type. They are usually summoned into existence by the magic spell Conjure Elemental (page 60), the sorcery spell Summon Elemental (page 87), or through other means, perhaps even occurring naturally.

Elemental hit points are determined by adding their CON+SIZ, not averaging. Elementals do not heal lost hit points or regenerate power points: when one is reduced to 0 hit points or spends its last power point, it disappears, reduced to the raw element it was composed of.

As magical beings, elementals are immune to normal attacks such as weapons or firearms. They are, however, vulnerable to one another's attacks. Depending on the setting, energy or chemical weapons may affect them, and attacks by substances that naturally oppose them may also have an effect. Finally, many powers will affect elementals, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Presented here are four traditional types of elementals—air, earth, fire, and water. Others may exist, whether spirit; shadow; hybrids; or even aspects such as time, gravity, light, etc. The examples are average, and they can be made more or less powerful, as desired.

Air Elemental

Air elementals usually appear as floating, transparent female humans of surpassing beauty, either naked or in wispy garments, surrounded by a whirlwind. They are barely tangible, as if formed out of thickened air. Their voices are soft and faint, and they are mischievous, with a short attention span. Air elementals are often called sylphs.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6	3D6	2D6	4D6	3D6	4D6	3D6+3
10–11	10–11	7	14	10–11	14	13–14

Move: 10 (12 flying) **Hit Points:** 17–18
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** None, but invulnerable to normal attacks

Attacks:

- Scouring Wind 50%, 1D10 (knockback, range is POW in meters)

Skills: Dodge 75%, Fly 100%, Language (summoner's) 100%, Listen 75%, Science (Meteorology) 100%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%.
Powers: An air elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** It can cast the Lift and Lightning spells at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** It can cast Wings of the Sky (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** It has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Energy Control (Wind) and Energy Projection (Wind) superpowers.
- An air elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy a fire elemental of equivalent strength.
- It may also provide breathable air for one character, at the cost of 1 hit point per round.
- Air elementals can turn invisible at will at a cost of 1 power point, though they reappear if commanded by their summoner, or if they attack someone.

Earth Elemental

Earth elementals appear as thick-bodied humanoid forms, made of stone, earth, and minerals, with roots and vines like veins and sometimes hair or beards of moss and leaves. Their voices are low and raspy, and they are often slow-witted and grumpy, surly when summoned, though they still do the bidding of their summoner. In other environments, they may appear as the type of earth available, such as sand and sandstone in the desert. They are often called gnomes.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
5D6+12	3D6+6	3D6	2D6	3D6	2D6	1D6+3
29–30	16–17	10–11	7	10–11	7	6–7

Move: 6 **Hit Points:** 26–28
Damage Modifier: +1D6 or +2D6 **Armor:** None, but invulnerable to normal attacks (see below)

Attacks:

- Fist 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)

CHAOTIC FEATURES

Demons and other creatures of chaos are inconsistent in their appearance and powers. Just as living beings have mutations, unnatural creatures may have chaotic features. If desired, each individual chaotic creature may have one or more chaotic features, rolled or chosen from the following table.

D100%	Chaotic Feature
01–03	POW+1D6
04–05	POW+2D6
06	POW+3D6
07–09	DEX+1D6
10–11	DEX+2D6
12	DEX+3D6
13–14	STR+1D6
15	STR+2D6
16–17	CON+1D6
18	CON+2D6
19–20	Never surprised.
21–22	Absorbs 1 point of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding +1 power point per spell.
23–24	Spits acid of 2D10 POT 1D6 times per day, six-meter range.
25–26	Breathes 3D6 fire 1D6 times per day; single target, three-meter range.
27–28	Reflects 1-pt. magic or sorcery back at user.
29–30	Highly flammable; if ignited burns all within three-meter radius for 2D6 points damage until extinguished.
31–32	Hypnotic pattern on skin; viewers must succeed in an Idea roll or be stunned for 1D3 rounds.
33–35	Appearance is confusing; all attacks against it are at −20%.
36–37	Large and valuable gem clearly visible on body.
38–40	Regenerates 1 hit point per combat round until dead.
41–42	Can attempt to befuddle a target each round in addition to any combat, with a POW vs. POW resistance roll. Failure puts the target into a confused and highly suggestive state. To perform any actions, the target must make a Difficult Idea roll, and may be ordered by the creature to act contrary to their normal wishes. Resisting these commands also requires a successful Difficult Idea roll.
43–45	Creature seemingly invincible; appears to take no damage until it reaches 0 hit points, then falls over dead.
46	Invisible until it attacks.
47–48	Appearance is extremely confusing; all attacks against it are at −30%.
49–50	Poison touch of 2D10 POT; natural attack must do 1 hit point of damage for poison to work.
51–52	CON is −2D6, but regenerates 3 hit points per round until dead.
53–54	6-pt. armored skin. If already has armored skin, +6 to its current armor value.
55–56	MOV 12
57–58	Absorbs 1 or 2 points of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding the amount to current power points.
59–60	Can launch a POW vs. POW attack each round; if successful, target loses 1D6 power points.
61–62	Explodes upon reaching 0 hit points, causing 3D6 damage to all within three meters. Armor, shields, etc. will protect against this, though weapon parries cannot.
63–65	Appears far more dangerous than really is.
66–67	Can turn invisible at will when not in combat.
68–70	Reflects 1- or 2-pt. magic or sorcery back at user.
71–72	8-pt. armored skin. If already has armored skin, +8 to current armor value.
73–74	10-pt. armored skin. If already has armored skin, +10 to current armor value.
75–76	12-pt. armored skin. If already has armored skin, +12 to current armor value.
77	Appears utterly harmless until it enters combat.
78–80	Regenerates 1D6 hit points per combat round until dead.
81–82	Can leap vertically or horizontally ten meters from a standstill.
83–84	Undetectable through magic or sorcery.
85	Appearance extremely disorienting; all attacks against it are at −40%.
86–87	Extremely valuable gem (or gems) inside creature, discovered if creature is cut open.
88–90	Makes agonizing screams continually.
91–92	Overpowering stench causes nausea in any who breathe near it. If target fails a Stamina roll, all actions against this creature are Difficult for 1D6+2 rounds.
93–94	Reflects 1D6+2-pt. magic or sorcery back at user. Roll randomly each turn a spell is cast against the creature to determine how much is reflected.
95–96	The hideous appearance of the creature demoralizes those who it beats in a POW vs. POW resistance roll. If target fails, all actions against this creature are Difficult for 1D6+2 rounds.
97–98	SIZ +2D6
99	Roll twice again on this table. If this is rolled again, add another two chaotic features, and roll again, etc.
00	This creature has CHA 5D6 and is particularly endearing. It attacks with a CHA vs. INT resistance roll. Failure causes the victim to befriend the creature, perhaps even offering to serve it. The creature may have up to 1D6 current companions of this nature, at the gamemaster's discretion. The charmed character may even fight friends to defend the creature.

Skills: Appraise 50%, Craft (Blacksmithing) 75%, Language (summoner's) 25%, Science (Metallurgy) 100%.
Powers: An earth elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** It can cast the spells Dull and Wall at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** It can cast Gift of the Earth (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** It has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Barrier superpower.
- An earth elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy an air elemental of equivalent strength.
- It can also sink into the ground and move at normal speed, emerging when it wishes. It can extend this ability to a character of its SIZ or smaller, engulfing them and moving the character through the earth unharmed at the elemental's normal MOV rate. It will only do this with a willing character but does not supply oxygen for the voyage (see Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation, page 145).
- In addition to being invulnerable to normal attacks, an earth elemental has a chance of breaking any normal weapon made of metal. If a character successfully strikes an earth elemental with a metallic weapon, they must make a resistance roll of their weapon's hit points vs. the earth elemental's CON. If the weapon's roll fails, it automatically breaks. If it succeeds, it does not break. This roll needs only to be made once at the first successful strike in a round, and it applies to weapons with magic spells or sorcery temporarily cast upon them, but not magical weapons.
- Earth elementals are also aware of any precious metals or anything underground within their INT×100 meters, but will only begrudgingly admit this, and must be convinced or commanded to go and retrieve these things. Use of this power costs the earth elemental power points equal to the SIZ of the item brought back.

Fire Elemental

Fire elementals appear as four-legged reptiles made of fiery plasma. They scorch the ground where they walk, and smoke emerges from their mouths when they speak in their hissing, crackling voices. They are generally irritable and quick-tempered. Fire elementals are often called salamanders.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+6	3D6	3D6+6	2D6	3D6	4D6	1D6+3
13	10–11	16–17	7	10–11	14	6–7

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 26–28
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None, but invulnerable to normal attacks
Attacks:

- Flame Breath 50%, 1D10 per round (fire, range is POW in meters)
- Grapple 50%, special + 1D6 per round (fire)

Skills: Demolition 75%, Dodge 50%, Language (summoner's) 50%, Listen 50%, Sense 50%, Spot 50%.
Powers: A fire elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** It can cast the magic spells Flame and Resistance at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** It cast Flames of the Sun (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** It has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Energy Control (Heat) and Energy Projection (Heat) superpowers.
- A fire elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy a water elemental of equivalent strength.
- It can ignite any flammable material by touch but will never willingly extinguish or prevent a fire.

