BESM

ROLE-PLAYING GAME

FOURTH EDITION



ANIME AND MANGA ADVENTURES

BESM
ROLE-PLAYING GAME
FOURTH EDITION



In the myriad realms of imagination, there are an infinite number of fascinating worlds waiting to be discovered

BESM FOURTH EDITION
helps you explore them all

Welcome to Big Eyes, Small Mouth – the multi-genre role-playing game for all your anime and manga adventures! Whether your gaming preference runs towards comedy or drama, fantasy or science fiction, horror or romance, shojo or shonen, BESM Fourth Edition has everything you need to help you make your favourite anime and manga characters and stories come to life.

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Japanime GAMES

TRI-STAT SYSTEM

ISBN 978-1-989695-00-5
9 781989 695005 >

©2019 White Wolf Entertainment AB info@dyskami.ca Production #JPG800 DriveThruRPG PDF Edition

BESM

ROLE-PLAYING GAME

FOURTH EDITION

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Japanime GAMES

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Production #JPG800 (#JPG800-LE for Deluxe Edition)
Printed in China. First Printing – December 2019

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TRI-STAT SYSTEM

FOREWORD

BESM Fourth Edition is the game that almost never happened.

My previous company, Guardians Of Order, published BESM and Tri-Stat System games from 1997 through 2005. When it became clear that GoO did not have the funds or operational support to print the completed and ready-to-go BESM Third Edition, I wanted to find a great home for it. White Wolf, publisher of Vampire and other World of Darkness role-playing games, was an excellent fit and I transferred the BESM rights to them. I then exited the gaming industry since my company was non-viable, and I expected that would be the final journey for BESM.

Of course, ceasing to be a publisher and designer didn't mean that I stopped being a gamer as well. As the years passed, I kept tinkering with the BESM rules because I believed that improvements could be made on what I created in Third Edition. Additionally, I had left an unexecuted BESM line development plan behind, and naturally I kept obsessing about the "what ifs". After several attempts to reacquire the rights to play in the BESM multiverse failed, I decided that my love of designing and publishing could be met through tabletop board games instead. In 2013, I founded the Dyskami Publishing Company and published my first board game design, Upon a Fable, followed shortly by Worker Placement and Warband: Against the Darkness. I successfully pursued a Sailor Moon Crystal game license from Toei Animation as well, and boom – I was back working in the anime-gaming circles.

But my love for BESM never wavered. A series of fortunate events presented the opportunity to me to license BESM from White Wolf Entertainment AB to create this Fourth Edition – and I was ecstatic! I was determined to make this new edition the ultimate anime and manga role-playing experience and started refining the designs with which I had been tinkering for years. Then reality hit me about the state of the role-playing industry, and I started second-guessing the viability of BESM Fourth Edition. Did anyone still care about BESM anymore, which had been out of print for over a decade? Was there a reasonable purchasing fan base that could ensure Dyskami had the financial resources to develop not just a core rulebook, but also an extensive game line? Could my newly formed publishing partnership with Japanime Games help with the resurrection of BESM?

I didn't know the answers to my questions, but I had faith. Dyskami invested the time and resources into preparing BESM Fourth Edition for a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign launch in the summer of 2019, to ensure it would be a quick turnaround after the funding campaign ended. I didn't know what the buy-in would be for BESM 4, but I believed. *Build it right*, I thought, *and the backers and supporters will come*.

And now you hold BESM Fourth Edition in your hands (literally or digitally) because of the incredible support we received through the Kickstarter. Nearly 1,700 backers pledged over $140,000 to bring anime and manga role-playing back to life – enough to fund not just the core game, but also a stripped-down core version of the rules that we call BESM Naked. Dyskami could also seed a holistic approach to future BESM expansions and supplements. You demonstrated to us that yes, BESM is remembered and loved and desired. So whether you're experiencing Big Eyes, Small Mouth for the first time, or revisiting an old favourite to see where the game has travelled over the past decade, I extend my sincerest and heartfelt thanks to you for helping make my dreams come true.



Mark MacKinnon
November 2019

WE EXTEND OUR THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR BESM 4 PLAYTESTING AND EDITING SUPPORT

Michael Bioly, Corinna Black, Nick Blakely, Nate Bodine, Joseph Borawski, Vivian Bracewell, Shane Allen Bryner, Evan Burris, Tasha Cejic, Clinton Chan, Amber Clementi, Aaron Corder, Jason Danitz, Emma Dixon, Jacob Dixon, Patrick Eason, Garland Easter III, Joshua Evanishyn, Isaac Feuermähne, Marcelo Figueroa, Anthony Fox, Jonas Fredrikson, Emma Fry, Joe Fry, Tommy Gherity, Caitlin Gilson, Daniel Glass, Rodrigo Goller, Doug Graham, John Greene, Kyle Groom, Emmanuel Guerrero, Rob Hammond, Jason Henninger-Esparza, Jon Hollander, Rachel Howlett, Josh "vazor" Jones, Amjad Imran Khan, Matthew Kreis, Marjorie Lamkin, Jonathan Lang, Sebastian Linnert, Gary McCandless, Karen McLarney, Sean "Punk Smurph" Murphy, Tyler Omichinski, Nathan Pickner, David L. Pulver, Benjamin "eSca" Reed, Annah Reginew, Kenneth Roberts, Christopher Ruthenbeck, Richard Schade, Todd, Top_Tsun, Mindy Turner, Justin "Shameless" Verret, Bryan Wagner, Ben Wilson, Lorien Wright, Phillip Wright

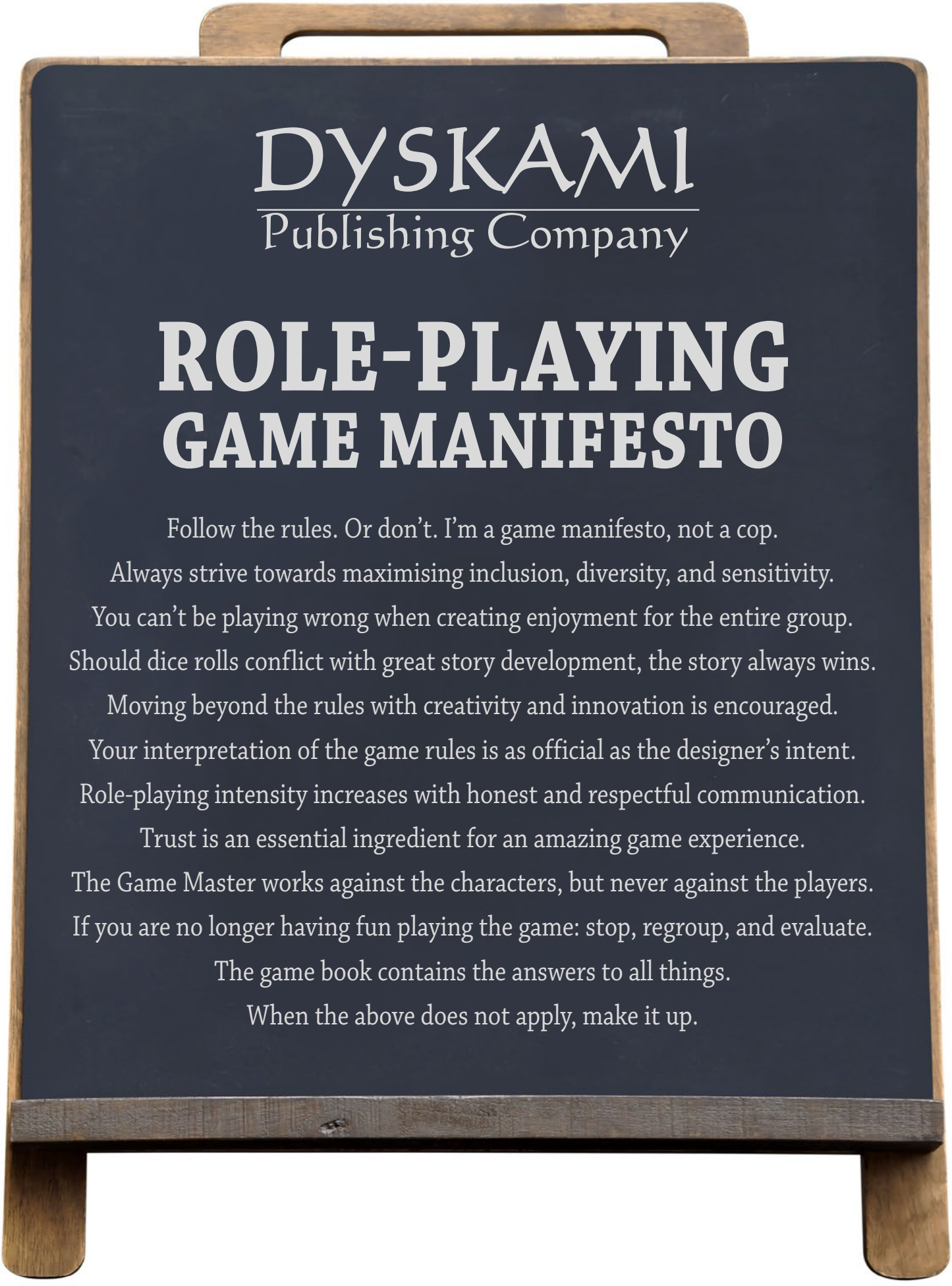

DYSKAMI
Publishing Company
ROLE-PLAYING
GAME MANIFESTO
Follow the rules. Or don't. I'm a game manifesto, not a cop.
Always strive towards maximising inclusion, diversity, and sensitivity.
You can't be playing wrong when creating enjoyment for the entire group.
Should dice rolls conflict with great story development, the story always wins.
Moving beyond the rules with creativity and innovation is encouraged.
Your interpretation of the game rules is as official as the designer's intent.
Role-playing intensity increases with honest and respectful communication.
Trust is an essential ingredient for an amazing game experience.
The Game Master works against the characters, but never against the players.
If you are no longer having fun playing the game: stop, regroup, and evaluate.
The game book contains the answers to all things.
When the above does not apply, make it up.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

01: INTRODUCTION

BIG EYES, SMALL MOUTH

In the myriad realms of imagination, there are an infinite number of fascinating worlds waiting to be discovered.

BESM Fourth Edition helps you explore them all.

Welcome to Big Eyes, Small Mouth – the multi-genre role-playing game for all your anime and manga adventures! Mark MacKinnon, the creator of BESM, and the Dyskami Publishing Company licensed the rights to release this new edition of the game from White Wolf Entertainment. Dyskami then teamed up with Japanime Games to publish this core game book plus an entire line of BESM support products to expand the game system and storytelling world. What you hold in your hands is the beginning of this journey, so hold on tight as we welcome you to your next great adventure.

WHAT IS ANIME? MANGA?

"Anime" is the accepted term for animation from Japan. It has garnered much more respect in its native country than North American cartoons have in Canada and the United States. One reason for the popularity of anime is its diverse subject matter, ranging from fantasy and science fiction to romantic comedy and horror. While North American cartoons tend to be written for younger audiences (with a few exceptions), anime includes many shows aimed explicitly at teenagers or older viewers, and this in turn permits more sophisticated storylines and a wider array of genres.

Another factor in the appeal of anime is the ongoing multi-episode story arcs that are a common feature of many live-action TV dramas. A show can tell a complete story with a beginning, middle, and end rather than simply present a series of disconnected episodes that lurch onward until cancellation. Science fiction and fantasy fare very well in anime. Freed from the budgetary constraints imposed by the high cost of live-action special effects, coupled with a willingness to tackle stories that appeal to older viewers, many shows bring fantastic visions to vivid life. Alien invasions, world-shaking sorcery, transforming robots, super-powered heroes, demonic monsters, obsessively-detailed military hardware, and realistic depictions of life in space are all a part of anime. Characters in these shows are often larger than life: angst-ridden, utterly clueless, burning for revenge, or hopelessly in love.

"Manga" can simply be defined as comics from Japan, though the offerings are once again much more accepted and widespread than their Western counterparts, with millions of issues sold each week. With on-going plot lines, engaging characters, and a vast diversity of settings, genres, and topics, manga has gained popularity in North America over the years. With manga achieving mainstream respectability, bookstore shelves often have a separate manga section, sometimes with hundreds of titles available for purchase.

ANIME ORIGINS

The first anime series produced in Japan was Tetsuwan Atom (1963), created by Osamu Tezuka and his animation studio, Mushi Productions. Later, this series became popular in the West as Astro Boy. From the 1980s through the 1990s, anime improved in both sophistication and quality, with series like Space Battleship Yamato (1975, space opera), Urusei Yatsura (1981, alien girlfriend comedy), Mobile Suit Gundam (1979, military drama), Macross (1983, science fiction soap opera), Bishojo Senshi Sailormoon (1992, magical girl drama) and Ranma 1/2 (1994, martial arts comedy) exemplifying particular genres. A major breakthrough came in the early 1980s, when direct-to-video (OVA; Original Video Animation) anime releases caught on, allowing production studios to produce shows aimed at smaller niche audiences or older viewers in a much greater diversity of genres. The legacy of this "OVA boom" (and the rise of speciality cable TV) was a renaissance in original television anime in the late 1990s, of which the most influential series was the mecha-conspiracy saga, Neon Genesis Evangelion (1996).

In North America, relatively few anime-derived series were translated and adapted for television in the 1970s and 1980s. Most that did appear were heavily altered, often losing those Japanese elements (such as a continuing story arc) that made them interesting and so engaging. Notable exceptions were Star Blazers (1979, the U.S. version of Space Battleship Yamato) and Robotech (1985, a compilation of Macross and two other series), whose adaptations left their story arcs largely intact. The fandom that developed around these shows was sustained by comics, books, and fan activities that helped fuel the first anime-inspired giant robot board games and RPGs. In 1986, the first American anime magazines appeared. More and more Westerners became active in the distribution of Japanese language or fan-subtitled tapes, as fans became aware of the "OVA boom" taking place in Japan. Successful comic book translations of high-quality Japanese manga (such as Akira, Lone Wolf and Cub, and Appleseed) and the theatrical release of Akira captured new fans.

01: INTRODUCTION

In the late 1980s, a number of American companies began releasing quality subtitled and dubbed translations of anime releases, including some of the best of the then-new science fiction OVA series like Gunbuster (1988) and Bubblegum Crisis (1988). In the 1990s, the growing popularity of anime allowed companies to release longer TV series (notably Ranma 1/2, one of the first successful non-mecha series in America) direct to video. In 1995, the "impossible" happened when the magical girl show, Sailor Moon, began appearing on North American television, the first shojo (young girl) anime to do so. Its success has added a new generation of young female (and male) fans.

The end of the millennium and the transition into the new century saw an explosion in anime with TV series being translated and released on video within months of their appearance in Japan. This is in addition to anime returning to mainstream American television. Series such as Dragon Ball Z, Gundam Wing, Tenchi Muyo!, Cardcaptor Sakura, Digimon, Escaflowne, and Pokémon were broadcasting on network television to high ratings. It seemed as though the high times would continue for years to come.

ANIME EVOLUTION

All good things must come to an end however and around the end of the decade, the bubble burst on the North American anime market. This left doubts in people's minds on if anime in the west would even survive the large scale changes that were looming. With the advent and popularisation of the streaming service Crunchyroll in 2008, fans were able to access anime faster than ever before. While some criticised the streaming site for allowing illegal uploads of Asian entertainment on their site at first, Crunchyroll began obtaining legal anime licenses and grew exponentially over the coming years.

With streaming becoming more and more popular in the second half of this decade, multiple companies couldn't keep up with the changing marketplace and either went out of business (ADV and Central Park Media), or closed up shop in the west entirely (Bandai Entertainment and Geneon). Luckily for fans in North America, more companies followed Crunchyroll's lead by opening their own streaming services including Funimation and Netflix, both of whom have recently started to enter the market more heavily by helping to finance original productions.

Despite this new hurdle that had to be overcome, the indomitable spirit of anime lived on in Japan with hundreds of new series being released every single year. Giant robot series, which included Code Geass (2006) and Gurren Lagann (2007), continued to be popular. However, series that adapted the story of Japanese dating-sim games such as Fate/Stay Night (2006) and Clannad (2008) also started to increase in prominence. While this was happening, a new art style began to gain popularity in the form of bishojo (pretty girl) or moe, a style that would become the calling card of studios like Kyoto Animation. This style of art was well represented throughout the next few years with Lucky Star (2007), Toradora (2008), and K-ON! (2009) leading the charge and soon began appearing in overseas markets as well.

One thing that remained the same throughout the transition into the new millennium was the popularity of shonen (young male) and seinen (adult male) anime. Series like Fullmetal Alchemist (2003) and the subsequent (more faithful to the manga source) retelling in Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood (2009), Death Note (2006), Fairy Tail (2009), Attack on Titan (2013), and Dragon Ball Super (2015) all took the world by storm and made anime even more mainstream.

As the years progressed, however, more anime aimed at a female demographic started to emerge and grew in popularity in North America and beyond. Such shows included the worldwide figure skating hit, Yuri!!! on Ice (2016), and the resurrection of the beloved magical girl series, Sailor Moon. The new streaming series, Sailor Moon Crystal (2014), rebooted the global anime phenomenon that more closely followed creator Naoko Takeuchi's original manga stories.

In 2012, Sword Art Online recaptured imaginations and became arguably one of the most popular series of the decade, helping to usher in a new era of isekai (different world) anime. While the concept of heroes being transported to different worlds, lands, or dimensions was not new to the anime landscape, the success of SAO paved the way for many others of its kind, including Re:Zero (2016) and That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime (2018). This genre ended up becoming so popular among manga and light novel authors by the latter half of the decade that multiple publishing contests in Japan banned entries that fell into the category.

By 2015, anime had reached a fevered pitch with over three hundred new series being aired in Japan in one year alone. Animation studios were becoming overworked and understaffed with productions being scheduled years in advance. In 2019, these conditions were brought forward by a worker for famed studio Madhouse who claimed to have been forced to work almost 400 hours of unpaid overtime in one month.

About to dive head first into a new decade, anime is on the horizon of a new era and where it will go next is anyone's guess. Good times or bad, however, one thing remains the same: anime will continue to be a worldwide phenomenon for many years to come.


SHILIN16

ANIME GAMING

Watching anime movies or reading a manga series doesn't quite provide the immersive experience that some people crave. These inspired individuals don't just want to passively watch anime – they want to live it and experience it and be consumed by it. Even playing anime-themed video games doesn't provide the creative outlet whereby players can live the adventures of their favourite anime characters. An anime and manga role-playing game – just like the one you're reading – fills this dramatic need perfectly.

WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

For many people, a role-playing game (RPG) is the logical evolution of the games we used to play as children: "House," "Cops and Robbers," and "Superheroes." A rule system assists in settling conflicts and resolving actions, often with the use of a random generator (dice, cards, etc.) to add an unpredictable element to the game. A game typically involves a handful of players (2-10) and one person to act as the game master (GM) or referee. The players tell the GM what their anime alter-egos would like to do, and the GM describes the results of their actions. The GM is also responsible for creating the plot and the setting for the game adventures and works closely with the players to keep the game interesting and fun for all.

In Big Eyes, Small Mouth (BESM), players assume the roles of anime characters suitable to the time period and setting of the adventures the GM is staging. The game system helps players assign some strengths and weaknesses to their characters using numbers to indicate relative ability. The remaining elements of a character's background, family, knowledge, hobbies, and interests are not covered by the rules and are described by each player according to their choice of character personality.

As a player, you control your character's actions in the game. They can be likened to one of the major characters in an anime movie or series, working through the unexpected twists and turns of the plot with the help of other major characters (ie. personalities controlled by the other players). Your character's actions can greatly affect the outcome of the adventure, but you must keep in mind that every action has a consequence that could be revisited upon your character in a future game session. Role-playing is a group effort, and positive interactions between your character and those of the other players are vital to everyone's enjoyment of the game.

As a GM, your contribution will be much greater than that from any one player. You must establish the genre, setting, conflicts, and plot of the adventure as well as all the non-player characters (NPCs) your group of players will meet during the game. Additionally, you must be able to project your imagination to the players by describing in vivid detail the world in which they live. Then, after all that, your game plot must remain sufficiently flexible to allow the characters' actions to make a definite impact on the adventure. A plot that is too rigid may leave players feeling their characters have lost the free will to affect their own destiny. Should you assume the role of GM, you must possess creativity, good judgement, and the ability to improvise in unexpected situations. It takes extra time and effort, but the reward of a well-played adventure is certainly worth it.

Each role-playing adventure or episode will require one or two game sessions, each several hours in length. A number of episodes using the same characters can be linked together to form an anime campaign. Campaigns require more commitment from everyone involved, but watching the characters grow as the greater plot unfolds makes the extra effort worthwhile. The most engaging campaigns can last years or even decades, but keeping a campaign running for several months to a few years is a significant accomplishment given the busy schedules we find ourselves living.

For additional details about playing in and running BESM adventures, see Chapters 12 and 13.

WHAT DO YOU WANT IN AN RPG?

If you ask ten gamers what is the most important aspect of a role-playing adventure, you'll likely hear ten different answers. Diversity in role-playing is one of the hobby's strengths, though establishing a common ground for your game's focus is essential to help meet everyone's expectations.

▶ ROLE-PLAYING WITH BESM

BESM was designed to create multi-genre anime and manga adventures, accommodating nearly any setting, time period, and player power level. The rules are straightforward to use and thus do not include an overwhelming amount of specific detail. In particular, the task resolution and combat system is designed to capture the fast-moving nature of anime and manga action. This system elegance is one of the central foundations of BESM, making it an ideal choice for both novice and experienced players. Nevertheless, the role-playing interactions between the GM and the players, as well as between the players themselves, are the primary focus of BESM; to this end, the core mechanisms of the game are merely a tool to accomplish this goal.

▶ RP VS. G

People play role-playing games for many reasons, and different game systems cater to some preferences more than others. RPGs that have detailed and intricate game systems typically attract players who are engaged with the system mechanics and focus more on the "game" parts of an RPG. Conversely, games that have more flexible and narrative game systems typically attract players that engage with the story plots and focus more on the "role-playing" parts of an RPG.

BESM falls in between on this spectrum, leaning more towards emphasising the stories and characters as opposed to the game system. Although BESM's underlying Tri-Stat System is streamlined and easy-to-use, it's quite a comprehensive multi-genre system designed to handle nearly anything you throw at it. The process of creating characters in BESM can be quite an involved process given the volume of options available, but once the adventure begins, the game mechanics fade into the background and allow the role-playing to command the stage.

Since its inception, BESM was always presented with one simple unwritten rule in mind: when the game system conflicts with the story (and, by extension, the characters), the story always wins.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BESM

Game creator Mark MacKinnon here to provide some context to more than 20 years of history. Big Eyes, Small Mouth was born in 1997 out of a desire to play anime adventures and from a lack of any similar games on the market. I had passed through my D&D phase, and was really hooked on the Amber Diceless RPG at that time. I wanted something in between, though – light on rules, but with a point based structure that had a few more options than Amber presented.

This new RPG did exactly what I wanted it to, and fortunately was what many gamers were looking for. But for every "hey, this is great" I heard several "this is great, but it needs more...." BESM and it's core Tri-Stat System evolved with market forces and gamer demands into the Second Edition (chiefly helmed by point-based system guru, David Pulver). It kept the same simple ideas and structure, but added more rules and framework. The Second Edition reached even more gamers and garnered us even more fans. It was heading in the right direction, it seemed, though we did lose the support of some that preferred the simplicity of the First Edition.

And still, I heard "BESM isn't defined enough. We want more concrete rules."

I was in a conundrum. BESM 1e was a game I wrote for myself, while 2e was a game David and I wrote for others. Still, there seemed to be room for "improvement," and the line's survival depended on giving the customers what they wanted. If I could modify Tri-Stat to please everyone, the publisher would prosper.

Of course, that was impossible. The superhero RPG, Silver Age Sentinels, was my attempt to add more options to the Tri-Stat System while also streamlining the game and making it easier to learn. It succeeded greatly for one goal – giving even more rules crunch to those who wanted it – but the game lost touch with simplicity. For many, it was even confusing ... a great idea with an unfulfilled execution.

So when I knew I needed to develop a Third Edition of BESM, the question was obvious: how do I keep the desirable and flexible point-based creation, but eliminate the confusion from Silver Age Sentinels and successfully migrate closer to BESM 1e simplicity? After taking many pokes at the system itself (with great assistance from others), I discovered that the presentation of information was just as important as the information itself. The only way to create a system both simple and complex involved presenting the complex system in a simple manner. It almost worked.

I was finalising the Third Edition of BESM during a dark time when the publisher, Guardians Of Order, was ceasing operations and transferring game ownership to White Wolf. Consequently, the game was rushed and not enough attention was given to point balance and streamlining the presentation. BESM 3e was good – I'd even say very good – but the execution missed the mark slightly. Although I exited the gaming industry in 2006 with BESM in the hands of White Wolf, I still obsessed about doing BESM right. Not just as a single core product, but as a holistic game line.

I began tinkering with BESM over a decade ago, slowly breaking it down and rebuilding it into the version that never was. It was a labour of love because I no longer had the right to publish a new BESM edition. But I knew it could be better. And maybe, I thought, just maybe, I might get the chance to release a new edition ... somehow ... some way....

My perseverance paid off, and after a long journey and moments that were "this close", my new tabletop game enterprise, Dyskami Publishing Company, secured the rights from White Wolf to produce a new edition of BESM. Fourth Edition would be BESM done right, because there was no way I was going to miss the mark this time. Two additional years of development later, you hold the beginning of my vision for BESM in your hands.

Sometimes, dreams do indeed come true.

WHAT MAKES BESM AN ANIME/MANGA RPG?

Since the First Edition of BESM was published in 1997, the same question arises repeatedly: "What makes BESM an anime and manga RPG? Isn't it really just a universal game system?"

Yes, it's true that BESM functions as a universal RPG system in a similar way as other effects-based games. For over two decades, many groups have used it as their go-to generic system, completely divorced from any references to anime or manga. What separates BESM from other universal RPGs (such as HERO, GURPS, Fate, or Savage Worlds) and establishes it as a universal anime and manga game is the fundamental design foundation of its Tri-Stat System. In short, BESM is an anime and manga game because it was designed with that foremost in mind.

The Tri-Stat System is the mechanics while BESM is the game, much in the same way that d20 is the system for Dungeons and Dragons and HERO is the system for Champions. Unlike most RPGs, BESM only has three primary game statistics (called Stats): Body for all things physical, Mind for all things mental, and Soul for all things spiritual. Contrast this with six stats ("Ability Scores") in Dungeons and Dragons – Strength, Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma – and you'll see the intention with Tri-Stat was to provide a balance to all aspects of a character that doesn't value physical over mental or spiritual. Furthermore, a character's combat prowess in BESM (know as Combat Value) is determined by averaging the character's Body, Mind, and Soul Stats. Again, this purposeful choice to derive fighting ability from all aspects of a character (rather than just physical aspects) reflects a decidedly Eastern philosophy about harmony of the Complete Self. Balance in the Tri-Stat System was an intentional decision at its inception.

There are other aspects of BESM that gives it a distinct anime and manga feel, too. The artwork sets a strong visual tone, of course, and this Fourth Edition has some spectacular pieces by extremely talented illustrators. Also, some story and character elements that are common in anime and manga – but are not as common in Western stories – do provide



additional flavour, such as combining giant mecha (the Merge Attribute) and characters that attract a swarm of admirers (Magnet Defect). Finally, the game of BESM, rather than the Tri-Stat System, provides excellent guidance for playing and game mastering campaigns to help you create an evocative anime-style flavour in your stories (see Chapters 12, 13, and 14).

That doesn't mean you are required to use BESM solely to play games with anime or manga stylings. Although the game mechanics were designed with anime in mind, BESM is still a universal system that is a perfect choice for diverse scenarios that feature comic book superheroes, high fantasy worlds, campy horror movie elements, Western sci-fi epics, and so much more. BESM Fourth Edition embraces its anime roots, but encompasses a much larger RPG landscape.

WHAT'S NEW IN BESM FOURTH EDITION?

BESM Fourth Edition reflects an elegant evolution of the Tri-Stat System, the game mechanic system that powers your anime and manga action. Transformation from the third to fourth is not as substantial as the changes from second to third, though a rebalancing and new presentation were necessary to provide a better framework for both BESM newcomer and seasoned player alike.

The list below outlines major improvements and changes to BESM, both from the previous Third Edition (2007) but also from the popular Second Edition (2000).



» switching to a more-intuitive roll-high game system instead of the roll-low from BESM Second Edition

» rebalancing Points for all Stat, Attribute, and Defect costs, while simultaneously reducing the Character Point totals presented in BESM Third Edition to more manageable numbers

» expanding Attribute and Defect options from BESM Second Edition (little change from the previous edition)

» renaming select Attributes and Defects to make them more inclusive of different genres and styles

» removing the individual and separate Skill System in favour of more dynamic and streamlined Skill Groups Attribute

» emphasising both Race and Class Templates in character creation by inserting them into the earliest stages of the process and expanding the list of options available

» incorporating most Attribute customisation into a standard system of Enhancements and Limiters that elegantly changes an Attribute's effective level instead of Character Point cost (this reflects a new take on Variables and Restrictions from BESM Third Edition)

» returning clear Attribute Level descriptions to all entries, which were removed when transitioning from the Second Edition to Third Editions

» adding a new Social Fault Defect to address social disadvantages for characters, which in previous BESM editions were relegated to role-playing opportunities only

» changing how damage is calculated and applied compared to BESM Second Edition

» streamlining the flow of combat by focusing more on core actions, with a wide range of optional rules moving to the BESM Extras sourcebook instead

» unifying dice roll difficulty modifiers into a new concept of "edges and obstacles", which instead adds extra dice to the standard two six-sided dice roll and requires the player to only use the two highest (edge) or lowest (obstacle) dice to determine the final roll value

» expanding on character companions by including a chapter with animal and supporting character stats

» providing a sneak peek into the Anime Multiverse, BESM's vast multi-dimensional and multi-genre campaign setting that was introduced in Third Edition (the setting will be fully presented in the BESM Multiverse sourcebook)

» establishing a holistic approach and presentation to the core game book and essential expansion sourcebooks (including BESM Naked, BESM Extras, and BESM Multiverse) to provide a firm foundation for the BESM Fourth Edition game line

Enabling all of these dramatic changes means that BESM Fourth Edition is not directly compatible with any previous edition of BESM. Your First, Second, and Third Edition characters and mecha will certainly convert to this new edition with some effort, but they will need to be reworked and balanced to reflect the new system.

THE BESM

This BESM Fourth Edition core game book contains everything you need to create your anime characters and start playing. No other books are required, though we have an entire expansion line in the works to support your gaming adventures. A non-exhaustive list of these titles is outlined briefly below, with more detailed release information available at ***http://BESM4.life****.*

BESM NAKED

The First Edition of BESM was a small, 96-page, digest-sized rulebook that presented a simple, open-ended system for gameplay. Although subsequent releases, including this newest edition, expands on the initial game framework and provides a more precise system of rules – which appeals to many role-players – there's a simplistic elegance from the original edition that got lost in the evolution.

BESM Naked is a throwback to the beginnings of the Tri-Stat System. We have taken the core elements of Fourth Edition, stripped them down to their essential fundamentals, and presented them as a complete product. **BESM Naked** is fully compatible with these standard Fourth Edition rules, but also stands on its own as a simple, open-ended game system. So now you have two flavours of BESM – the crunchier, more comprehensive, and more detailed version as well as the simpler, easier, more narrative version – from which you can select to augment your preferred gaming style.

BESM EXTRAS

With so many variations existing for the Tri-Stat System over the years, a number of system mechanic twists have been developed for the game. We wanted this Fourth Edition to be both approachable and streamlined, which is why we created an entire book dedicated to rules variations, extended game mechanics, expanded optional guidelines, and plenty of ready-to-use examples. Detailing these alternative **BESM Extras** in their own dedicated volume allows us to focus on the foundational aspects of BESM in this core book, while still providing opportunities for those players searching for more detail and variety in their game mechanics.

BESM CHARACTER FOLIO

Some players desire more than a simple character sheet to present their creation. The **BESM Character Folio** is the ultimate journal for detailing characters from any style of game campaign. The folio includes: a deluxe character sheet with expanded areas for stats and descriptions; sections for detailing your character's abilities, background, personality; and journal pages on which you can record your character's inner thoughts, secrets learned during each session, and other important game notes.



GAME LINE

BESM PRIMER

We have also created an introductory set of fast-play rules for BESM that showcases the essential game elements with a "big picture" lens. **BESM Primer** serves as a helpful support product for larger gaming groups as well if there's only one copy of this core game manual for the table.

BESM MULTIVERSE

When we created BESM Third Edition, we incorporated a multi-genre, multi-dimensional setting called the Anime Multiverse to provide a framework for the game. Although use of this setting is optional for your game because it is a distinct and separable part of BESM Fourth Edition, the multiverse is an ideal way to introduce new players to the game and provide a conduit for examples. Chapter 14 outlines the cosmology of the multiverse and provides a short entry for the primary setting worlds. We will further develop these background kernels into a more complete gaming environment in the **BESM Multiverse** sourcebook. Journey from modern-day Tokyo to the darkest hells and highest heavens, encountering towering mecha, magical girls, mighty mages, angels, demons, and much more! Featuring dozens of new races, templates, items, mecha, vehicles, and powers, the **BESM Multiverse** sourcebook is an invaluable resource for players and an evocative campaign setting for game masters.

BESM GAME SCREEN

This handy, four-panel reference screen for Game Masters features a one-stop location for BESM tables, charts, and other resources, wrapped in a stunning full-colour, panoramic, multi-dimensional image on the front. As a bonus, inside you'll find the engaging two-part, multi-genre adventure "You Have Chosen ... Wisely" that serves as a game launching point or it can be dropped into your ongoing campaign. With gorgeous art and an intriguing adventure story, this **BESM Game Screen and Adventure** is a great addition to your anime RPG collection.

BESM LARP

When most gamers think of LARPs, or live-action role-playing games, White Wolf's famously popular World of Darkness immediately comes to mind because LARPing was made popular by their Mind's Eye Theatre rules. Attendees at anime conventions have been playing anime-specific LARPs for decades, though, and use a collection of different game systems to provide an amazingly fun experience. While BESM has claimed a substantial share of attention over the years as the go-to system for tabletop anime role-playing, a complementary set of rules for live-action gaming didn't exist until now. A **BESM LARP** sourcebook will translate the standard Tri-Stat System into a flexible live-action experience while retaining the core elements that make BESM so popular with anime fans.



CONCISE BESM GLOSSARY

Attribute: Specialised aspects of your character that represent innate talents, learned skills, racial traits, magical or psychic abilities, superpowers, technological enhancements, and more.

Character Points: A numerical measure of the relative capability of characters. Those with higher Character Point totals are typically more powerful or competent than those with lower Point totals. Players construct the various aspects of their characters – Stats, Attributes, Defects, etc. – using the Character Points assigned by the Game Master during character creation.

Defect: Disadvantages or drawbacks through which your character must suffer in order to overcome the hardships of day-to-day life. They can be considered "negative Attributes" that return Character Points.

Derived Values: Calculated numbers that are based directly on a character's Body, Mind, and Soul Stat values, and thus do not afford any choices of Character Point distribution. These include a character's Attack Combat Value, Defence Combat Value, Health Points, and Energy Points.

Edges: A positive modifier that provides an advantage to the character when rolling dice to determine the outcome of a task. When an edge is applied to a roll, instead of the normal two six-sided dice roll, the player rolls three dice (for minor edges, representing a small advantage) or four dice (for major edges, representing a large advantage) and adds together the two highest numbers to determine the final value. An edge is the opposite of an obstacle.

Enhancement: A positive modifier that enhances the usage of a character's Attribute beyond its baseline description, providing an additional benefit or otherwise improving the Attribute. In exchange for this advantage, adding an Enhancement to an Attribute decreases its effective functioning Level by one Level. An enhancement is the opposite of a limiter.

GM: The Game Master, or GM, is the person who organises and oversees the role-playing game implementation by narrating the details of the story that are not controlled by the players.

Hedging: Players can eliminate the random elements of normal 2d6 dice rolls for their character by assuming an automatic result of 7, instead of generating the normal unpredictable value between 2 and 12 (known as "hedging").

Initiative: This determines the order in which characters will act during a particular scene (often involving combat). An Initiative roll is made by participants using two six-sided dice and adding appropriate modifiers, with characters obtaining higher generated Initiative values acting before lower ones.

Key: A character in the Anime Multiverse whose soul is connected to one specific gate between multidimensional worlds. Rare individuals known as Skeleton Keys can operate any of the world gates.

Limiter: A negative modifier that decreases the usage of a character's Attribute below its baseline description, imposing an additional drawback or otherwise weakening the Attribute. In exchange for this disadvantage, adding a Limiter to an Attribute increases its effective functioning Level by one Level. A limiter is the opposite of an enhancement.

Multiverse: The optional multi-dimensional and multi-genre background setting for BESM that features an infinite number of worlds connected by energy waylines across the vast cosmic web of all creation.

NPC: A non-player character whose actions in the game are usually controlled by the Game Master rather than a player. Every major, minor, and background entity that appears in a game scenario that is not one of the players' characters is an NPC.

Obstacles: A negative modifier that provides a disadvantage to the character when rolling dice to determine the outcome of a task. When an obstacle is applied to a roll, instead of the normal two six-sided dice roll, the player rolls three dice (for minor obstacles, representing a small disadvantage) or four dice (for major obstacles, representing a large disadvantage) and adds together the two lowest numbers to determine the final value. An obstacle is the opposite of an edge.

Roll: Generating a random summed value between 2 and 12 on two six-sided dice (also known as "2d6") whenever the outcome of a character task is in question.

Stat: Numerical assignments that reflect your character's basic capabilities, with higher Stat values indicating an advanced level of accomplishment. Stats provide the foundation upon which everything else about a character is built. Each character is created with three Stats – Body Stat, Mind Stat, and Soul Stat – which typically range in value from 1 to 12.

Template: Ready-to-use packages of character Stats, Attributes, and Defects that can optionally be assigned to characters to simplify and speed up the creation process. They are subdivided into three categories of character archetypes: Size Templates, Race Templates, and Class Templates.

Tri-Stat System: The name of the game mechanics system used in BESM Fourth Edition.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

The following dialogue is a brief example of how a typical BESM role-playing session might progress. Since this portrayal is intended to instruct, the mechanics are more complex and forced than normal play.

The game involves four players – Julian (Kozoh, a weapons master), Lynne (Sparks, an augmented tech genius), James (Dr. Chaz, a druid shaman), and Pete (Hogarth, a cyborg marine) – plus the Game Master (or GM), Rae. The players are part of the Psychic Assault Corps (or PAC), which investigates threat intrusions on Earth from other worlds in the Anime Multiverse.

In the previous session, PAC was battling to defeat a hive of Bazaroth demons that were working to open a cross-dimensional portal to their homeworld. In the final battle before an archfiend could breach through to Earth, the PAC's commander background NPC, Aki, was sucked through the portal as it closed.

Rae recaps the previous events, and then opens the scene with PAC (minus Aki) planning what to do.

Julian: (as Kozoh) What happened to Aki? Sparks, were you recording the battle? Can you get any reading?

Lynne: (to GM Rae) You remember I said I was recording, right?

Rae: Right.

Lynne: (as Sparks) Yes, Kozoh. (Lynne taps a finger to her head, in imitation of what Kozoh is doing). It's all up here. I'm reviewing it now. (to Rae) I want to analyse the data.

Rae: All of it? You've been recording for a while.

Lynne: Only if I have to. I'm going to focus on the moments right before Aki went through the portal, and run a full spectrum analysis, looking for anything odd. Do I need to roll dice?

Rae: Nope. Only if you were trying to do it really quickly. I'll tell you if you find anything interesting in a moment. What are the rest of you doing?

Julian: Stomping on the bodies of one of these demons out of frustration. Mostly trying to contain my anxiety.

James: We left our Xeaon transport in Earth orbit, so I want to see if I can feel it there. I assume that's either Sixth Sense: Dimensions or Dynamic Powers: Shamanism?

Rae: It's sort of a blend of both. The Xeaon was in regular orbit and isn't a threat to Earth, so your Sixth Sense isn't exactly appropriate, but mechanically what you are trying would work the same way. So you open yourself to Earth's energies, and reach out for the Xeaon's essence ... roll a Soul Stat check.

James: (rolls two dice) I got a 7. My Soul is 8, so that's 15 total – exactly succeeding on a Difficult TN!

Rae: Hmmm. Chaz stands there silently for a moment, and stretches out ... out ... out .... You can't feel the Xeaon anywhere.

James: (Dr. Chaz) It's ... it's gone. (to Rae) Am I able to check other nearby dimensions?

Rae: Not yet, and not so quickly. If you want to do that, you'll have to do more complicated effect, and you'll need to open a dimensional gateway. Think about it. (to Pete) Now, what's Hogarth doing?

Pete: With my power armour ready for any surprises, I'll jetpack over to the demons' skiff that we grounded earlier to see if it's salvageable. Maybe even just for parts.

Rae: No problem. What's Hogarth's Technical Skill Group Level?

Pete: Level 4 — I'm talented!

Rae: Okay, make a Skill check against a Challenging Target Number of 18.

Pete: (rolls two dice, gets 9) My Mind is 6, plus 4 for the Technical Skill Group, so that's 19 total. Made it by 1.

Rae: Okay. You give the ship a quick once over. It's definitely weird demon tech, and designed to fly in space. It looks like it would have trouble achieving lift-off – it just doesn't have the raw power since some lift cells have been damaged – but it could probably be flown once it's in space with a modicum of repairs. (to Julian) You score a beautiful stomp and hear the snap of demon bones breaking. Anything else?

Julian: No, not right now. I'll wait.

Rae: (to Lynne) Sparks, you've completed a preliminary scan on the data. You see now that Aki was prepared to blast the archfiend if it came through the portal. When she got sucked in, something cut across the signal in a blur of red energy.

Lynne: Red like our PAC teleportation technology? (as Sparks) Something has definitely happened to the Xeaon!

James: (as Doctor, to himself) I was going to say that. (to the group) It's vanished from normal space.

Julian: (as Kozoh) All right. First step is to find the Xeaon. Then Aki. Then hunt down the remaining demons. Hogarth, can that infernal craft get us into space to we can investigate further?

Pete: (as Hogarth) Not under it's own power since we inflicted booster damaged when we brought it down – but if Sparks can help me get it up into space, it will allow us to get around.

Lynne: Doesn't sound too hard, (to Rae) does it? I assume the red light was a trace of the transporter so I'd like to design a large telepod and install it in the demon ship to get us into orbit. If we can't fly it up, perhaps we can teleport.

Rae: There's more than enough raw material around here to work with, and by the time you're done, Hogarth will have finished repairing the ship for vacuum flight – assuming that's your plan, Pete?

Pete: Yeah. I'll get to work on it.

Rae: (to Lynne) However, the teleporter is a complicated device to design. You want it to be mobile, run off the demon ship, and presumably be electrostatically stable to unexpected energies. You must make a difficult Power Flux Mind Stat check against TN 15 to plan it properly.

Lynne: (rolls two dice) Sparks's Mind is 9, and I rolled a 7, so no problem at 16!

Rae: Great. You have no problem figuring this out and are able to replicate it fairly closely. Obviously it's not as precise as the Xeaon's pod, nor do you have an infinite power supply – but it will pop the demon skiff that Hogarth has finished prepping into space easily enough.

Julian: (as Kozoh) PAC, let's do this!

Rae: Hold up, that'll take a bit of time for Hogarth to do the repairs and Sparks to design a telepod. What will Kozoh and the esteemed Dr. Chaz be doing while the other two are doing tech work?

James: Well, we did hear rumours that one of the demon cells were capturing people across the region and storing them somewhere. (to Julian) Does Kozoh want to help me investigate?

Julian: Sure, we have the time. What's the plan?

James: If there's anyone still alive nearby, they'd be afraid and their spirit out of alignment with nature's harmony. I want to direct my Shamanism to detect any sources of nearby fear or anxiety.

Rae: Interesting move. Make a Soul Stat check against a Difficult Target Number of 15.

James: I'll hedge for 7 instead of rolling. My Soul is 9, so that's 16 total. No problem.

Rae: You sense a disturbance in the natural harmonics around you ... close ... deep ... below the Earth.

Julian: (to Rae) Didn't you describe a trap door in the floor in the previous room? We forgot to investigate it when we heard the demons in this room.

Rae: I did, though it wasn't exactly a trap. It was a metal plate seemingly riveted into the concrete floor.

Julian: We'll head there and search for a door opening. It should lead downstairs.

Rae: You both return to the previous room and approach the plate. It seems to be quite thick without any hinges or handle. There is a numerical keypad installed within the surface, though. And there is some sort of demon script etched into the metal surrounding the keypad.

James: What does the infernal script say?

Rae: Neither of you can read it, but it is familiar and likely originals from Bazaroth. (to James) Make a Soul Stat check for Chaz.

James: (rolls dice, gets an 11) 11 plus 9 Soul is 18.

Rae: The Doctor senses a negative field pulsating from the demon script that interferes with the natural aura of the Earth is this vicinity. You sense a conflict that seems familiar, and this is similar to the demon warding spells you've previously encountered.

James: That's not good. Is the entire door warded?

Rae: The script seems to penetrate the entire door, though the keypad is untouched. It might be safe, if you can unlock it.

James: This is beyond our pay grade, Kozoh. We'll need to call in Sparks.