Water Elemental

Water elementals appear as beautiful aquatic, vaguely translucent human females the color of the sea, with greenish-blue hair and skin. They are alluring and usually are scantily clad or nude. If encountered on land, water elementals leave wet footprints and are constantly dripping with water. They are intelligent, thoughtful, and speak in gurgling voices. Water elementals are often called undines.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+6	3D6+6	2D6	4D6	3D6	3D6	3D6+3
16–17	16–17	7	14	10–11	10–11	13–14

Move: 10 (12 swimming) **Hit Points:** 23–24
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** None, but invulnerable to normal attacks (see below)
Attacks:

- Drowning 50%, special (see below)

Skills: Dodge 75%, Language (summoner's) 75%, Navigate 100%, Science (Oceanography) 100%, Sense 50%, Spot 50%, Swim 100%.
Powers: A water elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** A water elemental can cast the magic spells Heal and Unseal at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** A water elemental can cast Bounty of the Sea (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** The water elemental has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Drain and Super Movement (Water Walking) superpowers.
- A water elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy an earth elemental of equivalent strength.
- To drown an opponent, a water elemental engulfs the target's mouth and nose in a bubble of water. If it has succeeded in a touch attack, all further drowning attacks against the target are *Easy* until the target has either broken free or is dead (see the rules for drowning on page 145). This attack costs the water elemental an equivalent number of hit points to the damage inflicted on the target. It may cease the drowning attempt at any time.
- In addition to being invulnerable to normal attacks, a water elemental has a chance of rusting any normal metal weapon or warping any wooden weapon striking it. If a character successfully strikes a water elemental with a metallic weapon, they must make a resistance roll of the weapon's hit points vs. the water elemental's CON. If the weapon's roll rails, it rusts (losing 2 hit points, –1 to damage) or warps (–1 hit point, –5% to hit). If it succeeds, it is unaffected. This roll needs only to be made once at the first successful strike in a round, and it applies to weapons with magic spells or sorcery temporarily cast upon them, but not magical weapons.
- While submerged, a water elemental can become invisible at will at the cost of 1 power point, though it reappears if commanded by the summoner, or if it attacks someone.
- While underwater, a water elemental can speak clearly to any within normal hearing range.
- Water elementals are also aware of any items within the body of water they were summoned from, within their INT×100 meters, but only admit this if asked, and must be convinced or commanded to go and retrieve these items. Each use of this ability costs the water elemental power points equal to the SIZ of the item brought back.

SCIENCE FICTION CREATURES

These creatures are most suitable for science fiction, futuristic, post-apocalyptic, or even horror settings.

Alien, Grey

Grey aliens visit Earth for research and experimentation upon humans and animals and have been doing so for millennia. Because of their relatively frail bodies, they rely on sophisticated technology to immobilize their captive subjects. Their motives are unknown, and exhibit no signs of emotion, rarely even acknowledging the sentience of their subjects as they conduct bizarre and humiliating experiments upon them.

Grey aliens are sometimes encountered at UFO crash sites, wandering around dazed and trying to defend their ship until a rescue arrives. They are either naked or in formfitting mesh jumpsuits and equipped with alien technology.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
1D6+3	2D6	1D6+3	2D6+12	3D6	3D6+3	1D6+1
6–7	7	6–7	19	10–11	13–14	4–5

Move: 7 **Hit Points:** 7
Damage Modifier: –1D4 **Armor:** None
Attacks:

- Stun Pistol 50%, 2D6 (stuns, see weapon description)
- Disintegrator Rifle 35%, 3D6+2 (see weapon description)

Skills: Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 75%, First Aid 75%, Hide 60%, Knowledge (Human Culture) 55%, Knowledge (Region: Milky Way) 85%, Language (Area) 20%, Language (Zeta Reticulan) 100%, Listen 55%, Medicine 100%, Navigate 70%, Pilot (UFO) 80%, Repair (Quantum) 50%, Science (Astronomy) 75%, Science (Planetology) 95%, Science (Zoology) 50%, Sense 60%, Spot 50%, Stealth 50%, Technical Skill (UFO Sensors) 50%
Powers: Grey aliens use what humans believe to be psychic powers. Commonly psychic powers are Emotion Control, Mind Control, Mind Shield, Telekinesis, and Telepathy. Each of these is at their POW×2%, or higher.

Alien, Xenomorph

Discovered on the edge of space, these xenomorphs are ravenous for flesh, devouring any living being they come across. Vaguely insectile, xenomorphs communicate with one another in an unknown fashion and are capable of surprisingly sophisticated tactics. They reproduce through a complex and extremely rapid process wherein eggs are implanted into their victims until gestation is complete, at which point the newborn alien emerges and devours the former host. Scientists theorize that each clutch of these aliens is led by an egg-laying brood queen of immense size and superior intelligence. Xenomorphs are cunning, coordinating their attacks to quickly overrun any area they are introduced into, building giant hives and capturing living hosts to serve in their vile reproductive process.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+3	3D6	3D6+3	2D6	2D6	3D6+6	1D6
13–14	10–11	13–14	7	7	16–17	3–4

Move: 12 **Hit Points:** 12–13
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 2-pt. carapace (spews acidic blood, see below)
Attacks:

- Claw 50%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Bite 35%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Tail Lash 35%, 1D4+dm (impaling)
- Grapple 35%, special

Each round, the xenomorph can attack twice with claws and once with a bite attack 5 DEX ranks later. If it is successful with both claw attacks, it attempts to grapple and bite on the next round. If appropriate, it substitutes its bite for a tail lash attack.

Skills: Climb 75%, Dodge 50%, Hide 60%, Jump 50%, Listen 35%, Sense 50%, Spot 35%, Stealth 50%, Track 75%.
Powers: Xenomorphs have a special defense: acidic blood. This biological acid is intensely powerful and sprays from any physical wound the xenomorph takes, actively corrosive for 1D6+2 combat rounds. Any target one meter from the xenomorph must make a Luck roll to avoid being spattered. Failure indicates that the character takes 1D3 points from the acid. Armor initially protects against this acid, but not for long. It continues to eat away at armor, doing damage each combat round until it is through the armor. The gamemaster should keep track of the acid's damage each round until the armor's value is overcome. At this point, it burns the character. Removing the armor without being burned takes one full combat round and a *Difficult* Agility roll. If hit locations are used, only the armor on the affected hit location(s) need be removed. Failure indicates that the armor is still on. A fumble indicates that the acid got onto the character. Once a character is being burnt by the acid, it continues burning until it is neutralized by some force, or the acid eventually stops being corrosive at the end of the 1D6+2 rounds.

Blob

A grotesque mass of slimy protoplasmic matter. This creature is horrific, constantly extending multiple pseudopods, tendrils, and even approximations of human limbs and sensory organs. Blobs are semi-translucent, and their engulfed victims can be viewed inside as they are eaten away by powerful digestive acids. Blobs can compact their bulk, squeezing through tight spaces, changing their overall shape, but not their actual mass.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
18D6	12D6	24D6	2D6	3D6	1D6
63	42	84	7	10–11	3–4

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 63
Damage Modifier: +8D6 **Armor:** None, but see below
Attacks:

- Engulf 70%, engulfs + dm (see below)

Skills: Climb 50%, Hide 25%, Sense 25%, Stealth 25%, Track 25%.
A blob has no armor, but fire and electrical attacks do only ½ damage (round up) and physical weapons such as firearms do only 1 point of damage.
Powers: A blob engulfs the target upon a successful attack. Its damage modifier is applied to an engulfed character, and in the subsequent round the character begins to be digested. If using hit locations, damage is divided between all hit locations simultaneously. This does 1D3–1 points of damage each combat round. Protective gear does not work unless it is utterly enclosed, and it only lasts within a blob for combat rounds equal to its armor value. Getting out of a blob is extremely difficult, requiring a successful *Difficult* Effort roll. Blobs also regenerate 1 hit point per combat round until they reach full hit points.

Robot, Giant

The giant robot was built by a top-secret government organization to defend the world from a bewildering array of strange alien creatures and giant monsters. Armored and equipped with a variety of astonishing weaponry, the giant robot is idolized by people everywhere, despite doing immeasurable property damage whenever it fights.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
16D6+32	16D6+32	16D6+32	3D6	2D6	3D6
88	88	88	10–11	7	10–11

Move: 24 (176 flying) **Hit Points:** 188 (+100 from Extra Hit Point power)
Damage Modifier: +10D6 **Armor:** 30-pt. armored hull
Attacks:

- Energy Cannon 100%, 10D6 (crushing)
- Missile Pod 100%, 8D6+8 (impaling + knockback)
- Energy Sword 75%, 4D10+dm (bleeding)
- Fist 75%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Kick 75%, 1D6+dm (crushing, knockback)
- Stomp 75%, 2D6+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 75%, special

Powers: The giant robot has a variety of components best represented with superpowers, including: Absorption (Electric) 20; Adaptation (High Pressure, Vacuum, always on, no power point cost) 30; Armor (Heat, Kinetic, Radiation) 30 each; Energy Projection (Kinetic) 10; Extra Energy +200; Extra Hit Points +100; Flight 30; Resistance (Radiation, Sound) 10 each; Super Sense (Dark Vision, Infrared Vision, Night Vision, Super Hearing, Super Vision) 10 each; Super Skill 15 (Artillery +60%, Brawl +40%, Fly +60%, Navigate +20%, Repair +20%, Spot +40%). In addition to these powers, the giant robot has a missile pod and a giant energy sword built into its structure.
Skills: Artillery 75%, Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 35%, Fly (Internal Rockets) 90%, Jump 55%, Knowledge (Kaiju) 50%, Language (English) 30%, Language (Japanese) 75%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 40%, Navigate 50%, Repair (Mechanical) 55%, Spot 65%, Throw 55%

Robot, Killer

Killer robots have many different origins. They may have been built for the military and gone amok, household robots turned murderous, or assassins sent from some future time or distant reach of space. Regardless of the reason, the killer robot is pitiless and resourceful, usually bent on the destruction of a single person, an entire group of people, or perhaps anyone of a particular race (for example, human).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6+24	4D6+12	2D6+9	2D6+6	2D6	3D6	3D6
38	26	16	13	7	10–11	10–11

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 21
Damage Modifier: +2D6 **Armor:** 20-pt. internal plating
Attacks:

- Plasma Rifle 80%, 2D10+4 (impaling)
- Assault Rifle 80%, 2D6+2 (impaling)
- Automatic Shotgun 80%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
- Heavy Pistol 80%, 1D10+2 (impaling)
- Fist 80%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Depending on where and when it is encountered, the killer robot is either equipped with advanced weaponry or armaments appropriate to the setting.

Skills: Artillery 80%, Brawl 80%, Climb 50%, Demolition 50%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Motorcycle) 75%, Drive (Truck) 60%, Grapple 80%, Jump 50%, Knowledge (Future History) 65%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 50%, Language (Binary) 100%, Language (Local) 60%, Listen 65%, Pilot (Helicopter) 50%, Repair (Electronics) 75%, Repair (Mechanical) 95%, Spot 75%, Strategy 40%, Throw 55%.
Powers: The killer robot usually has a few superpowers such as Super Sense (Infrared Vision, Super Hearing, Super Vision, Ultrasonic Hearing) at 5 each. It can use these powers without any power point cost. Some killer robots can shape change, stretch, or are armed with integral weaponry such as claws, blades, laser eyes, or internal firearms.

Robot, Utility

A trusted servant of humankind, the utility robot has been engineered to aid in humans. Utility robots are traditionally programmed to be humble and friendly, and above all to avoid performing any actions that could lead to the harm of a living being. Some utility robots have internal tools built inside them when they do mechanical or electrical maintenance and repair, or they may be simple approximations of humankind, destined for roles such as diplomacy, translation, and personal assistance.

STR	SIZ	INT	DEX
2D6+6	3D6	2D6+6	3D6
13	10–11	13	10–11

Move: 8 **Hit Points:** 10–11
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** 4-pt. plating
Attacks:

- Brawl 30%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Power Tools 50%, 1D6 (fire or electric, see below)

Most utility robots have strict programming injunctions about harming sentient species. However, some are less strict about it than others, and may act in self-defense. Technical robots have a few internal tools such as welders or electric dischargers that can be used for damage.

Skills (Diplomacy Package): Appraise 85%, Bargain 55%, Etiquette 95%, Fast Talk 75%, Heavy Machine (Binary Loadlifter) 50%, Hide 25%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Alien Cultures) 75%, Knowledge (Linguistics) 100%, Language (all known) 95%, Listen 55%, Persuade 45%, Teach 60%.
Skills (Technical Package): Fine Manipulation 95%, Heavy Machine (Spaceport Systems) 95%, Hide 35%, Language (Galactic Common, cannot speak) 50%, Language (Machine) 100%, Listen 50%, Pilot (Starfighter) 50%, Repair (Electronic) 95%, Repair (Mechanical) 95%, Repair (Quantum) 75%, Spot 50%, Technical Skill (Computer Use) 100%.

NONPLAYER CHARACTER DIGEST

These sample nonplayer characters can used instantly or easily customized as needed, reskinned or even used as quick player characters. Their wide range of potential weapons does not mean they always go heavily armed, but that they are skilled in more than a single weapon.

Cave Dweller

A primitive human from a long-vanished epoch of history, the cave dweller is entirely focused around survival for self, family, and tribe. Barely able to use tools, the cave dweller has not yet progressed past the hunter-gatherer stage of civilization, and either inhabits caves for safety or migrates as the seasons change, warring with other tribes for resources or even survival. Cave dwellers often venerate the spirits of weather and their prey.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	16	10	8	12	15	9

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 13
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 1-pt. hide
Attacks:

- Short Spear 50%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 50%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Light Club 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Rock (thrown) 50%, 1D2+½dm (crushing)
- Grapple 50%, special

Skills: Brawl 50%, Climb 60%, Craft (Wood Carving) 25%, Dodge 35%, Hide 35%, Jump 50%, Language (Own) 40%, Listen 55%, Sense 50%, Spot 65%, Stealth 30%, Throw 50%, Track 40%
Powers: Cave dwellers rarely have any powers, though some primitive shamans may have a few magic spells or psychic powers if their POW is high enough.

Criminal Mastermind

The criminal mastermind is a gang leader or highly placed member of an organized crime family, most likely having worked their way up through the ranks. They are skilled in running a large group of individual criminals in the day-to-day activities of organized crime. Unscrupulous, ruthless, determined, and cunning, the criminal mastermind is a resourceful and dangerous enemy. Though they are not physically imposing, they make up for it in ambition, callous disregard for human life, and an army of skilled and vicious henchmen.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
11	12	12	12	17	16	14

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 12
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** None
Attacks:

- Medium Pistol 75%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Straight Razor 65%, 1D4+dm (bleeding)
- Machine Gun 55%, 2D6+4 (impaling)

Skills: Appraise 55%, Bargain 65%, Command 65%, Craft (Cooking) 55%, Craft (License Plates) 35%, Demolition 35%, Disguise 25%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Getaway Car) 45%, Etiquette 45%, Fast Talk 55%, Gaming 60%, Hide 35%, Insight 75%, Knowledge (Law) 55%, Language (Local) 75%, Language (Own) 75%, Listen 55%, Medicine (Pharmacology) 35%, Perform (Singing) 50%, Persuade 75%, Sense 40%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 45%, Status 55%, Stealth 55%, Strategy 60%, Throw 45%.
Powers: Criminal masterminds rarely have powers and are usually the enemies of those with superpowers.

Cyborg

The cyborg is a human augmented with technological elements, either as a means of improvement or as replacement for body parts lost through accident. Half-flesh and half-machine, the cyborg has come to accept this newfound condition, despite the alienation it creates. They may be entirely human in appearance or be an obvious amalgam of flesh and metal.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
33	24	14	14	11	22	14

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 19
Damage Modifier: +2D6 **Armor:** None
Attacks:

- Brawl 90%, 1D3+10+dm (crushing)

Skills: Climb 40%, Dodge 65%, Drive (Car) 55%, Hide 40%, Jump 75%, Language (Own) 85%, Listen 75%, Pilot (Experimental Jets) 75%, Repair (Electronic) 55%, Science (Cybernetics) 40%, Spot 85%, Stealth 40%, Throw 65%.
Powers: The cyborg's augmentation is best represented with superpowers, such as the following:

- **Defensive Systems:** Armor 5 (vs. electrical energy) Internal Battery: Extra Energy 5 (+50 power points)
- **Physical Improvements:** Leap 5 (+10 meters), Super Characteristics 40 (+20 STR, +10 CON, +10 DEX), Super Speed 2 (1 extra movement, 1 extra action)
- **Sensory Enhancements:** Super Sense (Super Hearing 10, Super Vision 10, Infrared Vision 5, Ultrasonic Hearing 5)
- **Tactical Modifications:** Defense 20 (–10% to be hit), Super Skill 8 (Jump +40%, Listen +40%, Spot +60%, Throw +25%), Unarmed Combat 5 (+10 damage, –25% to one target's chance of hitting, +25% to Brawl skill)

Weaknesses: The cyborg has the following weaknesses to balance out this awesome power:

- Cyborg identity makes normal life impossible.
- Significant involvement with government agency responsible for cyborg modifications.
- Cyborg components take an extra 1D6 damage from magnetic-based attacks.

Demigod

The offspring of a god and a mortal, the demigod adventures across the world, battling supernatural threats and aiding normal humans in struggles against the tyranny of the gods. Caught between two worlds, the divine and the mortal, the demigod has a mighty destiny, but has not yet decided whether that fate is to aid humanity in overthrowing the gods, or to lead mortals to greater worship and fealty to the heavens. The demigod often attracts lesser heroes to their cause and is a locus for trouble. Immortal, the demigod can be encountered at any point in history.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
35	34	15	13	18	15	17

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 25
Damage Modifier: +2D6 **Armor:** 20-pt. Armor (Kinetic)
Attacks:

- Brawl 110%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 110%, special
- Short Sword 100%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Round Shield 80%, 1D3+dm (knockback)

Skills: Brawl 110%, Climb 80%, Command 45%, Dodge 65%, Drive (Chariot) 65%, Etiquette 25%, Grapple 110%, Insight 55%, Jump 75%, Knowledge (Mythology) 85%, Language (Ancient Own) 100%, Language (Local) 90%, Listen 65%, Navigate 60%, Perform (Harp) 50%, Persuade 45%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 70%, Spot 60%, Status 45%, Stealth 50%, Strategy 60%, Swim 75%, Throw 85%

Powers: The demigod has a variety of powers from the divine parentage, such as the following superpowers:

- Adaptation (Radiation, Underwater, Vacuum) 5 each; Armor (Kinetic) 20; Extra Energy 20 (+200 power points); Extra Hit Points 30 (+30 HP); Leap 10 (+20 meters to Jump distance); Regeneration 3 (heals 3 HP per combat round); Sidekick (see below); Super Characteristics 50 (STR +20, CON +20, POW +5, CHA +5); Super Skills 20 (Brawl +40%, Grapple +40%, Knowledge [Mythology] +40%, Sense +40%, Shield +80%, Strategy +40%, Sword +80%, Throw +40%), Unarmed Combat 5 (+10 brawl damage, –25% to one attacker's skill, Brawl/Grapple skill +25%).