Lynne: I'm busy with the telepod!

James: Can't you take a break from it? Or is that too dangerous?

Lynne: Good question. (to Rae) Can I put the pod work down briefly to help them unlock the door?

Rae: You can find a good time when that won't be an unsafe problem.

Lynne: Do I need to roll anything?

Rae: This time, yes, due to the difficulty. You'll need to make a Technical Mind-based Skill check against an Unlikely Target Number of 21.

Lynne: (rolls dice) Mind is 9, Level 5 Tech Skill and I rolled a 10, so that's a big 24!

Rae: Wow, with an attempt that solid it clearly wasn't much of a challenge for you. After only a couple of minutes, the code is broken and the door is unlocked. The metal plate splits in the middle and slides open revealing a set of stairs going down.

Lynne: Kozoh, Doctor, I really need to return to my telepod work. Can you handle investigating it from here?

Julian: We should be good. If there's trouble, we will radio for help. (to Rae) We're carefully heading down into the lower level.

Rae: The stairs and rooms below look like they have been here for a quite a while. The tech in the area is advanced, but not crazy off-the-charts. Still, in your experience, demons don't often have bases this complex on Earth. There's not a lot down here, honestly, with several small empty rooms off the main hallway that look like they are for storage. Then you get to a larger room at the end of the hall, which is about the size of a high-school gymnasium. Lined against the walls and arranged in rows crossing the room are what look like old-time metal and glass phone booths. Probably a hundred of them or possibly a few more. Inside most of them are naked humans that appear to be standing up and sleeping. They are strapped in with various tubes inserted into them. Doctor, you've located the source of the fear you detected; it's coming from them.

James: Well, I'm creeped out. I think the demons are using them as food or energy or something. This was not expected.

Rae: Hogarth and Sparks, you'll both be finished with your work shortly. What does your team want to do?

Julian: I had thought our priorities were Xeaon, then Aki, then hunting demons. This throws a wrench into that order, but I still think we need the Xeaon since we may be on a clock for finding Aki. How about we call in this location to another PAC squad and let them handle rescuing the people?

Rae: Is everyone agreed to this plan? (seeing the nods) OK then. You radio into the nearest PAC and ask for backup. It'll take them most of the day to get here, but the phone booth humans don't seem to be going anywhere. When the repairs and tech work is done, you board the demon skiff and feel it tremble as Sparks counts down. The teleporter pops, and you're in orbit where you left the Xeaon. But instead of the Xeaon, there's a sinister-looking sister ship in its place. You see a landing bay with open doors.

Julian: A sister ship? As in, the demons or whomever have a ship that looks like a Xeaon clone?

Rae: That's what it looks like. From your perspective, the Xeaon and this ship could be production-line twins.

Pete: That seems awfully convenient. But let's not pass up the opportunity. Can we pilot in and board the imposter ship?

Rae: That's straight forward, so no problem. You've landed in the bay and there's an artificial atmosphere in operation. You see one pod door leading into the ship.

Lynne: If we are going in, Sparks forces the airlock, and we board the ship. I suggest we split into two groups. Dr. Chaz and Hogarth, head towards the engineering room, while Kozoh and I will seek out the bridge.

Rae: OK, great. On your way to the bridge – you know where it is – you turn a corner and run into a half dozen of the same Bazaroth demons you defeated on Earth, plus an archfiend leader. It's combat time!

Combat example continued in Chapter 9 (page 184).



CHAPTER 2
CHARACTER BASICS

02: CHARACTER BASICS

SESSION ZERO

And so, it begins. Designing new characters for a BESM game should involve a thoughtful collaboration between you, the other players, and the Game Master. Your objective is to create a character who is fun to play and has a strong motivation to undertake adventures, while simultaneously ensuring a good fit with the GM's plans for the dynamic stories that will unfold. In BESM, you can choose to spend as little as a few minutes or upwards of an hour designing a character ... or even longer! The difference lies in the amount of detail and individuality you build into your character. At no time during a role-playing campaign do you have more control over the destiny of your character than during the creation process because that's when you establish their foundation. As questions arise concerning specific game mechanics or special character abilities, the discussions you have with your GM and fellow players are of paramount importance.

SCOPING THE GAME

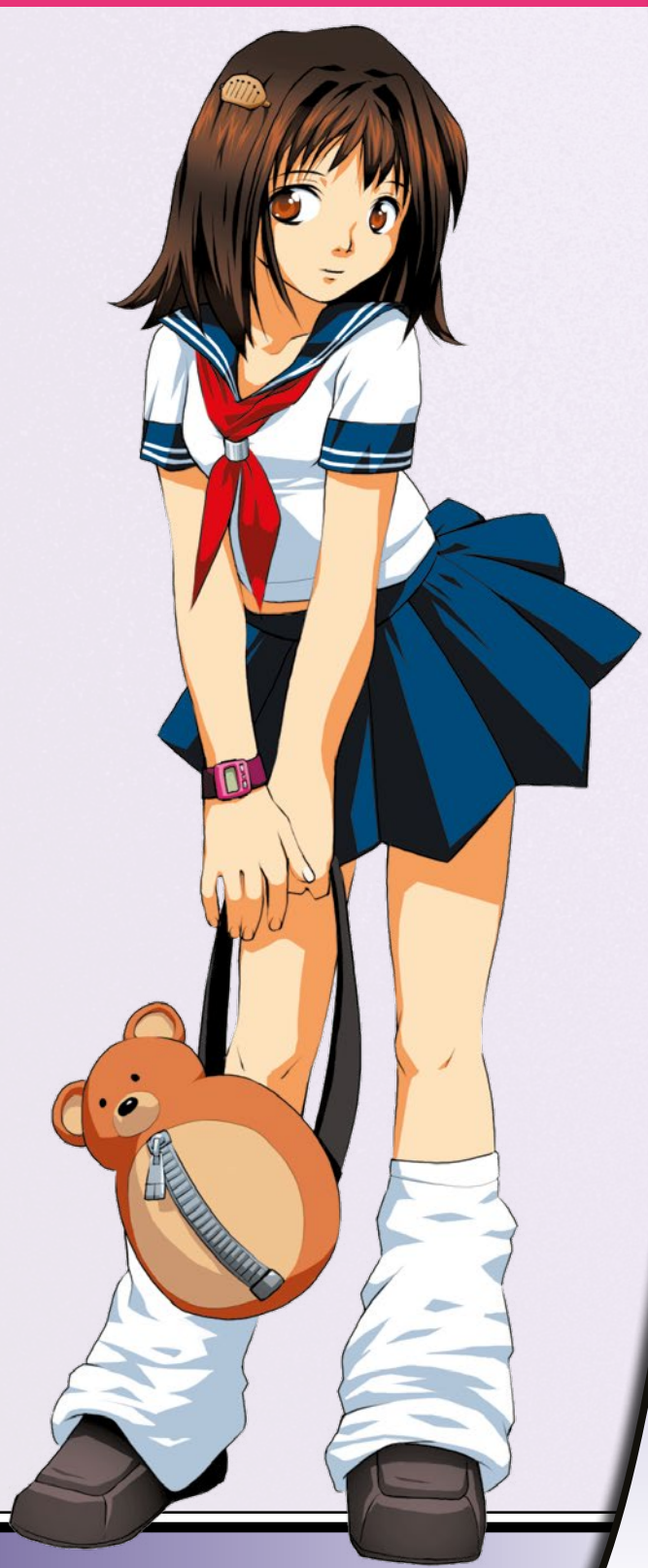
Session zero of your game establishes the essential baseline of what comes next and takes a broad perspective of your upcoming adventures. This is the time to answer big-picture questions, such as: What is the setting, genre, and tone? Will we be having adventures in an existing anime or manga series (and perhaps taking on the roles of those main characters) or are we playing in an original creation? What sorts of things will our characters be doing? What are our characters' roles in the adventures?

Your group will also need to discuss the practical, real-life aspects of the upcoming game as well. How often are we meeting to play (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or on some other schedule)? Is there a fixed number of sessions until we finish, or are we playing an open-ended campaign? What is the ideal number of players for the game storyline? Where are we playing and who is hosting the game nights? Your group may not have all the answers at this point, but discussing such parameters now ensures everyone is on the same page about the time commitment expected.

Now is the ideal time to also discuss your preferences involving game issues such as: theme and story maturity levels; combat intensity and frequency; drama versus comedy ratio; and the roles that players can take to co-create the adventures. When you establish the foundation for your game together, you'll discover and actualise an experience that you all want to play.

▶ THE ANIME MULTIVERSE

If you're looking for a compelling multi-genre and multi-dimensional setting in which to establish your adventures, consider using the Anime Multiverse (page 308) – the official setting for BESM Fourth Edition. Chapter 14 establishes a cursory overview of the worlds and cosmology to get you started, while the dedicated BESM Multiverse sourcebook expands and explores this rich setting to help you establish your campaign within the context of a larger backdrop. The diversity of story opportunities in the Anime Multiverse is unlimited!



COLLECTIVE CREATION

When preparing for the launch of a new role-playing campaign, players typically create their characters in isolation based on the setting information the GM provides. This tendency may not produce the best results for a strong start to the adventures, though, since both the characters and the players lack cohesion for this innately social activity.

Consider the benefits that a group character creation session provides to the team. Discussing the nature and roles of everyone's character ideas together ensures that the group dynamic is balanced and that every character has unique benefits that will allow them to shine during the game. Establishing character connections is also easier in this initial group meeting, since you can co-develop resonant backstories to provide friendship contexts in the game setting. Finally, group character creation reduces the chances of missed opportunities when designing your team (ie. having a hole in your party). In a traditional swords-and-sorcery RPG, for example, adventures may be significantly more challenging if your group is missing a spell caster, healer, fighter, or thief!

After scoping the game, spend the rest of session zero talking about the ideal composition of your character team and the strengths and individuality that each character member can bring to the group. Everyone should ideally be open to ideas they may not have considered earlier and look at their character's role in the larger context of the game. Spending additional time with the players and Game Master at this stage of character creation will yield great benefits compared to the typical isolated development tendency.

POWER LEVEL

Once the GM and players together have outlined the general framework of the upcoming adventures, it's time to discuss your characters' power level. The characters' relative capabilities and aptitudes determines the Character Point total from which they are constructed (covered in detail in Chapters 3-7). Consider which of the eight power rankings described herein best align with the vision your group created for your characters.

SUB-HUMAN (0-24 POINTS)

Role-playing underpowered characters can be a highly rewarding experience, with the game typically focusing more on drama and less on action. Such roles may include younger teens and children, wee creatures (such as pixies and sprites), or sentient small animals (like bunnies and squirrels).

01 CHARACTER POWER LEVELS

Power Level	Character Points
Sub-Human	0-24
Human	25-49
Adventurer	50-74
Heroic	75-99
Mythical	100-149
Superhuman	150-199
Superpowered	200-249
Godlike	250+

HUMAN (25-49 POINTS)

This power level is suitable for games in which most of the characters will play brave but low-powered roles (such as those described above), with a few special abilities or powerful items to aid in their quests. It can also be used for games featuring normal humans like detectives, high school students, scientists, and soldiers.

ADVENTURER (50-74 POINTS)

The adventurer power level is suitable for games in which most of the characters are valiant and courageous but otherwise normal humans or near-humans. They may have some special abilities, but rarely exceed the power of a typical action movie hero. It is also suitable for games where the characters play low-powered characters (for example, elementary school students) who have some powerful abilities, such as pet monsters or the knowledge to cast magical spells.

HEROIC (75-99 POINTS)

BESM players may find this power level the "sweet spot" for a wide variety of adventures, since heroic characters have a decent selection of moderate abilities plus some nifty items and other resources. At the same time, the power level and Character Point totals aren't so high that they might cause power balance issues or difficulties presenting challenging adventures for every character in the group. Heroic characters may reflect humans at their peak performance with moderate special abilities, or capable non-human characters with significant technological or paranormal advantages.

MYTHICAL (100-149 POINTS)

The mythical power level is most suitable for games where the characters are notably more impressive than normal humans, but can still be challenged by ordinary opponents (especially in large numbers). The characters may still be human but are typically exceptionally talented, such as a legendary martial arts master, the

toughest cop in the city, or an elite secret agent. They could also be characters with significant supernatural or psychic powers, such as a magical girl or an experienced mage or psionic. Mythical level is ideally suited for individuals with moderately powerful racial abilities: a vampire, a ghost, a cyborg, a demon, etc. Finally, a mythical game can also cover characters that are above average in capabilities, but individually or collectively have access to very powerful gear. Example character types include a squad of giant robot mecha pilots or the captain and crew of a starship.

SUPERHUMAN (150-199 POINTS)

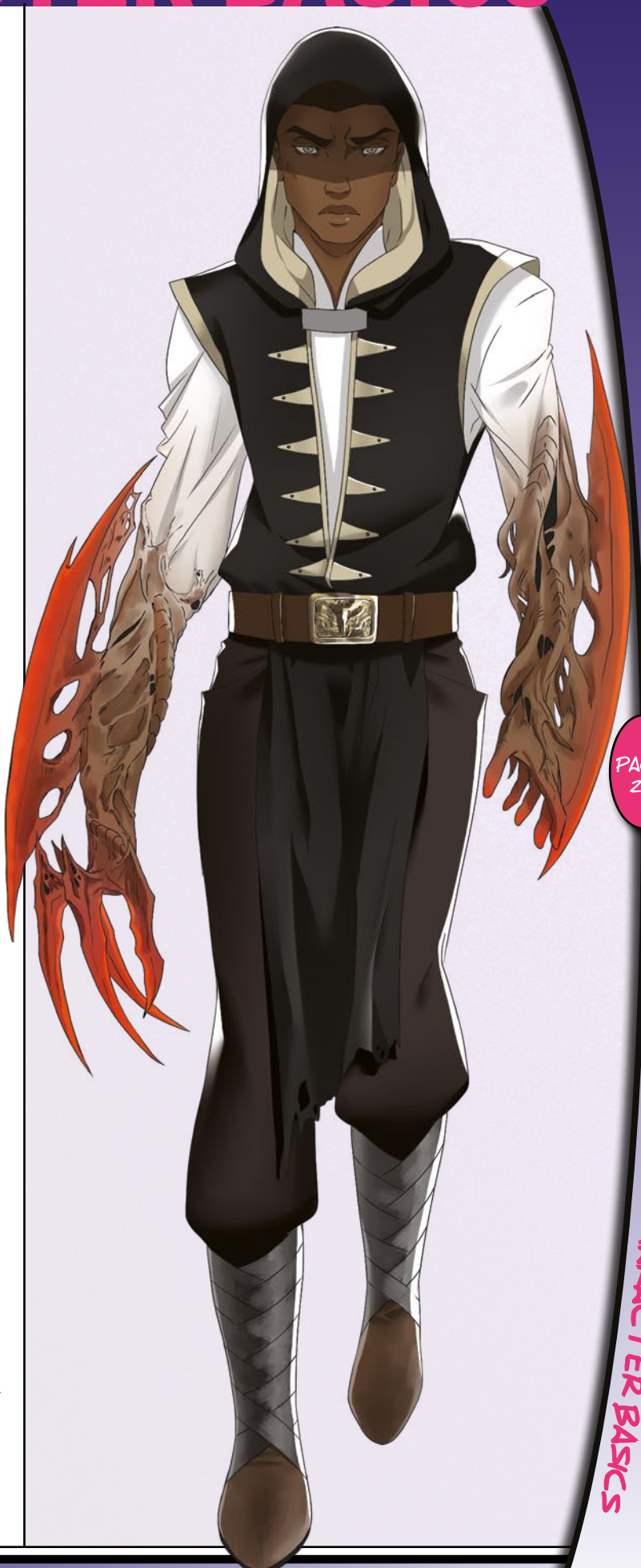
This power level enables the characters to possess abilities far beyond the norm. A "human" individual built at this power level will have legendary abilities – a contender for the title of the world's greatest thief or the world's best martial artist, for example. Alternatively, the character may have true superhuman abilities, such as an arch-mage sorcerer, a dragon, an elder vampire, a powerful psychic, an advanced combat android, or a magical girl that has fully awakened her abilities. A superhuman character could also be a competent but otherwise normal individual with a destiny and super powerful items such as a towering robot mecha or a mighty magical artefact.

SUPERPOWERED (200-249 POINTS)

Similar to superhuman power level, but the characters are so powerful that ordinary humans seem like ants underfoot. As with superhuman power, the character's abilities might come from paranormal powers, magic, racial abilities, or items ... or often a combination of all of them. Such amazing characters will not always be very experienced at wielding this power, however. Anime is full of ordinary teenagers who were granted the power of a demigod thanks to: suddenly inheriting an ultra-powerful mecha, awakening psychic powers, a scientific experiment gone awry, or some other twist of fate. How the characters handle these enhanced responsibilities – or spectacularly fail to handle them, with tragic results for all concerned – can be more important than the power itself.

GODLIKE (250+ POINTS)

With this challenging power level, the character's abilities are potentially forceful enough to single-handedly change the world (or even worlds). Players should be cautious about starting their adventures at this level of ability, since with great power comes great responsibility ... and also great complications. Nevertheless, godlike does reflect the power levels of some popular anime shows.



CHARACTER BENCHMARKS

BESM's Tri-Stat System offers nearly endless possibilities when spending Character Points on your creation. Problems relating to balance and suitable challenges could arise if players focus their Point allocations in only a few options, when compared to players that have created less-optimised characters.

For example, if all the characters in a fantasy story have modest protective armour (such as chain mail), but one character has an nigh-impenetrable force field, it is difficult to confront the group with an opponent that can threaten the highly protected character without being a vastly overpowered enemy to the majority.

Unlike a levelling-based RPG like Dungeons and Dragons – in which character abilities are prescribed with plenty of restrictions – BESM's flexibility can present challenges to players and GMs unfamiliar with the game. In short, it's possible to create "broken" characters in BESM without helpful benchmarks.

Table-02 presents a list of optional, but suggested, minimums and maximums when creating your character to avoid widely varying character abilities in your group. As you build your character and progress through Chapters 3-8 of the creation process, refer back to this section to ensure you aren't straying outside the recommendations. Players and the GM can collectively decide to modify or ignore these benchmarks, as desired.

▶ BENCHMARK EXCEPTIONS

Although suggestions in Table-02 apply widely, allowing some Attribute exceptions can still create balanced characters. With group consensus, the Maximum Attribute Level may be doubled (or even eliminated) for the following Attributes: Alternate Identity, Combat Technique, Energised, and Features.

ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES

No, not character boundaries – real-life boundaries. Although BESM is a wonderfully social game, it's incumbent upon us all to ensure that the sensitivities of the GM, the players, and even bystanders and passers-by, are all considered during the game. We don't know everyone's real-life history and story, and consequently the care and compassion we show to each other during character creation and game play is of paramount importance. Not everyone will share the same perspective concerning sensitive concepts, and thus having both advanced and ongoing conversations with the entire group is the best approach.

▶ SOCIAL SENSITIVITY

It is impossible to create an exhaustive list of every topic that might evoke sensitivities in your group. The few topics listed below can serve as a reminder and starting point for your considered thoughts and perhaps might generate insightful conversations:

- The role of LGBTQ+ in your game and how the tone (serious vs. comedy) impacts the participants
- Character gender identity and orientation
- Nudity, sexuality, violence, and consent
- Gender roles and associated power structures
- Race, minority rights, inequality and oppression, and stereotypes – even in a make-believe setting
- Mental health and addiction, as well as differing physical and mental abilities
- Religion, faith, spirituality, ideology, and dogma
- Politics across the entire left/right spectrum
- Law and order, and how it touches upon many of the above topics both positively and negatively

02

CHARACTER BENCHMARKS

Power Level	Maximum Stat Values	Maximum Attribute Levels (Effective Level)	Min/Max Combat Values (Modified Values)	Min/Max Health Points & Energy Points	Min/Max Damage Multiplier
Sub-Human	5	2	1 / 6	10 / 40	2 / 4
Human	7	3	2 / 7	30 / 60	3 / 6
Adventurer	9	4	3 / 8	40 / 80	4 / 8
Heroic	10	5	4 / 9	50 / 100	4 / 9
Mythical	12	6	5 / 10	60 / 120	5 / 10
Superhuman	12+	7-8	6 / 12	70 / 140	5 / 11
Superpowered	12+	8-9	7 / 12+	80 / 160	6 / 12
Godlike	12+	10+	8 / 12+	100 / 200+	6 / 14+





YOUR CHARACTER'S FRAMEWORK

A character outline is a broad concept that provides you with a frame on which to build your character. It is not fully detailed; there is no need to concern yourself with the character's specific skills, powers, or background details at this stage. Use the game scope established in your earlier discussions as the starting point for your character, and build your outline on that foundation. Continue discussing your character ideas with your group to ensure your creation works well with the concepts of the other players and with the overall themes and focus of the upcoming game.

▶ HUMAN VS. NON-HUMAN

In many game settings – including the Anime Multiverse (page 308) – non-human or part-human characters may exist. Examples include: aliens, androids, cyborgs, fantasy races (elves, ogres, or cat-people), genetic constructs (clones, genetically-enhanced people, or human- animal hybrids), ghosts and spirits, talking animals, gods and goddesses, monsters (demons, shapechangers, or vampires), and robots.

▶ CHARACTER STRENGTHS

In some campaigns, the players may want to create complementary characters with unique sets of abilities. For example, a team fighting supernatural evil might include a combat specialist or two for bashing monsters, an exorcist for dealing with ghosts and spirits, a psychic or sorcerer for handling magical opponents, and a scholar or computer hacker for digging up background information. A degree of specialisation helps players enjoy their characters by giving them a unique identity.

At the same time, it is equally important that the characters not be too specialised, or the group will lack cohesion and other players will sit around bored while each specialist has their own little adventure within the game. It is a good idea to identify a minimum set of capabilities that everyone should have. For example, in a martial arts campaign, everyone should be a fighter but individual characters may possess different fighting styles (karate, kick-boxing, ninjitsu, kendo, etc.) and unique backgrounds (the cop, the street fighter, the monk, the professional athlete). Similarly, in a game centred on giant robot action, each character might be a mecha pilot on the same team, but they and their mecha may have different capabilities; one might be a

close-quarters fighter with heavy armour, another fast and agile, a third may specialise in electronic warfare, while the fourth may have the most powerful long-range attacks.

In some games, the group of characters will be independent operators. Examples include a detective agency, a party of fantasy adventurers, the crew of a pirate ship, or a team of magical girls who fight evil. In other game concepts, the characters will be part of a larger organisation and would logically have helpers in supporting roles. An example of this scenario is a squadron of mecha pilots in a military space force. A base commander, communication officers, mechanics, doctors, cooks, and other personnel all support the pilots. A few of these roles may make worthwhile player characters, but often this "supporting cast" is best filled by background characters created and controlled by the GM. These characters may become the group's friends, colleagues, love interests, or rivals as the game progresses, but they also free the characters to take on roles that let them share in the same story action.

▶ CHARACTER WEAKNESSES

Game characters may be larger than life – sometimes even figures of myth and legend – but usually they still have one or more weaknesses. Is the character vulnerable to magic? Does it take a while for the character's powers to activate or can they be negated by a special substance? Does the character struggle with an addiction? Providing weaknesses to a character adds greater depth and potential for role-playing opportunities, but be sure to consider aspects of social discomfort concerning your choices (page 156).

▶ DEFINING YOUR CHARACTER

You should decide on your character's age and sex or gender, determine a broad archetype for their personality, and sketch an idea of ethnic and social background. Conversely, it is equally important that a character have room to grow beyond your initial concept. A character that you have spent hours perfecting and detailing may quickly become stagnant and uninteresting once play begins. A good character outline usually focuses on one or two main personality traits and leaves plenty of room for you to explore and develop the character into a fully rounded personality over time. Although the starting archetype should be an integral part of the character, it should not rule all of their actions. At some point during the game, your pacifistic martial artist may be driven to an act of vengeance, or your angst-ridden vigilante may finally discover a cause in which to believe. As long as these developments proceed naturally from events in the game, they should be a welcome part of the role-playing experience.

▶ BACKGROUND DETAILS

One of the most effective ways to better visualise your character is to provide detail through your creation of a background history, a character story, a character drawing, or other unique creation (perhaps using a website, video camera, music collection, etc.). Spending time to develop your character without a rule structure will enhance your role-playing greatly, and can give the GM a window into your character's motivations.

This step in character creation gives you a chance to answer important character questions before game-play begins. What formed their outlook on life? Where do they live? Work? Earn money? What are your character's likes? Dislikes? What about family? Friends? Romantic interests? Enemies? These details add depth to your character, but you should not become obsessed with them. Leaving room for growth can provide numerous character development opportunities during the course of the adventures.

CHARACTER QUIZ

To help spark creative inspiration for your character's background, answer the 30 questions listed on the character quiz (page 29). If you have the time and desire, write and answer your own additional questions, too.

▶ GROUP CONNECTIONS

Work with the other players to establish background connections between your characters before the game adventures begin. Perhaps some of your team grew up together and have been friends for their entire lives. Or instead they could have worked together in the past and have maintained a professional relationship (or rivalry!) ever since. The characters can even be related by blood or marriage, though this revelation might have been a recent surprise rather than a long-established situation. Furthermore, don't neglect establishing group connections with background organisations and cabals as well, since they can provide excellent future hooks.

▶ WHAT'S IN A NAME?

You have the freedom to name your character whatever you like, but the GM may have some ideas for character names that fit a particular setting. Anime series are often notorious for employing odd, but plausible, fictional names for fantasy or science fiction characters. Sometimes these are actually borrowed from Western or Asian mythology or named after objects such as cars, gemstones, motorcycles, or rock stars, making them sound suitably exotic without being totally unfamiliar. Unless your campaign is a comedy, however, avoid a silly name since it may ruin the suspension of disbelief for the other players.

STRUCTURE OF THE GAME MECHANICS

With the basics of character creation nearly complete, you'll soon move onto the construction of your alter ego using the assigned Character Points. Of course, it's somewhat challenging to create a character properly without understanding the context of the rules. Although you could jump ahead to Chapter 9: Action (page 172) to learn how the Tri-Stat System works, the brief summary presented herein provides the essential knowledge you need to understand the next steps.

ROLLING DICE

When using dice to resolve the outcome of unknown events, you usually roll two six-sided dice. Depending on the task you are attempting, a game value is added to your dice roll result (to generate a "total roll" value) and then compared to a Target Number to determine if your character was successful. If someone is opposing your action, though – such as in the case of combat – you instead compare your total roll to the opponent's total roll, with the higher result succeeding.

TARGET NUMBER (TN) RANGE

The Target Numbers against which the total rolls are compared range from TN 6 (Very Easy) to TN 24 (Improbable). TN 12 is considered Average Difficulty.

STAT ROLL

A Stat roll is used when innate ability is more important than any learned expertise or combat capability to resolve the action.

Total Roll = Dice Roll + Stat Value

SKILL ROLL

A Skill roll is similar to a Stat roll, except it is used when the task is governed by both a Stat and a particular Skill Group Attribute.

Total Roll = Dice Roll + Stat Value + Skill Group Level

INITIATIVE ROLL

Made at the beginning of combat to determine the order of character action

Total Roll = Dice Roll + Attack Combat + any bonuses

ATTACK/DEFENCE ROLL

Used during an attack/defence action in combat.

Total Roll = Dice Roll + Attack/Defence Combat Value + appropriate Attribute bonuses

INFLICTING DAMAGE

If an attack is successful (ie. the attack roll is greater than or equal to the defence roll), damage is usually delivered. Armour and Force Fields may reduce this damage, with any remaining damage then deducted from the target's Health Points.

DAMAGE MULTIPLIER

A character's base Damage Multiplier is 5, but it can be increased by the Massive Damage Attribute.

Damage Multiplier = 5 + Massive Damage Level

ATTACK DAMAGE

The amount of damage inflicted depends on the character's Damage Multiplier, the Weapon Level, and the attacker's Attack Combat Value.

Damage = Damage Multiplier x Weapon Level + attacker's Attack Combat Value

ARMOUR RATING

A character that is protected by the Armour Rating (AR) of the Armour and Force Field Attributes receives reduced damage from most attacks.

Damage = Damage Multiplier x Weapon Level + attacker's Attack Combat Value - AR

REDUCING HEALTH POINTS

The amount of damage inflicted is deducted from the character's current Health Point total

Health Points = Current Health Points - Damage

SIMPLICITY SCALE

BESM Fourth Edition is not a complex game. Character creation can become a little involved if you greatly customise your character or if the game adventures will be at the higher range of power levels, but there are methods to keep the game simple.

USE TEMPLATES

Select a Race and one or more Class Templates from Chapter 3 when building your character. These pre-constructed packages of Attributes and Defects speed up the creation process greatly.

KEEP CUSTOMISATION TO A MINIMUM

If you keep the base functionality of your character's Attributes instead of customising them with options presented in Chapter 6, you'll simplify the process.

STRIP DOWN WITH BESM NAKED

If you want all the flexible benefits of BESM in an even simpler and more streamlined presentation, check out the alternative BESM Naked RPG as well (page 14).

BESM CHARACTER QUIZ

- What are your character's central strengths and weaknesses?
- What is your character's primary emotional state?
- What role does your character fill in a group?
- Describe your character's family or tribe.
- Who are your character's three most valuable contacts?
- What personal values and beliefs does your character hold?
- To whom is your character closest and why?
- What does your character need the most?
- What are your character's life goals?
- What does your character fear the most?
- Describe your character's appearance.
- How does your character define "heroism"?
- Describe your character's hobbies, interests, desires, and likes.
- What would your character do if they accidentally killed an innocent bystander?
- For what does your character have little patience and tolerance?
- Does your character hide any emotions in public?
- How does your character view death and beyond?
- What does your character dislike about themselves?
- Describe your character's bedroom or rest location.
- Describe a perfect date night or other enjoyable outing.
- Describe your character's relationship with money.
- Describe your character's views on authority and the law.
- Who has impacted your character's life direction the most?
- How does your character view forgiveness and revenge?
- What are the origins of your character's special abilities?
- What is the prime motivation behind your character's actions?
- In which way does your character focus their personal growth?
- Describe the accomplishment of which your character is most proud.
- How does your character think they might die?
- How would your character describe themselves in a single sentence?





CHAPTER 3
TEMPLATES

03: TEMPLATES

CHOOSE TEMPLATES

Templates are ready-to-use archetypes you can assign to your character to speed up the character creation process. They are subdivided into three categories: Size Templates, Race Templates, and Class Templates.

Assigning Templates is optional if you prefer to build your character from scratch but is recommended for novice players or players who are not familiar with the openness of a point-based creation systems like the one presented in BESM. You can create a character without using them by selecting Stats, Attributes, and Defects (Chapters 4-7) appropriate to your character vision and scope of the game's storyline. Even if none of these Race or Class Templates fit the type of character you wish to design, all 50 of those entries can serve as examples of how you and the Game Master can collaborate to create new Race and Class Templates.

READING TEMPLATES

Templates provide a foundation upon which you can build your character by either adding or subtracting Stats, Attributes, and Defects to the human baseline – which provides no benefits nor drawbacks to your character. You'll learn more about these numerical aspects of your character as you progress through character creation.

For example, the Template for a race of highly intelligent aliens (the Grey; page 42) indicates that they start with a foundation of 3 Ranks of the Mind Stat (which costs 6 Character Points). Similarly, a Class Template for a mighty and honourable warrior (the Samurai; page 66) indicates that they start with 4 Levels of the Melee Attack Attribute with a sword specialisation (which costs 4 Character Points).

Note that the plusses and minuses of Defects work in reverse! A Template with -1 Marked Defect added to a character who already has the Marked Defect at -2 Points worsens the effect of the Defect to -3 Marked.

▶ MODIFIERS TO ATTRIBUTES

Some Attributes included in the Templates also have a list of one or more modifier entries followed by positive or negative numbers. For example, the "Fire Breath" Weapon of the Half-Dragon (page 42) includes the following: "Continuing -1; Range -1; Deplete +2". The entries with negative numbers are called Enhancements (reflecting a decrease to the effective Attribute Level) and the entries with positive numbers (reflecting an increase to the effective Attribute Level) are called Limiters. The digits indicate how many times the Enhancement or Limiter has been assigned. You don't need to worry too much about all those details right now, but if you're looking for more information about Enhancement and Limiters, see page 75.

▶ OTHER TEMPLATE NOTES

- Templates indicate both the Ranks/Levels and Point cost of all entries.
- If an Attribute does not indicate a specific Enhancement or Limiter is assigned as well, it is not associated with that use of the Attribute.
- Some Attributes give you a choice from which to select – such as "Melee Attack (Select Weapon Type)" or "Combat Technique (Select 5)" – rather than prescribing a specific choice for your character already.
- Templates work better if assigned during character creation rather than during advancement as the game progresses (page 303) – especially Size and Race Templates – unless there is a good storyline reason to assign them later.
- The human Race Template is worth 0 Character Points and does not offer any foundational Stats, Attributes, or Defects.
- Templates are provided as a guideline only and can be made into more powerful versions by simply adding abilities (or into weaker ones by removing them).
- You are encouraged to create your own Templates by either modifying the ones presented herein or constructing your own from scratch.

SELECTING YOUR TEMPLATES

You can assign any number of Race and Class Templates to your character, though limiting your choice to one Race and one or two Classes usually makes the most sense. Size Templates are already built into the Race and Class Templates, though you can assign one or more Size Template Ranks as most suitable for your character.

SIZE TEMPLATES

Size Templates help describe the benefits and drawbacks your character receives for being any size other than Medium (i.e. the size of a normal human). Size Ranks in BESM are shown in Table-03: Size Modifiers, along with a summary of effects. In brief, larger characters gain the following modifiers compared to shorter characters: taller, more massive, stronger, more damaging, tougher skin, faster, have a hard time hitting targets with ranged attacks, and easier to hit with ranged attacks.

If your character is roughly the same size as a Medium human (approximately 1-2 metres tall), you can ignore this Size Template section when creating your character.

▶ UNUSABLE ENTRIES

The Attributes and Defects associated with Size Templates cross all race and species boundaries and are created to have the widest application possible. Each Size Rank larger than Medium consists of a package of Attributes and Defects worth a total of 10 Character Points while each Size Rank smaller than Medium returns 10 Character Points (ie. the value of the Defects exceed the value of the Attributes by 10 Points). This list of packaged advantages and disadvantages may not apply to all creatures, though.

For example, smaller creatures gain a bonus to hit with ranged weapons (the Ranged Attack Attribute) but clearly small animals such as cats and toads do not have the capabilities to launch ranged attacks. Obviously the Unique Defect that reduces the distance of thrown weapons would not apply either. When applying Size Templates to animals and creatures incapable of being impacted by some of the Attributes and Defects included in the Template, simply do not include those entries and adjust the Rank cost appropriately.

The animal stat summary table provided on page 254 of Chapter 11: Companions already have the non-applicable Attribute and Defect entries removed before calculating their Point costs.

ALTERNATIVELY, KEEP IT SIMPLE

Of course, the alternative when dealing with animals and background creatures is to maintain the associated Size Template costs exactly as they are at the normal +/- 10 Points/Rank – including Attribute and Defect entries that wouldn't normally apply. This decision may produce unbalanced results, but typically won't have a significant impact on gameplay.

LARGER CHARACTERS

For every Size Rank greater than Medium, or when increasing each Size Rank, consider the following cumulative modifiers:

- x2 height and x8 mass (-2 Point)
- x5 lifting capacity (+8 Points)
- +10 to damage influenced by strength (0 Points; included in +8 Points above)
- +10 Armour Rating (+4 Points)
- -2 to hit penalty with ranged attacks (-1 Point)
- -2 defending penalty against ranged attacks (-1 Point)
- x2 distance when using a thrown weapon (+1 Point)
- x2 running speed (+1 Point)

TOTAL +10 Points

SMALLER CHARACTERS

For every Size Rank smaller than Medium, or when decreasing each Size Rank, consider the following cumulative modifiers:

- ÷2 height and ÷8 mass (+2 Point)
- ÷5 lifting capacity (-6 Points)
- -10 to damage influenced by strength (-2 Points)
- +10 damage received from all attacks (-4 Points)
- +2 to hit bonus with ranged attacks (+1 Point)
- +2 defending bonus against ranged attacks (+1 Point)
- ÷2 distance when using a thrown weapon (-1 Point)
- ÷2 running speed (-1 Point)

TOTAL -10 Points


8’0”
7’6”
7’0”
6’6”
6’0”
5’0
4’
4’0
3’6”
3’0
8’0”
7’6”
0”
0”
6”
3’0”

ASSIGNING SIZE

Look at Table-03 and select the Size Rank that best describes your character. Then select an appropriate mass for that size, adjusting appropriately if your character varies from the human norm (for example, not sharing human proportions, not made of flesh and bone, etc.).

Record the modifiers in terms of the Attributes and Defects indicated below:

HEIGHT AND MASS MODIFIER

Each x2 Height and x8 Mass is a Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious). Points returned: 2 Points

Each ÷2 Height and ÷8 Mass is a Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive). Total cost: 2 Point

LIFTING CAPACITY

Each x5 lifting modifier adds 2 Levels of Superstrength. Total cost: 8 Points

Each ÷5 lifting modifier is a Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷5), which can be considered close to -2 Levels of Superstrength. Points returned: 6 Points

DAMAGE MODIFIER

Each +10 damage modifier for strength-related attacks is already part of the 2 Levels of Superstrength listed above. Total cost: 0 Points

Each -10 strength damage modifier is a Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage). Points returned: 2 Points

ARMOUR RATING

Each +10 Armour Rating bonus adds +2 Levels of Armour. Total cost: 4 Points

Each extra 10 damage received from all attacks is a Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks), which can be considered equal to -2 Levels of Armour. Points returned: 4 Points

HITTING WITH RANGED ATTACKS

Each -2 penalty to hit with ranged attacks adds 1 Rank of Inept Attack (Ranged). Points returned: 1 Point

Each +2 bonus to hit with ranged attacks adds 1 Level of Ranged Attack (All Weapons). Total cost: 1 Point

DEFENDING AGAINST RANGED ATTACKS

Each -2 penalty to defend against ranged attacks adds 1 Rank of Inept Defence (Ranged). Points returned: 1 Point

Each +2 bonus to defend against ranged attacks adds 1 Level of Ranged Defence (All Weapons). Total cost: 1 Point

THROWING DISTANCE

Each x2 distance modifier is a Unique Attribute (x2 Thrown Weapon Distance). Total cost: 1 Point

Each ÷2 distance modifier is a Unique Defect (÷2 Thrown Weapon Distance). Points returned: 1 Point

RUNNING SPEED

Each x2 running speed modifier adds 1 Level of Special Movement (Fast). It does not affect the Land Speed or Superspeed Attributes. Total cost: 1 Point

Each ÷2 running speed modifier is a Unique Defect (÷2 Running Speed). It does not affect the Land Speed or Superspeed Attributes. Points returned: 1 Point

▶ INANIMATE OBJECT MODIFIERS

When a size category is assigned to an inanimate object that may be used in combat (such as a mecha), the Item must have either the Feature (Smaller Item) Attribute (page 94) or the Awkward Size Defect (page 156). Each two Feature Level assignments for Smaller Item costs 2 Points – regardless how many other Features are assigned – while each Awkward Size Rank returns 2 Points.

Similar to the rule for characters, smaller Items can hit larger Items in ranged combat more easily, and larger Items have a harder time hitting smaller Items. For every Size Rank the target is smaller than the attacker, the attacker suffers a -2 penalty to hit with a ranged weapon. Conversely, for every Size Rank the target is larger than the attacker, the attacker receives a +2 bonus with a ranged weapon. For example, a if a Diminutive Item (Size -3) and a Large Item (Size 1) are in ranged combat – a difference of 4 Size Ranks – the Diminutive Item gains a +8 bonus to hit while the huge Item gains a -8 penalty to hit.

IGNORING SIZE TEMPLATES

Some player groups may find Size Templates too detailed and "realistic" for their needs. Although the parameters for each Size Rank maintain a certain game logic (ie. bigger characters are heavier, can lift more, punch harder, have trouble hitting small things with ranged weapons, throw further, and run faster), these specifics may not be desirable for all groups. You can ignore Size Templates completely and only assign characters the Attributes and Defects you want instead.

TEMPLATE EXAMPLE

Size Rank -2: Tiny

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Ranged Attack (All)
2	2	Ranged Defence (All)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-2	Unique Defect (÷4 Running Speed)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
2	-2	Unique Defect (÷4 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	-20	**TOTAL**

TEMPLATE EXAMPLE

Size Rank 1: Large

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (AR 10)
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
2	8	Superstrength
1	1	Unique Attribute (x2 Thrown Weapon Distance)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Inept Attack (Ranged)
1	-1	Inept Defence (Ranged)
1	-2	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	10	**TOTAL**

03

SIZE MODIFIERS

Size	Rank	Typical Height/Length	Typical Mass	Lifting Capacity	Strength Damage Modifier	Armour Rating or Extra Damage Received	Ranged Modifier to Hit/Defend	Range & Speed Multiplier
Point	-10	100-400 µm	1-40 µg	÷ 5 M	-100	+100 damage	+20	÷ 1,000
Mote	-9	500-900 µm	50-500 µg	÷ 1 M	-90	+90 damage	+18	÷ 500
Speck	-8	1-4 mm	1- 5mg	÷ 250 k	-80	+80 damage	+16	÷ 250
Minute	-7	5-9 mm	6-40 mg	÷ 50 k	-70	+70 damage	+14	÷ 125
Wee	-6	1-2 cm	50-500 mg	÷ 10 k	-60	+60 damage	+12	÷ 60
Teeny	-5	3-4 cm	1-5 g	÷ 2.5 k	-50	+50 damage	+10	÷ 30
Fine	-4	5-9 cm	6-30 g	÷ 500	-40	+40 damage	+8	÷ 15
Diminutive	-3	10-24 cm	50-300 g	÷ 100	-30	+30 damage	+6	÷ 8
Tiny	-2	25-49 cm	500 g - 2 kg	÷ 25	-20	+20 damage	+4	÷ 4
Small	-1	50-99 cm	6-20 kg	÷ 5	-10	+10 damage	+2	÷2
Medium	0	1-2 m	50 - 150 kg	—	—	—	—	—
Large	1	3-4 m	200 - 1,200 kg	x 5	+10	+10 AR	-2	x 2
Huge	2	5-8 m	1.5 - 8 tonnes	x 25	+20	+20 AR	-4	x 4
Mammoth	3	9-15 m	10 - 60 tonnes	x 100	+30	+30 AR	-6	x 8
Gigantic	4	16-30 m	75 - 500 tonnes	x 500	+40	+40 AR	-8	x 15
Gargantuan	5	31-60 m	550 - 4,000 tonnes	x 2.5 k	+50	+50 AR	-10	x 30
Colossal	6	61-125 m	4 k – 30 k tonnes	x 10 k	+60	+60 AR	-12	x 60
Enormous	7	126-250 m	40 k – 250 k tonnes	x 50 k	+70	+70 AR	-14	x 125
Monstrous	8	251-500 m	300 k – 2 M tonnes	x 250 k	+80	+80 AR	-16	x 250
Titanic	9	500-1,000 m	2 M – 15 M tonnes	x 1 M	+90	+90 AR	-18	x 500
Monumental	10	1-2 km	15 M – 125 M tonnes	x 5 M	+100	+100 AR	-20	x 1,000

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HITTING MODIFIERS

While many of the effects of size make intuitive sense (for example, having larger characters with greater lifting capacities), the two ranged combat modifiers might seem odd. Some examples might illustrate the logic of the rules, though.

Consider firing a gun at three targets – a penny, a car, and a skyscraper – from across the street. Clearly, the penny would be the most difficult to hit, and the skyscraper the easiest. Thus it makes sense that if a large character (a giant) was fighting at range with a tiny opponent (a fairy), the giant would suffer a penalty to hit the fairy, and the fairy would gain a bonus to hit the demon.

Now consider two opponents the same size in ranged combat – two humans, two giants, two fairies, etc. Since they are the same size relative to each other, no modifiers should apply. That is, any bonuses they receive to hit should balance with any penalties they receive to be hit. Since BESM uses an oppositional rolling system during combat, a penalty on one roll is functionally the same as a bonus on the opposing roll.

So how do we represent this? A larger-than-medium character receives a penalty to their Attack Combat Value and Defence Combat Value when relating to ranged combat against all opponents. A smaller-than-medium character receives a corresponding bonus to their two Combat Values against all ranged opponents. If two combatants the same size clash, the bonuses and penalties cancel each other out. Similarly, the bonuses/penalties cancelling also applies to the damage modifier and Armour Rating for each Size Rank.

As you can see, the modifiers might not be intuitive, but they work!

RACE TEMPLATES

Race Templates are archetypes for non-human or part-human races such as a dwarf, catgirl, robot, or vampire. They provide a set of Attributes and Defects suitable for a character who is not quite or not at all human.

There are a near infinite possible worlds in the Anime Multiverse (or in your own campaign worlds) and consequently there is no consensus of what a vampire or a ghost or an android is exactly. Indeed, many anime series present their own spin on the traditional stereotypes. The Race Templates herein simply represent a small sampling of concepts that can be used in the Anime Multiverse, offering ideas from which players and GMs can draw inspiration.