Weaknesses: The demigod's character failings are:

- Inability to live a normal life.
- Hunted by enemies of the gods.
- Hunted by rival gods themselves.
- Always called on for help by mortals.

Demigods often have a mortal sidekick (using the Sidekick superpower or a normal nonplayer character), someone culturally familiar with the world and reminding them of the humility of mortal existence. Depending on the setting, a demigod could use magic spells or sorcery. They may not even be a divine being and might just be a mutant.

Detective

Whether a police detective, forensics expert, private eye, or criminologist, a detective is trained in investigation, observation, surveillance, interrogation of suspects and witnesses, examination of physical evidence, and deduction. Some detectives live action-packed lives full of car chases, beautiful women, and brushes with both the law and criminals. Others work in high-tech laboratories, dusty libraries and sitting rooms, or even in front of a computer terminal searching public and private records.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
13	12	14	17	14	14	15

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 13
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None
Attacks:

- Medium Pistol 75%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Fist 65%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 50%, special

Skills: Appraise 35%, Bargain 35%, Climb 55%, Disguise 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Sedan) 55%, Etiquette 25%, Fast Talk 65%, Hide 40%, Insight 55%, Knowledge (Law) 65%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 55%, Knowledge (Streetwise) 50%, Language (Local) 75%, Listen 45%, Persuade 45%, Research 75%, Sense 50%, Sleight of Hand 25%, Spot 65%, Stealth 50%, Track 35%

Powers: Detectives rarely have powers, though some few magicians or sorcerers become detectives.

Galactic Knight

This spacefaring paladin follows a mystic tradition that provides great and mysterious powers. As a defender of peace and justice throughout the galaxy, the galactic knight has sworn an oath to uphold a code of honor and serves almost as an intergalactic ranger. Most of the galaxy does not understand the strange force the galactic knight serves, though they are respected or feared wherever they go. The galactic knight shuns traditional weaponry, and instead uses an antiquated but sophisticated hand weapon to deadly efficiency.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
16	15	14	15	21	17	15

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 15
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None
Attacks:
Energy Sword 150%, 2D10+dm (bleeding)
Brawl 80%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Climb 75%, Command 50%, Dodge 75%, Hide 45%, Insight 75%, Jump 65%, Knowledge (Region: Galaxy) 35%, Language (Alien) 70%, Language (Own) 105%, Listen 65%, Martial Art s 80%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 35%, Pilot (Starfighter) 65%, Repair (Mechanical) 55%, Sense 70%, Spot 65%, Stealth 70%, Strategy 50%, Throw 60%.

Powers: The galactic knight is skilled in a mystical tradition that provides several psychic abilities, among them Danger Sense 60%, Empathy 55%, Mind Control 35%, Precognition 40%, Telekinesis 45%, and Telepathy 50%.

Gunslinger

The gunslinger makes their living killing people, specializing in fast and deadly combat with a handgun. In most cases, the gunslinger began life as something else, but was driven to a life of violence through tragedy or a taste for killing. The gunslinger's reputation is by far their most potent weapon—many lay down their weapons rather than face certain death. This gives the gunslinger steady work, helping those who need help, whether on the side of law or criminality. Sometimes reputation is a two-edged sword, attracting those who would make themselves famous.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	15	14	14	15	18	13

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 15
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 1-pt. heavy clothing
Attacks:

- Medium Revolver 95%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Sporting Rifle 85%, 2D6 (impaling)
- Double-barreled Shotgun 75%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
- Knife 75%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Fist 75%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Brawl 75%, Climb 60%, Demolition 30%, Dodge 60%, First Aid 40%, Gaming 65%, Grapple 50%, Insight 65%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 65%, Language (Own) 70%, Listen 65%, Ride (Horse) 75%, Sense 50%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 75%, Stealth 50%, Throw 55%, Track 40%.

Powers: Gunslingers rarely have powers.

Knight

A mounted and armored warrior, skilled in swordsmanship, jousting, and the etiquette of chivalry. Drawn from the noble class, a knight has sworn their allegiance to their liege, and draws a stipend from lands under their domain to pay for their weapons, armor, horses, and lifestyle. Knights practice their skills regularly, compete in tournaments, and journey to war whenever their liege orders. Ideally, a knight is chivalrous and pious, adhering to a code of honor and decency, though this varies knight by knight.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	15	15	11	12	15	14

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 15
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 10-pt. plate and heavy helm
Attacks:
- Long Sword 75%, 1D8+dm (bleeding)
- Kite Shield 65%, 1D4+dm (knockback)
- Lance 75%, 1D8+1+ mount's dm (usually +2D6, impaling, see below)
- Light Mace 65%, 1D6+2+dm (crushing)
- Long Bow 60%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Dagger 50%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Armored Gauntlet 50%, 1D3+1+dm (crushing)
- Tournament lances do crushing damage.

Skills: Command 45%, Dodge 50%, Etiquette 65%, Knowledge (Heraldry) 50%, Language (Other) 35%, Language (Own) 60%, Listen 45%, Ride (Horse) 75%, Sense 20%, Spot 45%, Status 60%, Strategy 30%.
Powers: Knights generally do not have powers, though some rare ones know magic. However, a knight may have access to a magic artifact (see page 162), whether a blessed weapon, holy relic, or armor with some virtue laid upon it. Elves are rumored to have their own orders of knighthood, and these knights would naturally use magic freely. Evil knights who have sworn allegiance to dark powers may use sorcery.

Maniac

A seemingly normal person who has gone violently, homicidally insane, the maniac is a figure to be feared. The maniac either stalks young victims in isolated locales, such as summer camp or some campground, or takes to the road as a serial killer, seeking out victims to murder for unfathomable reasons. In appearance, the maniac comes in two flavors: utterly ordinary, or in a distinctive costume or mask.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	14	14	14	15	17	12

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 14
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None
Attacks:
- Butcher Knife 75%, 1D6+dm (impaling)
- Wood Axe 75%, 1D8+2+dm (bleeding)
- Chainsaw 65%, 2D8 (bleeding)
- Pitchfork 55%, 1D6+dm (impaling)
- Machete 65%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 75%, special

Skills: Brawl 75%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Van) 65%, Hide 60%, Language (Own) 60%, Listen 45%, Sense 40%, Spot 65%, Stealth 80%, Throw 50%, Track 40%
Powers: Most maniacs do not have any powers, though some possess exceptional toughness and resilience. These are usually caused by a mutation of some sort, and appropriate mutations include Hardy, Increased Characteristic, Regeneration, or even Natural Weapon (teeth).

Mutant

This unfortunate soul was mutated through exposure to some radioactive or biological agent, or came to be through a hard luck roll of the genetic dice. Feared and unable to live a normal life, the mutant lurks on the outside of society. In a post-apocalyptic setting, the mutant is likely the victim of radiation and is one of many such creatures, threatening the 'pure' humans left.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
19	9	13	14	12	15	10

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 11
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 7-pt. bony knobs on skin
Attacks:
- Brawl 55%, 1D3+1D6+dm (crushing)

Skills: Disguise 25%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Dune Buggy) 40%, Fast Talk 25%, First Aid 40%, Hide 40%, Language (Own) 55%, Listen 35%, Sense 25%, Spot 30%, Stealth 25%, Track 25%.
Powers: This mutant has developed the following mutations: Congenital Disease (hemophilia, CON –5), Increased Characteristic (STR +6), Natural Weaponry (bony knobs on hands, +1D6 damage), Sensitivity (blood), Structural Improvement (bony knobs across skin, +7-pt. natural armor).

Ninja

The ninja is a feared shadowy killer from antiquity and even the modern world, trained in secret martial arts and techniques of stealth, infiltration, and assassination. Ninjas are often born into clans, though some rare few seek out the life and are accepted into the ancient orders. They are killers-for-hire, working alone or in groups.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	13	10	14	15	17	12

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 12
Damage Modifier: None **Armor:** None, or 2-pt. light chain mail
Attacks:
- Katana 65%, 1D10+1+dm (bleeding)
- Dagger 65%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Composite Bow 50%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Blowgun 50%, 1D3 (impaling) + poison (see below)
- Fist 55%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Kick 55%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

A ninja's blowdarts are usually covered in a paralytic POT 15 poison (see Poisons, page 151).

Skills: Climb 80%, Disguise 55%, Dodge 65%, Fine Manipulation 45%, Hide 70%, Jump 65%, Language (Own) 70%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 35%, Sense 50%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot 55%, Stealth 75%, Swim 55%, Throw 50%, Track 35%.
Powers: Ninja do not generally have powers, though in settings where they do, they would have either sorcery or superpowers approximating extraordinary martial arts.

Pirate

A colorful predator of the high seas, the pirate is an oceangoing bandit, ranging from urbane rogues to despicable savages. This pirate is a sample crewmember of an average pirate ship and is skilled in seamanship and hand-to-hand combat.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	15	13	11	10	14	13

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 14
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None
Attacks:
- Cutlass (Saber) 55%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)
- Knife 45%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Flintlock Pistol 50%, 1D6+1 (impaling)
- Musket 40%, 1D10+4 (impaling)
- Fist 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Artillery 30%, Brawl 50%, Climb 80%, Craft (Carpentry) 55%, Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 45%, Gaming 35%, Grapple 50%, Jump 45%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 40%, Language (Local) 40%, Language (Own) 55%, Listen 45%, Navigate 50%, Perform (Sing Sea Chantey) 45%, Pilot (Ship) 35%, Sense 30%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 50%, Swim 45%, Throw 50%.
Powers: In most settings, pirates don't have any powers. Some pirate chiefs, however, make pacts with darkness and are taught sorcery if their POW is high enough to qualify. Appropriate spells are Bird's Vision (1), Breath of Life (1), Rat's Vision (1), Sorcerer's Razor (2), Sorcerer's Sureness (2), and Wings of the Sky (4).