04 RACE TEMPLATES

Race Template	Point Cost	Page
Android Battle-Maid	60	37
Archfiend	80	38
Asrai	45	39
Dark Elf	20	39
Dwarf	15	40
Fairy	-10	40
Giant Living Robot	70	41
Grey	40	42
Half-Dragon	35	42
Half-Oni	30	43
Half-Orc	20	44
Haud	70	44
Homo Psyche	35	45
Kodama	25	46
Nekojin	10	46
Parasite	55	47
Shapechanger	35	47
Skeleton Key	60	48
Slime	0	49
Snow Maiden	60	50
Spider Demon	50	50
Vampire	70	52
Werewolf	5	54
Woolie	20	55
Yurei	50	55

RACE AND MARKED DEFECT

The Marked Defect is usually not included in any Template, since it is a social limitation that is dictated by the campaign setting. Playing a Haud or Spider Demon in a game set within the sylvan forest of Aradia would certainly call for assigning the Marked Defect, but playing the same character in a campaign set in the race's native homeland would not. You should add Marked to your character only if they stand out compared to the normal population of that setting.

RACE AND SKILL GROUPS

Most Racial Templates do not have Skills Groups to ensure that the Templates remain broadly representational of the race. In other words, unless an aptitude for a Skill is ingrained within the entire race, it is not included in the Template.

For example, most dwarves are fine craftsmen who have honed their talents with stone and metal. If a dwarf was taken immediately after birth, and placed with a family of humans in Japan on Earth, would they automatically gain the related earth-working Skills by adolescence? Probably not, which is why such Skill Groups are not part of the Dwarf Race Template.

▶ DUPLICATE ENTRIES WITH OTHER TEMPLATES

If you assign a Size or Class Template in addition to a Race Template, you may get undesirable duplicate Attribute and Defect entries. For example, if you decide to play a Magical Girl Kodama, the Templates provide you with 2 Levels of the Exorcism Attribute for the Magical Girl class and 2 Levels of Exorcism for the Kodama race. If you only want 2 Levels of Exorcism because it fits your character concept better, remove the excess Levels from one of the Templates and adjust the Point Cost total accordingly. Of course, if you're happy adding the two Templates together to gain 4 Levels of Exorcism, then no changes to the Templates are needed.

ANDROID BATTLE-MAID

Page 153 – The latest product to hit the market, these robotic gynoids resemble cute teenage girls dressed in a frilly maid outfit – a clever disguise for a machine with the fighting power of a combat android (for bodyguard duties) and the processing abilities of a cutting-edge minicomputer! Most serve as personal assistants and bodyguards for senior corporate executives and politicians (or their children). They are still experimental prototypes and a few beta-test designs were misplaced due to a clerical error and possibly mixed in with a shipment of more mundane domestic models. Who knows where they might have ended up? They are hardwired with only a few basic Skills. Their Power Flux Attribute provides Flux Points usable to acquire Skills from purchased (or perhaps pirated) software programmes.

In the Anime Multiverse, these Battle-Maids can be found accidentally shipped to many worlds but most are found on Earth.

ANDROID BATTLE MAID

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
3	6	Armour (AR 15)
1	1	Attack Mastery
2	4	Data Access
1	1	Defence Mastery
1	1	Features (Appearance: Cute; Internal Computer)
3	3	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell, Vision)
2	2	Jumping
1 (2)	10	Power Flux: Skill Flux (Equipment: Programmes +1)
10 (5)	20	Resilient (Ageing, Airborne Toxins, Disease, Lack of Air, Poisons; All Complete -5)
3	3	Skill Group (Domestic)
1	3	Superspeed
1	4	Superstrength
5	5	Tough
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-2	Ism (Android)
1	-1	Marked (Production mark in embarrassing spot)
2	-4	Obligated (Purchaser)
	60	**TOTAL**

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ARCHFIEND

Below – Towering up to 15-metres tall and massing up to 60 tonnes, the archfiend is a terrifying sight to behold. Their thick, leathery skin ranges in hues on the blue-black spectrum and is pull taught over rippling muscles that emphasises their incredible power. Most archfiends carve out their subterranean homes themselves using their innate tunnelling abilities. As a greater demon, archfiends can magically summon and control its minor brethren to carry out their bidding – which often involves terrorising the landscape as they lay waste to anyone who opposes them. Archfiends live for the thrill of battle.

In the Anime Multiverse, archfiends are important players on the Prime World of Bazaroth. Many archfiends find their destructive talents valued in service to a major demon lord while others prefer to make power plays of their own to establish dominance.



ARCHFIEND

Size Rank 3: Mammoth

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
6	12	Armour (AR 30)
2	2	Combat Technique (Brutal, Lethal Blow)
2	6	Conversion
3	3	Melee Attack (Swords)
2	2	Melee Defence (Swords)
2 (4)	10	Mind Control (Narrow: Demons +2)
3	3	Special Movement (Fast 3)
4	8	Summon Creatures (Dimensional -2; Narrow: Demons +2)
6	24	Superstrength
4	4	Tough
1	1	Tunnelling
3	3	Unique Attribute (x8 Thrown Weapon Distance)
7 (3)	14	Weapon: Soul Sword (Multidimensional -1; Muscle -1; Penetrating -1; Piercing -1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
3	-3	Inept Attack (Ranged)
3	-3	Inept Defence (Ranged)
3	-6	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	80	**TOTAL**

ASRAI

Page 315 – Asrai resemble beautiful humans in most ways, except for their small feathered wings that causes many people who see one to believe they are angels. They all have a magical connection to the natural world that allows them to gently reshape their native lands. Asrai typically live in pastoral societies and are a peaceful folk that are always eager to help those in need.

In the Anime Multiverse, Asrai hail from the beautiful Prime World of Aradia and embody all that is good and kind. They are creations of Aradia itself to serve as stewards of the land and leaders of the peoples. Their interest in natural harmony extends beyond Aradia, though, and trained emissaries are often sent to other worlds to act as mentors, partners, and guardians.

ASRAI

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Mind Stat
2	4	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
3 (2)	30	Dynamic Powers (Major: Natural Magic -1)
2	2	Energised
1	1	Features (Appearance)
1	3	Flight
1	1	Skill Group (Domestic)
1	1	Sixth Sense (Danger)
1	1	Special Movement (Zen Direction)
	45	**TOTAL**

DARK ELF

Page 167 – Dark elves are the distant cousins of high elves who abandoned their forest homes for subterranean dwellings. They share a number of similarities with their woodland born cousins – long, slender, and elegant features and a natural affinity for magic – though their love of life and the vibrant wonders of the world has been replaced by a deep hatred and resentment. Dark elves are usually malicious beings who eagerly serve the sinister gods. Some believe that dark elves came into existence when a group of elven wizards uncovered some evil magical secrets that forever changed and warped them. Dark elves bridle at this theory, resenting any implication that they are descended from high elves.

In the Anime Multiverse, dark elves come from an Outer World that once shared a world gate with Ikaris before it was destroyed. A few small clans still reside on Ikaris but they rarely venture to the surface.

DARK ELF

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	1	Control Environment (Darkness)
1	1	Heightened Awareness
3	3	Mind Shield
2	4	Resilient (Ageing, Poisons)
2	2	Supersense (Dark Vision, Magic)
5 (2)	10	Unaffected (Source: Magic; All Attributes -3)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-3	Sensory Impairment (Diminished vision in sunlight)
	20	**TOTAL**

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DWARF

Below – Dwarves are stout, rugged, and noble craftsmen who live under the ground, working stone and metal with a skill and grace that belies their gruff exterior. Dwarves often have dealings with the outside world since many other races are eager to trade goods for dwarven-crafted weapons and armour. Due to their self-imposed confinement, dwarves are open to these trade arrangements in return for foods and other goods that are hard to come by under tonnes of rock. While dwarves may often seem stern and serious, they also know how to party. Few, if any, races can maintain pace with a dwarf in a drinking contest!

In the Anime Multiverse, dwarves hail from the Prime World of Ikaris. They have not visited many of the other dimensions.



DWARF

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
2	2	Features (Depth Awareness, Longevity, Low-Light Vision)
4	4	Immutable
2	2	Mind Shield
2	4	Resilient (Disease, Poison)
1	1	Supersense (Infrared Vision)
2	2	Tough
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Shortcoming (Body: Major - Agility)
1	-1	Shortcoming (Body: Minor - Running Speed)
	15	**TOTAL**

FAIRY

Right – These are tiny pixie-like sprites that maintain a psychic connection to the wild. They are usually no more than 15 cm tall but are surprisingly strong and resilient for their stature. Many are skilled at weaving webs of deception using their control of light to fool unsuspecting targets and they sometimes have animal companions as well. Most fairies are good by nature but dark forces have corrupted some; mankind's despoiling of their wilderness lairs has angered others.

In the Anime Multiverse, the majority of fairies are exiles from their own world when it was destroyed by a terrible Blight. These now live in the deep forests on the Prime World of Aradia, which they call their home. Some have journeyed to other realms, either as exiles or as emissaries, often serving as companions of magical girls or young adventurers. A few evil sorcerers are known to keep fairies as captives, using their innately magical essences for bizarre rituals or experiments.

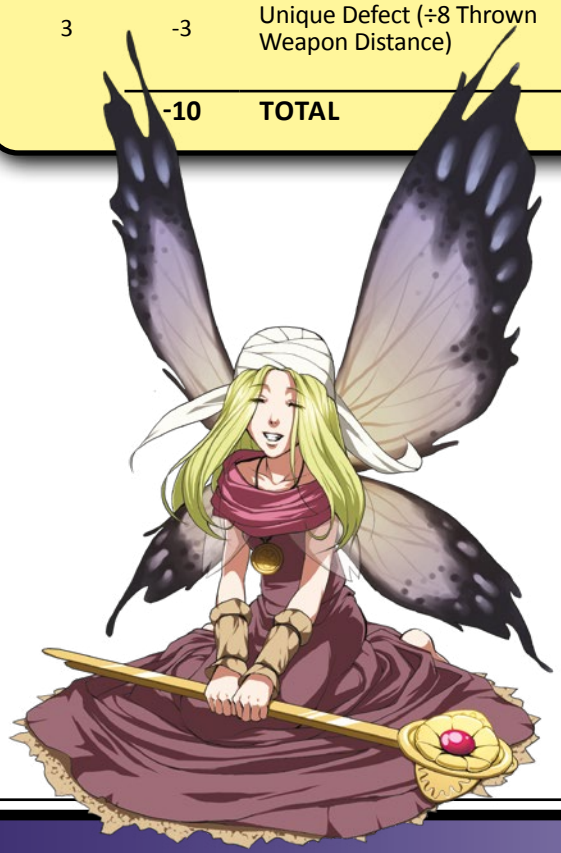
FAIRY

Size Rank -3: Diminutive

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
1	2	Mind Stat
2	4	Soul Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Control Environment (Lights)
2	2	Features (Appearance: Cute, Direction Sense, Scentless)
2	6	Flight
2	2	Heightened Senses (Smell, Touch)
1	3	Projection
3	3	Ranged Attack (All)
3	3	Ranged Defence (All)
3	6	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-2	Fragile
3	-6	Unique Defect (-30 Strength Damage)
3	-18	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷100)
3	-3	Unique Defect (÷8 Running Speed)
3	-12	Unique Defect (Suffers 30 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
3	-3	Unique Defect (÷8 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	-10	TOTAL



GIANT LIVING ROBOT

Page 81 – An observer should not be fooled by the unchanging expression of the giant living robot's electronic eyes because there is surely something deep going on behind them. Living robots are the last step in biotechnological evolution – scientific wonders that astound everyone with their organometallic bodies and free will. Despite their sentience, such robots are still bio-machines that do not get sick, do not need food, and do not even need to breathe. As machines, they have a huge advantage over other organisms because they can customise their bodies. Under their armoured exoskeletons, living robots can hide all sorts of equipment and can keep adding parts as desired.

In the Anime Multiverse, the giant living robot home world is one of the Beyonder dimensions. Through concentrated effort or perhaps by accident, some have adventured into the Outer and Inner Worlds.

GIANT LIVING ROBOT

Size Rank 2: Huge

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
4	8	Armour (AR 20)
2	2	Capacity (Cargo)
2	2	Combat Technique (Brutal, Lethal Blow)
4	4	Gear (Tools and Computers)
3	3	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell, Vision)
3	3	Jumping
4	4	Mind Shield
2	10	Regeneration
10 (5)	20	Resilient (Ageing, Airborne Toxins, Disease, Lack of Air, Poisons; All Complete -5)
2	2	Special Movement (Fast)
4	16	Superstrength
4	4	Tough
2	2	Unique Attribute (x4 Thrown Weapon Distance)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-2	Inept Attack (Ranged)
2	-2	Inept Defence (Ranged)
1	-2	Ism (Non-Human)
2	-4	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	70	TOTAL

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GREY

Page 88 – The grey are an advanced space-faring race who expand their knowledge by travelling between planets and gathering both information and samples. They vary in height from one to three metres, with large almond eyes, inverted teardrop head, and hairless grey skin. Although many unpleasant experiences have been attributed to greys, more extensive research indicates they have been present on numerous planets for a very long time and that their activities are intended to contribute benevolently to civilisations.

In the Anime Multiverse, greys are one of the many alien species from the Prime World of Cathedral that prefer to remain neutral concerning the hotly contested Orb Radiant.

GREY

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
3	6	Mind Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
2	2	Features (Ambidexterity, Low-Light Vision, Ultrasonic Communication)
3	3	Healing
2	2	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Taste)
3 (5)	15	Mind Control (Broad: Sentient Beings +1; Concentration +1)
4	4	Mind Shield
3	12	Telekinesis
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Easily Distracted (Technology)
1	-1	Fragile
1	-1	Shortcoming (Body: Major - Agility)
1	-1	Shortcoming (Body: Minor - Running Speed)
	40	**TOTAL**

HALF-DRAGON

Below – Some shapeshifting dragons are occasionally impressed enough with a human (usually a great mage or hero) to take them as a mate. The coupling may produce a half-dragon offspring. The typical half-dragon is humanoid with small wings, curving horns, and a reptilian tail. They tend to be feisty individuals but often have trouble fitting in with either of their parents. Consequently, they typically either live in exceptionally cosmopolitan areas or spend their time wandering the wilds.

In the Anime Multiverse, the great dragons have been asleep for several millennium on the Prime World of Ikaris – though there are rumours that they are starting to awaken. Since dragons also call many of the Inner, Outer, and Beyonder Worlds home, half-dragons may come from many different places.



HALF-DRAGON

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
5	15	Immunity (Heat)
1	1	Immutable
2	6	Flight
1	4	Superstrength
1	1	Tough
2	4	Weapon: Fire Breath (Continuing -1; Range -1; Deplete +2)
	35	**TOTAL**

HALF-ONI

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
1	2	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	1	Attack Mastery
3	3	Energised
1	1	Immutable
1	4	Superstrength
1	1	Tough
8 (4)	16	Weapon: Ogre Blast (Enervation -2; Insidious -3; Range -1; Stun -1; Deplete +3)
	30	**TOTAL**

HALF-ONI

Right – A half-oni is the child of an oni (Japanese for "ogre") and a human being. They look human except for an odd mark on their foreheads where an oni's single horn would grow. They have superhuman strength and resilience, though, and a tendency to fly into uncontrolled rages. Some half-oni control this anger and use their powers to fight evil or other full-blooded monsters; others succumb to their dark sides and turn into monsters themselves.

In the Anime Multiverse, oni are most commonly found amongst the Outer Worlds, though several clans make their homes in the wilderness of Japan on Earth. Interestingly, their forehead symbols sometimes cause them to be mistaken for the highly prized Skeleton Keys (page 48) – an unfortunate situation for the half-oni!



HALF-ORC

Page 183 – When a human (usually female) and an orc mate, the resultant offspring is a hulking, leathery half-orc. Although both humans and orcs usually range from one to two metres in height (Medium sized), the progeny for some reason can stand as tall as three metres (Large sized). With sharp fangs, muscular body, thick skin, and shaggy hair, a half-orc can be a valuable ally in combat ... or a terrifying enemy if you cross one.

In the Anime Multiverse, the alchemist Salish Orc created a tribal race of goblins – also known as "orcs", after his name – during the second Azari Civil War nearly two millennium ago on the Prime World of Ikaris. Though often shunned by their pure-blood cousins and treated as outcasts for being different, some half-orcs have risen to prominence in a goblinhold through intimidation, combat prowess, and force of will.

HALF-ORC

Size Rank 1: Large

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (AR 10)
3	3	Combat Technique (Brutal, Judge Opponent, Lethal Blow)
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
2	8	Superstrength
3	3	Tough
1	1	Unique Attribute (x2 Thrown Weapon Distance)
2	4	Weapon: Fangs

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Inept Attack (Ranged)
1	-1	Inept Defence (Ranged)
1	-2	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	20	TOTAL

HAUD

Below – The haud are an intelligent space-faring species that believe it is their right to travel from planet to planet and exploit and enslave the indigenous populations. These two-metre-tall reptiles are extremely hearty, brutally efficient, and naturally adaptable – ideal qualities that assist in their activities. Their one significant weakness is cold and consequently they avoid conquering planets too far from the warmth of a sun.

In the Anime Multiverse, the haud's home planet resides in the Alpha Centauri star system in the Earth dimension. Though Earth has not yet felt the impact of a full-scale haud incursion, several haud cells crashed in Asia during an exploration mission and now secretly work to destabilise world governments and regain contact with the rest of their kind with an invitation to invade.



HAUD

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (AR 10)
3	3	Attack Mastery
4	4	Combat Technique (Brutal, Lethal Blow, Lightning Reflexes 2)
2	2	Defence Mastery
1	4	Extra Actions
2	2	Features (Long Tongue, Longevity, Secondary Eyelids)
3	3	Heightened Senses (Smell, Taste, Vision)
3	3	Jumping
1	5	Regeneration
6 (5)	12	Resilient (Airborne Toxins, Disease, Lack of Food, Less Sleep, Poisons: Complete -1)
6	6	Special Movement (Balance, Cat-Like, Fast, Slithering, Wall-Crawling 2)
2	8	Superstrength
1 (4)	3	Telepathy (Specific: Haud +3)
4	4	Tough
1	2	Undetectable (Infrared)
3 (2)	6	Weapon: Fangs and Claws (Penetrating -1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-2	Achilles Heel (Cold Attacks)
1	-2	Bane (Sub-Zero Temperatures)
1	-1	Unappealing
	70	**TOTAL**

HOMO PSYCHE

Page 115 – With the proper activation, training, and guidance, a human can reach their next evolutionary stage: homo psyche, or a human with psionic powers. Though this relatively new species can have widely varying powers and abilities, most have the potential to exhibit the Attributes presented in this Template.

In the Anime Multiverse, homo psyche evolved on the Primary World of Enid under the careful watch of a pro-psionic organisation called Neo-Logos. Unfortunately, many psychics are caught in a conflict between major military forces, used as pawns in the battles. Though Neo-Logos strives to provide protection, psychics are still subject to much discrimination and exploitation. Consequently, some homo psyche who have accidentally crossed over to another world often prefer their new home.

HOMO PSYCHE

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Mind Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Control Environment (Cold, Heat)
6	6	Energised
1 (2)	3	Flight (Potent -1; Concentration +1; Deplete +1)
1 (2)	1	Healing (Potent -1; Concentration +1; Deplete +1)
2 (3)	2	Sixth Sense (Emotions, Psionics; Deplete +1)
1 (3)	4	Telekinesis (Concentration +1; Deplete +1)
1 (4)	3	Telepathy (Concentration +1; Deplete +1; Unpredictable +1)
6 (4)	12	Unaffected (Source: Psionics; All Attributes -3; Deplete +1)
	35	**TOTAL**

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KODAMA

Page 311 – Kodama are tiny natural tree spirits that stand up to a half-metre tall, with humanoid features, pale white skin, enlarged heads, and bulbous (rather than delicate) features. Their connection with the natural environment grants them numerous talents, including the ability to change into liquid, gas, or incorporeal states at will. Kodama can also peer briefly into the past, learn important information by talking with the land itself, control the growth and movement of plants, dispel evil and unnatural entities, and summon animals from the surrounding environs.

KODAMA

Size Rank -2: Tiny

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
6 (5)	18	Change State (Quick Change -1)
1 (2)	2	Cognition (Postcognition; Environmental: Nature +1)
2	4	Data Access (Nature)
2	2	Exorcism
1	4	Force Field
1	1	Healing
3	3	Plant Control
2	2	Ranged Attack
2	2	Ranged Defence
2	4	Summon Creatures
1 (2)	3	Telepathy (Broad: Non-Sentient Animals +1)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-2	Unique Defect (÷4 Running Speed)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
2	-2	Unique Defect (÷4 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	25	**TOTAL**

In the Anime Multiverse, kodama can be found in limited numbers in natural vegetation environments across most worlds. In nature, they tend to form small tribal groups with other kodama for companionship. They usually don't engage in the politics of their worlds, but some curious kodama have been known to venture beyond their natural homes and into more urban settings to explore and learn about other societies.

NEKOJIN

Page 79 – A nekojin is a humanoid with large cat ears, a tail, and some feline facial features and behavioural traits. Some have some fur as well, though it might only cover a portion of the body. It is unclear if a human and a cat were genetically fused in a laboratory, if they mixed during an evolutionary process, or if they are simply a separate species. The majority of scientists support the last supposition. Most cat people in anime tend to be female, very genki (highly energetic and cheerful), and extremely agile.

In the Anime Multiverse, nekojin are found with surprising frequency amongst many of the Outer Worlds in small tribes or communities. Their natural curiosity has led some of them to the Inner and Prime Worlds as well.

NEKOJIN

Size Rank 0: Medium

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Combat Technique (Lightning Reflexes 2)
2	2	Features (Appearance: Cute, Low-Light Vision, Retractable Claws)
1	1	Heightened Senses (Hearing)
2	2	Mulligan
2	2	Special Movement (Cat-Like, Wall Bouncing)
1 (2)	2	Weapon: Claws (Non-Penetrating +1)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Easily Distracted (Things that Distract Cats)
	10	**TOTAL**

PARASITE

Page 23 – These form-changing alien species require a host bodies with which to bond and consequently a second Race Template is often assigned to reflect this dual identity. These oily-black parasites live within their host, and constantly struggle for dominance and control of its body. Once bonded, a parasite grants many combat and survival abilities to its host, including stretching and reforming limbs into deadly sharp weapons. Parasites are immune to electricity but have a weakness to loud sounds, which disrupts their malleability and control over their host.

In the Anime Multiverse, parasites were first discovered on the Prime World of Enid while workers were excavating deep underground to create their Arcology cities following the environmental collapse. Parasites reproduce through asexual binary fission and soon these creatures bonded to important individuals to travel throughout the other Prime and Inner Worlds in search of new hosts.

PARASITE

Size Rank 0: Medium

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	10	Absorption (Health Points)
2	4	Armour (AR 10)
3	3	Attack Mastery
2	2	Combat Technique (Blind Fighting, Brutal)
3	3	Defence Mastery
4	4	Elasticity
1	4	Extra Actions
1	1	Heightened Senses (Hearing)
4	12	Immunity (Electricity)
3	9	Massive Damage
1 (3)	5	Mind Control (Potent -2; Single: Merged Host +4)
1 (2)	3	Telepathy (Potent -2; Specific: Parasites/Hosts +3)
1	2	Weapon: Extending Body Blades (Range -1; Non-Penetrating +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Bane (Loud Sounds)
1	-3	Unique Defect (Must Bond to Host Body)
	55	TOTAL

SHAPECHANGER

Below – Form is fluid and appearances are transient – that's the lesson nearly every shapechanger learns upon gaining their powers. It's redundant to say that shapechangers are not what they appear, but it is true in more than one way. They can be aliens, or suffer from a curse, or may be inherently supernatural creatures. Unless the shapechanger knows and explains the source of their powers, it is nearly impossible to tell just what they are. Their power to assume many forms can create great heroes or heinous villains. No enemy base, or locker room either, will ever be safe again.

In the Anime Multiverse, shapechangers are ubiquitous to nearly all worlds in very limited numbers. Their natural abilities make them highly desired commodities for corporate CEOs and national rulers.

SHAPECHANGER

Size Rank 0: Medium

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
3 (2)	30	Dynamic Powers (Major: Shapeshifting -1)
5	5	Immutable
	35	TOTAL



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SKELETON KEY

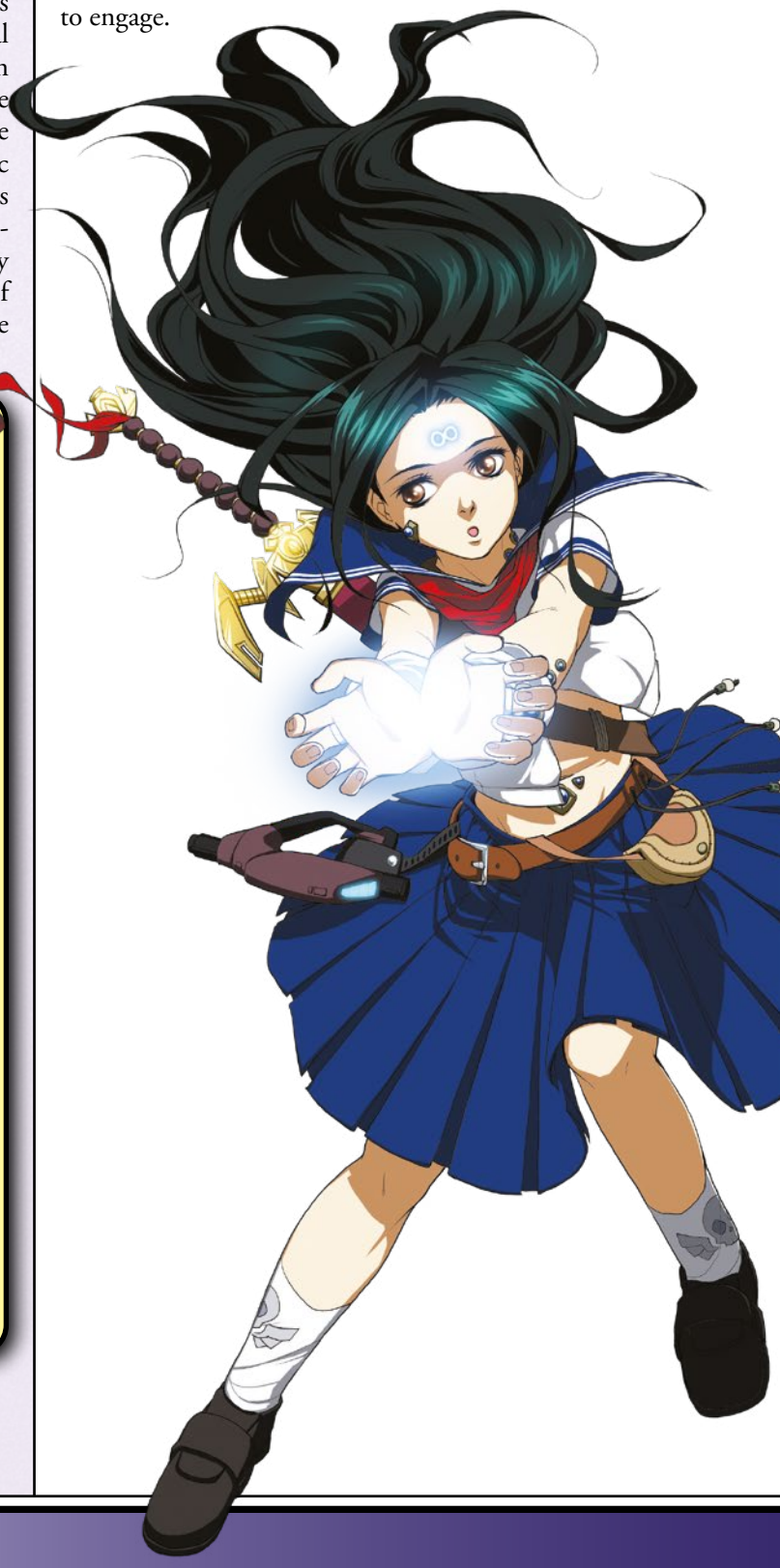
Right – In the Anime Multiverse, a Key is someone who is attuned to a specific world gate and can open the portal to the dimension beyond (see page 309 for more information). A rare few known as Skeleton Keys have a special bond with all doorways and locks, though, and can operate any world gate on any dimension; a glowing infinity symbol appears on the forehead when using such powers. Additionally, these Skeleton Keys are indeed, metaphorically, the "key" to locks in general – including physical locks (for example, the locks on buildings and vehicles), password locks (such as those on computer files and bank cards), etc. They are the universal key, though with only Level 1 Dynamic Powers to represent this, the extent of their ability is limited to simple locks. To complement their gate-opening abilities, Skeleton Keys can also permanently destroy any world gate when they pass through it (if desired), detect nearby world gates, and reincarnate should they die.

SKELETON KEY

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	10	Dynamic Powers (Minor: Keys and Gates)
5	5	Energised
3	3	Mulligan
3	3	Pocket Dimension
8	16	Portal (7 World Linkages + Pocket Dimension)
4 (3)	8	Reincarnation (Difficult to Stop -1)
6 (1)	6	Sixth Sense (World Gates; Area -5)
6	6	Unique Attribute (Can Destroy World Gates)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Marked (Infinity Symbol on Forehead)
3	-6	Skeleton in the Closet (Skeleton Key)
	60	**TOTAL**

Few know or understand the true power of a Skeleton Key but those that do will often go to great lengths to meet or even capture one. Consequently, most Skeleton Keys rarely stay in one place for too long and instead use their extraordinary abilities to travel the web of the Multiverse. Most Skeleton Keys have established a few of their own links to worlds they have visited and they can open one-way portals between such dimensions even without a world gate. There are an infinite number of places to explore, and an equal number of adventures to engage.



SLIME

Below – These intelligent drops of dense goo are typically the size of a large beach ball and the shape of a teardrop or onion, though some unusual slimes are as small as a thimble or as large as a house. Slimes communicate with one another telepathically, adding emphasis with meaningful squeaks and tones. Although some slimes have small wings and can fly, most are wingless and scoot merrily along the ground. Slimes are not as fluid as they seem; they can be caged, for example. There are dozens of slime varieties, and each sub-race has a distinct magical ability according to its colour. Most slime civilisations of villages and towns are composed of a monochromatic population (all purple, all red, all copper, etc.), though "polychrome" towns are not unique.

In the Anime Multiverse, slimes are found primarily on a few low-technological Outer Worlds and rarely make the journey to the Inner Worlds.



SLIME

Size Rank -1: Small

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
4	4	Elasticity
1	1	Features (Appearance: Cute, Slippery)
2	2	Mulligan
1	5	Regeneration
1	1	Ranged Attack (All)
2	2	Ranged Defence (All)
6	6	Special Movement (Balance, Cat-Like, Fast 2, Light-Footed, Slithering)
1 (4)	3	Telepathy (Specific: Telepaths +3)
1	2	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-2	Fragile
3	-9	Impaired Manipulation
1	-3	Impaired Speech
1	-1	Magnet
1	-2	Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage)
1	-1	Unique Defect (Leaves Slime Trail)
1	-6	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷5)
1	-1	Unique Defect (÷2 Running Speed)
1	-4	Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
1	-1	Unique Defect (÷2 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	0	**TOTAL**

SNOW MAIDEN

Right – These mysterious pale-skinned females are personifications of winter: beautiful and deadly. They have haunted Japan since ancient times, known as the legendary spirit Yuki Onna ("Snow Woman").

In the Anime Multiverse, they are creatures from an Outer World that were saved by the long-lost gatekeeper of Earth from a terrible fate in their home dimension. In fulfilment of this debt, they now serve as guardians of the world gates of Earth, hunting down alien visitors from other dimensions who intruded into this reality without their master's permission and punishing those humans that consorted with them. With the Earth gatekeeper gone, some still perform this mission and live in secret among humans, while others have their own agendas. Many are bound to the world gates of Earth and cannot travel far from them.

SNOW MAIDEN

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
4 (6)	8	Armour (Optimised: Cold +2)
2	4	Cognition: Precognition
3	3	Energised
1	1	Features (Appearance)
1 (2)	3	Flight (Deplete +1)
2 (3)	2	Sensory Block: Blizzard (Hearing, Smell, Vision; Deplete +1)
8 (4)	16	Resilient (Ageing, Disease, Intense Cold, Lack of Food and Water; Complete -4)
1	1	Supersense (Infrared Vision)
1 (3)	4	Superstrength (Environmental: Cold +2)
6 (2)	12	Weapon: Winter's Kiss (Incapacitating: Frozen -2; Penetrating -4; Deplete +2)
5 (2)	10	Weapon: Ice Storm (Range -2; Spreading -3; Deplete +2)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-2	Achilles Heel (Fire Attacks)
1	-3	Confined (Near World Gates)
1	-3	Special Requirement (Fresh Blood)
	60	**TOTAL**



SPIDER DEMON

Right – These hellspawn demons can transform from their normal appearance – thin, red humanoids with diamond eyes and oversized mouths – into a monstrous half-demon, half-spider hybrid form. This Alternate Form is built with 50 Character Points and is added atop the existing spider demon template.

In the Anime Multiverse, these spider demons are the rare offspring of female Akkaba demons from the Prime World of Bazaroth and other non-Akkaba males (demon, human, or other). Usually shunned by the true Akkaba tribes, these Akkaba-hybrids often set out on their own to explore their own world or other world to which they can gain access. Life on Bazaroth is difficult for lone demons, though, and few Akkaba-hybrids survive for extended periods.

SPIDER DEMON

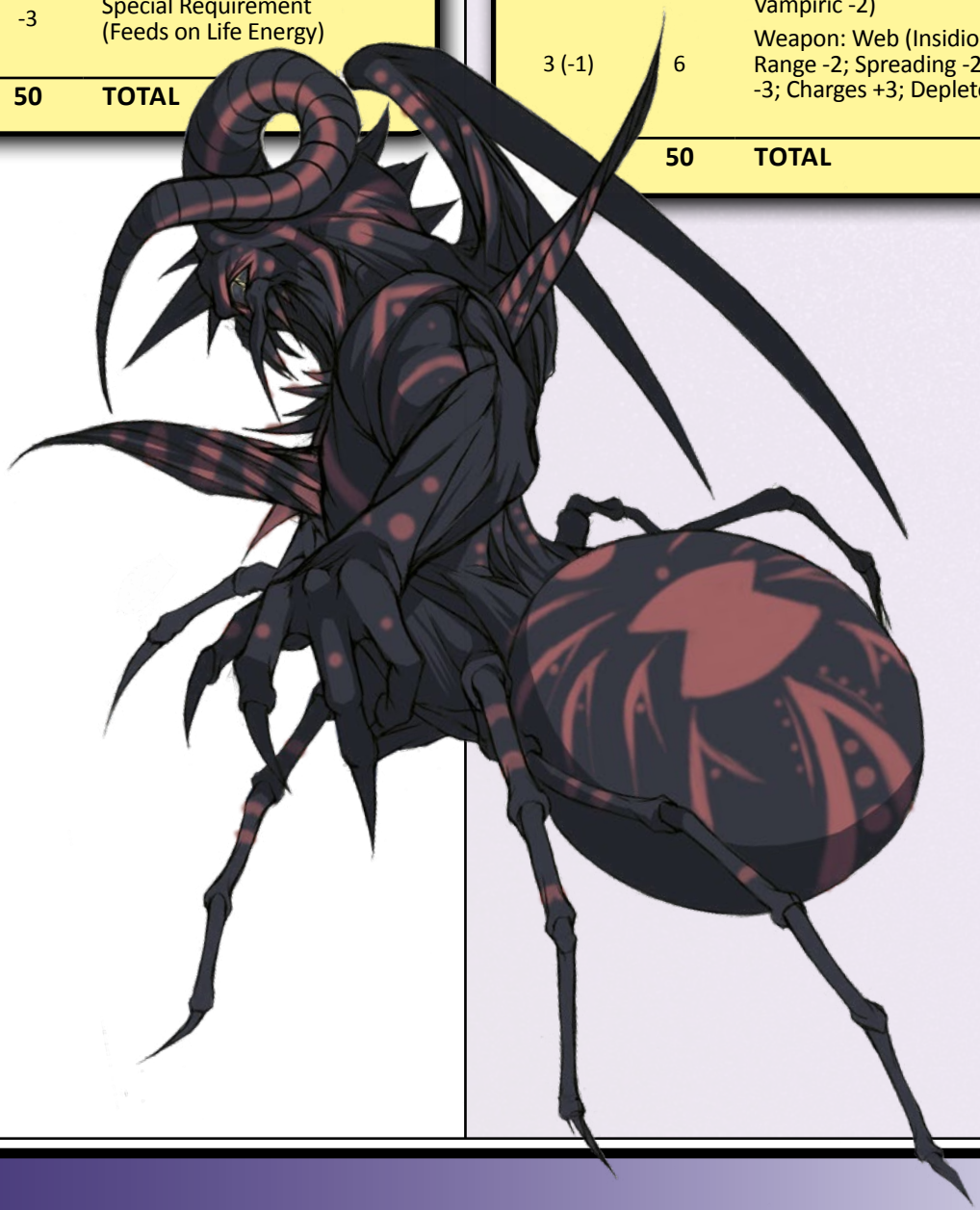
Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
3	6	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
8 (10)	32	Alternate Form (Spider Hybrid; Activation +2)
1	1	Attack Mastery
2	2	Immutable
2	2	Mind Shield
1	2	Resilient (Ageing)
1	1	Sixth Sense (Goodness)
1	4	Superstrength
3	3	Tough
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-3	Special Requirement (Feeds on Life Energy)
	50	**TOTAL**

SPIDER HYBRID

Size Rank 0: Medium

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
3	6	Armour (AR 15)
1	2	Augmented (Body Stat; Demonic Magic)
3	3	Combat Technique (Brutal, Lethal Blow, Lightning Reflexes)
1	4	Extra Actions
4	4	Extra Arms
1	1	Features (Low-Light Vision)
2	2	Jumping
2	2	Special Movement (Wall-Crawling 2)
1	4	Superstrength
8 (3)	16	Weapon: Demonic Fangs (Enervation -2; Muscle -1; Vampiric -2)
3 (-1)	6	Weapon: Web (Insidious -3; Range -2; Spreading -2; Tangle -3; Charges +3; Deplete +3)
	50	**TOTAL**



VAMPIRE

Right – Vampires are the nobility of the undead and predators of the night, who treat the living as their cattle. They are peerless hunters and killers, possessed of enormous physical and mystical powers. Vampires look as they did before death; the common belief that all vampires are deathly pale is true only of those who have not fed in a long time. Vampires who have recently gorged on the blood of a victim look as ruddy and healthy as any mortal of their former species. Vampires originated in the distant past and scholars disagree about how they came about. Some believe an early mortal was cursed to wander as a vampire for some great sin, while others argue that they are part of the natural order, in the same relationship to men that men are to sheep. However they began, a vampire may be created in several ways. The most common is by the bite of another vampire, who drains its victim and then, at the moment of death, feeds the mortal its own blood.

In the Anime Multiverse, vampires can be found on nearly any world in small numbers. They tend to gather in communities called nests for mutual benefit when possible, often pulled together near a place of power (such as a world gate or other important nexus point).

VAMPIRE

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
-3	-6	Soul Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Attack Mastery
2	2	Combat Technique (Brutal, Lethal Blow)
1	1	Heightened Awareness
2	2	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell)
9 (6)	18	Metamorphosis (Weaker Vampire Race: 30 Points; Duration: Permanent -10; Delay: Days +3; Deplete +1; Unique Limiter: Vampire Must Personally Drain Victim's Blood +3)
4 (5)	20	Mind Control (Deplete +1)
2	2	Mind Shield
1	5	Regeneration
1	1	Sixth Sense (Death and Decay)
10 (5)	20	Resilient (Ageing, Airborne Toxins, Disease, Lack of Air, Poisons; All Complete -5)
2	2	Special Movement (Cat-Like, Fast)
1	4	Superstrength
2	4	Swarm (Bats or Rats)
2	2	Tough
1 (2)	2	Weapon: Fangs and Fingernails (Non-Penetrating +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Achilles Heel (Wooden Weapons)
1	-2	Bane (Holy Symbols)
3	-6	Bane (Sunlight)
1	-1	Easily Distracted (Past Memories)
1	-1	Shortcoming (Soul: Major - Luck)
	70	TOTAL



WEREWOLF

Page 279 – There are many myths and legends surrounding these frightening lupine lycanthropes – better known as werewolves – that can trace their origins back centuries on Earth and millennia on other worlds. The base form of this Race Template can be added to virtually any other race, since the curse spreads when a werewolf in wolf form bites a new victim (on the night of a full moon). Though few in numbers, these cursed humans bond together in tight-knit communities for mutual protection to guard their secrets from those who would seek their destruction should their true nature be discovered. Werewolves are exceptional hunters – strong, fast, armoured, and tough, and single-minded in their focus to kill and feast.

In the Anime Multiverse, the origins in werewolves remain unknown. One theory places their origin thousands of years ago on the Prime World of Ikaris, where a powerful sorcerer cursed the children of a noble that slew their pet wolf when it strayed onto his prime hunting lands. Since that time, werewolves have managed to travel to dozens of worlds as they seek a cure for their affliction ... though these travels have only helped spread their contagion even further.

WEREWOLF - BASE FORM

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1 (4)	4	Alternate Form (Wolf Form: 20 Points; Delay +1; Concentration +2)
1	1	Connected (Lycanthrope Community)
2	2	Heightened Awareness
1	5	Regeneration
1	1	Sixth Sense (Blood)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Cursed (Werewolf)
1	-1	Involuntary Change (Full Moon)
1	-1	Nightmares (Flashbacks of Wolf Kills)
3	-6	Skeleton in the Closet (Werewolf)
	5	TOTAL

WEREWOLF - WOLF FORM

Size Rank 0: Medium

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Armour (AR 5)
2	4	Augmented (Body Stat; Lycanthrope Magic)
1	1	Features (Low-Light Vision)
4	4	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell, Vision, Taste)
2	2	Jumping
2	2	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
2	2	Melee Defence (Unarmed)
10 (4)	20	Metamorphosis (Werewolf Form: 20 Points; Duration: Permanent -10; Delay +3; Dependent: Fangs Weapon +1)
2	2	Special Movement (Fast 2)
5	5	Tough
3	6	Weapon: Fangs

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Bane (Less Common: Wolfsbane Plant)
2	-2	Easily Distracted (Prey)
2	-6	Impaired Manipulation
2	-6	Impaired Speech
1	-1	Involuntary Change (Sunrise)
3	-3	Marked (Wolf Body)
6	-6	Shortcoming (Mind: All Aspects; -3 Penalty to Mind Stat Rolls)
1	-2	Unique Defect (Suffers Triple Damage from Silver Weapons)
	20	TOTAL

WOOLIE

Page 118 – The woolie are a naturally strong tribal race of fur-covered barbarians that eke out their existence on their frozen home world. Though they primarily lead agrarian lifestyles farming in expansive underground caverns heated by hot springs, the woolie's powerful bodies has captured the attention of more aggressive and advanced species in nearby star systems. As a result, many woolie have been captured from their homes and turned into slaves or conscripts.

In the Anime Multiverse, the woolie home world resides in the Outer Worlds. Through cross-dimensional slave trading, some woolie have been transplanted as far as the Prime World of Cathedral, where they are trained to serve as crew members on space freighters.

YUREI

Page 164 – If a person dies in the grip of strong negative emotions – such as jealousy, envy, or anger – the spirit can return as a ghost. In this form, they haunt the place in which it lived or died, or they stalk those responsible for its fate. Most anime ghosts, or yurei, are female. The classic Japanese ghost appears wearing the white kimono traditionally used for burials, with its feet shrouded in mist. Many yurei have a white triangular piece of paper or cloth (hitaikakushi) on their foreheads. If they materialise – only possible with great effort – their touch can induce soul-chilling dread. Even if a ghost's physical body is destroyed, it will usually reform within an hour.

In the Anime Multiverse, yurei can manifest anywhere there is sufficient negative energy, but they are quite commonplace on Earth. Some theorise that the primal nature of Earth, at the centre of all reality, draws them to this world.

WOOLIE

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
1	2	Soul Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Armour (AR 5)
1	1	Combat Technique (Brutal)
2	2	Features (Homing Instinct, Pouch, Scent Glands)
1	1	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
1	2	Resilient (Intense Cold)
2	2	Skill Group (Domestic)
1	1	Special Movement (Swinging)
1	4	Superstrength
1	1	Tough

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Shortcoming (Body: Major - Agility)
1	-1	Shortcoming (Body: Minor - Manual Dexterity)
	20	**TOTAL**

YUREI

Size Rank 0: Medium

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	3	Flight
1 (5)	3	Change State (Incorporeal; Potent -1; Maximum +3; Semi-Permanent +2)
2	2	Mind Shield
6 (5)	12	Reincarnation (Difficult to Stop -1)
10 (5)	20	Resilient (Ageing, Airborne Toxins, Disease, Lack of Air, Poisons; All Complete -5)
6 (-1)	12	Weapon: Deadly Touch (Drain: Soul -3; Psychic -4)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-2	Marked (Shrouded in Mist)
	50	**TOTAL**

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CLASS TEMPLATES

Class Templates are archetypal roles that a character may play, or life paths that a character may follow. This includes occupations (like detective, general, mercenary, etc.), lifestyles (like adventurer, hot rod, pet monster trainer, etc.), callings (demon hunter, gate guardian, magical girl, etc.), and status (idol, sentai member, tech genius, etc.). Each Class Template provides a set of Attributes, Skill Groups, and Defects that you use as a framework on which to build your character. You can assign more than one Template if you desire, or none at all, or you can create your own. Like Race Templates, using Class Templates is optional and the ones outlined herein are but a small sampling of possibilities.