Police Officer

This is a police officer from any modern country. Trained in a wide variety of law enforcement techniques, the police officer is usually on patrol, or is called to the scene of an incident. In the event of a major incident in an urban area, police will likely be the first on the scene. More heavily armed police officers are a part of a Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) team and are usually called on to deal with excessively violent situations.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	14	14	14	14	14	14

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 14
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 8-pt. bulletproof vest (4-pt. vs. melee weapons) or 12-pt. riot gear
Attacks:
- Medium Pistol 70%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Shotgun 50%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
- Baton (Light Club) 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Pepper Spray 65%, special (POT 16, blinds 1D4+2 combat rounds)
- Taser 65%, special (see Stunning or Subduing, page 154)
- Grapple 65%, special

Skills: Brawl 65%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Police Car) 55%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Law) 50%, Language (Spanish) 30%, Language (English) 80%, Listen 50%, Persuade 50%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 30%, Spot 45%, Stealth 30%, Throw 45%.
Powers: Police officers rarely, ever, have powers.

Priest

The priest is a devout worshipper of their patron deity, having left the safety of the monastery and into the outside world, armored in piety and armed with the blessings of the deity. The priest ventures to strange and exotic lands to bring the message of truth to the unbelievers and strikes with vengeance any who oppose their divine mandate.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	13	14	15	16	13	15

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 14
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 8-pt. chain and light helmet
Attacks:
- Morningstar Flail 50%, 1D10+1+dm (crushing)
- Full Shield 45%, 1D4+dm (knockback)
- Sling 40%, 1D8+½dm (crushing)
- Kick 40%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Art (Illuminated Manuscripts) 35%, Command 25%, Craft (Bookmaking) 35%, Dodge 40%, First Aid 45%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Religion) 70%, Language (Own) 70%, Listen 45%, Literacy (Common) 70%, Perform (Hymns) 35%, Persuade 45%, Ride (Horse) 35%, Spot 40%, Status 35%, Teach 30%
Powers: The priest has psychic abilities granted by their deity: Divination, Mind Shield, Precognition, and Sensitivity, all at the priest's POWx1%. Additionally, the priest has an allegiance of at least 50 to their patron deity, with whatever benefits that may entail. See Allegiance (page 211).

Psychic

Born with a particular gift, the psychic's powers developed during young adulthood. The psychic learned self-discipline and meditation techniques to quiet the voices echoing through their head, and now these strange gifts have been put to the purpose of aiding others, using them to seek knowledge and hidden truth.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
12	13	14	15	19	14	14

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 14
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** None
- **Attacks:**
- Fist 35%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Art (Painting) 35%, Bargain 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Automobile) 30%, Fast Talk 35%, Insight 50%, Knowledge (Art History) 45%, Language (Own) 90%, Listen 35%, Research 65%, Sense 35%, Spot 40%, Status 35%, Stealth 30%.
Powers: The psychic abilities Aura Detection 35%, Precognition 25%, and Psychometry 50%.

Soldier

The soldier is trained in modern principles of warfare, utilizing weaponry and tactics, obedient to the chain of command, supportive of teammates, and remaining calm under fire. Under ideal conditions, the soldier is well-equipped, well-supported, and well-informed. This example soldier is especially fit and experienced, perhaps an elite commando.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	14	15	13	11	13	13

Move: 10
Hit Points: 15
Damage Modifier: +1D4
Armor: 8-pt. bulletproof vest (4-pt. vs. melee weapons) + 3-pt. light helmet

Attacks:
- Assault Rifle 65%, 2D6+2 (impaling)
- Combat Knife (Dagger) 50%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Grenade (Explosive) 40%, 4D6 (knockback)

Skills: Artillery 30%, Brawl 45%, Climb 50%, Command 25%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Humvee) 45%, First Aid 40%, Grapple 50%, Hide 35%, Jump 35%, Language (Own) 65%, Listen 45%, Spot 45%, Stealth 40%, Strategy 20%, Throw 40%
Powers: Soldiers rarely, if ever, have powers.

Sorcerer

Chosen from youth and apprenticed in the mystic arts, the sorcerer deals with demons and commands the very elemental forces. The sorcerer is arrogant among lesser, non-magical mortals. At the same time, they are exceedingly careful of getting into personal combat, an arena they are woefully unprepared to compete in.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
9	11	15	19	21	14	12

Move: 10
Hit Points: 13
Damage Modifier: None
Armor: None, or 4-pt. Sorcerer's Armor

Attacks:
- Dagger 35%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)

Skills: Appraise 35%, Dodge 40%, Etiquette 35%, Fast Talk 45%, Hide 30%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Academic Lore) 50%, Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 20%, Knowledge (Occult) 70%, Language (Demonic) 50%, Language (Own) 85%, Listen 35%, Persuade 45%, Research 75%, Ride (Horse) 35%, Sense 35%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 55%.

Powers: These sorcery spells are in memory: Curse of Sorcery (4), Sorcerer's Armor (4), Sorcerer's Sharp Flame (3), Summon Demon (1), Undo Sorcery (2), Heal (2), Witch Sight (3).

Spy

A secret operative working clandestinely for a government agency, trained in infiltration, stealth, disguise, combat, and other espionage skills. Missions range from armed intrusion to infiltration of enemy groups with surveillance, sabotage, or assassination as the end goal. They may be equipped with an array of gadgets and weapons, some disguised as commonplace items. Consult Chapter Eight: Equipment for guidelines on constructing high-tech spy gear.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	14	13	15	14	15	14

Move: 10
Hit Points: 14
Damage Modifier: +1D4
Armor: 5-pt. ballistic cloth tuxedo (3-pt. vs. melee weapons)

Attacks:
- Light Pistol 75%, 1D6 (impaling)
- Sniper Rifle 75%, 2D10+4 (impaling)
- Throwing Knife 75%, 1D4+½dm (impaling)
- Fist 80%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Kick 65%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Appraise 45%, Brawl 65%, Climb 60%, Demolition 40%, Disguise 60%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Sports Car) 85%, Etiquette 65%, Fast Talk 75%, Fine Manipulation 75%, First Aid 55%, Gaming 65%, Grapple 65%, Hide 75%, Insight 65%, Jump 50%, Knowledge (Espionage) 75%, Language (Own) 90%, Language (Other) 70%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 45%, Persuade 55%, Pilot (Boat) 65%, Pilot (Helicopter) 45%, Research 45%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 60%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot 65%, Stealth 70%, Strategy 50%, Swim 65%, Throw 65%, Track 35%.
Powers: Spies rarely, if ever, have any powers.

Superhero

Given powers by some freak accident or genetic abnormality, the superhero has vowed to do right, seeking justice for everyone, using their abilities to help normal people and protect them from threats both natural and unnatural, as well as those posed by super villains. Most keep their superheroic identities a secret, living normal lives when they can. A few superheroes have partners or join teams. The superhero is often wracked with self-doubt, wondering if the cost of heroism is too high.

This sample superhero is Stormcloud, a brash (and inexperienced) lightning-based hero, and enemy of Doctor Dread. Stormcloud's civilian identity is that of a television meteorologist.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
25	20	12	14	16	20	15

Move: 10 (62 flying)
Hit Points: 16
Damage Modifier: +1D6
Armor: 12-pt. Armor (Kinetic, Radiation)

Attacks:
- Lightning Bolt 45%, 6D6 (electric)
- Brawl 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Art (Photography) 70%, Brawl 50%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Car) 35%, Fly 80%, Grapple 35%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 35%, Language (other) 00%, Language (Own) 85%, Perform (News) 50%, Research 45%, Science (Meteorology) 25%, Status 25%, Technical Skill (Use Computer) 35%.
Powers: Stormcloud has the following superpowers: Absorption (Electric) 18; Armor (Kinetic, Radiation) 12 each; Energy Projection (Electric) 6; Extra Energy 15 (+150 power points); Flight 10; and Super Characteristics 30 (STR +14, CON +8, DEX +8).
Weaknesses: Stormcloud's character failing is a weakness to water, losing –2D6 power points each round wet or submerged.

Supervillain

Unlike the superhero, the supervillain enjoys a life of crime, using their abilities in pursuit of fortune, power, revenge, or other malfeasance. They can be a master criminal or a glorified thug, depending on ambition. Some choose to work alone, while others have a cadre of minions. Even fewer supervillains work together in teams, as the unstable personalities tend to make equitable partnerships impossible.