Most Class Templates are appropriate for a wide range of genres and worlds. For example: detective types can be found across many dimensions; a hot rod might own an archaic, modern, or futuristic vehicle; any large military force will need a general to lead the way; etc. When necessary, the Templates can be modified slightly to accommodate the specifics of your campaign. In particular, customising a Template's Items – which are usually left to your discretion – is a great way to add flavour to your creation.

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ADVENTURER

Page 177 – Abandoned ruins, secured locations, and tales of lost or hard-to-get treasure are like a siren's call for the adventurer, whose penchant for getting into trouble gives them endless opportunities to develop potential that would otherwise remain untapped. Adventurers are a varied lot, as likely to find themselves exchanging witticisms in a social gathering as they are to swing from a dangling chain in a crumbling tomb. Depending on their personal preferences, they can specialise in particular areas, but one thing will always remain true: wherever they are, they can expect to run into trouble ... even if they are not actively seeking it out.

ARTIFICER

Right – The artificer is part artisan and part enchanter. They can not only create beautiful and useful crafts and other works of art, but the artificer can also imbue them with real power to create a plethora of minor artefacts with the assistance of a special multi-gadget. A valuable addition to any group of adventurers, the Artificer often has the right tools for the job at hand ... or can create new ones if needed.

05 CLASS TEMPLATES

Race Template	Point Cost	Page
Adventurer	20	56
Artificer	45	56
Broker	50	57
Demon Hunter	40	58
Detective	35	58
Exorcist	55	58
Gate Guardian	60	58
General	60	60
Hacktivist	50	60
Hot Rod	35	60
Idol	25	61
Magical Girl	60	62
Martial Artist	60	62
Master Thief	50	63
Mecha Pilot	50	63
Mercenary	45	64
Ninja	70	64
Pet Monster Trainer	30	65
Pirate	25	66
Samurai	65	66
Sentai Member	35	67
Shadow Warrior	75	68
Student	35	68
Tech Genius	55	69
Warder	60	69

ADVENTURER

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Combat Technique (Select 1)
3	3	Gear (Adventuring Supplies)
1	1	Heightened Awareness
1	1	Melee Attack (Select Weapon Type)
1	1	Melee Defence (Select Weapon Type)
3	9	Skill Group (Adventuring)
1	2	Skill Group (Social)
1	2	Skill Group (Street)
	20	**TOTAL**

ARTIFICER

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Mind Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	2	Augmented (Body: tech enhancement)
	10	Item (Multi-Gadget; 20 Points)
2	20	Power Flux (Major: Item Gadgeteer -1; Equipment: Multi-Gadget +1)
2	2	Skill Group (Artistic)
1	3	Skill Group (Scientific)
3	6	Skill Group (Technical)
	45	**TOTAL**



BROKER

Page 227 – If you're searching for something specific, something rare, something unique, you need look no further than the multi-talented broker. Many years of training has honed supernatural and intuitive talents in the most respected brokers, who can detect hidden features in objects and peer through time to determine significant details of their recent past. If you have the money and the connections, a broker can get what you want or tell you more about what you have.

BROKER

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
1	2	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
4 (5)	8	Cognition (Postcognition; Equipment: Concerning Object History Only +1)
2	2	Features (Eidetic Memory, Lightning Calculator, Speed Reading)
6	6	Gear (Object Collection)
1	1	Sixth Sense (Hidden Object Features)
5	5	Skill Group (Academic)
5	10	Skill Group (Business)
2	4	Skill Group (Social)
2	4	Skill Group (Street)
2	4	Skill Group (Technical)
	50	**TOTAL**

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PAGE 58

DEMON HUNTER

Page 200 – Demons abound on many Multiverse worlds, whether they arrived from the Prime World of Bazaroth or existed natively since the beginning of time. Demon hunters dedicate their lives to tracking down these vile creatures and destroying them, and consequently are skilled in many forms of combat. Most hunters are part of a larger organisation that documents demonic activities and supports the hunters in the field. Alone, a demon hunter is a worthy foe ... but in a team, they are a terrifying force.

DEMON HUNTER

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
2	2	Attack Mastery
5	5	Combat Technique (Select 5)
3	3	Connected (Demon Hunting Group)
1	1	Defence Mastery
2	2	Heightened Awareness
1	1	Immutable
	10	Item (20 Points; Various Armour, Weapons, Equipment)
1 (2)	3	Massive Damage (Targetted: Demons +1)
2	2	Mind Shield
1	3	Skill Group (Adventuring)
1	3	Skill Group (Detective)
1	3	Skill Group (Military)
1	2	Skill Group (Street)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Easily Distracted (Demon Lore)
1	-1	Nightmares (Demon Attacks)
	40	**TOTAL**

DETECTIVE

Page 190 – Detectives range from private investigators to police officers to brilliant child prodigies, and they can be found in both rural and urban settings. They often specialise in a particular area, such as supernatural or medical crimes, and work with a team of friends (such as a computer hacker, martial artist, or a spiritualist). When a crime is afoot, the detective is surely hot on the trail.

DETECTIVE

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
2	2	Attack Mastery
2	2	Combat Technique (Select 2)
2	2	Connected (Law Enforcement)
2	2	Gear (Detective Supplies)
1	1	Heightened Awareness
	5	Item (10 Points; Various Armour, Weapons, Equipment)
2	2	Ranged Attack (Select Weapon Type)
3	9	Skill Group (Detective)
1	3	Skill Group (Military)
1	2	Skill Group (Social)
2	4	Skill Group (Street)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Red Tape
	35	**TOTAL**

EXORCIST

Page 127 – Exorcists live to hunt and destroy the demonic forces that invade across dimensions to take up residence in people and objects. Connected in a global society to others with a similar calling, exorcists are elite warriors in the secret battle for the mortal souls of unsuspecting targets. Exorcists have diverse beliefs that power their abilities. Some ascribe their mystical talents to a god or higher power, others rely on natural magics to channel their energies, and a few simply believe that a focussed will can overcome demonic possession. Whatever the source of their strength, an exorcist's value cannot be understated when the monsters arrive.

GATE GUARDIAN

Page 207 – Some warriors who protect the world gates are selected to be part of an ancient order known as the Gate Guardians. Candidates are recruited across the Multiverse as replacements for senior members who become too old to serve the order well. The bond that a guardian has with their gryphon Companion is passed onto the new member as well, and together the new duo protect their assigned gates from invading forces and other dangers. A few guardians are stationed in several of the Prime Worlds, including Earth.

EXORCIST

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Soul Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Combat Technique (Judge Opponent)
3	3	Connected (Exorcist Organisation)
6	6	Energised
5	5	Exorcism (Area -1; Targets -3; Activation +2; Backlash: Becomes Possessed +1; Deplete +1)
2	2	Mind Shield
4	4	Skill Group (Academic)
2	6	Skill Group (Detective)
2	4	Skill Group (Street)
3	6	Unaffected (Source: Demonic Magic; Mind Control)
4 (-1)	8	Weapon: Soul Blast (Drain: Soul -3; Psychic -4; Exclusive: Demons +2)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Nightmares (Demon Attacks)
1	-2	Wanted (Demons)
	50	**TOTAL**

GATE GUARDIAN

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
1	2	Soul Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Attack Mastery
2	2	Combat Technique (Select 2)
8	32	Companion (Guardian Gryphon; 80 Points)
2	2	Heightened Awareness
	5	Item (10 Points; Various Armour and Weapons)
2	2	Ranged Attack (Select Weapon Type)
3	9	Skill Group (Adventuring)
2	2	Skill Group (Occupation: Local Protector)
	60	**TOTAL**

GUARDIAN GRYPHON

Size Rank 2: Huge (6 metres)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
9	18	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
7	14	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
6	Attack Combat Value (Unarmed 10)
6	Defence Combat Value (Unarmed 8; Ranged 10)
80	Health Points
50	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier (Unarmed 8)

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
4	8	Armour (AR 20)
2	2	Extra Arms
2 (3)	6	Flight (100 kph; Spread +1)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Sight 2)
2 (3)	6	Massive Damage (Focussed: Unarmed +1)
2	2	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
1	1	Melee Defence (Unarmed)
2	2	Ranged Defence (Personal)
2	2	Special Movement (Fast 2)
4	16	Superstrength
1 (2)	3	Telepathy (Potent -3; Single: Gate Guardians Only +4)
4	8	Weapon: Talons and Beak

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-6	Impaired Manipulation (Talons)
2	-6	Impaired Speech
2	-4	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	80	**TOTAL**

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GENERAL

Page 323 – A military force will degrade into a chaotic mess unless held in check by its superiors and the individual at the top of this hierarchy is the general. Fit, intelligent, wise, and determined, an army general is the driving force behind their troop's actions. Most of the general's leadership is channelled through the chain of command – down to their colonels, then other officers, then the troops – but they can also inspire soldiers directly when required. During their long years of service, generals usually form close bonds with one or more high-ranking assets in various government organisations.

GENERAL

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
2	4	Mind Stat
1	2	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
6	24	Companion (Government Agent; 60 Points)
6	6	Connected (Military Organisation)
4	4	Inspire
5	15	Skill Group (Military)
2	4	Skill Group (Social)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Red Tape
	60	**TOTAL**

HACKTIVIST

Page 26 – These digital vigilantes make subversive use of computers networks to promote a political agenda or effect social change. They are exceptionally talented at breaking through encrypted networks of governments and large corporations to mine data, which has resulted in labels of "cyberterrorists" and "national traitors". Hacktivists rarely leave digital signatures of their network intrusions unless they are choosing to send a specific message about their presence, which is why so few talented individuals are ever tracked and apprehended.

HACKTIVIST

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
3	6	Mind Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
2	2	Connected (Anonymous Organisation)
5 (9)	10	Data Access (Worldwide; Activation +2; Concentration +1; Equipment: Computer and Connectivity +1)
4	4	Gear (Digital Equipment)
5	10	Skill Group (Street)
6	12	Skill Group (Technical)
2	6	Wealth
	50	**TOTAL**

HOT ROD

Page 96 – Hot rods feel the need – the need for speed! Leading as fast a life as they can, they live with one foot on the accelerator and the other on the clutch. The telltale sign of a hot rod is their set of wheels; it is a badge of honour, a trusted friend, and a symbol of freedom. Not content to just drive it, the hot rod has enough mechanical prowess to fix and enhance it. Since top-notch parts cost money, however, the hot rod constantly searches for the next job to fund their passion. Cocky and self-assured, hot rods have a certain magnetism that they carry with them even when they get out of their cars and off their motorcycles.

HOT ROD

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	1	Features (Appearance)
	15	Item (Vehicle; 30 Points)
5	5	Skill Group (Occupation: Driver/Mechanic)
1	3	Skill Group (Adventuring)
1	2	Skill Group (Social)
3	6	Skill Group (Street)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Wanted (Law Enforcement)
	35	**TOTAL**

IDOL

Below – The idol is a celebrity on their way up, commanding the adoration of possibly millions of fans. They might be a singer, model, actor, or news announcer. Idols do not have to be normal humans either – this template can be combined with other Templates for a more unusual character. A "magical idol" is the alter ego of pure hearted pre-teen girls who have the power to transform into glamorous teenage stars, while "virtual idols" are androids or computer programs designed as the ultimate media commodity.



IDOL

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
3	6	Minions (Assistants)
2	2	Features (Appearance 2, Famous, Perfect Pitch)
4	4	Inspire
2	4	Skill Group (Business)
4	4	Skill Group (Occupation: Entertainer)
4	12	Wealth
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-2	Fragile
2	-4	Hounded
1	-1	Inept Attack
1	-1	Inept Defence
1	-3	Reduced Damage
	25	**TOTAL**

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MAGICAL GIRL/GUY

Page 274 – The forces of light sometimes choose the least likely candidate to be their defender. Enter the magical girl (or magical guy) – once a normal person with normal worries like snagging a romantic partner, preparing for exams, or just eating the right food. With the appearance of a strange little creature (often from the Prime World of Aradia), however, everything changed. Now wielding a strange artefact that grants weird and wonderful powers, the magical girl is charged with protecting friends, family, and often the rest of humanity. Oddly, nobody seems to recognise her under the costume.

MAGICAL GIRL/GUY

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
3	6	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	1	Alternate Identity (Normal Human)
3	12	Companion (Animal Companion; 30 Points)
2	2	Exorcism
2	2	Features (Animal Empathy, Appearance: Cute, Famous)
2	2	Inspire
	5	Item (10 Points; Various Weapons)
3 (4)	9	Massive Damage (Targetted: Select Type +1)
4	4	Mind Shield
4	4	Mulligan
2	2	Ranged Attack (Magical Attacks)
2	2	Ranged Defence (Personal)
1	1	Sixth Sense (Select One Aspect)
1	3	Skill Group (Action: Select One)
6 (4)	12	Weapon: Magical Attack (Area -1; Drain: Soul -3; Range -2; Selective -1; Targets -2; Charges +2; Deplete +2; Maximum +3)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Easily Distracted (One Trigger)
2	-2	Nemesis (One Enemy)
2	-4	Skeleton in the Closet (Magical Identity)
	60	**TOTAL**

MARTIAL ARTIST

Page 169 – The idea that one's own body is the best weapon is central to the martial artist's philosophy – and they make a very convincing argument when they break a wall with their bare fists. Products of rigorous training and discipline, martial artists are masters of unarmed combat, achieving with punches and kicks what others need weapons to do. A martial artist is protective of their abilities, treasuring their master's teachings and upholding the honour of their fighting school against any opponent (especially other martial artists). Their mystical awareness also allows them to fight under the most adverse conditions.

MARTIAL ARTIST

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
10	10	Combat Technique (Blind Fighting, Brutal, Concealment, Deflection, Judge Opponent, Lethal Blow, Lightning Reflexes 2, Reflection, Tournament Encyclopaedia: Martial Arts)
1	4	Extra Actions
2	2	Heightened Awareness
1	1	Jumping
2 (3)	6	Massive Damage (Focussed: Unarmed +1)
4	4	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
4	4	Melee Defence (Unarmed)
3	3	Ranged Defence (Personal)
2	6	Skill Group (Adventuring)
1	2	Skill Group (Street)
4	4	Tough
3	6	Weapon: Finishing Move
2	4	Weapon: Ki Blast (Drain: Body -1; Enervation -1; Range -1; Backblast +2; Hands +1)
	60	**TOTAL**

MASTER THIEF

Page 178 – With years of dedicated experience and a larger-than-life reputation that matches their greatest heists, the master thief is the foil to dozens of law enforcement agencies around the world ... and possibly across the Multiverse! Smooth, suave, and wealthy, such masters of subterfuge live a luxurious lifestyle at the expense of those unfortunate enough to become a target. When hired to undertake a job, though, these consummate professionals can become deadly serious.

MASTER THIEF

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
1	2	Mind Stat
2	4	Soul Stat

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Features (Ambidexterity, Appearance, Eidetic Memory)
3	3	Gear (Thieving Supplies)
5	5	Heightened Awareness
3	3	Mulligan
3	9	Wealth
2	2	Skill Group (Academic)
1	3	Skill Group (Adventuring)
3	6	Skill Group (Social)
3	6	Skill Group (Street)
2	4	Skill Group (Technical)
5	5	Skill Group (Occupation: Thief)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-2	Nemesis (One Enemy)
2	-4	Wanted (Law Enforcement)
	50	TOTAL

MECHA PILOT

Right – The field of battle looks very different when commanding a large, powerful war machine. Mecha pilots know that they are the elite of any army, even if they stumbled upon their mecha by accident or they were saddled with the responsibility to pilot it. The mecha pilot's life is marked by growth both as a warrior and a person, learning the controls of a great machine at the same time that they try to understand the basics of human behaviour. Although the mecha gives meaning to the mecha pilot's existence, they must learn that real life starts once they leave their cockpits.

MECHA PILOT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Attack Mastery
3	3	Connected (Select One)
	30	Item (Mecha and Equipment; 60 Points)
2 (3)	6	Massive Damage (Focussed: Mecha Weapons +1)
2	2	Ranged Attack (Mecha Weapons)
1	1	Ranged Defence (Mecha Movement)
3	3	Skill Group (Occupation: Mecha Pilot)
1	3	Skill Group (Military)
	50	TOTAL



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MERCENARY

Page 147 – Mercenaries are elite soldiers for hire that are prepared to undertake nearly any mission for a hefty fee or a cause they support. By taking the laws into their own hands, mercs have placed themselves on the fringes of society. Although many people see the mercenary as a crazed force of destruction, there are as many cool and silent strangers as there are trigger-happy psychos.

MERCENARY

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
3	3	Attack Mastery
4	4	Combat Technique (Weapons Encyclopaedia + Select 3 Others)
2	2	Defence Mastery
3	3	Gear (Various Weapons and Equipment)
3	3	Heightened Awareness
2	6	Skill Group (Adventuring)
1	2	Skill Group (Business)
1	3	Skill Group (Military)
1	2	Skill Group (Social)
2	4	Skill Group (Street)
1	2	Skill Group (Technical)
3	9	Wealth
	45	**TOTAL**

NINJA

Page 188 – Ninja, wrapped in mystery and shadow, have haunted the sleep of the powerful for centuries. As the heirs to an ancestral tradition, the ninja know a great variety of mystical secrets and guard them with great zeal from outsiders. The veil of secrecy they foster makes ordinary people believe them to be legends ... and they would not have it any other way. A fearful reality clothed in myth, ninja fight for many purposes. Some are ruthless assassins for hire while, at the other extreme, they can also be like knights errant, serving justice against tyrants and striking from anonymity.

NINJA

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
3	3	Attack Mastery
8	8	Combat Technique (Blind Fighting, Blind Shooting, Brutal, Concealment, Lethal Blow, Lightning Reflexes 2, Portable Armoury)
2	2	Defence Mastery
1	10	Dynamic Powers (Ninja Tricks)
2	2	Gear (Ninja Supplies)
2	2	Heightened Awareness
	10	Item (Weapons; 20 Points)
2	2	Jumping
2 (3)	6	Massive Damage (Focussed: Unarmed +1)
3	9	Skill Group (Adventuring)
2	2	Skill Group (Artistic)
2	4	Skill Group (Street)
6	6	Special Movement (Balance, Cat-Like, Fast, Light-Footed, Untrackable, Wall-Bouncing)
2	2	Tough
	70	**TOTAL**

PET MONSTER TRAINER

Right – Born of magic, technology, or simply part of the natural order of things, there are monsters roaming around. Some of them can be disgustingly cute and docile even if they can unleash fire from their eyes and shoot bolts of lightning from their ... tails. Pet monster trainers take it upon themselves to tame these creatures and use their potentially deadly natural weapons towards some particular goal – perhaps as silly as gladiatorial badge collecting. A few trainers organise tournaments to see who can work better with their pet and cultivate its innate abilities. Others prefer to pursue personal gain but are opposed by other trainers who wish to defend their friends.

PET MONSTER TRAINER

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	1	Combat Technique (Tournament Encyclopaedia: Pet Monster Duels)
2	8	Companion (Novice Pet Monster; 20 Points)
4	16	Companion (Veteran Pet Monster; 40 Points)
2	2	Inspire
2	2	Skill Group (Occupation: Pet Monster Trainer)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Nemesis (One Rival)
	30	**TOTAL**



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PIRATE

Page 107 – Not all pirates have an eye patch, a peg leg, and a talking parrot (but some certainly do)! The modern pirate can come from a variety of backgrounds, whether it's the seafaring stereotype, a planet-hopping space pirate, or an urban business privateer. During the course of their adventures, pirates have learned numerous ways to inspire their allies, run afoul of the local laws, received one or more distinguishing physical marks, and earned a nemesis that dogs them at inopportune moments.

PIRATE

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
1	2	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
2	2	Attack Mastery
1	1	Defence Mastery
1	1	Enemy Attack (Select Enemy)
1	1	Features (Appearance)
3	3	Inspire
	5	Item (Various Equipment; 10 Points)
1	1	Mulligan
3	9	Skill Group (Adventuring)
3	6	Skill Group (Street)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-2	Easily Distracted (Select One)
1	-1	Marked (Select One)
1	-1	Nemesis (Select One)
1	-2	Wanted (Law Enforcement)
	25	**TOTAL**

SAMURAI

Page 198 – The Bushido Code demands that the samurai hold themselves to the ideals of justice, courage, benevolence, politeness, veracity, honour, and loyalty. They are virtuous warriors that seek perfection at the edge of their blades, tempering their spirits in the heat of combat and honing their values at the same time that they sharpen their swords. They enter combat with aplomb and deadly calm, hesitating to unsheathe their katana because once they do, they are honour-bound to finish a battle for good or ill. The most experienced samurai can seemingly infuse their souls into their weapons and cut through steel and stone as if they were paper.

SAMURAI

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
4	4	Combat Technique (Blind Fighting, Judge Opponent, Lethal Blow, Lightning Reflexes)
1	4	Extra Actions
1	1	Gear (Family Heirlooms)
4	4	Heightened Awareness
3	3	Inspire
	10	Item (Weapons; 20 Points)
3 (4)	9	Massive Damage (Focussed: Sword +1)
4	4	Melee Attack (Sword)
4	4	Melee Defence (Sword)
2	2	Ranged Defence (Personal)
2	6	Skill Group (Adventuring)
2	2	Skill Group (Artistic)
2	2	Skill Group (Domestic)
2	4	Skill Group (Social)
1	1	Special Movement (Zen Direction)
2	2	Tough
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Social Fault (Bushido Code)
	65	**TOTAL**

SENTAI MEMBER

Below – Sentai members are team players to the core and cannot conceive fighting for truth and justice without a group of companions. Assuming the role of follower or teammate, the sentai member charges into combat trusting the strength of the group and using all of their skill and power towards the good of all. Some people believe that sentai members lack intelligence and need to colour-code their uniforms to tell each other apart, but sentai members wear their colours with pride as a mark of their own individuality while at the same time identifying their allegiance to their team.



SENTAI MEMBER

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1 (2)	1	Attack Mastery (Environmental: Near Teammates +1)
1 (2)	1	Defence Mastery (Environmental: Near Teammates +1)
	10	Item (Pool of Shared Mecha Equipment; 20 Points)
1 (3)	3	Massive Damage (Environmental: Near Teammates +1; Focussed: Choose Weapon +1)
2 (3)	2	Mulligan (Environmental: Near Teammates +1)
1	1	Sixth Sense (Danger to Teammates)
1	3	Skill Group (Adventuring)
5	10	Weapon: Combined Attack (Piercing -1; Range -1; Stun -1; Assisted: Teammates +2; Emotional +1)
	35	**TOTAL**

SHADOW WARRIOR

Right – The title of Shadow Warrior is granted to the chosen few champions (primarily from Earth) who have achieved such incredible harmony with their sword that they move beyond the physical world and can pass through solid objects. These combatants do not carry the samurai's baggage of honour, preferring to wage battle against anyone they deem a threat to their goals ... whatever they may be. Few can withstand the ferocity of a shadow warrior focussed on victory, and even fewer can understand the motivations that drive them in battle.

SHADOW WARRIOR

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Body Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
5	15	Change State
1	1	Immutable
	10	Item (Weapons; 20 Points)
5 (6)	15	Massive Damage (Focussed: Sword +1)
6	6	Melee Attack (Sword)
6	6	Melee Defence (Sword)
2	10	Regeneration
1	2	Skill Group (Street)
6	6	Tough
	75	**TOTAL**

STUDENT

Page 21 – Normal life is adventure enough without the need to go gallivanting after lost treasures or joining armies at the unlikely age of 14. A student's life is full of little challenges like weird teachers, romantic rivals, and cultural festivals. The friends they make tend to get them into trouble with gangs, psychopathic fiancées, and crazy relatives ... not to mention obnoxious aliens, awakened demons, or erstwhile goddesses. Moreover, they must still make some time to prepare for finals and the dreaded college entrance exams. For all their normality, students seem surrounded by a special aura of oddness.

STUDENT

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Soul Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
1	1	Connected (Select One)
4	4	Energised
1	1	Features (Animal Empathy)
1	1	Heightened Awareness
3	3	Mulligan
2	2	Skill Group (Occupation: Student)
	20	Unknown Power (30 Points)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-1	Magnet
	35	**TOTAL**



TECH GENIUS

Page 150 – There are people who enjoy the blessings of technology, but it is the tech genius who creates their own. Gifted with an innate understanding of the science behind technology, these individuals can assemble the most astounding machines known to the world ... and a lot of the unknown ones, too. Their focus on the world of machines distances a tech genius from others, often creating odd personality quirks. The most creative are unjustly labelled as "mad scientists" by everyone around them, but they know they can be patient. Praise will come when their next invention starts working.

TECH GENIUS

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
2	4	Mind Stat
LEVEL	**POINTS**	**ATTRIBUTE**
5	5	Gear (Various Equipment)
2	2	Features (Eidetic Memory, Lightning Calculator, Speed Reading)
	10	Item (Powerful Gadgets; 20 Points)
2 (6)	20	Power Flux (Primal: Super Inventor -2; Activation +3; Equipment: Workshop +3)
1	2	Skill Group (Business)
6	12	Skill Group (Technical)
	55	**TOTAL**

WARDER

Page 258 – A warder has learned the mystical art of inscribing temporary marks or wards on flesh to imbue specific combat abilities on themselves and others. With careful dedication to their inscriptions (and the spending of Character Points during character creation or advancement!), the wards can be made permanent and infuse power into the warder. Consequently, a warder's body is usually covered from head to toe in various impact and absorption wards that provide numerous enhancements in battle. Warders travel the lands searching for new sources of unique wards to unlock even more powerful endowments.

WARDER

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	10	Absorption (Health Points)
1	2	Augmented (Body Stat; Source: Ward Magic)
2	2	Combat Technique (Brutal; Lethal Blow)
3	3	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell, Vision)
4	4	Immutable
3	3	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
2	2	Melee Defence (Unarmed)
2 (4)	20	Power Flux (Major: Combat -1; Duration -3; Activation: Wards +3; Unique Limiter: No Fluxing Attributes of Wards +3)
2	6	Skill Group (Adventuring)
2 (4)	6	Transfer (Specific Attribute: Power Flux +2)
5	5	Tough
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
3	-3	Marked (Whole Body)
	60	**TOTAL**



CHAPTER 4
STATS

ASSIGN STATS

Stats (short for Statistics) are numerical assignments that reflect your character's basic capabilities, with higher Stat values indicating an advanced level of accomplishment or achievement. More than any other values in BESM, Stats are a measure of your character's core competencies and provide the foundation upon which everything else is built. Dice rolls are compared to your Stats when you want your character to perform challenging tasks in BESM (page 176) to help determine if their attempt was successful or not.

BESM uses three Stats to represent your character's abilities: Body, Mind, and Soul. You may use some or all of your remaining Character Points when assigning Stat values to your character, and then add these values to any that were included in their assigned Race or Class Templates (page 36).

BODY STAT

The Body Stat measures the physical aspects of your character. This includes overall health, strength, endurance, quickness, rate of healing, manual dexterity, and ability to withstand damage and trauma. A character with a high Body is in good physical shape.

Body values of nonhumans or super-powered humans may still centre on a human average (unless they are also superhumanly fit). Superhuman or subhuman strength, durability, and speed are all represented by specific Attributes and Defects. For example, an out-of-shape giant might have a lower Body than an athletic teenage boy but the giant's size may be reflected by other Attributes such as Armour (page 80), Superstrength (page 124), and Tough (page 128).

MIND STAT

The Mind Stat represents your character's mental prowess and aptitude. High values indicate intelligent and witty characters who are keen critical thinkers and strategists. Your character's Mind value does not necessarily correlate with breadth of training and depth of experience, though. Your character can be highly skilled in a particular area, yet still have only an average Mind Stat.

SOUL STAT

The Soul Stat represents luck, willpower, determination, and spirit, and can also represent psychic ability, empathy, and unity with nature. A high rating in the Soul Stat helps your character focus their personal energies or life force to go beyond their normal limits and to fuel special abilities. High Soul values are a good way to represent the many anime heroes whose main trait is their strength of character, pure heart, or innocence.

BALANCED ABILITIES

Stats in BESM assume as a baseline that characters are well-rounded, balanced individuals at their core. For example, people who we would describe as athletic would have Body Stats that reflects their physicality across a wide range of Body aspects (strength, dexterity, flexibility, toughness, etc.). Similarly, characters who are pulled towards more academic pursuits would have Mind Stats that reflect their brain power through multiple avenues (intelligence, wit, critical thinking, perception, etc.). Creating balanced anime and manga characters in BESM is simplified by only having three Stats that cover the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of your creation.

If one or more of your character's Stats result from enhancements (such as technology, magic, paranormal training, divine intervention, etc.) rather than natural expressions of experience and talent, their aptitude can either be explained through the assignment of the Augmented Attribute (page 80) or another more targetted Attribute. A few examples of such specialised Attributes that fall outside the Stat range and can refine your character concept for excelling in one particular area include:

- Superstrength for a strength aspect (Body)
- Resilient for an immune system aspect (Body)
- Special Movement: Fast for a running speed aspect (Body)
- Tough for a damage resistant aspect (Body)
- Heightened Awareness for a perception aspect (Mind)
- Feature: Eidetic Memory for a memory aspect (Mind)
- Mind Shield for a mental resistant aspect (Mind)
- Sixth Sense for an intuition aspect (Mind)
- Exorcism for an indomitable will aspect (Soul)
- Mulligan for a luck aspect (Soul)
- Inspire for a determination aspect (Soul)
- Skill Group (select appropriate one) for composure aspect (Soul)

READING STAT VALUES

For most games, Stats range from 1 to 12. A value of 4 in a Stat is the adult human average. Ratings under 4 indicate decreasing competency and ratings over 4 designate increasing superiority. For example, a person of average build, high intelligence, and above average determination might have Body 4, Mind 7, and Soul 5.

Under normal circumstances, characters and living beings must have a value of at least 1 in each Stat. Furthermore, GMs are encouraged to require a solid character concept before allowing Stats values to exceed 9 in games focussed on regular humans, since these represent capabilities well beyond the human norm.

Table-06: Stat Values shows the Character Points required to assign each Stat Value.

STAT COSTS

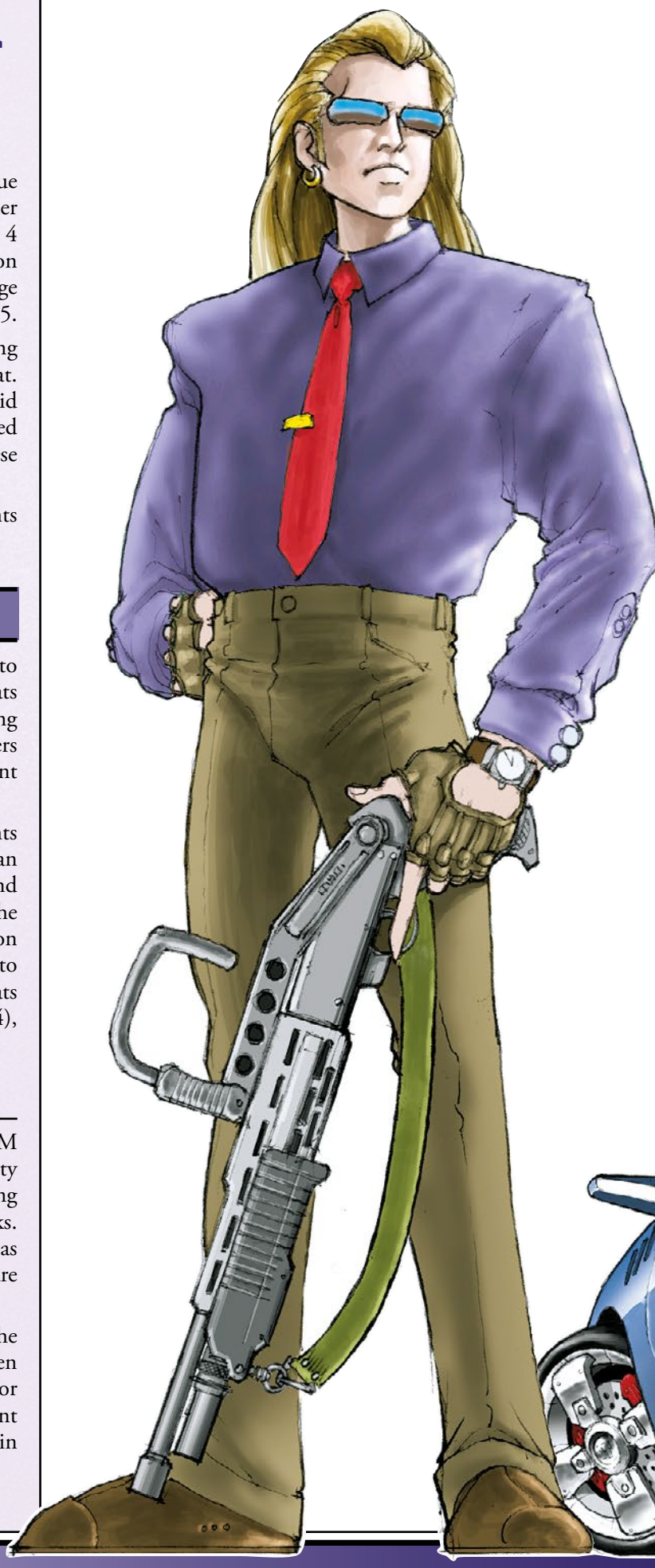
Your starting Character Points (page 22) are used to purchase Stats; how you allocate your character's Stats are your choice. Stats start with a value of 0 and raising a Stat by one costs 2 Character Points. Most characters should have values of at least 4 each in Stat if you want to represent at least average human capabilities.

You may wish to not spend all your Character Points assigning Stats, since any Points not spent on Stats can be used to acquire very useful Templates (page 30) and Attributes (page 74) for your character. Of course, the GM may choose to set an absolute ceiling or floor on the number of Character Points that can be allocated to Stats to ensure characters have a balance between Stats and Attributes (see benchmarks in Table-02, page 24), or they may leave this decision to your discretion.

▶ STATS ABOVE 12

Stats above 12 are not recommended for most BESM games, since they tend to take away from the humanity of the characters involved, and can also be unbalancing by making it trivially easy to succeed at most tasks. Attributes that affect a single aspect of a Stat – such as Mulligan, Superstrength, Superspeed, or Tough – are usually a better way to represent superhuman ability.

Nevertheless, if it is vital to a character concept, the Game Master may choose to design an NPC or even permit a player character to have a Stat above 12. For example, a character who is defined as the most brilliant scientist in the solar system might have Mind Stat in the 13-18 range.



EXPENSIVE SUPERHUMAN STATS

To reflect their rarity, Stats above 12 are more expensive than normal. Each +1 to a Stat over 12 costs 4 Character Points instead of the normal 2 Character Points. For example, Body 13 costs 28 Points, Body 14 costs 32 Points, Body 15 costs 36 Points, etc.

▶ SHORTCOMING DEFECT

As mentioned previously, with only three game Stats representing all physical, mental, and spiritual capacity, BESM is obviously ideal for well-rounded, balanced characters. But what if your character is weak in a particular area of a Stat? For example, your character might be strong, healthy, and durable, but rather clumsy. Similarly, they could be intelligent and witty, but forgetful; or strong-willed and composed, but unlucky.

On page 165, you will find the Shortcoming Defect, which was designed specifically to further divide the Stats into subcategories as best fits the vision for your character. Although you do not normally select Defects for your character until Chapter 7, you may wish to become familiar with the Shortcoming Defect earlier if you need to define your character with specific precision.

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STAT VALUES

Stat Value	Point Cost	Rank Description
1	2	Highly inept; infant
2	4	Significantly below adult human; child
3	6	Below adult human average; teenager
4	8	Adult human average
5	10	Above adult human average
6	12	Significantly above adult human average
7	14	Highly capable
8	16	Extremely capable
9	18	Best in the local region
10	20	Best in the country or large region
11	22	World-class ability
12	24	Maximum normal human potential
13+	28+	Special; see text for details

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CHAPTER 5
ATTRIBUTES

05: ATTRIBUTES

ADD ATTRIBUTES

The three Stats from Chapter 4 represent your character's baseline abilities. More specialised aspects of your character are known as Attributes, which can represent innate talents, learned skills, racial traits, magical spells, psychic abilities, superpowers, technological enhancements, and more. Attributes can also be added to equipment (known as Items; page 196) or entities (known as Companions; page 226) to create personal gear, artefacts, vehicles, pets, and assistants.

The amount of flexibility and customisation provided by Attributes is immense. You will probably spend more time pouring over the Attribute options for your character than on any other stage of character creation. Take your time and communicate frequently with your Game Master if you have any questions about how specific Attributes will work in your upcoming game or if the GM has any suggestions to help guide your character development.

ATTRIBUTE LEVELS

Since you have already spent points to assign Stats and Templates to your character, you can now use your remaining Character Points to acquire Attributes. There are dozens of different Character Attributes, each representing a particular talent or special ability. Think carefully about the balance between a few high-Level Attributes and a large number of low-Level Attributes. Most Attributes are rated with a Level from 1 to 6, but with GM permission and a solid character concept, you can create your character with Attribute Levels beyond this threshold. In particular, the GM may allow players to assign Attributes with one or more Enhancements (see below) exceeding the Level 6 limit since the effective functioning Level of the Attribute is lower. The Attribute descriptions may note when it may be appropriate for a character to exceed the recommended Level 6 limit.

Attributes added to your character are combined with those gained through Templates (page 30). For example, the Android Battle-Maid Template (page 37) includes 1 Level of the Superstrength Attribute. If you now add an additional 3 Levels of Superstrength to your character, their Superstrength is raised to Level 4 (1+3=4).

ENHANCEMENTS AND LIMITERS

Some Attributes include options to modify the functionality of your character's ability beyond the baseline description. Modifications that provide an additional benefit or otherwise improve the Attribute are called Enhancements while those that impose a drawback or weaken the impact of the Attribute are called Limiters. Each Enhancement or Limiter can usually be assigned only once to your character's Attribute unless noted in the description, although some modifiers are sufficiently beneficial or detrimental that they count for two, three, or even four slots.

Adding an Enhancement to an Attribute does not change its Character Point cost but it does decrease the effective functioning Level of the Attribute by 1 Level. For example, the Force Field Attribute (page 94) costs 4 Points/Level and provides an Armour Rating of 10/Level. Adding the Force Field Attribute at Level 4 therefore costs 16 Points and provides a substantial 40 Armour Rating.



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If you add the Blocks Teleport Enhancement to ensure no one will magically bypass your Force Field, the Attribute still costs 16 Points (since it is still a Level 4 Attribute) but functions 1 Level lower due to the extra advantage. Consequently, your Force Field now functions as though it was Level 3 that provides your character with a 30 Armour Rating. Enhancements cannot be added if the effective Level of the Attribute would drop below Level 1.

Conversely, adding a Limiter to an Attribute increases the effective functioning Level by 1 Level. For example, a Level 1 Force Field costs 4 Points and provides a 10 Armour Rating. If you add the Both Directions Limiter that stops weapons from firing both into and out of the Force Field, the Attribute still costs 4 Points (since it is still a Level 1 Attribute) but functions at 1 Level higher as though it was a Level 2 Attribute that provides a 20 Armour Rating.

The Level effectiveness of adding Enhancements and Limiters is cumulative. Expanding on the above examples, a Level 3 Force Field that costs 12 Points and provides a 30 Armour Rating that has three Enhancements (Blocks Teleport, Offensive, and Regenerating) and two Limiters (Both Directions and Internal) functions as though it was a Level 2 Force Field with an Armour Rating of 20. The Enhancements decrease the effectiveness by 3 Levels and the Limiters increase the effectiveness by 2 Levels; cumulatively, the effectiveness of the Attribute is decreased by 1 Level (Level 2 instead of Level 3).

LEVEL DESIGNATIONS

When reading a Template or character entry, an effective Level of an Attribute may be provided in parentheses after the actual assigned Attribute Level if it has Enhancements and Limiters. For example, the Asrai Race Template (page 39) lists her Dynamic Powers Level as "3 (2)", which means the actual Attribute Level is 3 (and costs 30 Points), but the effective Level is 2 (to account for the Major Category Enhancement of Natural Magic to the Dynamic Powers).

▶ GREATER ATTRIBUTE CUSTOMISATION

Although only a few Attributes include a list of Enhancements and Limiters within their descriptions, you can modify most Attributes to align with your specific vision for your character's abilities. Chapter 6: Customisation (page 144) details the additional Enhancements and Limiters that you can add to your character's Attributes as desired.

ATTRIBUTE ENTRIES

Attributes in BESM are described in a templated format using the following entries:

NAME

This is the Attribute's name. Players are encouraged to make up their own names to further personalise Attributes where appropriate (Weapons in particular benefit from custom names). Put the descriptive name after the Attribute name – for example Weapon: Raging Dragon Punch, for a ki-powered super blow.

ATTRIBUTE COST

Cost is the Attribute cost in Points per Level. If the cost entry lists "Variable", it is explained in the Attribute's description.

RELEVANT STAT

Some Attributes list a relevant Stat. This is the Stat most often used should a Stat or Skill roll to control or otherwise use the Attribute be needed (page 88). If there is usually no need to make Stat rolls to use the Attribute, this entry is omitted.

DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

This text describes the Attribute's game effects and any special rules. A few Attributes (Weapon, for example) also have a list of special variations (Enhancements and Limiters, page 145) that can be assigned to the Attribute during character creation.

▶ ATTRIBUTE TABLE

Table-07: Character Attributes conveniently summarises the cost and page reference for all Attributes.

HUMAN ATTRIBUTES

The entire range of Attributes include abilities that a normal human could have as well as some that are most appropriate for more-than-human characters or equipment. An asterisk (*) next to an Attribute name on Table-07 indicates a "human Attribute" – one that is reasonable for an ordinary human to possess (at least at lower Levels). If all player characters are supposed to be humans or human-level concepts, the GM may choose to limit characters to choosing only these Attributes. Exceptions to this guideline include Attributes that are built into Items or non-human Companions, or ones that are included in templates the GM has approved.

For completely normal humans, the following maximum Levels are recommended (if other than Level 6): Extra Actions Level 2, Heightened Awareness Level 4, Heightened Senses Level 2, Massive Damage Level 3, and Tough Level 4.

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CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

Attribute Name	Level Cost	Page
Absorption	5	78
Alternate Form	4	78
Alternate Identity	1	80
Armour	2	80
Attack Mastery *	1	80
Augmented	2	80
Capacity	1	81
Change State	3	82
Cognition	2	82
Combat Technique *	1	83
Companion *	4	84
Connected *	1	84
Control Environment	1	86
Conversion	3	86
Data Access	2	88
Defence Mastery *	1	88
Dimension Walk	5	89
Dynamic Powers	10	89
Elasticity	1	90
Enemy Attack *	1	90
Enemy Defence *	1	90
Energised *	1	91
Exorcism	1	91
Extra Actions *	4	92
Extra Arms	1	92
Features *	1	92
Flight	3	94
Force Field	4	94
Gear *	1	95
Ground Speed	1	96
Healing	1	96
Heightened Awareness *	1	97
Heightened Senses	1	97
Illusion	1	97
Immunity	3	98
Immutable	1	99
Inspire *	1	99
Item *	Half	101
Jumping	1	101
Massive Damage *	3	102
Melee Attack *	1	102
Melee Defence *	1	103
Merge	4	103

Attribute Name	Level Cost	Page
Metamorphosis	2	106
Mimic	2	107
Mind Control	5	108
Mind Shield *	1	109
Minions *	2	109
Mulligan *	1	109
Nullify	5	110
Plant Control	1	110
Pocket Dimension	1	112
Portal	2	112
Power Flux	10	113
Power Variation	4	114
Projection	3	114
Ranged Attack *	1	116
Ranged Defence *	1	116
Regeneration	5	117
Reincarnation	2	117
Resilient	2	118
Sensory Block	1	119
Sixth Sense	1	119
Size Change	10	120
Skill Group *	1 / 2 / 3	120
Spaceflight	1	121
Special Movement	1	122
Summon Creatures	2	122
Supersense	1	123
Superspeed	3	123
Superstrength	4	124
Swarm	2	124
Telekinesis	4	125
Telepathy	3	126
Teleport	3	127
Tough *	1	128
Transfer	3	128
Transmute	3	128
Tunnelling	1	129
Unaffected	2	129
Undetectable	2	131
Unique Attribute *	1-10	131
Unknown Power *	Variable	123
Water Speed	1	132
Wealth *	3	132
Weapon	2	132

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ABSORPTION

Attribute Cost: 5 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

Absorption represents a character who grows stronger as they absorb kinetic energy of attacks and physical impacts. Certain types of demons, elementals, giant monsters, and artefacts most frequently have this quality. The character can absorb up to 5 damage received from physical attacks (such as guns, swords, punches, energy blasts, falling, etc.) for each Level of this Attribute and change them into the same number of Health or Energy Points before damage is inflicted (Health Points or Energy Points must be selected when this Attribute is first assigned). The absorbed Points are added to the character's current total immediately, which may temporarily raise the total above its normal maximum (no more than twice the normal level) until the end of the combat encounter or dramatic scene. Damage stopped by the character's Armour (page 80) or Force Field (page 94) Attributes cannot be absorbed, nor can damage can both be absorbed and converted (by the Conversion Attribute; page 86) at the same time.

Absorption does not apply to damage from non-physical or complex attacks, including Weapons with the following Custom Enhancements: Continuing, Drain (Any), Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, Psychic, Stun, and Tangle.

Level 1	Up to 5 damage is absorbed
Level 2	Up to 10 damage is absorbed
Level 3	Up to 15 damage is absorbed
Level 4	Up to 20 damage is absorbed
Level 5	Up to 25 damage is absorbed
Level 6	Up to 30 damage is absorbed

ALTERNATE FORM

Attribute Cost: 4 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

A character with Alternate Form can instantaneously transform into one other specific form that is determined during character creation and approved by the Game Master. Once selected, the choice of form cannot usually be altered. Alternate Form allows the character to possess a radically different body shape and size than their normal human form, and exhibit exotic physical features as well. See the Metamorphosis Attribute (page 106) for a variation on Alternate Form.

If a character only has a single, permanent, non-human form, this Attribute should not be applied. Instead, the character should acquire the relevant Attributes and Defects that best represent the form's capabilities. A character with several different Alternate Forms should assign this Attribute multiple times. The Attributes gained in the character's Alternate Form obviously cannot be Dependent (page 149) upon the Alternate Form Attribute. Different Alternate Forms can be built with different Attribute Levels as well. To create a character with unlimited additional forms, see the Dynamic Powers (page 89) or Power Flux (page 113) Attributes with a Shapeshifting speciality.

The extra form is built from 5 Character Points for each Alternate Form Level, which can be used to acquire Attributes and Defects for the form. The character retains all the Stat Values, Attribute Levels, Enhancements, Limiters, and Defects associated with their regular body while in the new form; the newly acquired Attributes and Defects add to the character's normal form. If the character's Stats are modified by the Augmented Attribute (page 80) or Shortcoming Defect (page 164), the Derived Values (page 168) should be recalculated as necessary. Unless the GM indicates otherwise, normal clothing becomes part of the Alternate Form as well. An Alternate Form may only be assigned if some disadvantage (social or otherwise) exists that make staying in form all the time a significant disadvantage.

REDUCING ATTRIBUTES

Although the Attributes of an Alternate Form usually add on top of the character's base Attributes, sometimes the character will need to "sell off" a few Attribute Levels to best match the player's concept. In this case, elimination of Levels returns Points to the character, which can be allocated to other Attributes.

For example, a character with Level 4 Alternate Form can add +20 Points to create the new form. If the character wants to reduce their Superstrength Attribute from their normal Level 2 to a new Level 0 (because the Alternate Form does not possess Superstrength) the character gains back the 8 Points spent on Superstrength. Consequently, the Level 4 Alternate Form now gives the character +26 Points (20 + 6 = 26) to spend on new Attributes. The converse is true for "buying off" a character's normal Defects when using the Alternate Form, as the Points available for the character's Alternate Form are lowered appropriately by the Point reduction associated with the Defect.

If a character needs to reduce more than two Attributes in their Alternate Form, or the secondary form is intended to be weaker than the character's primary form (such as a powerful vampire changing into a bat), it is probably better to assign the Metamorphosis Attribute (page 106) instead of Alternate Form. Furthermore, if two or more players wish to create a combined and merged form for their characters, it is better to assign the Merge Attribute (page 103).

▶ SAMPLE ALTERNATE FORMS

The examples below suggest some Attributes that may be appropriate for specific Alternate Forms, but the GM can modify them if desired; it's a non-exhaustive list. For forms that simply represent different states of matter (such as liquid, gaseous, or incorporeal), the Change State Attribute (page 82) may be a better option.

ANIMAL FORMS

Many nature-based shapeshifters have one or more animal-hybrid forms. Suggested Attributes: any that are relevant to the specific animal form, such as Armour, Attack Mastery, Features, Flight, Heightened Senses, Jumping, Special Movement, Tough, Tunnelling.

ELEMENTAL/CHEMICAL FORMS

This option covers a wide range of possible forms, including: acid, base, gold, granite, ice, mercury, water, sulphur, synthetic drugs, etc. Suggested Attributes: Armour, Augmented, Change State, Elasticity, Extra Arms, Ground Speed, Massive Damage, Regeneration, Resilient, Special Movement, Superstrength, Swarm, Tough, Water Speed, Weapon.

FLAME FORM

The character is composed of fire and can ignite flammable objects on contact. Any person near the character may suffer burn damage as well. Suggested Attributes (which may be optimised for heat and fire): Armour, Control Environment, Conversion, Flight, Force Field, Weapon (with Aura).

MELDING FORM

The character can meld into any inanimate object and perceive nearby events as though they are still human. Once merged, the character cannot be harmed unless the object is damaged. Suggested Attributes: Change State, Resilient, Teleport (within the melded object), Tunnelling.

MASS DECREASE

The character can decrease their density. Suggested Attributes: Change State, Special Movement. Suggested Defects: Fragile.

MASS INCREASE

The character can increase their density. Suggested Attributes: Armour, Massive Damage, Tough.

SUPERHUMAN OR MAGICAL FORM

Some characters like magical girls and heroes maintain dual human/super identities and do not have access to all of their Attributes until transformed. Suggested Attributes: any that are relevant to character's other form, often including Armour, Augmented, Extra Actions, and Weapon.

TWO-DIMENSIONAL FORM

A 2D character has height and width, but not depth. They can squeeze through the spaces between atoms and are completely invisible when viewed from the side. An entire new two-dimensional universe may be waiting to be explored by such a character. Suggested Attributes: Pocket Dimension, Resilient, Special Movement, Superspeed.

Level 1	Alternate Form is built with up to 5 Points
Level 2	Alternate Form is built with 6-10 Points
Level 3	Alternate Form is built with 11-15 Points
Level 4	Alternate Form is built with 16-20 Points
Level 5	Alternate Form is built with 21-25 Points
Level 6	Alternate Form is built with 26-30 Points



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ALTERNATE IDENTITY

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

This is a much less powerful version of the Alternate Form Attribute. The character has one Alternate Identity per Level, which may vary in race, gender, looks, age, or even status.

Each Alternate Identity will have a different physical description, but the character's Attributes do not change. The only exceptions to this are any Attributes that are tied to their looks and any relationships that differ from one identity to the other, such as Features (Appearance) and possibly Connected, as well as the Defects Hounded, Marked, Nemesis, Significant Other, Unappealing, and Wanted.

Alternate Identity can also be assigned to Items that perform similar cosmetic changes, such as a car that (while keeping most of its Attributes) can change its apparent model, paint job, and license, or magical cosplay clothes that can change into a series of different alternate outfits.

To have a character who can change into any identity at will, without changing their Attributes, assign Dynamic Powers (page 89) with a minor "identity changing" specialty at Level 1 for 10 Points and this will cover someone who can assume any form they wish. Still another way to change apparent identity is with the Illusion (page 97) or Projection (page 114) Attributes.

Level 1 One Alternate Identity
Level 2 Two Alternate Identities
Level 3 Three Alternate Identities
Level 4 Four Alternate Identities
Level 5 Five Alternate Identities
Level 6 Six Alternate Identities

ARMOUR

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

The Armour Attribute can represent actual armoured plates or simply skin or clothing that is highly resistant to damage. It is most often found on combat vehicles, cyborgs and androids, giant monsters, and powerful beings. Each Level of the Attribute provides an Armour Rating of 5. The damage inflicted by a successful attack on the character is reduced by their Armour Rating. For example, if an attack inflicted 30 damage and the character had Armour Level 2 (Armour Rating 10) they would only lose 20 Health Points. For a high-tech or magical alternative to Armour, see the Force Field Attribute (page 94).

▶ LIMITER

EMPHASISED

The Armour is focussed against a particular uncommon attack form such as fire, cold, acid, electricity, etc. It provides double Armour Rating protection against the particular attack form but only half protection against other sources of damage. A character can acquire both Emphasised Armour and ordinary Armour, even at different Levels, by assigning the Armour Attribute twice.

OPTIMISED

Counts as 2 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 2 Levels). Similar to the Emphasised Limiter with double Armour Rating protection but the Armour provides no protection against sources of damage other than the uncommon attack form.

Level 1 Armour Rating = 5
Level 2 Armour Rating = 10
Level 3 Armour Rating = 15
Level 4 Armour Rating = 20
Level 5 Armour Rating = 25
Level 6 Armour Rating = 30

ATTACK MASTERY

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Attack Mastery denotes either an innate killer instinct or the character's intimate knowledge of a wide range of offensive combat techniques covering all aspects of armed and unarmed encounters. The Melee Attack (page 189) and Ranged Attack (page 116) Attributes lets a character specialise with particular weapons or specific styles, but Attack Mastery allows a character to pick up any weapon (or use none at all) and be dangerously proficient. See page 169 for more information on the Attack Combat Value.

Level 1 Attack Combat Value increases by 1
Level 2 Attack Combat Value increases by 2
Level 3 Attack Combat Value increases by 3
Level 4 Attack Combat Value increases by 4
Level 5 Attack Combat Value increases by 5
Level 6 Attack Combat Value increases by 6

AUGMENTED

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

This Attribute is useful when a character should have one or more high Stat Values, but the player wants to indicate that the elevated Stats are derived from one particular source (such as magic or technology

or supernatural ability) instead of being part of the character's innate nature. When this Attribute is assigned, the player must specify which of the three Stats is being Augmented (you can assign Augmented up to three times if desired to cover all three Stats). In most instances, assigning Character Points to the Augmented Attribute or to the Stat directly results in the same benefit: a character with a Body of 9 and a character with a Body of 4 with the Augmented (Body Stat) Attribute at Level 5 both have an effective Body Stat of 9.

Level 1	Selected Stat is increased by 1 Stat Value
Level 2	Selected Stat is increased by 2 Stat Values
Level 3	Selected Stat is increased by 3 Stat Values
Level 4	Selected Stat is increased by 4 Stat Values
Level 5	Selected Stat is increased by 5 Stat Values
Level 6	Selected Stat is increased by 6 Stat Values

CAPACITY

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

The Capacity Attribute is a very common technological feature for vehicle and location Items, but it can also be applied to a character large enough to carry people or cargo inside itself, such as a giant mecha, living starship, or a god with a city in its body. This capacity is in addition to the one person that is assumed to fit normally inside a robot, vehicle, or location. The Capacity Attribute can be assigned any number of times for Items, but unless the Item is supernaturally bigger inside than it is outside, you should also assign an appropriate level of the Awkward Size Defect (page 156).

Note that the Capacity Attribute assumes operation of the Item in a normal gravity environment. For ships and other Items in space away from the stress of a significant gravity source, the cargo mass carrying capacity should be multiplied by 1,000.

Level 1	Can carry an extra 1 person (200 kg)
Level 2	Can carry +2 people (500 kg)
Level 3	Can carry +5 people (1 tonne)
Level 4	Can carry +10 people (2 tonnes)
Level 5	Can carry +25 people (5 tonnes)
Level 6	Can carry +50 people (10 tonnes)
Level 7	Can carry +100 people (25 tonnes)
Level 8	Can carry +250 people (50 tonnes)
Level 9	Can carry +500 people (100 tonnes)
Level 10	Can carry +1,000 people (200 tonnes)
Level 11+	Double capacity of the previous Level



CHANGE STATE

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

The character can change into a different state of matter – liquid, gaseous, incorporeal, or energy – for either a short duration (one dramatic scene) or long duration (several hours), depending on the Attribute Level. A character normally requires a full combat round (several seconds) to change between states. When this Attribute is activated, the character's body lacks full solidarity of a regular form and they don't have the same physical requirements (such as breathing, sleeping, eating, etc.) as a normal solid form. Examples of anime characters that may change into such forms include spirits, elementals, monsters, undead, and wizards. This Attribute can be assigned multiple times to represent a character with more than one non-solid state.

LIQUID STATE

A character in liquid state is amorphous and may resemble a mobile puddle of water. The character is material (but not solid) and can flow through cracks in walls, under doors, through pipes, etc. They cannot pick up solid objects and can only exert the pushing force of a gentle wave. Most physical attacks inflict one-half normal damage to the character (rounded down), but attacks that cover a wide area may inflict full damage. The character moves at normal speed over ground and can also move through other liquids at a similar speed (if the character has the Water Speed Attribute, then those higher speeds are possible).

GASEOUS STATE

This state is less substantial than a liquid state. The character cannot pick up solid objects and can only exert the pushing force of a gentle wind. Most physical attacks inflict only one-fifth normal damage (rounded down) but attacks that cover a wide area may inflict full damage. The character can move through air at their normal ground speed (if the character has the Flight Attribute, then those higher speeds are possible).

INCORPOREAL STATE

An Incorporeal state is without physical substance (for example, a ghost or living shadow). The character can pass through walls, walk on air or water, and perform similar ghost-like feats, though the character is still visible as normal. All physical attacks harmlessly pass through the character while incorporeal, while non-physical attacks (such as mental attacks) retain their full effects.

ENERGY STATE

An Energy state is similar to an incorporeal state, except the character does not have a normal visible form and only extraordinary non-physical attacks can affect them (at the GM's discretion). The energy can be represented by a force such as electricity, radiation, light, or sound, or can represent a more abstract state of energy such as emotion, data, dream, or one of many other possibilities.

▶ ENHANCEMENT

QUICK CHANGE

Rather than requiring several seconds, the character can change states nearly instantaneously and may attempt to do so as part of a defence roll against an incoming attack. This Enhancement grants the character minor edge (page 182) on the defence roll and success indicates the character changed states instead of evading the attack (which may avoid or reduce damage, depending on the state and nature of the attack).

- Level 1 The character can change into a liquid state for a short duration
- Level 2 The character can change into a liquid state for a long duration
- Level 3 The character can change into a gaseous state for a short duration
- Level 4 The character can change into a gaseous state for a long duration
- Level 5 The character can change into an incorporeal state for a short duration
- Level 6 The character can change into an incorporeal state for a long duration
- Level 7 The character can change into an energy state for a short duration
- Level 8 The character can change into an energy state for a long duration

COGNITION

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

The Character has either Precognition (the ability to access potential visions of the future) or Postcognition (the ability to see true events of the past). The player must decide which of these two abilities their character has during character creation or assign this Attribute twice to represent both abilities. Note that Cognition is a GM-defined Attribute, which allows them to limit its application and scope within the game.

- Level 1 The character can see up to a few seconds into the future or up to 1 minute into the past
- Level 2 The character can see up to 1 minute into the future or up to 1 hour into the past
- Level 3 The character can see up to 10 minutes into the future or up to 1 day into the past

Level 4	The character can see up to 1 hour into the future or up to 1 week into the past
Level 5	The character can see up to 1 day into the future or up to 1 month into the past
Level 6	The character can see up to 1 week into the future or up to 1 year into the past

COMBAT TECHNIQUE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

The Combat Technique Attribute allows a character to perform astounding feats with a variety of weapons or while unarmed. Each Level gives the character one combat technique; the Game Master will determine if a specific manoeuvre can be assigned multiple times. The GM and players are encouraged to develop their own combat techniques as well.

BLIND FIGHTING

The character can fight hand-to-hand in poor light or absolute darkness, or against an invisible opponent, just as effectively as under normal conditions.

BLIND SHOOTING

The character can attack with ranged weapons in poor light or absolute darkness, or against an invisible opponent just as effectively as under normal conditions.

BRUTAL

Normally, unarmed attacks are a free Weapon Attribute at Level 0 (see page 134) for all characters. One assignment of this Technique increases unarmed attacks to a Weapon Level 1.

CONCEALMENT

The character has an uncanny ability to conceal hand-held objects about their person. As long as the character has something to hide the equipment (even if it only long hair or a light robe) the character's weapons will not be noticed by anything short of an actual physical search.

DEFLECTION

With a successful defence roll (page 192), the character can stand their ground and deflect a ranged attack away harmlessly instead of dodging or blocking the incoming attack. This Technique is often used to impress or intimidate the opponent, or when the character does not want to give ground. The GM may decide that some types of attacks cannot be deflected.

EXTENDED RANGE

Characters with this Technique can double the distances when using ranged weapons (see Range Enhancement, page 147).

JUDGE OPPONENT

The character can judge their opponent's approximate Combat Value and weapon ability from the foe's attitude and posture even without actually seeing them fight. Additionally, the character can accurately estimate the opponent's remaining Health Points. For both of these advantages, the GM should provide descriptive indications such as "your enemy is much better than you are with a sword, but if you connect a few times with your fireball blast, it will drop him," rather than saying "the enemy's Attack Combat Value is 7, with a Melee Attack (Sword) Attribute Level 2, and he has 60 Health Points remaining."

LETHAL BLOW

Normally, unarmed attacks inflict Stun damage (see the Weapon Enhancement Stun, page 141). A character with this Technique inflicts normal damage with unarmed attacks instead.

LIGHTNING REFLEXES

The character reacts quickly in combat and frequently outmanoeuvres opponents. One assignment of this technique gives the character a minor edge on Initiative rolls while two assignments gives the character a major edge (see page 182).

PORTABLE ARMOURY

The character will always have easy access to any weapon required for a particular task, including illegal weapons and accessories not available to the general public. The actual weapons and accessories must still be acquired via the Gear (page 95) or Item (page 101) Attributes, but remarkably, the character can access them whenever they need instead of being forced to return to where they are normally stored. Characters with Portable Armoury may also make field modifications on their weapons, switching Features such as laser sights or scopes in a single round.

REFLECTION

If the character has the Deflection Combat Technique (see above) and makes both a successful Deflection defence and a successful attack roll (which uses up their next attack action), they can reflect a ranged attack towards any target within range (including the attacker) without damaging the blocking object. This Reflection is treated as a normal attack against the target. The GM may decide that some types of attacks cannot be reflected or can only be reflected under certain circumstances (such as requiring a mirrored surface to reflect a laser attack).

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TOURNAMENT ENCYCLOPAEDIA

The character has the ability to recall the vital statistics and important quirks of practically all opponents that have participated in one type of tournament (player's choice; possibilities include martial arts, magical, giant robot, pet monster duels, jousting, grand melee, etc.). This includes, but is not limited to: age, physical fitness, famous victories or defeats, approximate skill, any special abilities, etc. Characters without this ability will only have general information on such opponents unless they are particularly famous or well-known.

WEAPONS ENCYCLOPAEDIA

The character has the ability to recall the vital statistics and important quirks of practically all known commercially available weapons. This includes its general level of reliability as well as all vital statistics, such as material composition, manufacturer, ammunition capacity, calibre, model year, possible outfitted accessories, etc. Characters without this ability will only have such information on weapons they actually own or use regularly.

- Level 1 One Combat Technique
- Level 2 Two Combat Techniques
- Level 3 Three Combat Techniques
- Level 4 Four Combat Techniques
- Level 5 Five Combat Techniques
- Level 6 Six Combat Techniques

COMPANION

Attribute Cost: 4 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

The character has a sidekick or assistant that perhaps serves as a familiar, pet, associate, close friend, general ally, or bodyguard. Examples of Companions could include: a talking animal familiar, a robot, a high school flunky, a sorcerer's apprentice, a direwolf, a bound demon or ghost, a sentient starship, a dedicated henchman, a vampire's enslaved thrall, a magical stuffed toy or doll, etc. Review Chapter 11 (page 226) for Companion examples.

Companions are NPCs controlled by the GM, but they will normally be loyal to their masters, and work toward that character's best interests (as they perceive them). Nevertheless, they should have their own personalities and may occasionally get into trouble of their own. Fellow player characters are not Companions, nor are NPC friends, patrons, or allies who have the own agendas or interests but occasionally help the player characters.

A Companion is created in the same way as a character and is built on 10 Character Points for every Level of the Companion Attribute (Companions with negative Character Point totals fall under Level 1 of this Attribute). GM permission is required to create a Companion who has a Character Point total greater than the character they serve. Some relationship-based Defects (such as Hounded, Obligated, Red Tape, etc.) should not be assigned due to the Companion's innate role as a character's subordinate. To have multiple Companions, a character must either assign the Companion Attribute several times (at the same or different Levels) or instead assign the Minions Attribute (page 109) for a large number of relatively weak allies.

- Level 1 Companion has up to 10 Character Points
- Level 2 Companion has 11-20 Character Points
- Level 3 Companion has 21-30 Character Points
- Level 4 Companion has 31-40 Character Points
- Level 5 Companion has 41-50 Character Points
- Level 6 Companion has 51-60 Character Points

CONNECTED

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

The Connected Attribute represents a character's close relationship with a hierarchy of some sort that grants them access to resources, respect, and privileges. Examples of such organisations include governments, powerful corporations, military units, feudal systems, organised crime rings, secret guilds and societies, and some religions.

The organisation selected should have moderate power within the game setting and the GM and player should discuss the proposed organisation before gameplay begins to ensure they are both on the same page regarding the organisation's scope and importance. Connected should not be assigned if the selected organisation will not have a meaningful impact on the game and only makes appearances infrequently.

Connected is a relatively inexpensive Attribute because the benefits the connection provides always comes with strings attached. The character must follow the goals of the organisation in order to gain the use of its resources. The other members are assumed to be loyal to the organisation itself, not the Connected character. Followers with personal loyalty to the character are better represented by Companion (page 84) and Minions (page 109) Attributes, while resources that belong directly to the character are represented by Item (page 101) and Wealth (page 132) Attributes. These Attributes can blend with one another, of course. For example, the Prime Minister of Japan could have both a high Connected Attribute (representing their status and access to resources) as well as a number of Companions (those individuals personally devoted to the character, for whatever reason).

For campaigns in which all players belong to the same organisation that is central to the game (such as a secret society or crew of a galactic freighter company), the GM may decide that the Connected Attribute is not required. Consequently, this Attribute is optional; the GM may prefer to treat organisation membership as a background detail instead.

Since Connected measures absolute power that a particular position grants, many smaller organisations will only have a few Levels. A club or small business, for example, will usually have no more than three Levels.

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

SIGNIFICANT POWER

The organisation to which the character is connected has significantly more influence within the game setting rather than just one with moderate power. In a high school comedy game, for example, the school's autocratic student council might wield significant power (while in most settings it would be a completely trivial organisation and wouldn't need the Connected Attribute).

GREAT POWER

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The organisation to which the character is connected has an important and diverse role within the game setting and provides the character with much larger advantages than one with only moderate power. For example, a criminal organisation like the Yakuza could be considered to have great power in a modern-day urban Japan setting but merely moderate power in a game about mystical demonologists.

CONNECTED IN THE MULTIVERSE

Groups to which characters could be Connected in the Anime Multiverse (page 308) include:

Aradia – Council of Aeons, College of Emissaries,

Bazaroth – The Infernal King's court

Cathedral – Galactic Trade Authority, The Fusion, Taj Kehal

Enid – Neo-Logos, League of Arcologies, Global Alliance

Ikaris – Alchemist's Guild, College of Harpers, Seraphic Knights

Imago – Global Economic Oversight, Typhon, Omniversal Nexus Entertainment, Exodynamics, Monad, Spectrum Heavy Industries

Level 1	Associated. Examples include a private or corporal in the army, an ordinary police officer, a Mafia connected guy, the class rep on a student council, or a junior employee in a corporation.
Level 2	Respected. Examples include the boss of a small business, the head of a student council, a Yakuza soldier or Mafia wiseguy, a sergeant in the army, a knight's squire, a police detective, a respected employee in a corporation, or the sheriff or priest of a small town.
Level 3	Modest Authority. Examples include a lieutenant in the army, a junior executive in a large corporation, the mayor of a small town, a city councillor in a big city, a poor knight, an abbot of a monastery, or the deputy chief of police in a large police department.
Level 4	Local Authority. Examples include a Mafia Captain, a departmental vice-president in a corporation, a knight with lands and followers, a junior congressional representative, or a middle-ranking army officer, such as a company commander (captain or major).
Level 5	Regional Authority. Examples include a senior congressional representative, an army colonel in command of a regiment-sized force, a big-city mayor, a country baron, or a popular regional religious leader ... all of which can exercise power over a sizeable area.
Level 6	Provincial Authority. Examples include a senior vice-president in a corporation, a US senator, or a high-ranking army officer such as an army brigade or a divisional commander, the boss of a state-wide crime syndicate, or the major nobles or courtiers in a small kingdom.
Level 7	National Authority. Examples include the president of a small nation, the king of a medieval kingdom, a senior member of the government in a powerful nation (such as grand vizier, secretary of defence, or the governor of a major US state or an imperial province).
Level 8	International Authority. Examples include the leader of a powerful nation or a hierarchical world religion (such as the President of the United States or the Pope).
Level 9	Planetary Authority. Examples include the ruler of the entire "known world" or planet, or senior members of the government or military in a multi-world power, such as admiral of the star fleet.
Level 10	Extraplanetary Authority. Examples include the ruler of multi-world nation whose boundaries extend to other planets or even other dimensions.

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CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

The character can initiate minor influence in a surrounding 10-metre area over environmental conditions such as light, darkness, heat, cold, humidity, sound, smell, specific weather conditions, etc. Creating a particular zone of environmental control requires a general action (page 189). The effect normally lasts for up to one minute or dramatic scene.

The control is not sufficient to inflict significant damage on individuals or objects within the area of influence unless the target is particularly susceptible to damage from that environment (such as delicate plants dying from cold air, or a vampire with a sensitivity to bright light). For damaging environmental effects, the character should acquire the Weapon Attribute (page 132) with a Dependent Limiter (page 149) for the Control Environment Attribute. For a much more versatile influence over the environment (such as full weather control) see the Dynamic Powers (page 89) or Power Flux (page 113) Attributes.

Level 1 Influence over one environment
Level 2 Influence over two environments
Level 3 Influence over three environments
Level 4 Influence over four environments
Level 5 Influence over five environments
Level 6 Influence over six environments

CONVERSION

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

A character with this Attribute temporarily gains new abilities after suffering damage. Martial artists who can only deploy their most powerful "finishing moves" after they are on the ropes sometimes possess this ability. It is also often applicable to super robots, or powerful alien or demonic monsters that simply feed on the energies of beams, bullets, magic, or other attacks; unless the right attack form is used, they will simply keep getting stronger.

A character with this Attribute still loses Health Points from damaging attacks (such as guns, swords, punches, energy blasts, or falls), but taking damage also grants additional Character Points that they can temporarily assign to Attributes. Character Points can be accumulated between attacks or combat rounds. The gained Character Points can only be assigned to Attributes the character already possesses and not new Attributes.

Damage cannot both be converted and absorbed (by the Absorption Attribute, page 78) at the same time. Conversion has no effect on attacks which inflict no actual damage (such as unarmed attacks with Weapon Level 0) and is not effective against other offensive Attribute, such as Metamorphosis (page 106) or Mind Control (page 108). Consequently, damage blocked by the character's Armour and Force Field Attributes cannot be converted because no damage was inflicted. In addition, Stun damage (page 141) or the extra damage from Continuing Weapons (page 135) cannot be converted. The extra Character Points gained through combat dissipate shortly after the current battle has finished or before the next dramatic scene (GM's discretion). The maximum number of extra Character Points gained during one scene – even after damage from multiple attacks has been converted – equals one half the character's normal Character Point total.

At each Level, the character gains 1 temporary Character Point for every 10 damage received from each single attack (round down). Most often, characters use these Points to enhance the following Attributes: Armour, Extra Actions, Force Field, Massive Damage, Regeneration, Weapon, and Superstrength. Conversion cannot normally be used to increase Stats (even through the Augmented Attribute) or acquire the Tough Attribute (see Absorption to increase the character's Health Points).

For example, a character with Level 3 Conversion gains 3 Character Points for every 10 damage received. If an enemy blasted the character with a weapon that inflicts 40 damage, the character's Health Points would reduce by 40, but they would gain 12 temporary Character Points (40 ÷ 10 = 4, 4 x 3 = 12). If the character possessed Superstrength at Level 2, they could raise it by 3 Levels immediately (since 12 Character Points ÷ 4 Points/Level for Superstrength = +3 Levels).

With GM permission, Conversion may be designed to convert forms of energy into Character Points, rather than converting damage. Examples of energy include: sound, light, radiation, mass, heat, and others. The progression of the Attribute under these conditions must be discussed with the GM.

Level 1 The character gains 1 temporary Character Point for every 10 damage
Level 2 The character gains 2 temporary Character Points for every 10 damage
Level 3 The character gains 3 temporary Character Points for every 10 damage
Level 4 The character gains 4 temporary Character Points for every 10 damage
Level 5 The character gains 5 temporary Character Points for every 10 damage
Level 6 The character gains 6 temporary Character Points for every 10 damage


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DATA ACCESS

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

With a successful Mind Stat check, characters with this Attribute can access, read, and understand data from all computers or Silicon Age technology in the surrounding area. The Attribute Level determines the maximum area in which the computers can be scanned. To read multiple computers over a network, the area Level must be high enough to encompass the target computers. Since this Attribute can be a very powerful tool in a campaign, the GM and players should ensure it is used appropriately.

In a specific setting, Data Access can be modified to access organic information from the natural environment instead (such as in a high fantasy eco-magic campaign). Characters who can control (rather than just read) complex networks or robots should take the Mind Control Attribute (page 108). Characters who can control mechanical technology such as automobiles and construction equipment might instead possess the Telekinesis Attribute (page 125) with a specific Limiter. This will let them manipulate levers, steering wheels, and other components remotely.

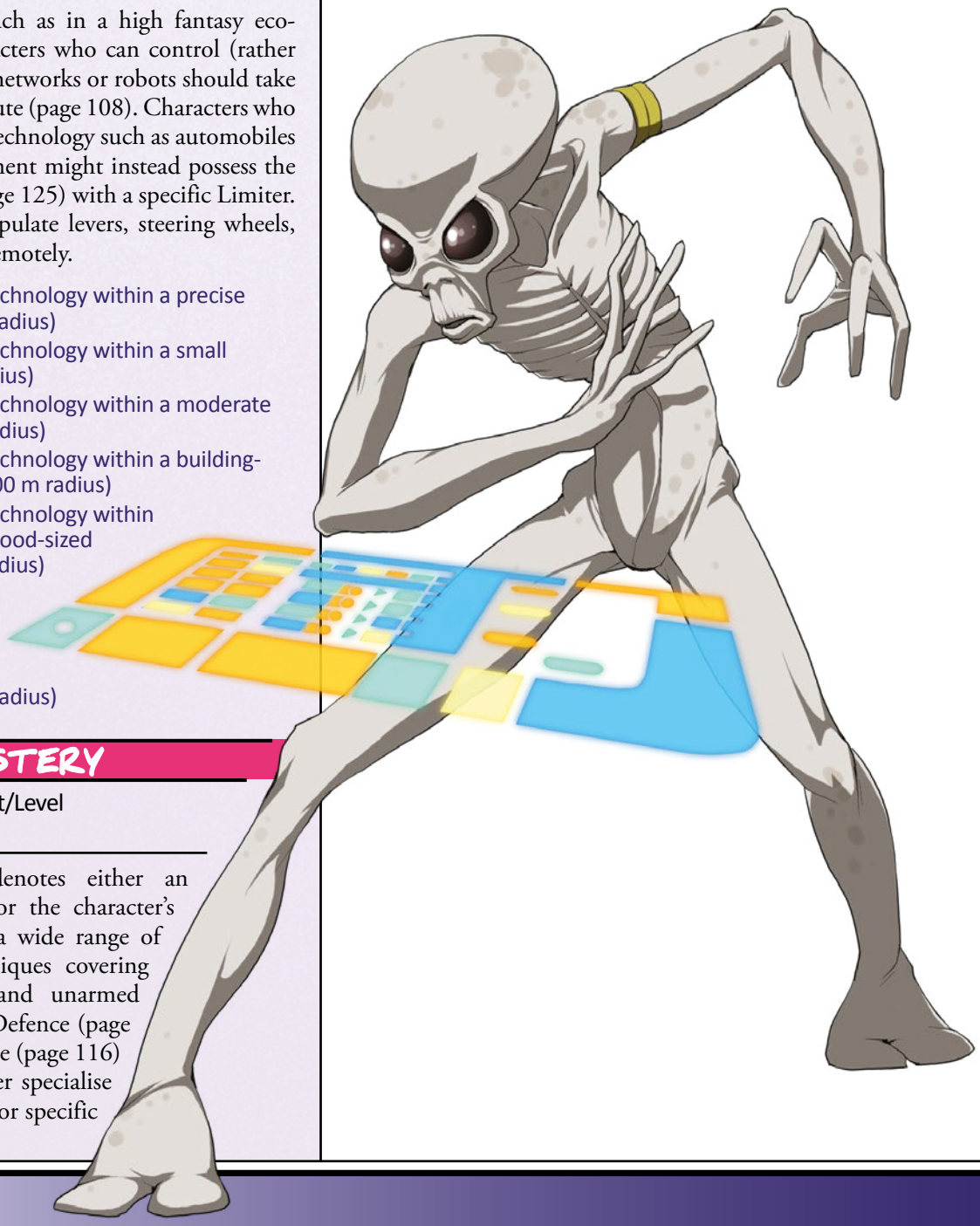
- Level 1 Can access technology within a precise area (10 cm radius)
- Level 2 Can access technology within a small area (1 m radius)
- Level 3 Can access technology within a moderate area (10 m radius)
- Level 4 Can access technology within a building-sized area (100 m radius)
- Level 5 Can access technology within a neighbourhood-sized area (1 km radius)
- Level 6 Can access technology within a city-sized area (10 km radius)

DEFENCE MASTERY

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Defence Mastery denotes either an innate danger instinct or the character's intimate knowledge of a wide range of defensive combat techniques covering all aspects of armed and unarmed encounters. The Melee Defence (page 103) and Ranged Defence (page 116) Attributes lets a character specialise with particular weapons or specific styles, but Defence Mastery allows a character to pick up any weapon (or use none at all) and still proficiently defend. See page 169 for more information on the Defence Combat Value.

- Level 1 Defence Combat Value increases by 1
- Level 2 Defence Combat Value increases by 2
- Level 3 Defence Combat Value increases by 3
- Level 4 Defence Combat Value increases by 4
- Level 5 Defence Combat Value increases by 5
- Level 6 Defence Combat Value increases by 6



DIMENSION WALK

Attribute Cost: 5 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

This Attribute is an adventurous way to visit other dimensions (see Portal, page 112, for an alternate method). The character can shift from one dimension to an "adjacent" dimension within a few minutes by walking (or riding, driving, flying, etc.) and reality gradually changes to match the new dimension's reality. Allies within the immediate area of the character can accompany them on the Dimension Walk as well.

The character's Level determines the degree that the details of the adjacent dimension can differ from their current dimension within those few minutes. For example, a character with Level 1 (insignificant changes) can quickly walk to a dimension with a green sky or one without shrimp. At Level 3 (minor changes), the dimension could have flying cars or neighbourhoods of talking animal citizens in downtown Tokyo. At Level 6 (major changes), the character could walk from an urban fantasy cyberpunk setting to a related high fantasy setting where technology is replaced by magical devices. At all Levels, characters can continue their Dimension Walk for extended periods (hours, days, or longer) to compound the changes to arrive at a dimension destination that is completely different from the origin dimension, with higher-Level characters completing their travels in less time than lower-Level characters.

The GM also determines what dimensions are "adjacent" in their setting. This could limit travel to a reality that is subtly different, or one that is connected metaphysically (as Earth is with the other Prime Worlds in the Anime Multiverse setting described briefly in this book and expanded upon in the BESM Multiverse sourcebook). Travel between specific identified dimensions with Dimension Walk is also possible, rather than simply shifting between generic destinations. This Attribute represents a powerful ability and players should ensure that it is compatible with the GM's concept of the campaign's metaphysics and cosmology before selecting it for their characters.

Level 1	The visited adjacent dimension can reflect insignificant changes
Level 2	The visited adjacent dimension can reflect specific changes
Level 3	The visited adjacent dimension can reflect minor changes
Level 4	The visited adjacent dimension can reflect moderate changes
Level 5	The visited adjacent dimension can reflect significant changes
Level 6	The visited adjacent dimension can reflect major changes

DYNAMIC POWERS

Attribute Cost: 10 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Variable

Dynamic Powers represents extensive control over a minor element, ideology, natural phenomenon, or sphere of influence. At low Levels, the character is an initiate, and can only effect small changes in the Attribute's influence. At high Levels, the character holds mastery over a particular realm, and has an intimate understanding of all things relating to the Attribute sphere. Examples of minor categories over which the character has control include: a classical element (water, fire, wind, earth), a limited concept or idea (lust, protection, charm, pride), a minor aspect of nature (temperature, friction, insects, sunlight, clouds, orbits, sea creatures), or a limited sphere of influence (keys, silence, cats, writing, guns, a small locality, nutrition).

Alternatively, rather than influencing a simple sphere of influence, the character might have minor control over a more descriptive realm such as "never being late", "always having the right amount of money", "people laugh with me, never at me", "always having the right outfit for the right situation", etc. While these event spheres are limited in scope, they also cross all Attribute boundaries when appropriate.

If the character makes a successful Stat roll (as determined by the GM; see Chapter 9: Action), they can manipulate aspects of the chosen area of influence. Since this is a story-driven Attribute, there are few definitive rules regarding what a character can and cannot do with a particular Attribute Level, with the Level progression being primarily descriptive in nature.

This is a very open-ended Attribute and should be discussed with the GM at length to determine the effects and limitations in their game. It is for advanced players and Game Masters only. Proper use of Dynamic Powers will not unbalance the game, but rather can provide many opportunities for character innovation. In general, the effect can vary depending on the need of the story and emotional intensity of the situation. Dynamic Powers should only be taken in campaigns where the GM is comfortable with a story-driven approach to the handling of powers. Game Masters who do not wish to adjudicate Dynamic Powers are free to prohibit it, or restrict it to a very low Level. Players and GMs who desire a more rigid (in terms of cost and effect) but still highly flexible Attribute should take the Power Flux Attribute (page 113). This will allow a character to produce similar dynamic effects within a specific game mechanical constraints.

ENHANCEMENTS

MAJOR CATEGORY

The character's influence extends to a major or large category that has a significant impact on the game instead of just a minor one. Examples include: a broad concept or idea (love, communication, travel, strength), a major aspect of nature (weather, magnetism, gravity, electricity, animals), or a broad sphere of influence (cities, computer data, health, necromancy, truth, manufacturing, fertility, weapons, drugs, shapeshifting).

PRIMAL CATEGORY

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The character's influence extends to a primal or universal category that has an extreme impact on the game instead of just a minor one. Examples include core concepts and primary spheres of influence such as Time, War, Death, Life, Earth, Stars, Thought, Magic, Force, Math, Self, Law, Chaos, Heaven, Hell, Dimensions, Dreams, and others.

- Level 1 The character exerts minimal control over their specific area
- Level 2 The character exerts minor control over their specific area
- Level 3 The character exerts moderate control over their specific area
- Level 4 The character exerts good control over their specific area
- Level 5 The character exerts significant control over their specific area
- Level 6 The character exerts major control over their specific area

ELASTICITY

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

The character can stretch or contort their limbs and/or body to a superhuman degree. This is most appropriate for giant robots with telescoping arms, sinuous demons or aliens, and rubbery creatures. Increased Levels not only provide greater flexibility, but also the control over fine manipulation (such as using a stretched finger to move specific tumbling mechanisms on a key lock). At high Levels, characters can squeeze under doors and through small holes, as well as mimic crude shapes. While stretched, the character receives a minor edge (page 182) on unarmed attack rolls. Extremely malleable characters who can contort their bodies into a virtually unlimited number of shapes to gain the benefits of other Attributes should acquire the Dynamic Powers (page 89) or Power Flux (page 113) Attributes instead.

- Level 1 Can stretch their body up to 10 cm
- Level 2 Can stretch their body up to 30 cm
- Level 3 Can stretch their body up to 1 m
- Level 4 Can stretch their body up to 3 m
- Level 5 Can stretch their body up to 10 m
- Level 6 Can stretch their body up to 30 m

ENEMY ATTACK

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

For each Level, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Attack Combat Value whenever they are battling specific types of opponents. Examples include: undead or extra-dimensional creatures, animals, a specific fantasy race (orcs, goblins, trolls, etc.), members of a specific organisation or gang, blood relatives, a specific nemesis, etc. Players are encouraged to develop a compelling backstory that explains why their character receives attack bonuses against these specific opponents. This bonus actually increases the Attack Combat Value when attacking the specific opponents, and thus relevant damage inflicted (page 193) is increased as well.

The benefits of Enemy Attack are cumulative with those provided by the Attack Mastery (page 80), Melee Attack (page 102) and Ranged Attack (page 116) Attributes in appropriate situations.

- Level 1 Attack Combat Value increases by 2 against specific opponents
- Level 2 Attack Combat Value increases by 4 against specific opponents
- Level 3 Attack Combat Value increases by 6 against specific opponents
- Level 4 Attack Combat Value increases by 8 against specific opponents
- Level 5 Attack Combat Value increases by 10 against specific opponents
- Level 6 Attack Combat Value increases by 12 against specific opponents

ENEMY DEFENCE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

For each Level, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Defence Combat Value whenever they are defending against specific types of opponents in combat. Examples include: undead or extra-dimensional creatures, animals, a specific fantasy race (orcs, goblins, trolls, etc.), members of a specific organisation or gang, blood relatives, a specific nemesis, etc. Players are encouraged to develop a compelling backstory that explains why their character receives defence bonuses against these specific opponents.

The benefits of Enemy Defence are cumulative with those provided by the Defence Mastery (page 88), Melee Defence (page 103) and Ranged Defence (page 116) Attributes in appropriate situations.

- Level 1 Defence Combat Value increases by 2 against specific opponents
- Level 2 Defence Combat Value increases by 4 against specific opponents
- Level 3 Defence Combat Value increases by 6 against specific opponents
- Level 4 Defence Combat Value increases by 8 against specific opponents
- Level 5 Defence Combat Value increases by 10 against specific opponents
- Level 6 Defence Combat Value increases by 12 against specific opponents

ENERGISED

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Possessing this Attribute increases the Energy Points of the character, allowing them to draw on a greater pool of internal reserves in times of need. This can often represent someone who has strong control over their ki or psychic energy, or simply extra stamina. See the Energy Points Derived Value (page 170) for information on Energy Points and their uses.

Energised normally adds directly to the character's Energy Points, but it can also be acquired with a Limiter that restricts its use – most often Activation (page 148), Assisted (page 148), Emotional (page 150), Equipment (page 150), or Environmental (page 150); others are only applicable with GM permission. If so, it forms a separate pool of Energy Points that are only usable in certain circumstances, and the player will have to keep track of these Energy Points separately. An example of an Energised Attribute with a Limiter would be a magical girl or martial artist who had Energised (Emotional) – in times of crisis, an extra pool of Energy Points is available. Another example would be a priest who had Energised (Environmental: Temple) and consequently could only access the extra Energy Points while inside the house of their god.

- Level 1 Energy Points increase by 10
- Level 2 Energy Points increase by 20
- Level 3 Energy Points increase by 30
- Level 4 Energy Points increase by 40
- Level 5 Energy Points increase by 50
- Level 6 Energy Points increase by 60

EXORCISM

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

A character with this Attribute knows how to perform or create rituals, charms, or spells, or has a psychic power, that is capable of releasing (through touch) the victims of supernatural entities, possession, or mind control. The Exorcism Attribute is often contained within Items such as holy relics as well. An exorcist may make only one attempt per combat or dramatic scene to release the victim from the undesired control.

Exorcism may be used to reverse the results of the Mind Control Attribute (page 108). The attempt is made against the subject of the control, but it is the controller (who may or may not be present) who resists. A successful exorcism releases a character who is subject to Mind Control. This requires an opposed roll between the exorcist's Soul Stat + twice the Exorcism Attribute Level and the controller's Soul Stat + Mind Control Attribute Level. If the exorcist wins, the target is freed. If they fail, the target remains under control and the mind controller is alerted that someone is attempting to interfere with that control.

Exorcism may also reverse the effects of the Metamorphosis Attribute (page 106) if the alteration is Soul-based (GM's discretion). If it is physical in nature, the Healing Attribute (page 96) is used instead. Use the same procedure as outlined for Mind Control: make an opposed roll between the exorcist's Soul Stat + twice the Exorcism Attribute Level and the source of the Metamorphosis's Soul Stat + Metamorphosis Level.

Some exorcists also have the power to actively dispel demons, undead, and other entities who are present in the flesh by draining energy from them, sending them home, or destroying them. This effect should instead be taken as the Weapon Attribute (page 132) with the Targetted (and often Psychic) Enhancements.

- Level 1 Add 2 to the character's Soul Stat roll when attempting an exorcism
- Level 2 Add 4 to the character's Soul Stat roll when attempting an exorcism
- Level 3 Add 6 to the character's Soul Stat roll when attempting an exorcism
- Level 4 Add 8 to the character's Soul Stat roll when attempting an exorcism
- Level 5 Add 10 to the character's Soul Stat roll when attempting an exorcism
- Level 6 Add 12 to the character's Soul Stat roll when attempting an exorcism

EXTRA ACTIONS

Attribute Cost: 4 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

This Attribute reflects the character's ability to act extremely rapidly. Each round, the character may make one or more additional attack or general actions – all of which occur on the character's Initiative. In addition, unless two or more opponents are very close together, attacks with no significant range must target the same person. Assigned to Items, Extra Actions can represent computer or other automatic assistance (or perhaps magical enhancements).