This sample supervillain is Doctor Dread, a former defense industries engineer whose funding was cut. After using unlicensed military tech to build a suit of protective armor, Doctor Dread seeks a means of financing further (and potentially illegal) weapons research. These statistics represent Doctor Dread in the armor.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	18	9	17	17	18	10

Move: 10 (62 flying)
Hit Points: 14
Damage Modifier: None
Armor: 4-pt. Armor (Kinetic) + 20-pt. Force Field (Electric, Kinetic, Radiation)
Attacks:
- Heat Projector 70%, 6D6 (fire)
- Brawl 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Command 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Van) 55%, Fine Manipulation 65%, Jump 65%, Language (Own) 125%, Listen 45%, Repair (Electronic) 85%, Repair (Quantum) 75%, Research 85%, Science (Physics) 95%, Spot 50%, Technical Skill (Use Computer) 95%.
Powers: Doctor Dread's armor provides the following superpowers: Armor (Kinetic) 4; Energy Projection (Heat) 6; Extra Energy 15(+150 power points); Flight 3; Force Field (Electric, Kinetic, Radiation) 20 each; Leap 10 (+20 meters to Jump distance); Super Sense (Infravision, Ultrasonic Hearing) 1 each.
Weaknesses: Doctor Dread's character failings are full-time supervillainy; physically distinctive (ugly); psychological failings (bloodthirsty, arrogant); supervillain identity tied to armor and not on full-time; armor can be shut down or removed.

Thug

A goon for hire, usually working for a criminal group or sometimes just looking for trouble. A thug can be backup muscle or on their own, whether breaking-and-entering, robbery, banditry, or mugging.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
16	14	15	10	10	12	11

Move: 10
Hit Points: 15
Damage Modifier: +1D4
Armor: 1-pt. leather jacket
Attacks:
- Heavy Pistol 50%, 1D10+2 (impaling)
- Switchblade 50%, 1D4+dm (impaling)
- Baseball Bat 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Fist 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Head Butt 35%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Demolition 20%, Dodge 35%, Drive (Truck) 50%, Gaming 30%, Grapple 50%, Hide 25%, Insight 25%, Knowledge (Region: Home City) 35%, Language (Own) 50%, Listen 35%, Persuade 35%, Sense 30%, Sleight of Hand 25%, Spot 35%, Stealth 25%, Throw 35%.
Powers: Thugs never have powers. If they did, they'd be doing better for themselves.

Tribal Warrior

The tribal warrior is encountered in any area where civilization has not reached. They use weapons that are considered primitive by the standard of the day, and participate in their tribe's survival, hunting and fighting to defend the tribe against trespassers and attackers. The tribal warrior places great faith in the wisdom from the elders of the tribe who interpret the words of the gods.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
16	14	15	11	13	16	13

Move: 10
Hit Points: 15
Damage Modifier: +1D4
Armor: 1-pt. hide armor
Attacks:
- Short Spear 65%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 75%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Light Club 55%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Light Club (thrown) 65%, 1D6+½dm (crushing)
- Shield 65%, 1D2+dm (knockback)
- Blowgun 75%, 1D3 (impaling) + poison (see below)*
- Grapple 65%, special

**A tribal warrior's blowdarts are usually covered in a paralytic POT 10 poison (see Poisons, page 151).*

Some tribal warriors adopt the use of captured weapons from civilized men, while others shun them.

Skills: Climb 75%, Dodge 40%, Hide 45%, Jump 45%, Language (Own) 60%, Listen 55%, Sense 60%, Spot 65%, Stealth 60%, Swim 55%, Throw 65%, Track 70%.
Powers: Tribal warriors rarely have powers. However, tribes are usually

allied with a shaman or wise person who may have powers. These powers are usually psychic abilities or magic spells, sometimes sorcery.

Viking

Vikings are northern warriors who take lengthy sea-voyages for exploration, trade (against strong opponents or allies), and raiding (against enemies or those weaker). They are fierce and proud, excellent sailors, and surprisingly civilized given their savage reputation. Vikings have their own code of honor and laws and adhere to them stringently, though their rules do not apply to others.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	14	15	11	11	13	12

Move: 10 **Hit Points:** 15
Damage Modifier: +1D4 **Armor:** 7-pt. scale and light helmet
Attacks:

- Broad Sword 65%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)
- Hand Axe 55%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Hand Axe (thrown) 55%, 1D6+1+½dm (bleeding)
- Self Bow 50%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Large Round Shield 50%, 1D4+dm (knockback)
- Brawl 55%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Skills: Appraise 45%, Bargain 35%, Brawl 25%, Craft (type) 05%, Dodge 40%, Gaming 40%, Grapple 35%, Insight 15%, Jump 25%, Language (Own) 55%, Listen 40%, Navigate 35%, Pilot (ship) 25%, Ride (type) 05%, Spot 35%, Status 25%.
Powers: Vikings rarely have any powers. Some spellcasters use a variety of magic types, from rune magic, shapeshifting, or sorcery. Depending on the setting, a wealthy or favored Viking may have weaponry, armor, or some other magic artifacts.

CUSTOMIZING CREATURES AND NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

It may be necessary to customize these creatures and nonplayer characters based on the power level of your game, or to better match the competency of the player characters. Here are guidelines for doing so and for managing these creatures and nonplayer characters as needed.

It may make more sense for opponents to be of a higher caliber in one power level, such as a fantasy or superhero setting, while in other settings it might seem inappropriate or too challenging. In cases like these, the gamemaster may choose to increase the threat an opponent faces in another fashion, such as to increase the number encountered, or give them superior equipment, or other means as described below.

Normal Campaigns

The creatures and nonplayer characters in this chapter are geared for a normal campaign. They do not normally need to be adjusted, unless for a particular setting. Whenever adjusting characteristics, take note of any modified secondary characteristics (damage bonus, hit points, major wound, power points, etc.).

One thing to keep in mind is that even a little armor goes a long way. Adding 3 points of armor to an entity can make them challenging, and with more than +6 points they become very difficult to harm.

Heroic Campaigns

For a heroic campaign, here are ways you can adjust creatures or nonplayer characters to better suit heroic-level characters:

- Increasing the number of the creatures or nonplayer characters encountered by +25% or more.
- Adding one more extremely competent leader to any groups, perhaps built on the epic power level.
- Having them use superior tactics, be more cautious or aggressive, and taking better advantage of their terrain to gain tactical advantages and keep the player characters off-balance.
- Increasing key characteristics by another D6, or a flat +3, keeping the rollable maximums intact.
- Modifying combat-oriented and other relevant skills by +25% or multiplied by ×1.5.
- Adding more powers or increased efficacy in existing powers.
- Equipping them with better equipment, armor, weaponry, etc.

Epic Campaigns

For an epic campaign, here are ways to adjust creatures or nonplayer characters to present more of a challenge:

- Doubling the number that would be encountered by normal characters.
- Giving them a leader at the superhuman power level.
- Increasing characteristics by +6 or more, beyond racial maximums.
- Doubling skill rankings.
- Having them use skills like Command and Strategy to even the playing field.
- Adding all-new powers or multiple power groups, or combining entries, with superpowers like Extra Hit Points an easy solution.
- Giving foes the best equipment, armor, and weaponry available, whether power armor, magical artifacts, medical supplies capable of instant healing, etc. .

Superhuman Campaigns

For a superhuman campaign, the gamemaster may choose to adjust the following aspects of a creature or nonplayer character:

- Numbers can be increased to the limit of what you feel comfortable handling, mixing up normal, heroic, and epic level nonplayer characters to vary the challenge.
- Increasing characteristics far past the rollable maximums, using whatever powers to make these foes almost titanic in abilities and competency.
- Tripling or even quadrupling skill ratings far above 100%.
- Adding less obvious powers like Extra Hit Points, Super Characteristics, Super Skill, etc.
- Equipping opponents with exceptional arms, armor, and other gear, including magical or powered gear. They will also use this equipment tactically and to the best of their abilities.

General Notes

As noted, these are just suggestions, and should be applied intelligently. Examine the player characters' abilities and use that as a basis for how tough to make meaningful opponents. Don't be afraid to scale back an encounter by having enemies flee, or increase the difficulty by having new enemies arrive, or introducing some environmental factor make things more difficult for everyone.

Gauging an enemy's relative strength against a player character's is a difficult art to master, and the flat distribution of dice results and unexpected tactics can make a potentially easy encounter a life-or-death struggle or end a climactic battle with a single first (and lucky) shot.

It's important, though, to always remember the main rule: have fun and make sure the players are having fun, too.

CREATURE HIT LOCATION TABLES

Hit locations (page 21) allow for great detail in determining where an attack landed and appeal to many because they represent a more 'realistic' depiction of injuries. The standard hit location chart provided is suitable for any bipedal humanoid, other creatures have differently-shaped bodies and need different hit location charts.

This section presents a variety of hit location charts and quick formulas for determining the hit points per location for any creature desired. To determine which table to use, pick the one most appropriate to the desired creature.

- **Humanoid:** Human, Alien (Grey), Angel (wings hidden), Cyborg, Dwarf, Elf, Ghost, Ghoul, Giant, Halfling, Minotaur, Mummy, Mutant, Orc, Robots (Giant, Killer, Utility), Skeleton, Troll, Vampire (in human form), Elementals (Earth, Water), Werewolf (in hybrid form), Zombie
- **Formless:** Blob
- **Four-Legged Humanoid:** Centaur
- **Four-Legged:** Bear, Dog, Gorilla, Horse, Lion, Tiger, Unicorn, Wolf
- **Four-Legged with Tail:** Alien (Xenomorph), Alligator or Crocodile, Elemental (Fire)
- **Giant Four-Legged With Tail:** Brontosaurus
- **Multi-Limbed:** Squid (Giant)
- **Snake:** Snakes (Constrictor, Venomous)
- **Two-Legged with Tail:** Tyrannosaurus Rex
- **Winged:** Hawk
- **Winged Four-Legged:** Griffin

To determine hit points per location, either use the hit point formula, or use the Hit Points Per Location table (page 21).