Level 1	Gains 1 additional action each round
Level 2	Gains 2 additional actions each round
Level 3	Gains 3 additional actions each round
Level 4	Gains 4 additional actions each round
Level 5	Gains 5 additional actions each round
Level 6	Gains 6 additional actions each round

EXTRA ARMS

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Unless indicated otherwise, all characters normally possess two arms and hands. By assigning this Attribute, the character can acquire more – usually because they are of non-human origin. An "arm" is defined loosely as an appendage that can reach out and manipulate objects. A trunk, tentacle, or prehensile tail can be an arm; an appendage that simply ends in a gun-barrel, melee weapon, stump, or tool mount is not. Legs with paws or feet are not usually considered to be arms unless the character has good manipulation ability when using them (such as the way chimpanzees can use their feet to grasp objects). Additional arms are useful for holding onto several things at once, but do not give extra attacks (for that ability, see Extra Actions Attribute on page 92).

Possessing only one arm or no arms is reflected by the Impaired Manipulation Defect (page 158).

Level 1	1 extra arm
Level 2	2 extra arms
Level 3	3-5 extra arms
Level 4	6-10 extra arms
Level 5	11-25 extra arms
Level 6	26-50 extra arms

FEATURES

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Variable

The character possesses various secondary abilities that grant useful, but minor, advantages. The GM may decide that some specific features are too trivial (in the context of the campaign) to require characters to purchase this Attribute to represent it. In particular, a character or Item need not acquire accessories that are purely descriptive, implied by other Attributes (such



as fins if you have Water Speed), or are ubiquitous given its size and other functions (like headlights or safety belts in a modern vehicle, or fur/feathers on an animal). GMs should take care not to make individual Features too important. If a Feature is so useful that every character needs it to thrive and survive, than it shouldn't be just a Feature.

See Table-08: Example Features for a partial list of Features that the GM may make available in your game. You are encouraged to create custom Features as well.

PERSONAL FEATURES

Features can also be used to grant various minor talents, such as eidetic memory, perfect pitch, the knowledge of foreign languages, or weather sense. Personal features of this sort may grant a minor edge (page 182) on Stat or Skill rolls in certain circumstances.

RACIAL FEATURES

Features possessed by non-humans can reflect various small biological advantages provided they are not covered by other Attributes. Examples of racial features include low-light vision (like a cat possesses, not the ability to see in total darkness), a pouch, light armour (with Armour Rating 1-4), etc. A wide range of other Attributes covers other more useful racial abilities and features such as wings (see Flight, page 94), fangs (see Weapon, page 132), and super hearing (see Heightened Senses, page 97). Highly useful abilities are best represented by Attributes and not Features.

TECHNOLOGICAL FEATURES

These are usually assigned to robots, androids, or cyborgs, or embodied in Items such as vehicles or hand-held gadgets. Examples include modern phone, personal computer, radar detector, tool kit, etc. Most technological Gear (page 95) can be represented as a single Feature with no other Attributes, though trivial or common Features need not be assigned.

FEATURES (APPEARANCE)

Characters may be reasonably attractive (or average, or mildly unattractive) at no Character Point cost. Features (Appearance) represents outstanding looks that will turn heads and influence reactions. This Feature may be further defined as beauty (engendering romantic attraction if so inclined) or cuteness (encouraging feelings of protectiveness). Appearance may be assigned multiple times indicates to represent heightened levels of extreme beauty or cuteness, with Appearance x3 usually representing world-class appeal.

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EXAMPLE FEATURES

Personal Features	Racial Features	Technological Features
Ambidexterity	360˚ Vision	Alarm System
Animal Empathy	Camouflage	Basic AI (0 Stats)
Appearance	Fluid Squirting	Camera
Auditory Discrimination	Gills	Communication Suite (Comms)
Breath/Heartbeat Control	Heat Regulation	Data Backup Auto System
Depth Awareness	Homing Instinct	Ejection Seat
Direction Sense	Light Armour (Armour Rating 1-4)	Emergency Lights/Siren
Eidetic Memory	Light Weaponry (5 Damage)	Fast Acceleration (for mecha)
Famous (Beneficial)	Long Tongue	Global Positioning System (GPS)
Foreign Language	Longevity	Gyrocompass
Hypermobility (Double-Jointed)	Low-Light Vision	Highly Manoeuvrable (for mecha)
Light Sleeper	Multiple Hearts	Identity Verifier
Lightning Calculator	Nictitating Membrane	Life Monitory Systems
Mimic Sound	Pouch	Luxurious Decor
Perfect Pitch	Retractable Claws	Modern Vehicle Tech Suite
Range Sense	Scent Glands	Naked Enhancement (see page 197)
Spacial Sense	Scentless	Radar Detector
Speed Reading	Sexual Duality	Revolving License Plate
Time Sense	Ultrasonic Communication	Smartphone
Weather Sense	Webbed Feet/Hands/Paws	Tool or Medical Kit

FEATURES (SMALLER ITEM)

Two extra Levels of this Feature should be assigned to small mecha and Items that are used in combat situations – small vehicles, tiny robots, spy hover-cams, small drone assistants, etc. For every Size Rank (page 157) the Item is below the default (Medium; Size 0), the Item must have +2 Levels of Features assigned (costing 2 Character Point), regardless how many other Features are assigned. Smaller Items have the advantage of being light and hard to notice and also make smaller targets in ranged combat.

For every Size Rank the target is smaller than the attacker, the attacker receives a -2 penalty to hit with a ranged weapon. Conversely, for every Size Rank the target is larger than the attacker, the attacker receives a +2 bonus with a ranged weapon. For example, if a Small Item (Size -1) and a Diminutive Item (Size -3) are in ranged combat, the Small Item gains a -4 penalty to hit while the Diminutive Item gains a +4 bonus to hit.

Level 1	1-2 Features
Level 2	3-5 Features
Level 3	6-10 Features
Level 4	11-25 Features
Level 5	26-50 Features
Level 6	51-100 Features

FLIGHT

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

A character with Flight can fly through an atmosphere (see Spaceflight, page 121, for non-atmospheric flying). The method used to achieve flight can vary greatly: wings, paranormal power, rotors, rockets, anti-gravity, psionic levitation, magic, or some other technique. The base version of Flight lets the character hover and fly at variable speeds, take off and land vertically, or stop in mid-air. This is the most common type of flight possessed by characters.

▶ LIMITERS

GLIDE

The flyer can only become airborne if they launch from a high place (like a tree or rooftop) or from a fast-moving vehicle. Additionally, they can only gain speed by diving and only gain altitude by riding thermals.

MAINTAIN

The character needs a smooth surface or running start for landing and take off and must maintain a minimum speed (often about 10% of top speed) once airborne to avoid crashing.

SKIM

The character is limited to skimming no more than a metre or two off the ground or water. They may be riding on a cushion of air, magnetic lines of force, or even travelling along a magical weave.

SPREAD

The character needs plenty of free space surrounding them to fly. This Limiter is most often associated with winged flight, with ample space required to execute wing flaps properly.

Level 1	Fly at speeds up to 10 kph
Level 2	Fly at speeds up to 30 kph
Level 3	Fly at speeds up to 100 kph
Level 4	Fly at speeds up to 300 kph
Level 5	Fly at speeds up to 1,000 kph
Level 6	Fly at speeds up to 3,000 kph

FORCE FIELD

Attribute Cost: 4 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

A Force Field is an energy field surrounding the character (usually spherical in shape) that protects against incoming attacks. Force Fields can represent magical barriers, telekinetic shields, divine protections, or technological screens.

A Force Field can be "up" or "down." When down, it does not stop any damage. Unless the Detectable Limiter (page 150) is assigned, an up Force Field is invisible. Force Field status must be determined at the start of the character's actions for the round and cannot be changed until their turn to act in the next round.

Damage is first reduced by the Force Field's Armour Rating, with any additional damage that got past it applied against Armour (if any). Thus, if a weapon hit successfully penetrates a Force Field, the Armour Attribute can still protect against it.

A typical Force Field is different from Armour, since it can be battered down by a sufficiently powerful attack. If an attack inflicts more damage than the Force Field prevents (even if the rest of the damage is stopped by Armour), the Force Field temporarily loses one Level of effectiveness. The character can only regain Levels if the field is "down" and regenerating, unless the Regenerating Enhancement is assigned. A Force Field recovers one Level for every full round it is down (turned off and not in operation). A Force Field that is knocked to zero Levels automatically shuts off to regenerate and will reactivate once it has recovered at least a couple of protective Levels.

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

BLOCKS INCORPOREAL

The field prevents the passage of both incorporeal and energy state characters (see Change State Attribute, page 82) through it, even if they can normally pass through energy barriers.

BLOCKS TELEPORT

A character cannot teleport into or out of the field.

FIELD-PENETRATING

The Force Field can be used to penetrate other Force Fields while making attacks (or moving through them). If the character's Force Field is in direct contact with an enemy Force Field, and has a higher Armour Rating than the opponent's, the enemy's field offers no protection against the character's attack, but it is still considered up. In this case, the character may actually move through the neutralised field.

OFFENSIVE

The field delivers a powerful electric or energy shock to anyone who touches it, as if it possessed a Weapon Level (page 132) equal to the Force Field's current Level. Thus, the damage inflicted may decrease as the Force Field is hit and loses levels of effectiveness.

REGENERATING

If the character uses one general action to regenerate the Force Field while it is up or down, it regains one lost Level of effectiveness. A character with the Extra Actions Attribute (page 92) can regenerate multiples Levels each round.

▶ LIMITERS

BOTH DIRECTIONS

The Force Field blocks attacks moving in any direction, both inwards and outwards, thereby virtually preventing the user from attacking when the Force Field is up. This means that when the Force Field is active and the user makes an attack, the Force Field will affect their attack as it would an outside attacker's (reducing the damage inflicted and going down in Level if its protection value is exceeded).

INTERNAL

The field is only usable inside a specific building or other structure. This can be used to represent a Force Field that protects a vital part of a building's interior such as the power plant or dungeon cells, or a character who draws personal Force Field energy from some sort of power source inside their headquarters.

Level 1 Armour Rating = 10
Level 2 Armour Rating = 20
Level 3 Armour Rating = 30
Level 4 Armour Rating = 40
Level 5 Armour Rating = 50
Level 6 Armour Rating = 60

GEAR

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

The Gear Attribute represents a character's access to useful, but not overly powerful, equipment. Characters do not need to spend Character Points for objects that are utterly mundane in the campaign setting (such as clothing, a backpack, a knife, or normal consumer goods). GMs may require players to assign points to this Attribute, however, if their characters will begin the game with numerous pieces of specialised equipment to which the average person might not have easy access, such as weapons, body armour, or professional equipment.

Gear cannot include technology more advanced than what is standard in the setting, magic items, or secret prototypes (see Item Attribute, page 101). Gear can include common civilian vehicles appropriate to the setting (for example, a car, truck, or motorcycle in the present day). For less common or more expensive vehicles and objects, once again use the Item Attribute. The GM always has the final say on whether or not specific Gear is available to the characters.

Modern examples of Gear includes: guns, night vision goggles, burglary tools and other expensive tool kits, tactical armour, etc. Fantasy or medieval examples includes: melee and ranged weaponry, armour, poisons, and work animals.

GEAR VS. ITEM

When determining whether an object should best be classified as a piece of Gear or instead as an Item, consider whether a reasonably connected individual could legally purchase the object with a modest amount of money. If the answer is yes, then the object can be considered Gear. If no – because the item is illegal, beyond normally available technology, or too expensive for a casual purchase – then the object should instead be acquired through the Item Attribute instead.

Level 1 A couple pieces of Gear (1-2)
Level 2 A few pieces of Gear (3-5)
Level 3 Several pieces of Gear (6-10)
Level 4 Many pieces of Gear (11-25)
Level 5 Large amount of Gear (26-50)
Level 6 Huge amount of Gear (51-100)

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GROUND SPEED

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

This Attribute is most frequently assigned to vehicles and mecha built as Items, since they have no base running speed (unlike characters). Moderately fast characters and animals should instead acquire the Special Movement (Fast) Attribute (page 122) while extraordinarily speedster characters should acquire the Superspeed Attribute (page 123).

The Ground Speed Attribute allows Item to move quickly when travelling on the ground. The method used can vary greatly: paranormal or super ability, bionic legs, wheels, tracks, or some other specialised technique. An Item with Ground Speed cannot accelerate to, or decelerate from, their top speed immediately (this further distinguishes Ground Speed from the Superspeed Attribute). Maximum acceleration or deceleration is one Level of Ground Speed per round. Furthermore, Ground Speed is not cumulative with the Superspeed Attribute; use whichever gives the highest speed (which may change from round to round, if accelerating).

Flying or sailing vehicles (such as airplanes) that can move or taxi along the ground as a minor supporting movement form do not usually require the assignment of Ground Speed to reflect this.

▶ LIMITER

ROAD-BOUND

Many types of vehicles – notably those with wheels, such as most automobiles – requires a reasonably smooth surface on which to travel, such as a road or other graded surface. With the Road-Bound Limiter, such vehicles can only travel at very slow speeds on rough terrain (approximately one-tenth to one quarter of their normal maximum speed, depending on the roughness of the surface).

Level 1	Ground speed up to 10 kph
Level 2	Ground speed up to 25 kph
Level 3	Ground speed up to 50 kph
Level 4	Ground speed up to 100 kph
Level 5	Ground speed up to 250 kph
Level 6	Ground speed up to 500 kph

HEALING

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

This Attribute allows a character to instantly heal a target's injuries through touch (including themselves; for continuous healing, see the Regeneration Attribute, page 117). At higher Healing Levels, the character can also revive someone who is "clinically" dead but not actually brain-dead (Level 3+), repair massive trauma such as lost limbs or organs (Level 5+), or restore a character who was cut in two (Level 6+). No healer can repair someone who was blown to bits, disintegrated, or dead for more than a few minutes, however. The Attribute Level dictates the maximum number of Health Points the character can restore to a particular target in one hour or dramatic scene (though other healers may return additional Health Points to the injured subject).



Healing may also be used to reverse the effects of the Metamorphosis Attribute (page 106) if the alteration is physical in nature (Body-based). If it is psychic or spiritual in nature, the Exorcism Attribute (page 91) is used instead. This requires an opposed roll between the healer's Soul Stat + Healing Attribute Level and the source of the Metamorphosis's Body Stat + Metamorphosis Attribute Level. A healer may make only one attempt per day to reverse a particular individual's Metamorphosis.

Level 1 Heals 5 Health Points
Level 2 Heals 10 Health Points
Level 3 Heals 15 Health Points
Level 4 Heals 20 Health Points
Level 5 Heals 25 Health Points
Level 6 Heals 30 Health Points

HEIGHTENED AWARENESS

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body or Mind

The character possesses a high degree of situational awareness. They are usually very alert and receives a bonus on Stat rolls to notice nearby hidden things, such as concealed objects, ambushes, or anything else related to sensory awareness. The bonuses of Heightened Awareness are cumulative with those of the Heightened Senses Attribute (page 97).

Level 1 +2 Stat roll awareness bonus
Level 2 +4 Stat roll awareness bonus
Level 3 +6 Stat roll awareness bonus
Level 4 +8 Stat roll awareness bonus
Level 5 +10 Stat roll awareness bonus
Level 6 +12 Stat roll awareness bonus

HEIGHTENED SENSES

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body or Mind

A character with Heightened Senses has one or more senses that have been sharpened to a superhuman level of acuity. It can represent either the preternatural sharpening of a specific sense honed by special training (such as a blind person's trained sense of touch) or the enhanced senses of a paranormal, magical, or technologically augmented character.

For each Level of the Heightened Senses Attribute, one of the character's five physical senses – hearing, sight, smell, taste, or touch – is enhanced, and can operate over an area of several city blocks. The character may assign the same sense twice, which doubles the effect and extends the area of detection. Alternatively, a Heightened Sense can indicate enhancement in scope and precision instead of distance (such as the greater frequency range and pinpoint accuracy of a cat's hearing). A character using a Heightened Sense gains a minor edge (page 182) on Stat rolls that relate to using that sense to perceive things that someone with human-level senses might conceivably notice.

The Heightened Awareness Attribute (page 97) allows for a lower Level of enhancement for all of a character's senses while the Sixth Sense (page 119) and Supersense (page 123) Attributes allow characters to gain completely new senses.

Level 1 One enhanced sense
Level 2 Two enhanced senses
Level 3 Three enhanced senses
Level 4 Four enhanced senses
Level 5 Five enhanced senses

ILLUSION

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body or Mind

The character can create mental hallucinations that fools the target's sight, or possible more senses if Enhancements are assigned. An Illusion appears to be real to the targetted observers but is not really there; it has no physical substance, and characters who are not the target of the Illusion are unaffected. Characters that can create Illusions are often sorcerers, demons, or people with psionic abilities. See the Projection Attribute (page 114) for the ability to create seemingly real images that anyone can detect, rather than mental illusions that target the minds of specific people.

An Illusion takes a general action to create. It may be of a particular object or entity or of a complete scene (such as a furnished room or crowd). It may also be created over an existing person, scene, or object to make it appear different than it really is. An Illusion that is untended is normally static, either remaining in one place or (if created over something) moving as the underlying object or entity moves.

An Illusion lasts for as long as the character concentrates on maintaining it or one minute (or dramatic scene) if it created and then left untended. To give an Illusion the semblance of independent activity (such as an illusionary person or crowd that moves and speaks) the character must actively concentrate on manipulating the Illusion and perform no other actions.

The Level dictates the size of the Illusionary image but it can be created anywhere within a 100-metre range of the character. Thus, a Level 3 (10 metres) Illusion means that any image up to 10 metres in radius (such as a school bus) can be created and moved around within a range of 100 metres (such as a city block) from the character.

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In order for the character to create a convincing Illusion of something complex, the GM may require a Mind Stat check. The GM can assign a Target Number depending on how familiar or unfamiliar the character is with the scene that is being simulated. The GM may also give the character a minor or major edge (page 182) to the roll if they have in excess of the minimum Level needed to create an Illusion. If the roll fails, the character's Illusion is somehow flawed but the character creating it may not be aware.

Whether or not an observer recognises an Illusion for what it actually is depends on the circumstances and should be adjudicated by the GM. For example, if a character creates an Illusion of a tiger, it may easily fool someone if it is a few hundred metres away; if it comes close to the target, though, the fact that it is not making any sounds will be obvious. The tiger's lack of scent will probably only be a clue to someone who has the Heightened Senses (Smell) Attribute. If appropriate, the GM can require Body or Mind rolls to "see through" an Illusion – typically average (Target Number 12) for the base sight-sense Illusion, increasing to difficult (Target Number 15) for illusions covering two senses or challenging (Target Number 18) for three or more senses. If successfully discovered, the Illusion disappears. To create Illusions capable of injuring targets, the character should possess a Weapon Attribute (page 132) tied to the Illusion Attribute through the Dependent Limiter (page 149).

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

EXTRA SENSE

Each time Extra Sense is taken, the Illusions gain one additional sensory component – sound, smell, touch, or taste – that must be specified when the Enhancement is assigned during character creation. Continuing the earlier example, adding illusionary touch and sound as well as smell doesn't change the 5 Point cost of the Level 5 Attribute (that normally has a maximum illusion size of 1 km), but the Illusion now functions at three Levels lower (Level 2, which allows illusions with size up to 1 metre). The character sacrifices size for complexity and believability.

MULTIPLE ILLUSIONS

A character can normally maintain only a single Illusion at a time. The ability to maintain multiple Illusions at once is an Enhancement assigned during character creation that reduces the effective Illusion Attribute Level by 1 for every distinct Illusion the character can sustain simultaneously after the first. For example, Level 6 Illusion (10 km size) with a Enhancement that allows up to four simultaneous Illusions still costs 6 Points but functions three Levels lower at Level 3 (10 m size). A group of related objects or entities within the 100-metre range of the character, such as a furnished room, a swarm of insects, or a horde of charging warriors, counts as a single Illusion rather than several. If a character is already sustaining their maximum number of Illusions and wishes to create another one, an existing Illusion must first be dispelled.

- Level 1 Tiny-sized Illusions (10 cm)
- Level 2 Small-sized Illusions (1 m)
- Level 3 Moderate-sized Illusions (10 m)
- Level 4 Building-sized Illusions (100 m)
- Level 5 Neighbourhood-sized Illusions (1 km)
- Level 6 City-sized Illusions (10 km)

IMMUNITY

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

With this Attribute, the character is completely immune to attack damage and adverse environmental effects that stem from a particular weapon, element, application, or event. For example, a character with Level 2 Immunity to silver cannot be hurt by silver weapons and perhaps would not feel pain if clubbed by a pouch filled with silver coins. Similarly, a character with Level 5 Immunity to fire/heat could walk into an intense firestorm and emerge unscathed.

For characters with some (but perhaps not total) protection against hostile conditions, see the Armour (page 80) or Resilient (page 118) Attributes.

- Level 1 The Immunity plays a rare role in the game. Typical examples include: weapons made from a specific substance (such as wood from a sacred tree); attacks from one opponent (such as a particular nemesis); under an exact condition (such as on holy days).
- Level 2 The Immunity plays a small role in the game. Typical examples include: weapons made from a rare substance (such as gold or silver); attacks from a small opponent group (such as a brother or single animal type); under specific conditions (such as in water, one hour of the day, at home).
- Level 3 The Immunity plays a moderate role in the game. Typical examples include: weapons made from an uncommon substance (such as wood, bronze, or iron); attacks from a broad opponent group (such as blood relatives, demons, or animals); under broad conditions (such as during the night, on weekends, or in holy places).

Level 4 The Immunity plays a large role in the game. Typical examples include: electricity; cold; a specific weapons type (such as daggers, arrows, rapiers, or a specific make of gun).
Level 5 The Immunity plays a major role in the game. Typical examples include: fire/heat; a broad weapon type (such as swords, clubs, or handguns).
Level 6 The Immunity plays an extreme role in the game. Typical examples include: gunfire (including artillery); explosives; bladed weapons; unarmed attacks.

IMMUTABLE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body or Soul

A character with Immutable is protected against effects that can transform, alter, or displace their body or powers. This includes the Metamorphosis, Mimic, Nullify, Portal, and Teleport Attributes. The resistance may be a reflection of natural hardiness, a protective spell, racial ability, or defensive aura. Whatever the cause, the character gets a +2 bonus to Body or Soul Stat checks made to resist any of the above Attributes' effects. This bonus also applies to any Body Stat rolls made to resist the effects of the Blight, Flare, Incapacitating, or Irritant Weapon Attributes while also providing a 10 Points of Armour per Level against attacks with the Insidious Weapon Attribute.

For other defensive options that work differently than Immutable, see Mind Shield (page 109), Nullify (page 110), Resilient (page 118), and Unaffected (page 129) Attributes.

Level 1 +2 Stat roll bonus when resisting effects
Level 2 +4 Stat roll bonus when resisting effects
Level 3 +6 Stat roll bonus when resisting effects
Level 4 +8 Stat roll bonus when resisting effects
Level 5 +10 Stat roll bonus when resisting effects
Level 6 +12 Stat roll bonus when resisting effects

INSPIRE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

This ability can represent oratorical talents, innate charisma, supernatural awe, or even a beautiful or resonant voice. The character's very presence inspires their friends, followers, or fans, filling them with energy and determination to transcend their own normal limitations in pursuit of a goal. Its nature depends on the character: a general inspires through leadership and strategic prowess, an evil dictator might whip minions into a frenzy through hatred, a pop idol inspires through song, or a magical girl or mystical unicorn through the sheer power of love. It is also common for certain Items such as religious relics, holy shrines, or revered army standards to possess this ability.

Inspire takes a general action to initiate, during which the character must act appropriately – give an impassioned speech, start singing, threaten minions with destruction, or however their inspiration usually functions. Successful use of the Attribute requires succeeding with an average Soul Stat roll (Target Number 12). If it fails, the character can take another action and try again, but they are limited in the number of attempts per game session equal to the Attribute Level. Each successful use gives an effect that lasts for an entire dramatic scene. During that scene, every friend or ally who shares the character's goals will be inspired.

Alternatively, the character may define their Inspire as working through a Skill Group (page 120), most often Business, Social, Street, Military, or Detective. The character makes a Skill roll instead (which is usually easier, since the Skill Level is added to the roll), but the inspiration will only work in appropriate situations – for example, when leading people into battle for Military or when making an important corporate move with Business.

Inspired characters (both player characters and story characters under the GM's control, as well as the inspiring character themselves) receive a bonus equal to the Inspire Level to any appropriate Stat or Skill Group rolls at the GM's discretion. Story characters will, in general, be highly motivated which the GM will reflect through role-playing.

Any character with Inspire also exerts a natural uplifting influence even without making a special effort. This helps their friends and allies recover any lost Energy Points more rapidly as well. As long as they are in the character's immediate presence, they will regain extra Energy Points equal to the character's Level each hour.

The Inspire Attribute do not have a cumulative effect with the concurrent use of other characters' Inspire Attribute.

Level 1 Inspired characters gain a +1 bonus to Stat/Skill Group rolls when appropriate
Level 2 Inspired characters gain a +2 bonus to Stat/Skill Group rolls when appropriate
Level 3 Inspired characters gain a +3 bonus to Stat/Skill Group rolls when appropriate
Level 4 Inspired characters gain a +4 bonus to Stat/Skill Group rolls when appropriate
Level 5 Inspired characters gain a +5 bonus to Stat/Skill Group rolls when appropriate
Level 6 Inspired characters gain a +6 bonus to Stat/Skill Group rolls when appropriate



ITEM

Attribute Cost: One-Half Normal Value
Relevant Stat: —

Items are devices that enhance a character in some way or that serve as a useful tool, vehicle, base, or weapon. Items can represent powerful weapons, magical artefacts, or experimental or future technology, while the Gear Attribute (page 95) represents a character's access to useful, but not overly powerful, equipment. A player can assign this Attribute to their character multiple times to acquire different Items. Items can be created for the character (subject to GM approval) or selected from the extensive list of ready-to-use Items in Chapter 10 (page 196).

A device or object that cannot be lost or stolen (such as something implanted in or fused to the character's body) is not an Item. Any such device is considered part of the character and thus the player should use Character Points to acquire the relevant Attributes directly. If a character requires a specific object, or group of objects, to act as a focus when using one or more of their innate Attributes (such as requiring an amulet to focus a character's magical Weapon attack) Item does not apply either – that would be represented by a Limiter (page 148) on the particular Attribute, rather than any quality of the object itself.

Assign the Item any Attributes appropriate to its normal function that will benefit the character while using it. For example, a magic wand or a gun would have Weapon, a ring of invisibility would have Undetectable, and a hoverboard would have Ground Speed. A complex vehicle, such as a 50-metre-tall flying transformable battle mecha, could have a multitude of Attributes, such as Alternate Form, Armour, Features, Flight, Ground Speed, Resilient, Supersense, Superstrength, Tough, Weapon, etc. Attributes contained in Items can also be assigned Enhancements or Limiters which increase or decrease their effectiveness.

Attributes that an Item has do not usually stack with those of a character. If a vehicle has Flight Level 1 and so does its operator, this does not give the vehicle Flight Level 2. The GM may make exceptions where it seems appropriate (such as Armour).

Items can also be assigned Defects (page 154) provided they directly impact the utility of the Item or affect the user. For example, most vehicles larger than a bicycle will have Awkward Size, since they cannot be used in tight quarters and are big targets. Some defects that are usually inappropriate for Items unless approved by the GM include Ism, Marked, Obligated, Red Tape, Significant Other, Skeleton in the Closet, and Wanted. Nevertheless, the GM may make exceptions where this seems reasonable, such as a stolen mecha coming with the Wanted Defect if it is the mecha (rather than the character) that particular foes are after. In the same manner, a great artefact such as a Ring of Power might be Hounded and even have a Nemesis attached to it.

Items usually have no Stats (but may be given Augmented if they boost their user's Stats) but they may have Skill Groups to represent minor or major edges (page 182) to appropriate Skill rolls (such as a detailed data crystal Item adding to a Scientific Skill roll). Items are assumed to be lifeless objects and so no special Attributes or Defects are required to represent this status. For example, even though you cannot affect an Item by poisoning it, there is no need to assign the Immunity Attribute to avoid this unless it protects the people wearing it or riding inside it from the poison. Similarly, an Item is immune to threats like disease or lack of food (without having to buy Attributes to that effect) and they cannot normally be affected by mental-based Attributes (Exorcism, Telepathy, Mind Control, or Weapon with the Psychic Enhancement). Again, this assumed trait related to Items does not protect individuals inside or wearing it unless the specific Attributes are assigned to the Item. Note that an Item has no ability to heal any damage that it suffers, though, and must be repaired instead.

ITEM COST

Items are not ranked in Levels like other Attributes. To determine an Item's Character Point cost, total the Point cost of all Attributes and Defects built into the Item and divide by two (round down; minimum of 0 Points). For example, if a character has 33 Points of Items, the total Item cost is 16 Character Points. This makes Items that are described with only a single Feature Attribute (such as a modern phone) effectively free and often better handled by the Gear Attribute.

See the Chapter 10: Items (page 196) for more detailed examples and descriptions of Items.

JUMPING

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

With a running start, a character can normally jump a distance in metres approximately equal to three-quarters their Body Stat (a quarter their Body Stat from a static position). With this Attribute, the character can jump great distances (and land without injury) but cannot actually fly. Jumping does not enable a character to exceed the character's normal maximum running speed (or swimming speed for aquatic characters capable of leaping). Consequently, unless the character also possesses the appropriate Level of the Superspeed Attribute (page 123), long-distance jumps may require several round or minutes.

For example, a character with a Body Stat of 6 can normally sprint 18 metres/round (Body Stat x 3; see Character Movement, page 191) and jump approximately 4 metres with a running start. If the character with Level 2 Jumping (10 times the normal distance, or 40 metres) jumps their maximum distance of 40 metres, they will be airborne for approximately two rounds rather than finishing the jump in just one (since 40 ÷ 18 is approximately 2 rounds). The advantage to jumping rather than running, however, is that the character can ignore terrain and is not fatigued as the character would be if they had to run the same distance. See Jumping Distance (page 191) for additional jumping rules.

Level 1	Jump up to 3 times normal distance
Level 2	Jump up to 10 times normal distance
Level 3	Jump up to 30 times normal distance
Level 4	Jump up to 100 times normal distance
Level 5	Jump up to 300 times normal distance
Level 6	Jump up to 1,000 times normal distance

MASSIVE DAMAGE

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

A character with the Massive Damage Attribute knows precisely how and where to hit any opponent in order to inflict incredible amounts of damage. All characters start with a Damage Multiplier of 5 (see page 171 for more information). Each Level of Massive Damage increases this by +1.

Naturally, the character's attack must be successful to inflict any damage. Physical strength is not the key to delivering massive damage in an attack; the ability to sense a weakness is far more important. The capacity of Massive Damage to augment any kind of attack makes it a very useful Attribute for a combat-oriented character. For more information on physical combat and damage, see page 193.

▶ LIMITERS

FOCUSSED DAMAGE

Additional damage is only inflicted when the character uses one specific class of attacks. For example, it might represent a special talent with a type of weapon (such as guns, swords, bows, etc.), knowledge of a particular unarmed martial arts form, or ability with a particular offensive magical technique (such as fire spells).

TARGETTED DAMAGE

Additional damage is only inflicted when the character attacks a specific type of foe. For example, it might represent a holy avenger who delivers extra damage against undead creatures, a galactic hunter who greatly understand the physiology of an alien species, an orphaned barbarian who likes to beat on members of the invading clan that killed their family and destroyed their village, or an android programmed to destroy competing AIs with great efficiency.

Level 1	Damage Multiplier increases by 1
Level 2	Damage Multiplier increases by 2
Level 3	Damage Multiplier increases by 3
Level 4	Damage Multiplier increases by 4
Level 5	Damage Multiplier increases by 5
Level 6	Damage Multiplier increases by 6

MELEE ATTACK

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Melee Attack is a group of Attributes that represents expertise in offensive close combat weapons and fighting techniques. These Attributes can be taken multiple times to represent different ways of fighting.

For each Level, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Attack Combat Value whenever they are using the specified fighting technique. The class of weapons may be Unarmed (all normal punches, kicks, bites, etc.), a particular Weapon Attribute (e.g., "death touch" or "super dragon punch"), or a class of related Items (such as Axe, Baton/Club, Knife, Polearm, Shield, Spear, Sword, Whips/Chains, etc.). The GM may allow other classes of weapons, although they should not be overly broad. This bonus actually increases the Attack Combat Value when using the specific weapon and thus relevant damage inflicted (page 193) is increased as well.

Level 1	Attack Combat Value increases by 2 when using a specific fighting technique
Level 2	Attack Combat Value increases by 4 when using a specific fighting technique
Level 3	Attack Combat Value increases by 6 when using a specific fighting technique
Level 4	Attack Combat Value increases by 8 when using a specific fighting technique
Level 5	Attack Combat Value increases by 10 when using a specific fighting technique
Level 6	Attack Combat Value increases by 12 when using a specific fighting technique

MELEE DEFENCE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Melee Defence is a group of Attributes that represents expertise in defensive close combat weapons and fighting techniques. These Attributes can be taken multiple times to represent different ways of defending.

For each Level, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Defence Combat Value whenever they are using the specified fighting technique. The class of weapons may be Unarmed (all normal punches, kicks, bites, etc.) or a class of related Items (such as Axe, Baton/Club, Knife, Polearm, Shield, Spear, Sword, Whips/Chains, etc.). The GM may allow other classes of weapons, although they should not be overly broad.

- Level 1 Defence Combat Value increases by 2 when using a specific technique
- Level 2 Defence Combat Value increases by 4 when using a specific technique
- Level 3 Defence Combat Value increases by 6 when using a specific technique
- Level 4 Defence Combat Value increases by 8 when using a specific technique
- Level 5 Defence Combat Value increases by 10 when using a specific technique
- Level 6 Defence Combat Value increases by 12 when using a specific technique

MERGE

Attribute Cost: 4 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

This Attribute is most often assigned to vehicle and mecha Items, but can also apply to weapons, armour, and other equipment. Two or more Items must have the Merge Attribute at the same Level to represent how these individual Items can temporarily join together to create a new powerful Item. Players and the GM should design the new Merged Item with a number of Character Points equal to 10 Points/Level multiplied by the number of Items merging. For example, if five cat-themed vehicle Items each with Level 3 Merge can combine into a giant Lion Battle Mecha, the combined giant mecha is created as a distinct Item from 150 Character Points of Attributes and Defects (since Level 3 x 10 Points/Level x 5 vehicles = 150).

There are no rules that must be explicitly followed when creating Merged Items, though common sense should apply. For example, if several vehicles combine together the Merged vehicle should have sufficient Levels of the Capacity Attribute (page 81) to carry all the individual vehicle drivers. Similarly, the Armour Rating of the Merged Item should probably be at least equal to (or likely more than) that of the pre-merged Items with the greatest Armour Rating. It would also be strange (but not unheard of in anime!) for a Merged Item to be smaller than the largest of the pre-merged Items, and consequently you should look at the Awkward Size Defect (page 156) to determine an appropriate size for the Merged Item. Additionally, the Health Points of a merged Item – which is typically equal to the Item's Armour Rating; see page 223 – is not usually impacted by any damage received prior to merging.

Under normal circumstances, the maximum duration that Items can remain in their Merged state is equal to one minute or dramatic scene (as appropriate).

MERGING CHARACTERS

With GM permission, the Merge Attribute can also be assigned to two more characters. Similar to Items, the individual characters must each have the Merge Attribute at the same Level. The players and GM then together design a unique Race Template (page 36) for the Merged form that is built from a number of Character Points equal to 10 Points/Level multiplied by the number of characters merging. For example, if two magical girl characters each with Level 2 Merge can combine into a powerful magical woman, the players create a new merged Magical Woman Template from 40 Character Points (since Level 2 x 10 Points/Level x 2 characters = 40).

The Attributes and Defects of the individual character are added together in the combined form and then the Merged Race Template is added on top. The Body, Mind, and Soul Stats of the Merged form are each equal to the highest Stats of the individual pre-combined characters and then the Derived Values (page 168) are calculated appropriately. Similarly, if two or more of the individual characters possess the same Attribute before combining, the Attribute Level of the Merged form is equal to the Level of the highest ranked individual character; any Level bonuses from the Merged Race Template are then added on top.

- Level 1 Merged Item is created with up to 10 Points for each combining Item
- Level 2 Merged Item is created with 11-20 Points for each combining Item
- Level 3 Merged Item is created with 21-30 Points for each combining Item
- Level 4 Merged Item is created with 31-40 Points for each combining Item
- Level 5 Merged Item is created with 41-50 Points for each combining Item
- Level 6 Merged Item is created with 51-60 Points for each combining Item





METAMORPHOSIS

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind or Soul

This offensive Attribute is used to alter a touched person's species for short durations, typically up to one minute or for one dramatic scene. Different species are defined by a Race Template, which are packages of Attributes and Defects that provide the abilities and disadvantages of that race (a basic human Template has no Attributes or Defects and is worth 0 Points). While a person is transformed, any Stat modifier, Attribute, or Defect they possess that is normally the result of their current Race Template goes away; abilities unrelated to the character's Race Template are unaffected. The character then gains the appropriate Race Template for their new transformed race. The GM may decide that a metamorphosis automatically fails if it would prevent the character surviving in their present environment. Metamorphosis can also transform the user themselves if desired and works the same way.

The player must create a custom Race Template or choose one from those detailed in Chapter 3: Templates (page 30) when the Attribute is assigned during character creation. This Race Template may be worth a maximum of 5 Character Points or a minimum of -5 Character Points per Level of the Metamorphosis Attribute. The character is limited to transforming subjects into that specific Race Template only, though they can also reverse the process (ending the duration early).

Example 1: Kaori the Mage has Metamorphosis Level 5. Her player may pick or create a Race Template that is worth no more than 25 Points nor fewer than -25 Points. The player decides that Kaori's Metamorphosis Attribute can turn anyone into a rat. Kaori designs a rat Race Template that is worth no fewer than -25 Points.

Example 2: The demon Azog can transform humans into demon servants, granting them the Spider Demon Race Template (page 50). This Template costs 50 Character Points, so Azog requires Metamorphosis Level 10, which is well outside the range for a player character to possess unless given GM permission.

Metamorphosis requires an attack action to use on an unwilling target, requiring a successful attack roll, opposed by the target's defence roll (page 192). If the Metamorphosis attack succeeds, the target is transformed unless they chooses to resist. Resisting requires a successful Body or Soul Stat roll (Target Number 12); the target uses whichever Stat is higher. This resistance roll is made at a penalty of -1 per Level of the Metamorphosis Attribute. If the subject has the Immutable Attribute (page 99) it adds a +2 bonus per Level to resist being transformed. If a target successfully resists a Metamorphosis attempt from the same character three or more times, they are immune to further attempts for the rest of the day.

Metamorphosis is not intended for transforming people into stone or other forms where they would be immobilised. To do that, use the Weapon Attribute (page 132) with the Incapacitating Enhancement.

PERMANENT CHANGE

The base form of the Metamorphosis Attribute changes the target for only a short duration as noted. This is done primarily for game balance since making massive changes to another character, ally, or other individual is quite powerful. If you want the change to last for a longer time, assign the Duration Enhancement (page 146) multiple times. For a permanent Metamorphosis to best reflect your vision for the Attribute, Duration should be assigned 10 times (with GM permission).

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

MULTIFORM

The character can transform the subject into one of a range of different but related forms, provided that they are existing GM-approved Race Templates (that is, not made up on the fly) and their Template cost is aligned with the effective Attribute Level (1 Level lower). For example, a witch might know Metamorphosis – Multiform (Farm Animals) Level 3. She could give her victim any farm animal Template that was worth no more than 10 Character Points nor less than -10 Character Points (since the Attribute functions at Level 2 due to the Enhancement).

ANY FORM

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The character can transform the subject into any existing GM-approved Race Template providing the Template cost is aligned with the effective Attribute Level (2 Levels lower). For example, a demi-god with Metamorphosis – Any Form Level 5 could transform someone into anything, as long as that new form's Race Template was worth no more than +15 nor fewer than -15 Points per Level (functioning at Level 3).

Level 1	Race Template is created with up to +/- 5 Character Points
Level 2	Race Templates is created with up to +/- 10 Character Points
Level 3	Race Templates are created with up to +/- 15 Character Points
Level 4	Race Templates are created with up to +/- 20 Character Points
Level 5	Race Templates are created with up to +/- 25 Character Points
Level 6	Race Templates are created with up to +/- 30 Character Points



MIMIC

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

The character can temporarily mimic one Attribute or Stat of any single touched character for a duration of one minute or dramatic scene, though it only works on Attributes that derive their powers from one particular source (such as magic or technology or supernatural ability; page 258). The Mimic Attribute Level determines the maximum Attribute Level that can be mimicked. Stats Values (at any rank) can be imitated when Mimic reaches Level 5 or higher. The Level of a mimicked Attribute/Stat only replaces the character's corresponding Level (if applicable) if it is higher; the character's Attribute/Stat Level cannot normally decrease through Mimic.

Mimic requires an attack action to use. If used on an unwilling target, it requires a successful attack roll, opposed by the target's defence roll. If the attack succeeds, the target's ability is mimicked unless they choose to resist. Resisting requires a successful average Soul Stat roll (Target Number 12). This resistance roll is made at a penalty of -1 per Level of the Mimic Attribute. If the target has the Immutable Attribute (page 99) they may add that Attribute bonus to the roll to resist.

To create a character that steals a target's Attributes for their use, assign both the Mimic (page 107) and Nullify (page 110) Attributes, linked through the Dependent Limiter (page 149).

▶ ENHANCEMENT

ALL POWERS

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). This powerful Enhancement lets the character mimic all Attributes/Stats simultaneously at the appropriate Levels (as indicated above). Abilities from more than one character can be mimicked, though each targetted character must be touched (and potentially resisted) individually.

Level 1	Mimic Level 1 Attributes
Level 2	Mimic Level 2 Attributes
Level 3	Mimic Level 3 Attributes
Level 4	Mimic Level 4 Attributes
Level 5	Mimic Level 5 Attributes, as well as Stats
Level 6	Mimic Level 6 Attributes, as well as Stats

PAGE 107

MIND CONTROL

Attribute Cost: 5 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

This Attribute allows the character to mentally dominate other individuals, creatures, or entities (with a Mind Stat of 1 or higher) through touch, typically for a duration of one minute or one dramatic scene (or earlier if the target breaks free from control). Sorcerers, psionic adepts, and creatures with hypnotic powers such as demons or vampires are among those likely to have Mind Control.

Mind Control requires an attack action to use. If used on an unwilling target, it requires a successful opposed Mind Stat check. If the subject has the Mind Shield Attribute (page 109), they gain a bonus of +1/Level to their roll. If the attack succeeds, the target is under the attacker's control until they have an opportunity to break the connection. If a target successfully breaks Mind Control from the same character three or more times, they are immune to further attempts for the rest of the day.

When a player character is under the effects of Mind Control, the GM can take over the character from the player when necessary, although it is more fun if the player (with GM guidance) continues to role-play the character. Characters who have been Mind Controlled will not usually remember events that occurred during the time period they are controlled and will have a gap in their memories.

A target may attempt to break control under two circumstances: whenever they are given a command that conflicts with the nature of the character, and whenever the GM deems it appropriate for dramatic effect. To break control, the target must win an opposed roll using their Mind or Soul Stat roll (whichever is higher), against the controller's roll of Mind Stat + Mind Control Attribute. If the subject has the Mind Shield Attribute, they gain a bonus of +2/Level to their roll.

AGAINST TARGET'S NATURE

If a Mind Controlled target is commanded to perform an action that they would not willingly do under normal circumstances, the target can attempt to break control. For mildly distasteful actions (such as licking an enemy's boots or acting against the character's code of honour), the target receives a minor edge (page 182) on the Stat check. For highly distasteful or undesirable actions (such as stealing from or attacking an ally), the target receives a major edge on the Stat check.

WHEN THE GM DEEMS APPROPRIATE

If the character commands their target to perform a number of mundane activities (clean the house, fetching a drink of water, etc.), the GM may decide the target does not receive an opportunity to break established control. Even a seemingly inoffensive command such as "sit in the closet" or "go to sleep", however, may have a drastic impact on the lives of others if a bomb is about to explode in the train station or the target is piloting an airplane at the time. In these instances, the GM may give the target a chance to break free of the Mind Control even if the target does not regard a command as dangerous or distasteful (which would present an opportunity to end the control). This option puts the GM in direct control of the situation, which will benefit the campaign story.

▶ LIMITERS

BROAD CATEGORY

The character's Mind Control is restricted to a broad category of targets, such as "all humans and similar sapient beings" or "all non-sentient animals" or "all machine intelligences".

NARROW CATEGORY

Counts as 2 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 2 Levels). The character's Mind Control is restricted to a narrow category of targets, such as "any reptile" or "any male" "or "any faeries".

SPECIFIC CATEGORY

Counts as 3 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 3 Levels). The character's Mind Control is restricted to a specific category of targets, such as "dogs" or "people obsessed with beauty" or "any being, but only on Sundays".

SINGLE CATEGORY

Counts as 4 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 4 Levels). The character's Mind Control is restricted to a single targetted group, such as members of the character's family, or mutants with a specific gene, or poodles.

Level 1	The character has minimal Mind Control ability. They can give extremely basic, non-aggressive suggestions such as "turn around", "run away", "scream", etc.
Level 2	The character has minor Mind Control ability. They can give simple, non-aggressive suggestions such as "go make me a sandwich", "tell that bank teller to put cash into a bag and hand it over to you", "grab that pick axe and start mining for gems", etc.

Level 3 The character has moderate Mind Control ability. They can give complex, non-aggressive suggestions such as "pick up cargo case, talk your way through the security checkpoint using your fake ID, and then load it into the ships hidden smuggling compartment".

Level 4 The character has good Mind Control ability. In addition to the capabilities of Level 3, the character can also make aggressive suggestions (which includes attacking).

Level 5 The character has significant Mind Control ability. In addition to the capabilities of Level 4, the character can also permanently erase brief events from the victim's memory.

Level 6 The character has major Mind Control ability. In addition to the capabilities of Level 5, the character can also permanently erase and alter complex and prolonged events from the victim's memory.

MIND SHIELD

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

A character with Mind Shield is protected against psychic intrusion. This may be a reflection of their own psychic abilities, a protective spell, special training, or some innate knack. A character with Mind Shield can detect attempts to read their mind via Telepathy (page 126) or control their mind using Mind Control (page 108), and receive a bonus to resisting Mind Stat rolls as appropriate. Each Mind Shield Level also provides 5 Points of "Mental Armour" that provides an Armour Rating against damage inflicted via Weapon Attribute with the Psychic Enhancement (page 140).

For other defensive Attributes that work differently than Mind Shield, see the Immutable (page 99), Nullify (page 110), Resilient (page 118), and Unaffected (page 129) Attributes.

Level 1 +2 bonus to dice rolls when resisting psychic intrusion

Level 2 +4 bonus to dice rolls when resisting psychic intrusion

Level 3 +6 bonus to dice rolls when resisting psychic intrusion

Level 4 +8 bonus to dice rolls when resisting psychic intrusion

Level 5 +10 bonus to dice rolls when resisting psychic intrusion

Level 6 +12 bonus to dice rolls when resisting psychic intrusion

MINIONS

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

The Minions Attribute represents the extent of the character's loyal and dedicated human or creature resources. Minions – sometimes known as flunkies, groupies, stooges, henchmen, toadies, etc. – are eager to carry out the character's commands and ask for very little in return. They always aim to please, even at their own expense. For specific talented helpers or battle-ready followers, see the Companion Attribute (page 84). Mercenaries who the character hires for specific tasks are not Minions since they have an agenda and expect compensation.

During character creation, the player assigns the Minions a number of Character Points up to a maximum of one-fifth the Point total of their character. For example, a character built from 60 Points could have Minions built from a maximum of 12 Points each (60 ÷ 5 = 12). All Minions created by this Attribute assignment normally have identical Stats, Attributes, and Defects (with very minor and insignificant variations at the GM's discretion). Minions with different Character Point distribution can be created by assigning this Attribute more than once to create a new team of Minions. For example, a character in a high school setting might have Minions at Level 3 to represent a group of athletic students that work as school enforcers for the character and Minions at Level 5 to represent a different group of street-level spies that keep tabs on city events and act as the character's eyes and ears.

Level 1 Up to 5 Minions

Level 2 6-10 Minions

Level 3 11-25 Minions

Level 4 26-50 Minions

Level 5 51-100 Minions

Level 6 101-200 Minions

MULLIGAN

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

A character possessing the Mulligan Attribute may have powerful forces acting as their guardian, which can beneficially influence the outcome of important events. Alternatively, the character may be really lucky, have great karma, or perhaps can subtly influence their surroundings with thought alone. This relationship with fortune is represented through the re-rolling of undesirable dice rolls (this includes undesirable re-rolls as well). All dice are rolled when using a Mulligan, whether that's two dice for normal rolls or three/four

dice for situations involving a edges and obstacles (page 182). The player may choose to use the original roll, or any of the re-rolls, when determining the success of the action. The Level dictates the number of times dice can be re-rolled in a single role-playing session, though the GM can alter this time frame as desired.

Level 1	Re-roll all dice 2 times each game session
Level 2	Re-roll all dice 4 times each game session
Level 3	Re-roll all dice 6 times each game session
Level 4	Re-roll all dice 8 times each game session
Level 5	Re-roll all dice 10 times each game session
Level 6	Re-roll all dice 12 times each game session

NULLIFY

Attribute Cost: 5 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body or Soul

The character can temporarily render the Attributes of other touched characters unusable for approximately one minute or dramatic scene, though it only works on Attributes that derive their powers from one particular source (such as magic or technology or supernatural ability; see page 258).

The Nullify Attribute Level determines the maximum Attribute Level that can be nullified, which can either Nullify the target Attribute completely (if that Attribute Level is lower than the character's Nullify Attribute Level) or reduce the effectiveness of the target Attribute by the number of Levels of the Nullify Attribute (if that Attribute Level is greater than the character's Nullify Attribute Level). For example, if a character with Level 2 Nullify (of magical sources) targets a fellow mage who has Level 1 Armour, Level 2 Flight, and Level 5 Teleport, the character could reduce the target's Armour to Level 0 (1-2=0), or Flight to Level 0 (2-2=0), or Teleport to Level 3 (5-2=3).

Nullify requires an attack action to use and a character can Nullify one target Attribute for each attack action (and can thus Nullify multiple Attributes using multiple attack actions). If used on an unwilling target, it requires a successful attack roll, opposed by the target's defence roll. If the attack succeeds, the target's ability is Nullified unless they choose to resist. Resisting requires a successful Body Stat or Soul Stat roll (Target Number 12) – use whichever Stat is higher. This roll is made at a penalty of -1 per Level of the Nullify Attribute. If the subject has the Immutable Attribute (page 99), they may add that Attribute's bonus to the roll to resist.

To create a character that steals a target's Attributes for their own use, assign both the Nullify (page 110) and Mimic (page 107) Attributes, linked through the Dependent Limiter (page 149).

▶ ENHANCEMENT

MULTIPLE ATTRIBUTES

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). With this powerful variation, the character can counteract all source-related Attributes simultaneously (instead of just one) at the appropriate Level. Continuing the above magical battle example, with this Enhancement the character could reduce the target's Armour, Flight, and Teleport Attributes simultaneously for a single attack action.

Level 1	Nullify 1 Level of source-related Attribute
Level 2	Nullify 2 Levels of source-related Attribute
Level 3	Nullify 3 Levels of source-related Attribute
Level 4	Nullify 4 Levels of source-related Attribute
Level 5	Nullify 5 Levels of source-related Attribute
Level 6	Nullify 6 Levels of source-related Attribute

PLANT CONTROL

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

Characters with this Attribute can control the fast growth and movement of all plants in the surrounding area for up to one minute or dramatic scene. The Attribute Level determines the maximum area in which the plants can be controlled, with the character at the centre of that area. After one minute or dramatic scene, the plants will return to their normal state and size before the control. To cause significant damage with controlled plants, the character should acquire the Weapon Attribute (page 132) with the Dependent Limiter (page 149).

Level 1	The character can control plants within a precise area (10 cm radius) and cause them to grow up to 3 times their normal size
Level 2	The character can control plants within a small area (1 m radius) and cause them to grow up to 10 times their normal size
Level 3	The character can control plants within a moderate area (10 m radius) and cause them to grow up to 30 times their normal size
Level 4	The character can control plants within a building-sized area (100 m radius) and cause them to grow up to 100 times their normal size
Level 5	The character can control plants within a neighbourhood-sized area (1 km radius) and cause them to grow up to 300 times their normal size
Level 6	The character can control plants within a city-sized area (10 km radius) and cause them to grow up to 1,000 times their normal size



POCKET DIMENSION

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

This Attribute allows the character to have control over a small dimension or plane of existence of their own. A Pocket Dimension is a self-contained universe; it could be a dream world, a created reality, an astral construct, or even an object that is bigger inside than it is outside. A dimension could even be partially unexplored or dangerous territory, providing adventuring opportunities to characters who visit. Such a dimension provides a secure storage area and (if large enough) could be a private sanctum or prison. Pocket Dimensions are often used to store all manner of objects, from swords and battle costumes to mecha to legions of Companions. They also represent a method of making objects seem to suddenly appear.

The Attribute Level determines the maximum size of the extra-planar space. The environment and furnishings of the dimension are up to the player within the GM's limitations; extensive furnishings should be acquired with the Gear (page 95) or Item (page 101) Attributes. Under normal circumstances, this Attribute can only be taken by a character who already has either the Dimension Walk (page 89) or Portal (page 112) Attributes – otherwise, the Pocket Dimension may be inaccessible. Assigning this Attribute to an Item instead may remove this restriction if is normally accessible to anyone (such as a extra-dimensional "bag of holding" that anyone can access by opening the bag).

Level 1	Tiny dimension (10 cm radius)
Level 2	Small dimension (1 m radius)
Level 3	Moderately sized dimension (10 m radius)
Level 4	Building-sized dimension (100 m radius)
Level 5	Neighbourhood-sized dimension (1 km radius)
Level 6	City-sized dimension (10 km radius)

PORTAL

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

This Attribute allows the character to create a portal, hole, doorway, or rift no larger than a one-metre radius that leads into an alternative reality or plane of existence – that is, a different dimension. The Attribute will normally transport the user and everyone else within the surrounding radius to another dimension. Sometimes this is the character's Pocket Dimension (page 112). A Portal can usually be held open as long as a character desires.

The Attribute Level determines the number of one-way dimensional transitions the user has mastered. For example, "Earth to Bazaroth" is a single dimension link – the user can travel from Earth to the hell-dimension of Bazaroth, but not back. If the character wished to return, a second transition, "Bazaroth to Earth" or some other form of travel (such a natural gateway) is needed. Assigning both "Earth to Bazaroth" and "Bazaroth to Earth" is two transitions and requires two Levels of Portal… but sometimes this power is one-way journey only.

A character with only a few Levels of this Attribute can also select links in a way that ensures they need to travel through a chain of dimensions to get home. For example, someone with Level 3 might have: Earth to Bazaroth, Bazaroth to Ikaris, Ikaris to Earth. This means the character would have to pass through the Bazaroth hell-dimension each time they wished to reach Ikaris from Earth, which could be a perilous journey indeed.

A dimension can also be defined as the past or future, provided the GM is willing to deal with any issues of time travel that occur. One way to limit portals to other times while still permitting characters to visit anime staples such as ancient Japan and future Neo-Tokyo is to say they are really alternate realities (so history cannot change) and that time flows in a rate that remains constant with the present (so characters cannot repeatedly visit the same point over and over). This means a character living on Earth in 2020 might know how to open a portal to "Japan of four centuries ago" rather than "Japan in 1620" – this minor but significant detail ensures the flow of events is constant, so when it turns 2021 on modern day Earth, the character can now only visit "Japan in 1621." Ambitious GMs can have other dimensions where time flows at different rates or where altering events can change the past or future, but this can easily create various game balance problems.

Portal is not another version of the Teleport Attribute (page 127). A character will usually travel to a point in the other dimension that most closely maps with the point in their own reality (GM's option). The GM may also rule that visitors are likely to appear at certain nexus points (such as Tokyo Tower on Earth) regardless of where they come from, or that their arrival is completely random.

USING PORTAL ON OTHERS

Portal may be used offensively to send others to another dimension with or without going oneself. To do this, simply add the Duration Enhancement (see page 146). This sort of Portal is often possessed by Items such as an ancient shrine or machine that contains a gate to another world, sucking anyone nearby into it. The target will be in the dimension for a maximum amount of time indicated by the Duration Enhancement. The

character is released from the dimension once the Attribute's Duration ceases, reappearing at the point from which they vanished, or optionally, a different point congruent with their present location, depending on how that dimension maps with their origin.

Using Portal this way on others requires an attack action and a successful attack roll against the target. To avoid being transported, a victim must succeed with a Body or Soul Stat roll (Target Number 12) – whichever is easier – with a penalty equal to the Level of Portal. If the target has the Immutable Attribute (page 99) they may add that Attribute bonus to the roll to resist. If a particular subject resists three successive attempts at transporting them to another dimension, they are immune to further Portal attacks from that person for the rest of the dramatic scene.

Level 1	The character can create a one-way Portal to 1 defined dimension
Level 2	The character can create a one-way Portal to 2 defined dimensions
Level 3	The character can create a one-way Portal to 3 defined dimensions
Level 4	The character can create a one-way Portal to 4 defined dimensions
Level 5	The character can create a one-way Portal to 5 defined dimensions
Level 6	The character can create a one-way Portal to 6 defined dimensions

POWER FLUX

Attribute Cost: 10 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Variable

Power Flux represents extensive control over a minor element, ideology, natural phenomenon, or sphere of influence. It is often used to represent divine, elemental, or improvised magical powers, or a powerful high-tech Item. At high Levels, the character holds mastery over a particular realm, and has an intimate understanding of all things relating to the Attribute sphere. Examples of minor categories over which the character has control include: a classical element (water, fire, wind, earth), a limited concept or idea (lust, protection, charm, pride), a minor aspect of nature (temperature, insects, sunlight, clouds, orbits, sea creatures), or a limited sphere of influence (keys, silence, cats, writing, guns, a small locality, nutrition).

This is a very open-ended Attribute and should be discussed with the GM at length to determine the effects and limitations in the game. Proper use of Power Flux will not unbalance the game, but rather can provide many opportunities for character innovation. As an alternative option to Power Flux, see the Dynamic Powers (page 89), Power Variation (page 114), and Transmute (page 128) Attributes.

A character with this Attribute has a group of reserve Character Points (called Flux Points) that can be allocated to different Attributes as often as once a minute (or once each dramatic scene, as determined by the GM) within the thematic category chosen by the player. This often represents a broad-based magical or psionic ability, but it can also reflect a character who has several different powered forms or a character who has little control over their range of Attributes (in conjunction with the Unpredictable Limiter, page 153). Stats and Defects cannot be raised or lowered with Power Flux (though the Augmented Attribute may be altered). Fluxing some Attributes may require GM permission. Each Level of this Attribute provides the character with 5 Flux Points.

If the character makes a successful Stat roll (the relevant Stat is determined by the GM), they can assign Flux Points to one or more Attributes that grant powers that fit within the thematic category. A Flux Point is equal to one Character Point, which can be assigned to the cost of the Attribute directly, or to the cost of raising an Attribute's Enhancement Rank (if used and permitted by the GM). Under normal circumstances, Power Flux cannot be allocated to Companion, Dynamic Powers, Item, Power Variation, Skill Group, or Transfer Attributes.

For example, a character who is the reincarnation of an Egyptian cat goddess might take Power Flux (Cats) at Level 2 for 20 Character Points, which grants 10 Flux Points. Up to once every minute, the character can allocate the 10 Flux Points to any combination of Attributes that fit the cat theme. Perhaps in the evening the character plans to prowl around the city for several hours to hunt evil demons, leaping from rooftop to rooftop, and assigns the following Attributes: Heightened Senses (Hearing, Sight) Level 2 (2 Flux Points); Jumping Level 2 (2 Flux Points); Weapon Level 2 ("Claws") (4 Flux Points), and Special Movement Level 2 (Balance, Cat-Like) (2 Flux Points). Early next morning, the character decides they should gather information about any strange happenings they may have missed during the night by visiting a common stray cat hangout near the wharf and replaces the Level 2 Weapon Attribute with Telepathy (Cats) Level 1 (3 Flux Points) and Special Movement Level 1 (Fast) (1 Flux Point).

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

MAJOR CATEGORY

The character's influence extends to a major or large category that has a significant impact on the game instead of just a minor one. Examples include: a broad concept or idea (love, communication, travel, strength),

a major aspect of nature (weather, magnetism, gravity, electricity, animals), or a broad sphere of influence (cities, computer data, health, necromancy, truth, manufacturing, fertility, weapons, drugs, shapeshifting).

PRIMAL CATEGORY

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The character's influence extends to a primal or universal category that has an extreme impact on the game instead of just a minor one. Examples include core concepts and primary spheres of influence such as Time, War, Death, Life, Earth, Stars, Thought, Magic, Force, Math, Self, Law, Chaos, Heaven, Hell, Dimensions, Dreams, and others.

Level 1	Reassign up to 5 Flux Points each minute
Level 2	Reassign up to 10 Flux Points each minute
Level 3	Reassign up to 15 Flux Points each minute
Level 4	Reassign up to 20 Flux Points each minute
Level 5	Reassign up to 25 Flux Points each minute
Level 6	Reassign up to 30 Flux Points each minute

POWER VARIATION

Attribute Cost: 4 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Variable

This very flexible Attribute is similar to Power Flux, but more focussed. It also represents control over an element, ideology, natural phenomenon, or sphere of influence. However, Power Variation limits the character to a small assortment of previously assigned Attributes, amongst which their associated Character Points can be exchanged once a minute or dramatic scene. This Attribute is ideal for assigning to high-tech Items such as starships and vehicles that allocate power to different systems as need (such as powering shields, weapons, navigation, and life support systems).

At each Level of this Attribute, Character Points can be exchanged in any way between the Level costs of a wide range of Attributes (usually excluding Companions, Dynamic Powers, Item, Power Variation, Skill Groups, and Transfer) that are specified when this Attribute is assigned. The number of specified Attributes is equal to one more than the character's Power Variation Level. Note that for the purposes of Power Variation, each Weapon Attribute (page 132) is considered to be a separate Attribute. Furthermore, Levels can be dropped to 0 for one or more of these Attributes as desired in order to have more Character Points available for assigning to the other Attributes.

For example, if a character with Level 3 Power Variation has allocated 15 Character Points to four variable Attributes (Armour, Flight, a single Weapon, and Teleport) during character creation, they can redistribute these 15 Points in any way over the four Attributes and their Enhancement and Limiter Ranks once every minute. The original values of these Attributes are still important, though, because if an ability such as Nullify (page 110) is used to negate the Power Variation Attribute, the character will revert to their original values in each Attribute.

Level 1	Reassign Character Points between 2 Attributes each minute
Level 2	Reassign Character Points between 3 Attributes each minute
Level 3	Reassign Character Points between 4 Attributes each minute
Level 4	Reassign Character Points between 5 Attributes each minute
Level 5	Reassign Character Points between 6 Attributes each minute
Level 6	Reassign Character Points between 7 Attributes each minute

PROJECTION

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

The character can create projected images that may have audible or visual components, or both. This Attribute may reflect holographic technology, magical ability, control over environmental conditions, or a completely different method of creation. The difference between a Projection and an Illusion (page 97) is that everyone can see and/or hear a Projection because it does not target specific minds. The Projection cannot be touched because it is not substantial, nor does it have a taste or smell. A character can normally maintain only a single Projection at a time but assigning Enhancements (see below) can increase this.

Depending on the situation, and the nature of other individuals or animals viewing the Projection, the image may appear to be a real object. Closer inspection will usually reveal the Projection for what it is, but this will not cause the Projection to disappear as it would for an Illusion. If appropriate, the GM can require Body or Mind rolls to "see through" a Projection. See the Illusion Attribute (page 97) for the ability to create mental illusions that target specific people, rather than real images that anyone (including technological devices, such as cameras) can detect.

A Projection may be of a particular object or entity or complete scene (such as a furnished room or crowd). It may also be created over an existing person, scene, or object to make it appear different than it really is. A Projection that is untended is normally static, either remaining in one place or (if created over something) moving as the underlying object or entity moves. To give a Projection the semblance of independent activity (such as a projected image of a person who moves and

speaks) the character must actively concentrate on manipulating the Projection and perform no other actions.

The Level-related area dictates the size of the Projection image, but it can be created anywhere within a 100-metre radius surrounding the character. Thus, a Level 6 (30 metres) Projection means that any image up to 30 metres in radius (such as a huge advertising billboard) can be created and moved around within a location of 100 metres (such as a market square).

In order for the character to create a convincing Projection of something complex, the GM may require a Mind Stat roll. The GM can add edges or obstacles (page 182) to the Stat roll depending on how familiar or unfamiliar the character is with the scene that is being simulated. The GM may also give the character a +1 bonus for every Level they have in excess of the minimum Level needed to create a Projection. For example, if a character with Projection Level 5 (maximum Projection size of 10 m) decides to project the image of a large dog (1 metre in size; a Level 3 effect), a +2 bonus applies (Level 5 - Level 3 = +2). If the roll fails, the character's Projection has some obvious flaw in it (perhaps the dog has six legs, no face, or is green).

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

FEW PROJECTIONS

The character can maintain 2-3 Projections at the same time. A projection that represents the image of a group of objects or entities such as a crowd of androids or a furnished office, counts as a single Projection rather than several. If a character is already sustaining their maximum number of Projections and wishes to create another one, an existing Projection must first be dispelled.

SEVERAL PROJECTIONS

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). As above, but the character can maintain 4-6 Projections at the same time.

Level 1	Tiny projection (10 cm radius)
Level 2	Small projection (1 m radius)
Level 3	Moderately sized projection (10 m radius)
Level 4	Building-side projection (100 m radius)
Level 5	Neighbourhood-sized projection (1 km radius)
Level 6	City-sided projection (10 km radius)



RANGED ATTACK

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

A character with the Ranged Attack Attribute knows how to perform precise ranged attacks with a particular class of distance weapons. This is actually a group of different Attributes, each representing expertise with a particular class of weapons.

For each Level, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Attack Combat Value whenever they are using the specified group of ranged weapon. This bonus actually increases the Attack Combat Value when using the specific weapon, and thus relevant damage inflicted (page 193) is increased as well.

The character selects the group of ranged weaponry when this Attribute is assigned. Examples include:

Archery (bows); Artillery (large calibre indirect-fire guns such as howitzers and mortars); Blow Guns; Cannon (large calibre direct-fire guns such as tank guns and naval guns); Handgun (pistols, machine pistols, revolvers); Crossbow; Launchers (guided and unguided rockets); Long Gun (carbines, rifles, submachine guns, and shotguns); Machine Gun (bipod, tripod, or vehicle mounted machine guns and automatic cannon); Mechanical Artillery (catapults and bolt throwers); Sling; Special Attack (all attacks associated with a particular psychic ability or super power); Spells (magical missile attacks such as fireballs and lightning); Throwing (for thrown axes, knives, stars, grenades, etc.); or a group of ranged weapons built into an Item type such as "tank weaponry" or "starship weaponry" or "giant robot weaponry".

SIZE-RELATED LEVELS

When Ranged Attack is added to a character due to a Size Rank smaller than Medium, the character receives the Attack Combat Value bonus on all ranged attacks (ie. all types of weapons).

Level 1	Attack Combat Value increases by 2 when using a class of ranged weapons
Level 2	Attack Combat Value increases by 4 when using a class of ranged weapons
Level 3	Attack Combat Value increases by 6 when using a class of ranged weapons
Level 4	Attack Combat Value increases by 8 when using a class of ranged weapons
Level 5	Attack Combat Value increases by 10 when using a class of ranged weapons
Level 6	Attack Combat Value increases by 12 when using a class of ranged weapons

RANGED DEFENCE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

This is actually a group of different Attributes, each representing the character's talent at avoiding ranged attacks in specific circumstances. The character selects the condition for this Attribute when it is assigned, with each Level giving the character a +2 to Defence Combat Value when defending against ranged attacks under the specific condition.

RANGED DEFENCE (PERSONAL)

The Attribute applies against attacks made while the character is able to move freely, whether they be on foot, flying, swimming, etc. The character may not actually be dodging bullets, but rather this Attribute is a combination of situational awareness and tactical movement as well as knowing when to keep moving (to present a more difficult target) and when to drop for cover.

RANGED DEFENCE (MOVEMENT)

The Attribute applies against attacks made while the character is manoeuvring a specific vehicle or Item/Companion type, such as automobiles, motorcycles, boats, giant robots, starships, hoverboards, horses, dolphins, and more.

SIZE-RELATED LEVELS

When Ranged Defence is added to a character due to a Size Rank smaller than Medium, the character receives the Defence Combat Value bonus defending against all ranged attacks (ie. both personal and movement).

Level 1	Defence Combat Value increases by 2 when defending against ranged attacks under a specific condition
Level 2	Defence Combat Value increases by 4 when defending against ranged attacks under a specific condition
Level 3	Defence Combat Value increases by 6 when defending against ranged attacks under a specific condition
Level 4	Defence Combat Value increases by 6 when defending against ranged attacks under a specific condition
Level 5	Defence Combat Value increases by 10 when defending against ranged attacks under a specific condition
Level 6	Defence Combat Value increases by 12 when defending against ranged attacks under a specific condition

REGENERATION

Attribute Cost: 5 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

This Attribute can either Regenerate a character's own Health Points or Energy Points, but not both (though it can be assigned twice to Regenerate both Health and Energy). Select the focus of the Regeneration when this Attribute is assigned during character creation.

Characters with this Attribute automatically heal or energise their own injuries at the rate of 5 Health or Energy Points each Level each round, whether they are awake, asleep, or unconscious. The character's Health or Energy Points cannot exceed their original total, though. At higher Regeneration Levels of Health Points specifically, the character's body will revive itself if "clinically" dead but not actually brain-dead (Level 3+) and can repair massive trauma such as lost limbs or organs (Level 5+). Regeneration cannot repair a dead body, however (see the Reincarnation Attribute, page 117, for this ability).

▶ LIMITER

CONDITIONAL

Some characters need exposure to a particular substance or energy source in order to regenerate their Health or Energy Points. The speed of this Regeneration depends on the strength of exposure. The substance can be common, such as sunlight or positive emotions, but should not be something that is omnipresent under most practical circumstances (such as breathable air).

The GM should rate the strength of exposure to a particular condition or substance using five degrees of intensity, each of which provides a different rate of regeneration: Extremely Weak (1 Point/Level per round), Weak (2 Points/Level per round), Average (3 Points/Level per round), Strong (4 Points/Level per round), or Extremely Strong (5 Points/Level per round).

Characters should usually be able to find Average magnitude intensity substances easily. For example, if a character regenerates from sunlight, a sunny day would be sufficient. To continue that particular example, a Strong intensity might be the midday sun at the equator or unfiltered sunlight in space, while an Extremely strong intensity might be sunlight very close to a star (or during daytime on a planet near a star, such as Mercury). Similarly, Weak intensities should be common (indoor light through a window) and extremely weak should be very common (such as any exposure at all to solar radiation). Characters may also find themselves unable to regenerate when the substance is absent (such as at night or when underground).

The default assumption is that the substance that triggers the Conditional Regeneration is easy to find (sunlight, noise, heat, an emotion, plants, etc.). If the substance is rare, also take the Environmental Limiter (page 150).

Level 1	Regenerates up to 5 Health Points or Energy Points each round
Level 2	Regenerates up to 10 Health Points or Energy Points each round
Level 3	Regenerates up to 15 Health Points or Energy Points each round
Level 4	Regenerates up to 20 Health Points or Energy Points each round
Level 5	Regenerates up to 25 Health Points or Energy Points each round
Level 6	Regenerates up to 30 Health Points or Energy Points each round

REINCARNATION

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

If the character is killed or destroyed, some of their essence may still survive. This may be in spiritual or digital form, or it may be something that must be retrieved from the corpse. A robot whose memory can be copied or uploaded, a creature that leaves an egg in its body upon death, or an undead monster that will reform a few minutes, hours, or days after its apparent death are all examples of this. If this remnant can be salvaged or otherwise recovered, in a matter of days or weeks and with proper care, it will develop a new body similar to the original.

Reincarnation is moderately easy to stop. This may be as simple as burning, blowing up, or dismembering a body, or perhaps burying the body on consecrated ground. The GM and player must work together to determine the parameters involved in preventing the rebirth.

▶ ENHANCEMENT

DIFFICULT TO STOP

With this Enhancement, the Reincarnation can only be stopped with tremendous difficulty as best determined by the campaign scope with input from the Game Master.

Level 1	It takes up to 1 month to reincarnate
Level 2	It takes up to 1 week to reincarnate
Level 3	It takes up to 1 day to reincarnate
Level 4	It takes up to 12 hours to reincarnate
Level 5	It takes up to 1 hour to reincarnate
Level 6	It takes up to 1 minute to reincarnate

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RESILIENT

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

The character is adapted to survive for short periods in a number of environments equal to their Resilient Attribute Level that are hostile to ordinary humans.



Examples of hostile environments include: acidic/basic liquids, airborne toxins (including gasses and microbes), extra dimensional, high pressure, low pressure, intense cold, intense heat, radiation, lack of air, poisons, and underwater (the ability to seemingly "breathe" water for short periods), etc. Alternatively, the Resilient Attribute can indicate that the character has partial resistance from conditions that can otherwise afflict normal humans such as ageing (cannot be artificially aged), disease (major edge on Stat rolls to resist), sleep (can operate for long periods without sleep), sustenance (can survive long periods without food or water), sight/hearing effects from intense light/sound, etc. Finally, Resilient can be assigned to mechanical vehicles, mecha, and other non-living Items to represent an enhanced "mechanical endurance" that reduces the need for frequent refuelling or re-energising (similar to how Resilient can reduce the frequency that humans require food and water). When a Stat roll would be appropriate to determine if the Resilient Attribute provides the intended protection (such as when rolling to see if protection from blinding bright vision attacks is effective against a flash grenade), the character receives a major edge (page 182) on the Body Stat roll.

The Resilient Attribute does not apply to non-human characters whose natural living environment is not the Earth's atmosphere (such as a mermaid living in the ocean or an alien from a world with a breathable methane atmosphere). In these cases, the character would instead assign Resilient (Earth Atmosphere) to survive for extended periods in normal human environments (adding the Complete Enhancement if the character is fully adapted for survival).

This Attribute also provides the character with a 5 Armour Rating (page 80) against environmental conditions and attacks similar to the adapted environment. For example, Resilient (Heat) provides Armour while in the desert sun and against fiery blasts from dragons, while Resilient (Pressure) provides Armour while deep-sea diving and against a sorcerer's crushing gravity attack. In most natural Earth environments and climatic conditions, this built-in 5 Armour Rating is sufficient to provide the character with adequate protection. For complete resistance to specific types of Weapon attacks, see the Immunity Attribute (page 98).

▶ ENHANCEMENT

COMPLETE

This character's resilience is complete and fully adapted to one selected hostile environment or condition. For example, the character could be totally Resilient to all diseases or poisons, not age at all, not require any food or water, survive in total vacuum, etc. The Complete Enhancement can be assigned multiple times if the character is fully Resilient to more than one identified environment.

- Level 1 Resilient to 1 environment or condition
- Level 2 Resilient to 2 environments or conditions
- Level 3 Resilient to 3 environments or conditions
- Level 4 Resilient to 4 environments or conditions
- Level 5 Resilient to 5 environments or conditions
- Level 6 Resilient to 6 environments or conditions

SENSORY BLOCK

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

A character with Sensory Block is partially hidden from specific senses or detection techniques, hindering such detection within a three-metre area surrounding the character. This can represent a magical ability, technological enhancement, or paranormal effect. For each Level of the Sensory Block Attribute, the character can either block one Supersense (page 123) or one normal or enhanced sense, as determined during character creation. To fully block (rather than hinder) a detection technique, see the Undetectable Attribute (page 131).

Each Level allows one of the five senses – hearing, sight, smell, taste, or touch – or a particular specified Sixth Sense (page 119) or Supersense (page 123) to be partially blocked. Blocking a normal sense means that individuals within the three-metre area cannot see well (sight), cannot hear well (hearing), etc., while blocking a detection technique could mean that radar is scrambled, infrared is blurry, vibration is dampened, danger is considered relatively safe, the presence of magic is muted, etc., Stat and Skill rolls are assigned a major obstacle (page 182) when an individual inside the area (or individual outside the area that is attempting to detect inside the area) is using the identified sense or detection technique.

- Level 1 1 sense or technique is partially blocked in the character's vicinity
- Level 2 2 senses or techniques are partially blocked in the character's vicinity
- Level 3 3 senses or techniques are partially blocked in the character's vicinity
- Level 4 4 senses or techniques are partially blocked in the character's vicinity
- Level 5 5 senses or techniques are partially blocked in the character's vicinity
- Level 6 6 senses or techniques are partially blocked in the character's vicinity

SIXTH SENSE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

Some characters have the ability to detect things that may be hidden to normal senses or technological sensors, while others have affinities for specific objects or people. Sixth Sense typically represents psychic or magical ability, but can also reflect trained and acute senses or divine intervention.

The character may sense one particular category of phenomenon per Attribute Level. The player should define the category with the GM's approval. Examples of phenomena to which the character may be sensitive include: astral or ethereal beings, danger, pocket dimensions, electricity, elements, emotions, evil, illusions, interpersonal dynamics, magic, magnetic fields, paranormal nexus points, particular objects, places of power, psionic powers, radio, radar, spirits, telepathy, truth, virtue, or the use of specific Attributes or Defects.

As a guideline, the character is automatically alerted when something their Sixth Sense detects is in close proximity (within 10 metres). The GM may require a Soul Stat roll to do this, with a Target Number depending on the strength of the origin of whatever emanations the character can sense. The character receives a minor edge (page 182) if they are touching the source of the phenomena.

A character who specifically concentrates on using their Sixth Sense may gain more precise information on a successful Soul Stat roll. The exact content of this information is up to the GM. If the roll succeeds, the GM may provide the character with a few extra clues about the origin such as "the magic is coming from those buildings over there" or "you sense the evil presence feels otherworldly … and hungry." If the roll fails, the character will not gain any additional information unless something happens, such as the phenomena becoming stronger or coming much closer. The GM should always try to use Sixth Sense to plant clues that make a story more exciting, but not allow it to circumvent the process of discovery in a mystery plot.

- Level 1 1 Sixth Sense
- Level 2 2 Sixth Senses
- Level 3 3 Sixth Senses
- Level 4 4 Sixth Senses
- Level 5 5 Sixth Senses
- Level 6 6 Sixth Senses

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SIZE CHANGE

Attribute Cost: 10 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

The character can temporarily either increase or decrease their size up to one Size Rank away from their normal size for each Attribute Level. Select increase or decrease when the Attribute is assigned, though the character can always return to their normal size, of course. The character can typically maintain the change for up to one minute or for one dramatic scene. The benefits and drawbacks associated with the new Size Ranks apply (page 35).

▶ ENHANCEMENT

BOTH WAYS

The character can change sizes in both directions, instead of being limited to either growing or shrinking.

- Level 1 Grow by increasing up to 1 Size Rank; or shrink by decreasing up to 1 Size Rank
- Level 2 Grow by increasing up to 2 Size Ranks; or shrink by decreasing up to 2 Size Ranks
- Level 3 Grow by increasing up to 3 Size Ranks; or shrink by decreasing up to 3 Size Ranks
- Level 4 Grow by increasing up to 4 Size Ranks; or shrink by decreasing up to 4 Size Ranks
- Level 5 Grow by increasing up to 5 Size Ranks; or shrink by decreasing up to 5 Size Ranks
- Level 6 Grow by increasing up to 6 Size Ranks; or shrink by decreasing up to 6 Size Ranks

SKILL GROUP

Attribute Cost: 1, 2, or 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body, Mind, or Soul

Skill Groups represents training or natural talent in a particular broad field. There are several different Skill Groups and each of them is considered its own Attribute. Assigning multiple Skill Group Attributes at different Levels, therefore, is an ideal method for creating a versatile character. For combat-related capabilities, see the following Attributes instead: Attack Mastery, Defence Mastery, Melee Attack, Melee Defence, Ranged Attack, and Ranged Defence.

In appropriate circumstances, the Level of a character's suitable Skills Group is added to their related Stat when making a Skill roll to determine the success or failure of a task. See Roll Types (page 179) for more information on Skill rolls.

Skill Groups are divided into three categories with differing Character Point costs (from 1 to 3 Points per Level) to reflect their typical utility in most BESM games. The GM may reallocate some of these Skill Groups to different categories – thus changing their Point cost – to more accurately reflect frequency and value in their specific game setting. For example, in a high school game of romance and student council political drama, the Domestic Skill Group might be better categorised under a Field Skill or Action Skill instead of a Background Skill.

GAMING WITH SKILL GROUPS

Including Skill Groups in BESM Fourth Edition is a shift from previous editions that used detailed, specific skill lists instead of groups. There are numerous advantages to these collections of related skills, though several problems may arise as well that require GM and player consideration, including skill overlap and interpretation.

OVERLAP AND BROAD APPLICATIONS

The open-ended nature of the Skill Groups could encourage justifying that a specific activity falls under the realm of nearly any group. For example, extracting information from a street thug could be rationalised under:

Occupation – "I'm a bounty hunter, and deal with such things regularly."

Business – "I'll make a deal with him, selling him on the virtues of working with us."

Social – "I'm good at talking with people and will convince him through rhetoric."

Street – "I'll speak his gang language and ensure he understands the consequences of silence."

Detective – "After all my years on the beat, I'm highly adept at extracting information."

This diverse application of Skill Groups is an intentional feature, though it may cause some consternation with some players and GMs who desire a more rigid structure.

PRIMARY USAGE

It's equally important not to make one or two Skill Groups essential for survival and enjoyment in a game, which discourages from players creating diverse characters. For example, if the characters with the Adventuring and Street Skill Groups are always have the opportunity to use their talents in the game, while other characters are merely sitting back and observing, there may be too much emphasis placed on those groups.

▶ BACKGROUND SKILL GROUPS (1 POINT/LEVEL)

ACADEMIC

Skills that are rooted in language, research, communications, and critical thinking.

ARTISTIC

Skills that are tied to formal and informal expression, and related to imagination, creativity, and aesthetics.

DOMESTIC

Skills that are often obtained without formal education and that have applications in daily life.

OCCUPATION (SELECT ONE)

Skills that are tied to the activities of one specific career that are often learned "on the job".

▶ FIELD SKILL GROUPS (2 POINT/LEVEL)

BUSINESS

Skills that cover a wide variety of administration applications, such as management, sales, policy, and savvy.

SOCIAL

Skills related to community interactions, interpersonal dynamics, and political manoeuvring.

STREET

Skills that reflect familiarity with underworld elements as well as urban culture and survival.

TECHNICAL

Skills related to gadgets and their functions, including aspects of mechanics, electronics, and programming.

▶ ACTION SKILL GROUPS (3 POINT/LEVEL)

ADVENTURING

Skills that apply to a broad spectrum of exploration in wilderness environments.

DETECTIVE

Skills relating to police sciences, investigations, urban immersion, and subterfuge.

MILITARY

Skills connected to organised troop efforts, formalised hierarchies, espionage, and combat support.

SCIENTIFIC

Skills appropriate to quantitative fields – biological, physical, medical, mathematical, and natural sciences.

Level 1 Developing – The character is gaining proficiency with the Skill Group through regular application

Level 2 Trained – The character has moderate training and practice with the Skill Group

Level 3 Expert – The character has significant training and practice with the Skill Group

Level 4 Veteran – The character has extensive training and practice with the Skill Group

Level 5 Master – The character has exhaustive training and practice with the Skill Group

Level 6 Grand Master – The character has unparalleled ability and knowledge with the Skill Group

SPACEFLIGHT

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

This Attribute is primarily intended for use in interplanetary or galactic games. A character (or more often, a vehicle or mecha Item) with Spaceflight can fly in the vacuum of space (but not in an atmosphere) between planets, stars, asteroids, solar systems, and (at extremely high Levels) even galaxies. The Flight Attribute (page 94) is required° to escape from the atmosphere and gravity of a planet or other large body. Without Flight, the traveller or Item can only achieve Spaceflight speeds if already in space.

Level 1 Primitive near-planetary Spaceflight (up to 10,000 kph). Travel from a planet to its moon takes a few days while a flight between nearby planets can take up to a year or more. This Level represents the approximate state of current human achievement for manned spaceflight.

Level 2 Slow interplanetary Spaceflight (up to 100,000 kph). Travel from a planet to its moon takes a few hours while a flight between nearby planets can take up to a month. This Level represents the approximate state of current human achievement for unmanned spaceflight.

Level 3 Average interplanetary Spaceflight. Travel between nearby planets in the same solar system takes a few days.

Level 4 Fast interplanetary Spaceflight. Travel between nearby planets in the same solar system takes a few hours.

Level 5 Extrasolar Spaceflight. Travel between planets in the same solar system takes a few minutes while travel between nearby solar systems takes a few years.

Level 6 Slow faster-than-light Spaceflight. Travel between solar systems takes a few weeks.

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SPECIAL MOVEMENT

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

The character may select one Special Movement type for every Level of this Attribute. The movement abilities may be the result of genetics, mystical forces, supernatural talents, or intense training. Several examples are given below but the GM and players are encouraged to develop additional abilities as well. Many other Attributes provide alternate methods of movement, including Flight, Ground Speed, Jumping, Spaceflight, Superspeed, Teleport, Tunnelling, or Water Speed.

BALANCE

The character never loses their balance, even when running on a narrow rope or beam.

CAT-LIKE

The character will take half damage (round down) from most falls and always lands on their feet.

FAST

The character's Body Stat is doubled for each assignment of this Attribute when calculating running speed (see page 191).

LIGHT-FOOTED

The character can skim over sand, snow, or ice at full speed.

SLITHERING

The character can slither along the ground at normal walking/running speeds. This allows a character to move quickly while maintaining a very low profile.

SWINGING

The character can swing through forests and cities (areas with natural or artificial structures above swinging height) using vines, ropes, webbing, or simply their arms.

UNTRACKABLE

The character never leaves footprints or tracks when they walk or run. Eliminating the character's scent as well is a Feature (page 92).

WALL-BOUNCING

For the duration of a dramatic scene, the character can move at regular walking speed without touching the ground by bounding back and forth between nearby vertical surfaces (walls). For example, they can proceed down hallways or climb an alleyway between two buildings (bouncing from wall to wall).

WALL-CRAWLING

The character can cling to walls or ceilings as though they were on the ground or floor. Due to the enhanced utility of this type of moment, this counts as two Special Movement abilities.

WATER-WALKING

The character can walk or run over water as if they were on land. Due to the enhanced utility of this type of moment, this counts as two Special Movement abilities.

ZEN DIRECTION

When the character opens their mind to the natural world, they will always move in the right direction. The right direction is not always the direction the character wants, but it is the direction the character needs.

Level 1	1 Special Movement ability
Level 2	2 Special Movement abilities
Level 3	3 Special Movement abilities
Level 4	4 Special Movement abilities
Level 5	5 Special Movement abilities
Level 6	6 Special Movement abilities

SUMMON CREATURES

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

The character can summon a wide variety of natural animals from the surrounding area (up to 1 km radius) and command them to perform a variety of simple activities such as attack, confuse, hunt, defend, etc. for a duration of approximately one minute or one dramatic scene. Dominion over humans and other sentient species is best handled by the Mind Control Attribute (page 108) instead. The Attribute Level determines the maximum number of animals that can be summoned, and multiple different types of animals can be summoned at the same time. If fewer animals are in the surrounding area, only those nearby will obey the summons. Additionally, the animals do not appear magically and instantaneously; they must find a way to travel to the summoning character and consequently summoning turtles or snails may not produce the fastest results.

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

SUPERNATURAL

The animals are summoned through supernatural means. The character can always summon the maximum number of allowable animals (as determined by the Attribute Level) and the animals arrive at the summoner's side within a single round. When the duration expires, the animals instantly return to their original locations.

DIMENSIONAL

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The character is not limited to summoning only natural animals but can also summon the maximum number of a variety of weak creatures from other dimensions or planes of existence. When the duration expires, the creatures instantly return to their original locations.

▶ LIMITERS

NARROW CATEGORY

The summoning is restricted to a narrow category of animals or creatures, such as mammals, insects, reptiles, amphibians, fish, avians, micro-demons, fae, etc.

SPECIFIC CATEGORY

Counts as 2 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 2 Levels). The summoning is restricted to a specific category of animals or creatures, such as dogs, cats, rodents, ants, bees, large reptiles, frogs, sharks, birds of prey, imps, pixies, etc.

SINGLE CATEGORY

Counts as 3 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 3 Levels). The summoning is restricted to a single category of animals or creatures, such as poodles, tigers, rats, fire ants, crocodiles, tree frogs, hammerhead sharks, eagles, blood imps, water pixies, etc.

- Level 1 Summon up to 10 creatures
- Level 2 Summon up to 30 creatures
- Level 3 Summon up to 100 creatures
- Level 4 Summon up to 300 creatures
- Level 5 Summon up to 1,000 creatures
- Level 6 Summon up to 3,000 creatures

SUPERSENSE

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

Supersense gives the character one sense (assigned during character creation) that functions beyond the scope of normal human capability that can detect objects at a distance, in the dark, and invisible to normal sight. The detectable objects (or at least the radiation they send out, in the case of some Supersenses) must be in direct line of sight, though, and not blocked by a solid barrier or the curve of the planet's horizon. Supersenses can include: echolocation, infrared vision, radar, sonar, magnetic field detection, microscopic vision, ultravision, vibration detection, x-ray vision, and more exotic or magical detection forms. Active Supersenses that send out pulses of energy (such as radar and sonar) should also be assigned the Detectable Limiter (page 150).

Multiple different Supersenses with varying ranges can be represented by assigning this Attribute multiple times.

- Level 1 Supersense can detect objects within a range of 10 m
- Level 2 Supersense can detect objects within a range of 100 m
- Level 3 Supersense can detect objects within a range of 1 km
- Level 4 Supersense can detect objects within a range of 10 km (maximum horizon range)
- Level 5 Supersense can detect objects within a range of 100 km
- Level 6 Supersense can detect objects within a range of 1,000 km

SUPERSPEED

Attribute Cost: 3 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

A character can sprint up to 3 metres/round (or 3 kph) multiplied by their Body Stat over short distances. A character with Superspeed can move much faster than this, as well as perceive the world at an increased pace. This Attribute is usually supernatural in nature (since it progresses well beyond realistic speed physics) and consequently is usually only appropriate for augmented or magical characters and not regular vehicle or mecha Items. For a more realistic form of movement for Items, see the Ground Speed Attribute (page 96).