HUMANOID

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–4	Right Leg	1/3 total
5–8	Left Leg	1/3 total
9–11	Abdomen	1/3 total
12	Chest	2/5 total
13–15	Right Arm	1/4 total
16–18	Left Arm	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

FORMLESS

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–20	Body	Total

FOUR-LEGGED

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–2	Right Hindleg	1/4 total
3–4	Left Hindleg	1/4 total
5–7	Hindquarters	2/5 total
8–10	Forequarters	2/5 total
11–13	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
14–16	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
17–20	Head	1/3 total

FOUR-LEGGED HUMANOID

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–2	Right Hindleg	1/4 total
3–4	Left Hindleg	1/4 total
5–6	Hindquarters	2/5 total
7–8	Forequarters	2/5 total
9–10	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
11–12	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
13–14	Chest	2/5 total
15–16	Right Arm	1/4 total
17–18	Left Arm	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

FOUR-LEGGED WITH TAIL

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–3	Tail	1/3 total
4	Right Hindleg	1/4 total
5	Left Hindleg	1/4 total
6–9	Hindquarters	2/5 total
10–14	Forequarters	2/5 total
15	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
16	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
17–20	Head	1/3 total

CREATURE HIT LOCATION TABLES (CONTINUED)

GIANT FOUR-LEGGED WITH TAIL

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–2	Tail	1/3 total
3–4	Right Hindleg	1/4 total
5–6	Left Hindleg	1/4 total
7–10	Hindquarters	2/5 total
11–14	Forequarters	2/5 total
15–16	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
17–18	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

MULTI-LIMBED

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1	Arm	1/4 total
2	Arm 2	1/4 total
3	Arm 3	1/4 total
4	Arm 4	1/4 total
5	Arm 5	1/4 total
6	Arm 6	1/4 total
7	Arm 7	1/4 total
8	Arm 8	1/4 total
9	Arm 9	1/4 total
10	Arm	1/4 total
11–15	Body	2/5 total
16–20	Head	2/5 total

SNAKE

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–6	Tail	1/3 total
7–14	Body	2/5 total
15–20	Head	1/3 total

TWO-LEGGED WITH TAIL

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–2	Tail	1/3 total
3–5	Right Leg	1/3 total
6–8	Left Leg	1/3 total
9–11	Abdomen	2/5 total
12–15	Chest	2/5 total
16	Right Arm	1/4 total
17	Left Arm	1/4 total
18–20	Head	1/3 total

WINGED

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–3	Right leg	1/5 total
4–6	Left leg	1/5 total
7–12	Body	2/5 total
13–15	Right wing	1/5 total
16–18	Left wing	1/5 total
19–20	Head	1/4 total

WINGED FOUR-LEGGED

D20	Roll Result	Formula
1–2	Right Hindleg	1/4 total
3–4	Left Hindleg	1/4 total
5–7	Hindquarters	2/5 total
8–10	Forequarters	2/5 total
11–12	Right Wing	1/4 total
13–14	Left Wing	1/4 total
15–16	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
17–18	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

WINGED, FOUR-LEGGED WITH TAIL

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–2	Tail	1/4 total
3–4	Right Hindleg	1/3 total
5–6	Left Hindleg	1/3 total
7–8	Hindquarters	2/5 total
9–10	Forequarters	2/5 total
11–12	Right Wing	1/4 total
13–14	Left Wing	1/4 total
15–16	Right Foreleg	1/3 total
17–18	Left Foreleg	1/3 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

WINGED HUMANOID

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–3	Right Leg	1/3 total
4–6	Left Leg	1/3 total
7–9	Abdomen	1/3 total
10	Chest	2/5 total
11–12	Right Wing	1/5 total
13–14	Left Wing	1/5 total
15–16	Right Arm	1/4 total
17–18	Left Arm	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

CREATURE HIT LOCATION TABLE (CONTINUED)

To determine the hit points per location, compare the creature's total hit points with the fraction. Each total hit point value is provided a range and fractions are rounded up based on the upper limit of that range (thus 2/5 of 10–12 yields a value of either 4, 4.4, or 4.8 and is rounded to 5). If a more precise calculation is desired, use the formulas provided prior.

Total	2/5 (or 40%)	1/3 (or 33%)	1/4 (or 25%)	1/5 (or 20%)
1–3	2	1	1	1
4–6	3	2	2	1
7–9	4	3	3	2
10–12	5	4	3	2
13–15	6	5	4	3
16–18	8	6	5	3
19–21	9	7	6	4
22–24	10	8	6	4
25–27	11	9	7	5
28–30	12	10	8	5
31–33	14	11	9	6
34–36	15	12	9	6
37–39	16	13	10	7
40–42	17	14	11	7
43–45	18	15	12	8
46–48	20	16	12	8
49–51	21	17	13	9
52–54	22	18	14	9
55–57	23	19	15	10
58–60	24	20	15	10
61–63	26	21	16	11
64–66	27	22	17	11
67–69	28	23	18	12
70–72	29	24	18	12
73–75	30	25	19	13
76–78	32	26	20	13
79–81	33	27	21	14
82–84	34	28	22	14
85–87	35	29	22	15
88–90	36	30	23	15
91–93	38	31	24	16
94–96	39	32	24	16
97–99	40	33	25	17
100, etc.	41	34	26	16

APPENDICES

This chapter contains a variety of play aids, including conversion notes to use Basic Roleplaying with other Chaosium Inc. games, an afterword, a bibliography of sources consulted, character sheets, references, and tables presented for convenience.

CONVERSION NOTES

Here are conversion notes for using *Basic Roleplaying* with other Chaosium Inc. . games such as *Call of Cthulhu* or *RuneQuest*.

- Magic points are power points in this version, to be more thematically appropriate for mutations, psychic abilities, and superpowers.
- In other Basic Roleplaying-based games, Charisma (CHA) has been Appearance (APP).
- Characteristic rolls have been introduced for all characteristics.
- Many rules from other Basic Roleplaying games have been made optional, to streamline gameplay and make this set of rules suitable for all genres, with the level of complexity set by the gamemaster.
- Skills have seen the most change. The following table shows the skill titles that have been changed. Information and science-based skills have changed the most dramatically, and many have been subsumed into the Knowledge or Science skills. If a skill is not on this table, the title has remained the same (or essentially unchanged) throughout all iterations of this system. This list deals only with the core Basic Roleplaying game lines, and skills specific to a particular setting are not included.

Basic Roleplaying Skill	Equivalent Skill Names
Appraise	Evaluate, Evaluate Treasure
Art (various)	Fine Arts, Photography
Artillery (various)	Weapons System
Brawlw	Fist, Fist/Punch, Head Butt, Kick, Unarmed Combat
Craft (various)	Build
Drive (various)	Ground Vehicle
Energy Weapon (various)	Handgun: Energy
Fine Manipulation	Devise, Lock Picking, Locksmith, Pick Lock, Set Trap, Tie Knot, Trap Set/Disarm
Firearm (various)	Archaic Ranged Weapon, Handgun, Handgun: Projectile, Rifle, Shotgun, Submachine Gun
First Aid	Emergency Treatment, Healing Lore, Physik
Fly	Personal Flyer

Heavy Machine (various)	Operate Heavy Machine
Heavy Weapon (various)	Heavy Weapon: Energy, Heavy Weapon: Projectile, Machine Gun
Hide	Camouflage, Conceal, Hide in Cover
Insight	Psychology
Jump	Jumping
Knowledge (various)	Accounting, Animal Lore, Anthropology, Archaeology, Astrological Lore, Botany, Business, Computer Use, Criminology, Farming, Hermetic Lore, History, Hunt, Law, Linguist, Music Lore, Natural World, Occult, Plant Lore, Poison Lore, Religion, Streetwise, Survival, Theology
Language (specific)	Second Languages, Speak
Literacy (optional)	Read Own Language, Read/Write, Scribe
Medicine	Diagnose Disease, Pharmacy, Potions, Treat Disease, Treat Poison
Melee Weapon (various)	Archaic Melee Weapon, Melee
Navigate	Cartography, Make Map, Map Making
Perform	Musicianship, Play Instrument, Orate, Oratory, Sing
Persuade	Communication, Debate
Pilot (various)	Aquatic Vehicle, Atmospheric Craft, Boat, Drive Horses, Hyperdrive, Reaction Drive, Reactionless Drive, Sailing, Shiphandling
Psychotherapy	Psychoanalyze
Repair (various)	Electrical Repair, Mechanical Repair, Repair/Devise, Trap
Research	Computer Use, Library Use
Ride (various)	Ride Horses, Riding
Science (various)	Astronomy, Biological Lore, Biology, Chemical Lore, Chemistry, Geology, Mineral Lore, Physics, Planetology, Zoology
Sense	Perception, Scent, Scent/Taste, Smell, Taste
Sleight of Hand	Conceal Object, Cut Purse, Hide Item, Juggle, Pick Pocket, Sleight
Spot	Observation, Perception, Scan, Scrutinize, Search, See, Spot Hidden Item, Spot Hidden Object, Spot Trap
Status	Credit, Credit Rating
Stealth	Ambush, Move Quietly, Move Silently, Sneak
Swim	Swimming
Technical Skill (various)	Computer Use, Computers, Electrical Lore, Electronics, Locksmith, Mechanical Lore, Mechanics
Track	Hunt, Tracking

Additionally, certain skills have been replaced by characteristic rolls.

Characteristic Roll	Old Skill
Idea (INT×5)	Memorize
Agility (DEX×5)	Athletics, Balance, Tumble
Know (EDU×5)	Human Lore, World Lore

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AFTERWORD

This work is the spiritual descendent of the visionary *Worlds of Wonder* boxed set (1982), which took the Basic Roleplaying system into three different directions—fantasy, science-fiction, and super heroics. It has been called the first universal system based on that product, a flexibility demonstrated with Chaosium Inc.'s wide variety of other games, ranging from Lovecraftian horror in several eras, sword-and-sorcery, post-apocalyptic science fantasy, hard science fiction, modern occult thriller, tribal adventure in a world of elves, super heroics, Arthurian adventure, and others.

The first edition of this book was a labor of love, and this new edition is as well. Since *Basic Roleplaying* was first released, the Chaosium tribe has appreciated the acclaim and robust fan that this game, and the rest of the family of Basic Roleplaying games, has had. Revisiting this work and updating it for a new audience is a privilege and an honor.

Now, take these rules, make great games and play!

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING

PERSONAL

NAME _____ PLAYER _____
CULTURE _____ GENDER _____
HANDEDNESS _____ HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____
PROFESSION _____ WEALTH _____
GODS/RELIGION _____
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES _____
_____ MOVE (MOV) _____
DESCRIPTION _____
_____ AGE _____

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	_____	EFFORT ROLL	_____%
CON	_____	STAMINA ROLL	_____%
SIZ	_____	DAMAGE MODIFIER	_____
INT	_____	IDEA ROLL	_____%
POW	_____ ☐	LUCK ROLL	_____%
DEX	_____	AGILITY ROLL	_____%
CHA	_____	CHARM ROLL	_____%
EDU	_____	KNOWLEDGE ROLL	_____%

HIT POINTS

HIT POINTS _____
MAJOR WOUND _____
DEAD _____ 00 01 02
03 04 05 06 07 08 09
10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29 30
31 32 33 34 35 36 37

SKILLS

COMMUNICATION _____%

Bargain (05) _____% ☐
Command (05) _____% ☐
Disguise (01) _____% ☐
Etiquette (05) _____% ☐
Fast Talk (05) _____% ☐
Language (INT/EDU×05 or 00)
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Perform (05) _____% ☐
Persuade (15) _____% ☐
Status (15 or various) _____% ☐
Teach (10) _____% ☐

MANIPULATION _____%

Art (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Craft (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Demolition (01) _____% ☐
Fine Manipulation (5) _____% ☐
Heavy Machine (01)
_____ _____% ☐
Repair (15) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Sleight of Hand (05) _____% ☐

MENTAL _____%

Appraise (15) _____% ☐
First Aid (30) _____% ☐
Gaming (INT+POW) _____% ☐
Knowledge (05 or 00)
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Literacy (00 or language) _____% ☐
Medicine (05) _____% ☐
Psychotherapy (01 or 00) _____% ☐
Science (01) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Strategy (01) _____% ☐
Technical (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐

PERCEPTION _____%

Insight (05) _____% ☐
Listen (25) _____% ☐
Navigate (10) _____% ☐
Research (25) _____% ☐
Sense (10) _____% ☐
Spot (25) _____% ☐
Track (10) _____% ☐

PHYSICAL _____%

Climb (40) _____% ☐
Drive (20 or 01) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Fly (DEX×04 or 1/2 DEX) _____% ☐
Hide (10) _____% ☐
Jump (25) _____% ☐
Pilot (01) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Projection (DEX×02) _____% ☐
Ride (05) _____ _____% ☐
_____ _____% ☐
Stealth (10) _____% ☐
Swim (25) _____% ☐
Throw (25) _____% ☐

COMBAT _____%

Dodge (DEX×02) _____% ☐
Martial Arts (01) _____% ☐
See **WEAPONS** below for more Combat skills
_____(____) _____% ☐
_____(____) _____% ☐
_____(____) _____% ☐
_____(____) _____% ☐

EXPERIENCE BONUS _____%

WEAPONS

WEAPON TYPE	%	DAMAGE	RANGE	ATTACKS	LENGTH	HAND	HP	
								☐
								☐
								☐
								☐
								☐
								☐
Brawl (30)			touch	1	close	1h		☐
Grapple (25)			touch	1	close	2h		☐

ARMOR

ARMOR _____ ARMOR VALUE _____
_____ _____
SHIELD _____ % _____ DAMAGE _____ HP _____ ☐
COMBAT NOTES _____
_____
_____
_____

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING

CHARACTER POINTS

CAMPAIGN POWER LEVEL _____ CHARACTER POINTS _____

Character Failings	Points

POWER POINTS

POWER POINTS _____ BATTERY _____ UNCONSCIOUS _____

00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100			

FATIGUE

FATIGUE _____ EXHAUSTED (–_____)

00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100			

SANITY

SANITY _____ TEMPORARY INSANITY SCORE (TIS) _____

00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100			

POWERS

POWER	ENERGY TYPE	ACTIVE LEVELS	TOTAL LEVELS	RANGE	COST TO USE	DURATION	NOTES	CHARACTER POINT COST

ATTACK POWERS

ATTACK POWER	%	DAMAGE	RANGE	ENERGY TYPE	ENERGY COST	
						☐
						☐
						☐
						☐
						☐
						☐

Projection (DEX×02) ____% ☐ Throw ____% ☐ Brawl ____% ☐ Fly ____% ☐

POWER	ENERGY TYPE	LEVEL	%	ENERGY COST

Defense ____% Dodge (DEX×02) ____% ☐

NOTES

_____ REPUTATION _____ % ☐

PORTRAIT

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING

NONPLAYER CHARACTER

NAME _____

DESCRIPTION _____

DAMAGE MODIFIER _____

WEAPON	%	DAMAGE
Brawl/Claw		

ARMOR _____ ARMOR VALUE _____

SHIELD _____ % _____ DAMAGE _____ HP _____

STR ____ **INT** ____ **CHA** ____
CON ____ **POW** ____ **EDU** ____
SIZ ____ **DEX** ____ **MOV** ____

SKILLS _____

Projection ____% Throw ____% Fly ____%

Defense ____% Dodge (DEX×02) ____%

POWERS _____

HIT POINTS

DEAD	00	01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89
90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	

POWER POINTS

UNC	00	01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89
90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	

POSSESSIONS _____

FOLLOWER ONE

NAME _____

DESCRIPTION _____

STR ____ **INT** ____ **CHA** ____
CON ____ **POW** ____ **EDU** ____
SIZ ____ **DEX** ____ **MOV** ____

HIT POINTS

DEAD	00	01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89
90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	

Dodge (DEX×02) ____% DAMAGE MODIFIER _____

WEAPON	%	DAMAGE

ARMOR _____ ARMOR VALUE _____

SKILLS _____

POWER POINTS _____ / _____

POWERS _____

POSSESSIONS _____

FOLLOWER TWO

NAME _____

DESCRIPTION _____

STR ____ **INT** ____ **CHA** ____
CON ____ **POW** ____ **EDU** ____
SIZ ____ **DEX** ____ **MOV** ____

HIT POINTS

DEAD	00	01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89
90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	

Dodge (DEX×02) ____% DAMAGE MODIFIER _____

WEAPON	%	DAMAGE

ARMOR _____ ARMOR VALUE _____

SKILLS _____

POWER POINTS _____ / _____

POWERS _____

POSSESSIONS _____

FOLLOWER THREE

NAME _____

DESCRIPTION _____

STR ____ **INT** ____ **CHA** ____
CON ____ **POW** ____ **EDU** ____
SIZ ____ **DEX** ____ **MOV** ____

HIT POINTS

DEAD	00	01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89
90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	

Dodge (DEX×02) ____% DAMAGE MODIFIER _____

WEAPON	%	DAMAGE

ARMOR _____ ARMOR VALUE _____

SKILLS _____

POWER POINTS _____ / _____

POWERS _____

POSSESSIONS _____

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING

VEHICLE SHEET

VEHICLE TYPE _____

VEHICLE NAME _____

OWNER/SPONSOR _____

YEAR _____ MAKE _____ MODEL _____

SKILL _____

RATED SPEED		HANDLING	
ACCELERATION		MOVE (MOV)	
SIZ		HIT POINTS	
CREW		PASSENGERS	
CARGO		VALUE	

CREW/OPERATOR	CARGO

HIT POINTS

100+	200+	300+	400+	500+	600+	700+
DESTROYED	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68
69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92
93	94	95	96	97	98	99					

NOTES _____

BASIC ROLEPLAYING

MOUNT SHEET

MOUNT ONE

NAME _____ SPECIES _____

DESCRIPTION _____

				MOVE (MOV)	
STR		INT		WALK	
CON		POW		FLY	
SIZ		DEX		SWIM	

HIT POINTS

DEAD	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69
70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100							

POWER POINTS

UNCONSCIOUS	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Dodge ___% DAMAGE MODIFIER _____

WEAPON	%	DAMAGE

ARMOR	ARMOR VALUE

SKILLS _____

POWERS _____

MOUNT TWO

NAME _____ SPECIES _____

DESCRIPTION _____

				MOVE (MOV)	
STR		INT		WALK	
CON		POW		FLY	
SIZ		DEX		SWIM	

HIT POINTS

DEAD	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69
70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100							

POWER POINTS

UNCONSCIOUS	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Dodge ___% DAMAGE MODIFIER _____

WEAPON	%	DAMAGE

ARMOR	ARMOR VALUE

SKILLS _____

POWERS _____

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING

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