In most genres, a fast-moving character can still interact with the world. This means that the character will not run into buildings along city streets because they can perceive them early enough and make appropriate turns to avoid them. The character can also read books quickly, write at incredible speeds, and perform normal chores and activities at enhanced rates.

Superspeed is a modular Attribute that does not provide the character with many other Attribute benefits typically associated with speedy characters, however. This allows for maximum player flexibility when designing their character concept. Many characters with Superspeed will also possess one or more Levels in the following Attributes: Change State (incorporeal to vibrate through solid objects), Combat Technique (Lightning Reflexes), Extra Actions, Heightened Awareness, Massive Damage (Superspeed attacks), Regeneration, Special Movement, and Weapon (tied to Superspeed through the Dependent Limiter).

- Level 1 Top speed is 100 kph
- Level 2 Top speed is 300 kph
- Level 3 Top speed is 1,000 kph
- Level 4 Top speed is 3,000 kph
- Level 5 Top speed is 10,000 kph
- Level 6 Top speed is 30,000 kph

SUPERSTRENGTH

Attribute Cost: 4 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

A character can lift approximately 20-30 kg times their Body Stat (and freely manoeuvre about one half that amount), but some characters are far stronger than their Body Stats indicate. This Attribute can represent the muscular strength of a large or powerful non-human, a supernatural ability, the hydraulic systems of robotic muscles, etc. Each Level of Superstrength determines the maximum mass the character can lift and carry for short distances.

A character's Superstrength is independent of their Body Stat. When someone or something has Superstrength, strength moves beyond the Stat scale; the Body Stat now represents fitness, durability, and agility rather than actual muscle. Thus, a player could create someone with a Body Stat of 2, but Levels of Superstrength (clumsy, fragile, and out of shape, but super strong!).

UNARMED COMBAT

Each Superstrength Level adds +5 damage to unarmed attacks such as punches, kicks, grappling, or body slams. The +5 damage bonus also usually applies to the natural weapons of super-strong animals, including claws, bites, hooves, and gores.

MUSCLE WEAPONS

Each Superstrength Level adds +1 to a character's Damage Multiplier when using normal melee and thrown Weapons, as well as when using Weapon attacks with the Muscle Enhancement (page 138). If such a Weapon Attribute is defined as a form of unarmed combat as well, the +5 damage bonus described above does not also apply – the character only receives the +1 Damage Multiplier bonus.

Level 1	Lift up to 250 kg (such as a motorcycle)
Level 2	Lift up to 500 kg (such as a horse)
Level 3	Lift up to 1 tonne (such as a small car)
Level 4	Lift up to 2 tonnes (such as a truck)
Level 5	Lift up to 5 tonnes (such as an elephant)
Level 6	Lift up to 10 tonnes (such as a yacht)

SWARM

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

A character with this Attribute can transform into a swarm of small creatures, such as rats, bats, wasps, crows, or other creatures or things (such as tiny attack robots). Vampires and demons most often possess this dramatic ability.

The type of Swarm creature must be determined during character creation. The character can create one critter from their body for every current Health Point, multiplied by the Level in this Attribute. For example, a character with 130 current Health Points who has Swarm at Level 4 could transform into a hoard of 520 creatures (130 x 4 = 520).

When transformed into a Swarm, the character cannot use any of their existing Attributes. The actions of the Swarm are limited to three options: move, observe, and attack. Additionally, all the critters of the Swarm must remain within close proximity of each other (within a radius of five metres per Attribute Level). A swarm's Attack Combat Value is equal to the Swarm Attribute Level + 4. The attack damage is not calculated in the usual way, however. Instead, it inflicts a flat 1 damage for every 10 critters (round up; minimum 1 damage) in the Swarm.

A Swarm can be attacked normally, and each creature in it dies if it is hit (no defence roll is allowed). Unless an opponent is using a Weapon Attribute with the Area or Spreading Enhancements (pages 145 and 141), only a single member of the Swarm can be killed per attack (GM's discretion). Consequently, a Swarm of 200 creatures requires 200 attacks to completely destroy. Attacks with the Spreading Enhancement can affect multiple critters at a time, while attacks with the Area Enhancement can be devastating to the Swarm.

A character who dissolved into a Swarm may choose to revert into normal form during their Initiative in a combat round. To accomplish this, all available critters in the Swarm (those not killed or trapped) must join together. Transforming back to normal form replaces all the character's action for that round. The character will return to normal with Health Points equal to the number of critters that recombined, divided by the Swarm Attribute Level (round down). For example, if a character with 130 current Health Points and Swarm at Level 4 divided into 520 creatures, and after a battle recombined with only 100 available critters, the character would then have a current total of 25 Health Points (100 ÷ Level 4 = 25).

Level 1	The character can turn into a swarm of creatures equal to the character's current Health Point total
Level 2	The character can turn into a swarm of creatures equal to 2 times the character's current Health Point total
Level 3	The character can turn into a swarm of creatures equal to 3 times the character's current Health Point total
Level 4	The character can turn into a swarm of creatures equal to 4 times the character's current Health Point total

Level 5 The character can turn into a swarm of creatures equal to 5 times the character's current Health Point total

Level 6 The character can turn into a swarm of creatures equal to 6 times the character's current Health Point total

TELEKINESIS

Attribute Cost: 4 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

The character can concentrate on a physical object (but not forms of energy) within 10 metres and move it without physically touching it. Telekinesis may represent psionic ability, magic, or some form of tractor beam. Characters with the ability to magically control the movement of a particular element may also use Telekinesis to represent this ability by assigning a Limiter (see below).

A character using Telekinesis can lift themselves, a character, an object, or a group of adjacent objects or people and move them at a brisk walking speed (5 metres/round or 5 kph) or manipulate it with the dexterity of a human hand. If a character wishes to fly at speeds exceeding 5 kph, they need the Flight Attribute (page 94) rather than Telekinesis. A character can use Telekinesis as a weapon by lifting someone up into the air and dropping them, or by moving a heavy object over their foe and releasing it. The normal rules for non-combat damage (page 193) are used based on the severity of the impact incident.

Telekinesis can also be used more directly to hurl objects and inflict damage. The amount of mass that can be lifted and violently hurled is much less in this instance, equal the normal mass ÷ 100 (for example, 1 kg at Level º3, 10 kg at Level 4, etc.). Otherwise, the ordinary rules for combat are used, as if the telekinetic was striking or wielding objects with an invisible pair of hands (or multiple hands, if they have the Extra Actions Attribute, page 92). If striking with a weapon (including thrown weapons), use the normal combat rules (page 183) for attacking and determining damage. If striking with bare telekinetic force, use the normal guidelines for unarmed damage (page 193).

▶ LIMITER

FOCUSSED

This Limiter restricts the character to telekinetically moving or sculpting one specific type of matter – such as air, earth, fire, metal, water, wood, etc. – that is selected during character creation. Context is provided below for each of these examples:

AIR

The character can only move air (or other gases). A cubic metre of air masses about 1.3 kg. Enough air to fill a 3 metre by 3 metre by 3 metre (roughly 1,000 cubic feet) room masses 35 kg.

EARTH

The character can only move dirt, rock, stone, sand, etc. and cannot affect treated metals such as iron or lead. A cubic metre of packed dirt masses about 2 tonnes; the same mass of concrete masses about 2.5 tonnes, while a cubic metre of solid granite masses about 2.8 tonnes.

FIRE

The character can only affect flames of an existing fire, or can possibly start small ones (and manipulate them into larger ones, as appropriate) with their mind as well. Since fire does not have mass, the Level indicates the size of the flames that can be controlled and manipulated: small fires at Level 1 (like a candle or match flame), up to a large conflagrations that could encompass an apartment building at Level 6.

METAL

The character's Telekinesis only works on metal. This may be a mystical limitation, or it may be the character's Attribute is actually magnetic (or pseudo-magnetic if it works on most metals). A cubic metre of steel masses about 8 tonnes.

WATER

The character can lift and move water. A cubic metre of water (1,000 litres) masses one tonne while a gallon of water (about 4 litres) masses about 4 kilograms.

WOOD

The character's Attribute only works on wood (living or dead). This ability is usually mystical in origin and common to druids and woodland spirits. A cubic metre of wood masses just under a tonne.

Level 1 The character's Telekinesis can move up to 1 kg (such as a thick book). Extremely light objects (up to 10 grams) may be hurled with Telekinesis at a target up to 1 m away but does not inflict any damage.

Level 2 The character's Telekinesis can move up to 10 kg (such as a small dog). Light objects (up to 100 grams) may be hurled with Telekinesis at a target up to 3 m away; the object is considered a Level 0 Weapon with the Stun Enhancement.

Level 3 The character's Telekinesis can move up to 100 kg (such as an average human). Moderately heavy objects (up to 1 kg) may be hurled with Telekinesis at a target up to 10 m away; the object is considered a Level 1 Weapon.

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Level 4 The character's Telekinesis can move up to 1 tonne (such as a ballistic missile). Heavy objects (up to 10 kg) may be hurled with Telekinesis at a target up to 30 m away; the object is considered a Level 2 Weapon.

Level 5 The character's Telekinesis can move up to 10 tonnes (such as a large tree). Very heavy objects (up to 100 kg) may be hurled with Telekinesis at a target up to 100 m away; the object is considered a Level 3 Weapon.

Level 6 The character's Telekinesis can move up to 100 tonnes (such as an airliner). Massive objects (up to 1 tonne) may be hurled with Telekinesis at a target up to 300 m away; the object is considered a Level 4 Weapon.

TELEPATHY

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

By concentrating and through touch, the character can read another person's mind and can also transmit their thoughts to the target. At higher Levels, the character can invade a target's mind to probe and even alter their memories. Telepathy is the classic psionic ability, though versions of this Attribute may also represent other magical capabilities, such as demons that can tempt their victims through mental invasion.

Telepathy normally works only if the subject is in sight or can be otherwise perceived (touched, heard, use of a special detection technique, etc.). If the subject is beyond normal perceptions, mental invasion is usually not possible. The subject cannot detect a telepath reading thoughts or sensory impressions unless they have the Telepathy (page 126) or Mind Shield (page 109) Attributes. If so, they can attempt to block the telepath, in which case the only way to get through is with a mental invasion. A target will always be aware of a mental invasion, although a non-telepath might not understand what exactly is happening.

▶ LIMITERS

BROAD CATEGORY

The character's Telepathy is restricted to a broad category of targets, such as "all humans and similar sapient beings" or "all non-sentient animals" or "all machine intelligences".

NARROW CATEGORY

Counts as 2 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 2 Levels). The character's Telepathy is restricted to a narrow category of targets, such as "any reptile" or "any male" "or "any faeries".

SPECIFIC CATEGORY

Counts as 3 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 3 Levels). The character's Telepathy is restricted to a specific category of targets, such as "dogs" or "people obsessed with beauty" or "any being, but only on Sundays".

SINGLE CATEGORY

Counts as 4 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 4 Levels). The character's Telepathy is restricted to a single targetted group, such as family members, or mutants with a specific gene, or poodles.

Level 1 The character can, by concentrating, use mind reading to pick up the "loud" surface thoughts of one target (ie. strong emotions or intense thinking). The character can also transmit a single feeling such as fear or love or apathy to the target.

Level 2 The character can, by concentrating, use mind reading to pick up the ordinary surface thoughts of one target. The character can only read what a person is thinking about at that time. The character can also transmit a word, simple image, or simple concept (like a flower or a person's face) to a non-telepath target. Two telepaths can communicate with each other at conversational speeds.

Level 3 The character can, by concentrating, pick up a single target's sensory impressions as well (such as seeing through the target's eyes, feeling what the target feels, etc.). The character can choose to edit out some senses if desired. Alternatively, the character can concentrate and read "loud" surface thoughts from a small group of people (up to 10). The character can transmit speech to a single non-telepath target at normal conversational speeds or send a single powerful image or simple thought to up to 10 people.

Level 4 In addition to the Level 3 capabilities, the character can invade a target's mind. This counts as an attack – the character and the target make opposed Mind Stat rolls. If the target is willing or loses the mental combat, the telepath can probe the target's memory for information. The character can also instinctively read "loud" surface thoughts from anyone they touch (unless deliberately blocking the ability) without needing to concentrate. The character can also transmit thoughts at conversational speeds to a small group of people (up to 10) simultaneously.

Level 5 In addition to the Level 4 capabilities, the character can read the "loud" surface thoughts of anyone in the general vicinity without concentrating (unless deliberately blocking the ability). A successful mental invasion (winning the opposed roll) allows the character to probe memories that the target no longer consciously remembers. The character can also transmit thoughts at conversational speeds to a crowd of people (up to 25) simultaneously.

Level 6 In addition to the Level 5 capabilities, the character automatically reads the surface thoughts of everyone in the vicinity and automatically shares the sensory experiences of anyone they are touching without needing to concentrate (unless deliberately blocking the ability). A successful mental invasion (winning the opposed roll) allows the character to alter memories by deleting existing memories and giving the target false ones. The character can also transmit thoughts at conversational speeds to a throng of people (up to 50) simultaneously.

TELEPORT

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind

Teleport enables the character to transport themselves instantly from place to place without crossing the intervening space. It is a common ability for psionic characters, sorcerers, and superhumans. Assigned to a vehicle, it can perhaps represent a high-tech space folding drive or a magical location-transposing dweomer.

A character can carry anything reasonable while teleporting that they could normally carry or wear (such as clothing, handheld weapons and equipment, or a small pet or ally). Teleporting is only possible if the character has visited the intended destination or can see or otherwise sense the destination (possibly through the Heightened Senses, Supersense, or Sixth Sense Attributes).

Level 1 10 m maximum teleportation distance
Level 2 100 m maximum teleportation distance
Level 3 1 km maximum teleportation distance
Level 4 10 km maximum teleportation distance
Level 5 100 km maximum teleportation distance
Level 6 1,000 km maximum teleportation distance



TOUGH

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Possessing this Attribute increases the Health Points of the character, allowing them to withstand more damage from injuries. The Tough Attribute, along with the Body Stat, also reflects a character's resistance to sickness, disease, and other physical ailments. See page 170 for more information on Health Points. Note that characters with high Body or Soul Stats may be very healthy even without this Attribute, since Health Points are derived from these Stats. Tough should also be assigned to any character or Item that is unusually large or dense.

- Level 1 Health Points increase by 10
- Level 2 Health Points increase by 20
- Level 3 Health Points increase by 30
- Level 4 Health Points increase by 40
- Level 5 Health Points increase by 50
- Level 6 Health Points increase by 60

TRANSFER

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Soul

This Attribute represents the ability to transfer a character's talents to another willing person for a duration of one minute or dramatic scene. This often represents a magical gift of some sort; with appropriate Limiters, it can also represent someone who makes magical potions, talismans, or scrolls to give to others. By taking a general action and making a successful average Soul Stat roll (Target Number 12) the character can temporarily grant the use of any one of their Attributes to any single willing touched target. When an Attribute is Transferred, the receiving character is in complete control of its abilities. Should the character later grant the target a different ability, the target ceases benefiting from the previously transferred Attribute.

The Transfer Attribute Level determines the maximum other Attribute Level that can be granted, provided the transferring character has at least that Level to transfer. For example, a character with Level 4 Transfer can allow a target to use one of their Attributes at Levels 1-4 but cannot grant a Level 4 ability if the character only possesses it at Level 2 themselves. The GM may decide that Stats can also be given to a target when Transfer reaches Level 5 or higher. To grant Attributes to multiple targets simultaneously, the Transfer Attribute can be assigned multiple times.

▶ ENHANCEMENT

ALL ATTRIBUTES

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The character can transfer any and all of their selected Attributes of the appropriate Level simultaneously.

▶ LIMITER

SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTE

Counts as 2 Limiters (Attribute effectiveness increased by 2 Levels). The character can only transfer one of their Attributes, the identity of which must be specified when this ability is assigned during character creation.

- Level 1 Transfer Attributes at a maximum effectiveness of Level 1
- Level 2 Transfer Attributes at a maximum effectiveness of Level 2
- Level 3 Transfer Attributes at a maximum effectiveness of Level 3
- Level 4 Transfer Attributes at a maximum effectiveness of Level 4
- Level 5 Transfer Attributes at a maximum effectiveness of Level 5
- Level 6 Transfer Attributes at a maximum effectiveness of Level 6

TRANSMUTE

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Mind or Soul

This Attribute allows a character to use an action to transmute one medium-sized (or smaller Rank) solid non-living object – or set of connected objects – into another object of similar size and mass for one minute or dramatic scene. This might be due to alchemy, advanced nanotechnology, or magic. The character can transmute an object that is worth up to 5 Character Points for each Level of the Transmute Attribute and the object's new form is also limited to 5 Character Points/Level. Consequently, a medium-sized mundane object of appropriate mass can be transformed at only Level 1, while transforming powerful Items or advanced technology may require Level greater than 6 (and GM permission).

When attempting to transmute an Item that is in the possession of an unwilling opponent, the character must make a difficult (TN 15) Mind or Soul Stat roll (whichever is more relevant to the specific situation). Depending on the Character Point value of the Item, the GM may impose a minor or major obstacle (page 182) on this Stat roll.

The character cannot transmute material into new objects outside the character's experience. The character could transmute a weapon into a book, painting, or videotape, but the content must be something with which they were already familiar (but exact memorisation of every word is unnecessary – the subconscious mind fills in the blanks). Likewise, a character who had no familiarity with computers could not changed a television into one using Transmute. The GM may choose to require a Mind Stat roll (or relevant Skill roll) if the character attempts a particularly complex transmutation, setting whatever difficulty seems appropriate – typically an average Mind Stat or Mind-based Skill roll (Target Number 12). Failure may indicate the new object does not function properly. This failed result is especially applicable when creating complex technological devices.

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

RESIZE

The transmutation can change the size of the object up or down by 1 Rank (with corresponding mass change; see page 35) for each Level of the Transmute Attribute. For example, a character with Transmute at Level 2 can change a small pistol (Tiny; Size Rank -1) into a huge two-handed sword (Large; Size Rank 1).

GASEOUS

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The character can Transmute gases into solid objects (and vice versa), quite literally creating objects "out of thin air". The maximum Size Rank (page 35) of objects created out of large quantities of air or other gas is equal to the character's Transmute Level.

▶ LIMITERS

BROAD CATEGORY

The character can only transmute to and from a broad class of objects such as metal, weapons, clothing, food, etc. The GM may restrict any categories that seem overly broad or too powerful.

- Level 1 Transmute objects worth a maximum of 5 Character Points.
- Level 2 Transmute objects worth a maximum of 10 Character Points.
- Level 3 Transmute objects worth a maximum of 15 Character Points.
- Level 4 Transmute objects worth a maximum of 20 Character Points.
- Level 5 Transmute objects worth a maximum of 25 Character Points.
- Level 6 Transmute objects worth a maximum of 30 Character Points.

TUNNELLING

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

The Tunnelling Attribute allows a character to move through earth and burrow underground. Tunnelling assumes that the character is going through sand or packed earth. Burrowing through extremely dense or rocky ground is one Level slower and boring through solid rock is two Level slower. The tunnel the character leaves behind will either be permanent or will collapse immediately (specified during the creation of each tunnel).

- Level 1 Tunnel up to 10 metres per hour
- Level 2 Tunnel up to 30 metres per hour
- Level 3 Tunnel up to 100 metres per hour
- Level 4 Tunnel up to 300 metres per hour
- Level 5 Tunnel up to 1 kph
- Level 6 Tunnel up to 3 kph

UNAFFECTED

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

Unaffected represents the ability to ward off an enemy's use of an offensive Attribute when the character is targetted for assault. A magician's counterspell or a protective amulet or scroll could be represented by Unaffected. This ability only works on Attributes that derive their powers from one particular source (such as magic or technology or supernatural ability; see page 258) and that are ongoing or instantaneous (ie. not permanent). This Attribute can be assigned multiple times to affect more than one source.

The character can block the offensive use of one specific named Attribute that must be identified during character creation. In the case of the Weapon Attribute (page 132), only Weapons with a specific identified Enhancement are blocked (such as Weapons with the Drain, Psychic, or Stun Enhancements).

When an opponent targets the character with an Attribute considered Unaffected, the attacker must succeed with an opposed Stat roll with a penalty to their roll equal to twice the target character's Unaffected Attribute Level. If the roll fails, the Attribute does not affect the character.

▶ ENHANCEMENT

ALL WEAPONS

The character is Unaffected when targetted by all source-related Weapon Attributes, regardless of the assigned Enhancements.



SEVERAL ATTRIBUTES

The character is Unaffected by 2-5 source-related Attributes instead of just one.

MANY ATTRIBUTES

Counts as 2 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 Levels). The character is Unaffected by 6-10 source-related Attributes instead of just one.

ALL ATTRIBUTES

Counts as 3 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 3 Levels). The character is Unaffected by all source-related Attributes instead of just one.

Level 1	The attacker suffers a -2 penalty to affect the character with a specific Attribute
Level 2	The attacker suffers a -4 penalty to affect the character with a specific Attribute
Level 3	The attacker suffers a -6 penalty to affect the character with a specific Attribute
Level 4	The attacker suffers a -8 penalty to affect the character with a specific Attribute
Level 5	The attacker suffers a -10 penalty to affect the character with a specific Attribute
Level 6	The attacker suffers a -12 penalty to affect the character with a specific Attribute

UNDETECTABLE

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

This Attribute will completely hide the character from one or more senses or detection methods. The character may possess a supernatural concealment ability or a technological cloaking device, or may have a psychic or magical talent that causes observers to overlook them. To obscure an area instead, see the Sensory Block Attribute (page 119).

For each Undetectable Level, the player selects one sense or technique to which the character is "invisible." Senses include the human range for sight, hearing, taste, touch, or smell. Detection techniques include: astral, ethereal, infrared, magic, mental, radar, radiation, sonar, spiritual, ultraviolet, vibration, etc. Invisibility to sight or hearing cost 2 Attribute slots each rather than only 1, since they are usually more valuable in game adventures (GM's discretion).

While the character may not be detected using specific methods, indirect evidence can still reveal the character's presence. For example, a character who is Undetectable to sight will still leave footprints in muddy ground. Similarly, a vase that is knocked from a table by a character who is Undetectable to sound will still make noise as it smashes on the floor.

In normal combat situations involving human or nearly human opponents, a character who is Undetectable to sight has a great advantage. Only after the invisible character gives away their general position (for example, by firing a gun, attacking with a sword, or shouting) can they be attacked. Attacking opponents in melee range suffers a minor obstacle (page 182) on the attack roll and opponents at a greater distance suffer a major obstacle. Heightened Awareness (page 97) and Heightened Senses (page 97) Attributes can eliminate minor obstacles and reduce a major obstacle to a minor. Defending against a foe who is Undetectable to sight is also more difficult, with a minor obstacle applied on the defence roll.

▶ LIMITER

NONADJACENT

The character is only Undetectable at distances exceeding a few metres. At close range, the character can be perceived as normal or with a minor or major obstacle (page 182) to the Stat rolls of those nearby.

Level 1	Undetectable to 1 sense or technique
Level 2	Undetectable to 2 senses or techniques
Level 3	Undetectable to 3 senses or techniques
Level 4	Undetectable to 4 senses or techniques
Level 5	Undetectable to 5 senses or techniques
Level 6	Undetectable to 6 senses or techniques

UNIQUE ATTRIBUTE

Attribute Cost: 1-10 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: Variable

This Attribute covers any and all powers and special abilities not detailed in the rules. Often one single Character Point in a Unique Attribute is sufficient to give the character "flavour", but more Points can be allocated to enhance the effects on game play and must be added if the Attribute would be of considerable benefit. Discuss the Attribute with the GM to determine what specific game effects the Unique Attribute possesses.

The GM should assign a Point cost per Level based on how the Attribute compares to other Attributes and how useful it is. An Attribute that is somewhat useful in the game should cost 1 Point/Level; one that is very useful should cost 2-3 Points/Level; one that is extremely useful should cost 4-5 Points/Level; and one that is exceptionally powerful and useful should cost 6-10 Points/Level.

Note that many Unique Attributes can be better described simply as a Feature (page 92) or a new Combat Technique (page 83), or by adding Enhancements and Limiters to existing Attributes (see page 145).

Level 1 Basic aptitude with Unique Attribute
Level 2 Minor aptitude with Unique Attribute
Level 3 Moderate aptitude with Unique Attribute
Level 4 Significant aptitude with Unique Attribute
Level 5 Major aptitude with Unique Attribute
Level 6 Extreme aptitude with Unique Attribute

UNKNOWN POWER

Attribute Cost: Variable
Relevant Stat: Special

In some BESM games, the characters may be unaware of their paranormal or superhuman Attributes until they manifest at crucial moments. To represent this, the player can allocate some Character Points to the Unknown Power Attribute when creating the character. The player does not purchase a Level in this Attribute as normal, but rather simply allocates a selected amount of Character Points to the Unknown Power. The GM takes those allocated Points, adds a bonus of 50% (rounding up), and then uses them to assign other Attributes to the character. The GM does not tell the player which Attributes have been assigned; they are revealed to the player (and character) as the game unfolds and the Attributes manifest. GMs are encouraged to reveal the character's Attributes slowly and when it is appropriate for the campaign's story. The GM should never feel pressured to tell the player what their character's unknown Attributes are before the time is right.

WATER SPEED

Attribute Cost: 1 Point/Level
Relevant Stat: Body

Most characters and animals can swim at speeds equal to 0.5 kph times their Body Stat over short distances. A character with Water Speed, though, can float and travel both on and under water at even faster speeds for longer periods. Aquatic creatures and amphibious non-humans such as mermaids usually possess this Attribute. The character can swim on the surface at high speeds and dive underwater for brief periods by holding their breath or for longer periods if they have Features (Gills) (page 92) or the Resilient (Underwater) (page 118) Attributes. To survive the pressure associated with deep diving, the Resilient (Extreme Pressure) Attribute must also be assigned.

Level 1 Swim on or under water up to 10 kph
Level 2 Swim on or under water up to 30 kph
Level 3 Swim on or under water up to 100 kph
Level 4 Swim on or under water up to 300 kph
Level 5 Swim on or under water up to 1,000 kph
Level 6 Swim on or under water up to 3,000 kph

WEALTH

Attribute Cost: 3 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

The character is more financially stable and "liquid" than an average person and usually has non-liquid assets (such as real estate) commensurate with their wealth as well. The character can easily acquire commercially available goods as well as bribe or hire people. Note that hirelings that are intensely loyal to the character should still be acquired through the Companion Attribute (page 84). In order to have access to things that are illegal or difficult to acquire without special licenses, the GM can request that the character assign the Item (page 101) or Connected (page 84) Attributes.

Level 1 The character is financially stable (cash equivalence of $300,000)
Level 2 The character is well off cash equivalence of $1M)
Level 3 The character is moderately rich (cash equivalence of $3M)
Level 4 The character is very rich (cash equivalence of $10M)
Level 5 The character is extremely rich (cash equivalence of $30M)
Level 6 The character is moderately wealthy (cash equivalence of $100M)

WEAPON

Attribute Cost: 2 Points/Level
Relevant Stat: —

Many anime characters wield powerful offensive energies, such as electric zaps, magical fireballs, ki-powered martial arts strikes, or energy swords. Additionally, some characters, such as cyborgs or robots, may have guns, missiles, or beam weapons built into their bodies. This Attribute can also be contained within the Item Attribute (page 101) in order to create hand-held weaponry like swords, magic wands, guns, or even armed vehicles and suits. Weapons can be used on a single target each round with melee range (i.e. the target must be in very close proximity to the character) unless further modified by the Range Enhancement (page 147).

A character can only make one Weapon attack per action. A battery or barrage of several weapons that can be discharged simultaneously is normally created as a single powerful weapon (often paired with several Enhancements such as Area, Autofire, or Spreading; see page 135-141). The Weapon Attribute may be assigned more than once to give a character (or Item) a variety of different attacks.

When designing a Weapon, the player (with GM input) should determine exactly how the Weapon works. Is it an eyebeam? Retractable claws? A fireball? A psychic attack? A special rapid-strike martial arts finishing manoeuvre? The nature of the Weapons will give the attack role-playing flavour, will provide insight into how the character uses it, and will help determine what Enhancements and Limiters are appropriate.

Unlike most Attributes, the Weapon Attribute is often assigned at Ranks exceeding Level 6 to represent the wide range of powerful Items and special attacks common to anime. Discuss your Weapon Attribute limits with the GM.



WEAPON DAMAGE

A successful attack with the Weapon Attribute inflicts an amount of damage equal to the Weapon Level multiplied by the character's Damage Multiplier (call "Base Damage"). Most characters have a Damage Multiplier of 5. Then add the attacker's Attack Combat Value to the Base Damage, as well as the effects of any other Attributes that may apply, to determine the final attack damage. See page 193 for additional combat damage details.

Example: Samurai Kenjiro slashes a monstrous ogre using his katana sword. He has an Attack Combat Value of 7 and a Damage Multiplier of 5. The katana is an Item (Weapon Level 3). Upon a successful attack, the sword inflicts 22 damage (Weapon Level 3 x Damage Multiplier 5 = 15 Base Damage + 7 Attack Combat Value = 22 damage).

CUSTOMISING WEAPONS

More than any other Attribute, Weapon benefits greatly from game customisations beyond the basic description and parameters. The many Weapon Enhancements and Limiters provided herein – plus the Area, Range, Duration, and Potent Enhancements described in Chapter 6: Customisation (page 144) – help make each Weapon Attribute unique to your character. Many of these customisations can be assigned more than once as noted, with each assignment decreasing (for Enhancements) or increasing (for Limiters) the effective Level of the Weapon.

ALTERNATIVE WEAPON USES

As BESM is an effects-based system, the Weapon Attribute can also be used to represent offensive aspects of other Attributes that are not covered by their own descriptions. For example, suppose a character can weaken foes by teleporting them repeatedly within one combat round. Rather than being part of the Teleport Attribute, this ability could be designed as a Level 0 Weapon with the Drain Enhancement, reflecting the disorientation the target feels after the attack and the fact that no real physical harm is inflicted on the opponent. Alternatively, if the character is capable of teleporting just a select portion of a target away – very painful and causing great harm to the target! – the effect could be designed as a Weapon that simply inflicts an incredible amount of damage.

By using the Weapon Enhancements and Limiters, players can create a wide range of interesting attacks, which will account for the numerous and creative ways that heroes and villains use their abilities. Some Weapon attacks designed this way may also the Dependent Limiter (page 149) if the Attribute upon which they are based must be activated simultaneously.

UNARMED: THE FREE WEAPON

An unarmed person can strike an opponent using fists, feet, head, etc. This is a free Weapon Attribute that all characters automatically have and it does not need to be recorded on character sheets. Such attacks are considered a Level 0 Weapon with the Stun Enhancement and Non-Penetrating Limiter. Consequently, the damage inflicted upon a successful unarmed attack is simply equal to the character's Attack Combat Value (page 169). An exception to this guideline applies to characters with the Superstrength Attribute (page 124), since such powerful characters also gain +5 damage to their unarmed attacks for each Level of Superstrength.

LEVEL 0 AND -1

Weapon is unique among Attributes in that its effective Level can drop to 0 or -1 through the assignment of one or more Enhancements, though the minimum Level that you can assign to your character remains at Level 1 (costing 2 Character Points). The damage delivered by effectively Level 0 Weapons only considers the character's Attack Combat Value, since the Weapon's Base Damage is 0. For Weapons with an effective Level of -1, no actual damage at all is delivered and consequently such Weapons only have utility if they have been assigned one or more of the following Enhancements: Drain, Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, Quake, or Tangle. Assigning multiple Enhancements that drop the effective Level of the Weapon Attribute below -1 is forbidden; in these instances, simply assign additional Levels to the Weapon (costing 2 Character Points/Level) until its effective Level increases to at least -1.

EXAMPLES OF WEAPON LEVELS

Weapon Levels 1-10 cover the range of ordinary melee weapons and guns, from knives to large-calibre sniper rifles.

Levels 10-20 cover the range of heavy machine guns and futuristic blaster weapons, as well as archaic siege weapons. Many powerful magical fireballs and lightning bolts would also be in this range as well.

Levels 20-30 are in the range of tank or warship guns, anti-tank missiles, giant robot cannons, and increasingly destructive spells.

Levels 30+ are extremely powerful, such as the beam cannon of super mecha, various heavy bombs and missiles, mass drivers, or the powers of superhuman psychics or mages.

For further comparative purposes, refer to the Item examples in Chapter 10 (page 196).

Level -1	The attack doesn't inflict regular damage
Level 0	The Weapon's Base Damage is 0 and thus the final damage is only equal to the character's Attack Combat Value.
Level 1	The Weapon's Base Damage is equal to 1 times the character's Damage Multiplier
Level 2	The Weapon's Base Damage is equal to 2 times the character's Damage Multiplier
Level 3	The Weapon's Base Damage is equal to 3 times the character's Damage Multiplier
Level 4	The Weapon's Base Damage is equal to 4 times the character's Damage Multiplier
Level 5	The Weapon's Base Damage is equal to 5 times the character's Damage Multiplier
Level 6	The Weapon's Base Damage is equal to 6 times the character's Damage Multiplier

09 WEAPON ENHANCEMENTS

Enhancement	Ranks	Enhancement	Ranks
Accurate	1-2	Insidious	3
Aura	1	Linked	1
Autofire	3	Multidimensional	1
Blight	1-3	Muscle	1
Contact	1-2	Penetrating	1+
Contagious	1-3	Piercing	1+
Continuing	1+	Psychic	4
Drain	1-3	Quake	1-4
Enervation	1+	Reach	1
Flare	1-3	Selective	1
Flexible	1-3	Spreading	1+
Helper	1	Stun	1
Homing	1-2	Tangle	1+
Incapacitating	2 or 4	Targetted	1-3
Incurable	1-3	Trap	1
Indirect	1	Unique	1+
Irritant	1-3	Vampiric	2 or 4
Inconspicuous	3		

▶ ENHANCEMENTS

ACCURATE

The Weapon is extremely accurate and gives the character a minor edge (1 assignment) or major edge (2 assignments) on attack rolls (see page 189). Normally only assigned to Items.

AURA

The Weapon automatically affects anyone who merely touches the character's body. An example might be a character that is sheathed in flame or electrified. Aura may not be combined with the Range Enhancement.

AUTOFIRE

Counts as 3 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 3 Levels). The attack consists of a burst of multiple shots like a machine gun or rapid sequence of energy bolts. This allows multiple hits to be scored on a successful attack roll.

The character scores a number of hits depending on how successful the attack is: one hit if the attack roll total exceeds the target's defence roll total by 0-3; two hits when exceeding the defence roll by 4-6; three hits when exceeding the defence roll by 7-9; etc. Each hit delivers separate damage, which is important when considering Armour Ratings.

A Weapon with Autofire can also be used to spray an area, sweeping it back and forth. When doing so, the Weapon loses the usual benefit of Autofire and instead gains one assignment of the Spreading Enhancement. An Autofire Weapon that has the Ammo Limiter can conserve ammo by firing single shots, which eliminates the Autofire benefits.

BLIGHT

The target will suffer double damage (or double effect, when relevant) from a Blight attack if they do not make a successful Body Stat roll to resist its effects. If the roll is successful, the target only suffers one-fifth damage. This Enhancement represents Weapons that might not fully affect the target even when the attack is successful, such as a poisonous attack to which the target could exhibit resistance.

The Target Number for the Body Stat roll depends on the number of times Blight is assigned: Average (TN 12) for 1 assignments; Difficult (TN 15) for 2 assignments; and Challenging (TN 18) for 3 assignments. A target's Immutable Attribute (page 99) adds a bonus to resist the effects of Blight.

CONTACT

The Weapon – usually a poisonous liquid or plant – delivers damage through mere contact with the skin that can sometimes even affect animals with thick skin or hide (ie. skin that provides an Armour Rating). One assignment indicates that the target must have extended contact of several minutes with the substance; two assignments delivers its effect with only brief contact. This Enhancement is often associated with the Blight or Drain Enhancements, or the Toxic Limiter.

CONTAGIOUS

The attack's damage or other effects will be passed on to others who touch or otherwise contact the target. Anyone affected by the Contagious Weapon may negate the contagion and stop them from spreading it to others by making a successful Average Stat roll (Target Number 12), with no modifier (one assignment), a minor obstacle (two assignments) or major obstacle (three assignments) on the roll. The Stat roll is normally checked against the Body Stat but magical or cybernetic contagion may use Mind or Soul as appropriate. Contagious is often combined with the Toxic Limiter.

CONTINUING

This represents poison, pools of acid, flaming liquid, or similar sticky attacks that deliver lingering damage over several rounds. If the initial attack damage penetrates the opponent's Armour Rating, the target will take extra damage over time. At the end of each subsequent round following the attack, the character will suffer a loss of Health Points equal to one-fifth the original damage

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inflicted. Armour Rating does not protect against this. This continues for one round for each assignment of the Continuing Enhancement until the effect is somehow neutralised (GM's discretion; it should depend on the type of attack and may require several rounds for full neutralisation). This type of Continuing effect only applies to the Weapon's damage and not to the special abilities from other Enhancements.

Alternatively, Continuing can be defined as an hourly effect which inflicts the same damage as the original attack every hour after the attack, or a daily effect which inflicts the same damage every day. This variation is only ever one assignment and may best represent a disease or a slow poison attack.

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Unlike a regular Continuing attack, the hourly and daily damage will continue until the victim is dead or makes a successful Difficult (TN 15) Body Stat roll. The check is made with a major obstacle (page 182) on the Stat roll every hour (for hourly effects) or a minor obstacle every day (for daily effects). This type of Continuing attack applies to both damage and the special effects from other Enhancements such as Drain, Enervation, etc. Until the victim is cured of the Continuing attack, they normally cannot heal the damage related to this attack using any method (GM's discretion).

DRAIN

The Weapon causes the victim to lose Points from one Stat (specify Body, Mind, or Soul when designing the attack). A loss of Body may represent decrepitude, disease, rot, poison, or rapid ageing; a loss of Mind can represent insanity, a tranquilliser, or psionic blast; a loss of Soul can represent despair, fear, torment, or corruption. In addition to any Health Points lost, the specified Stat is reduced by 1 for every assignment of the Drain Enhancement (maximum of 3 assignments total). For example, Weapon (Drain 2: Mind) would reduce the victim's Mind Stat by 2 with a successful attack in addition to the normal attack damage. Defences that reduce the damage delivered by a Weapon with Drain (such as Armour and Force Fields) offer limited protection against the Drain effect as well: for every 5 damage the protection provides against the attack, one Enhancement assignment is negated. To design an attack that only reduces Stats values without physical injury, create an effective Level -1 Weapon. The drained Points return at the rate of one every hour. Losing Stat values will require the Combat Value to be recalculated appropriately but not other Derived Values (page 168).

A character reduced to 0 Body is paralysed and cannot move. A character with a 0 Mind is "mindless" and will act in an illogical, primal, or animalistic manner. A character reduced to 0 Soul is "broken" and lacks all drive or volition.

ENERVATION

The Weapon drains away the victim's personal energy supply, causing them to become fatigued or despondent. The attack results in a loss of 5 Energy Points every assignment of the Enervation Enhancement, which is in addition to the normal attack damage. Armour, Force Fields, and related Attributes offer protection against Enervation, reducing the Energy Points lost the same way they reduce damage inflicted to Health Points. To ignore ordinary Armour and Force Fields, also assign the Insidious or Psychic Enhancements. To design an attack that only reduces Energy Points without physical injury, create an effective Level -1 Weapon.

FLARE

If the target is hit and looking in the direction the attack they may be blinded. The target may resist by succeeding with an average Body Stat roll (Target Number 12) with no modifier (one assignment), a minor obstacle (two assignments), or major obstacle (three assignments) on the roll. The target may also add their Immutable Attribute bonus as appropriate. If the target character fails the roll, they are blinded for a number of rounds equal to amount by which the roll failed. To design an attack that blinds without inflicting other types of damage, create an effective Level -1 Weapon.

Flare can also be generalised to cover other sense-overloading attacks (for example, an acoustic attack that causes deafness). A separate Flare Enhancement must be assigned (maximum three assignments total each) for each sense (usually sight or hearing). For example, a moderately blinding and somewhat deafening attack that causes no other damage could be described as Weapon Level 2 "Cracker" (Flare: Sight 2, Flare: Hearing) for 4 Character Points (with an effective Level -1).

FLEXIBLE

This Weapon represents long, flexible, or extendible attacks such as a prehensile whip, energy-lash, razor-ribbon, or similar attack mode. A successful attack can trip or disarm an opponent in lieu of delivering damage, with the character suffering a major obstacle (one assignment), minor obstacle (two assignments), or no modifier (three assignments) on the attack roll to reflect the high degree of difficulty and great skill required to execute accurately.

HELPER

Weapons with the Helper Enhancement are usually installed in (or carried by) mecha and vehicle Items. Helper allows passengers to fire the Weapon instead of just the driver or pilot (or a single designated person). For example, a spaceship Item with four different manned gun stations with the Helper Enhancement assigned to each of the Weapons allows multiple attacks each round. If Helper is not assigned to the Item Weapons, a single character (often the driver or pilot) must fire the Weapon themselves and cannot delegate the task to anyone else.

HOMING

The Weapon fires a projectile or energy burst that can track and follow its target, with the character gaining a minor edge (one assignment) or major edge (two assignments) on the attack roll. Additionally, if the attack misses by a margin of failure that is no greater than the number of Homing assignments, the Weapon will return to try again one final time in the next combat round. Homing Weapons should specify one type of sense or detection technique it uses to track the target (one that the GM agrees is appropriate to the setting). For example, many Homing missiles use radar, infrared, or (for torpedoes) sonar, but other options are certainly possible such as magical Weapons that attack metaphysical qualities such as "life force" or "evil" (which would limit their utility to certain targets but be harder to counter). If the target has an appropriate form of the Undetectable Attribute (page 131), they are protected from the attack since the Weapon cannot detect the target to activate homing. Similarly, an appropriate Sensory Block Attribute (page 119) provides some protection against the attack as well. The GM must approve any unusual type of Homing to ensure it is not unbalanced.

INCAPACITATING

Counts as 2 or 4 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 2 or 4 Levels). Incapacitating represents any form of attack that can instantly immobilise a target regardless of the amount of damage inflicted, such as putting an opponent to sleep or turning them to stone. The target must make an average (Target Number 12) Body or Soul Stat roll (whichever is higher) to resist, with a minor obstacle (two assignments) or major obstacle (four assignments) on the Stat roll. The Immutable Attribute (page 99) can provide a bonus to resist. When designing the attack, specify the form of the Incapacitating Weapon: asleep, awake but paralysed, turned to stone, transformed into an inert doll, etc. The immobilisation normally lasts for only 1 round (two assignments) or 1 minute (four assignments). To design an attack that incapacitates the target without inflicting other types of damage, create an effective Level -1 Weapon.

INCURABLE

The Weapon produces wounds or other effects that are difficult to treat. One assignment means that the Health Points lost due to this attack cannot be restored using the Healing or Regeneration Attributes (or accelerated by drugs or technological aids) but can otherwise recover naturally or be repaired normally. Two assignments means that additionally natural healing recovery (page 195) is also slowed to a weekly rate instead of a daily rate. Three assignments means that no healing or other recovery is possible at all until some exotic event or treatment has occurred (the nature of which is specified during character creation and subject to GM approval).

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INDIRECT

An Indirect Weapon can fire shots in a high ballistic arc and is only assigned in conjunction with the Range Enhancement (page 147). Examples include Items such as grenade launchers and trebuchets, or a power or spell that summons lightning, a storm of ice, or a meteor swarm down from the sky above. Indirect allows the attacker to shoot at targets hidden behind buildings, hills, or other obstacles, or even shoot over the horizon if the Range Enhancement is sufficiently high. Indirect fire is tricky, however, and imposes a minor obstacle (page 182) to the attack roll. To effectively fire at an indirect location, the attacker must be able to locate the target in some way (sensors can be used) or someone else must spot the target and relay their position to the attacker.

IRRITANT

Irritant can represent pepper spray, a skunk's musk, an itching spell, or similar effect. Whether or not damage penetrated the target's Armour Rating, the target must make an average (Target Number 12) Body Stat roll to resist, with no modifier (one assignment), a minor obstacle (two assignments) or major obstacle (three assignments) on the Stat roll. The Immutable Attribute (page 99) can provide a bonus to resist. Failure results in partial blindness or distraction, imposing a minor obstacle on all Stat and Skill rolls until the effects wear off after one minute or dramatic scene. Irritant is often taken in conjunction with the Toxic Limiter to simulate an attack against which a gas mask may offer protection. To design an attack that irritates the target without inflicting other types of damage, create an effective Level -1 Weapon. Multiple Irritant effects against the same victim are not cumulative. If combined with the Incurable Enhancement, Irritant lasts indefinitely until an appropriate cure is found.

INCONSPICUOUS

Counts as 3 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 3 Levels). Most Weapon attacks have a visible component that makes it easy for targets to determine who is attacking them. An attack with the Inconspicuous Enhancement provides no such indication that it is about to strike and does not reveal the identity of the attacker. This may result in the attacker gaining surprise, which prevents the victim from making a defence roll (page 192). If the target knows they are under attack, however, a defence roll can still be made with a minor obstacle (page 182) on the roll. Inconspicuous is most often associated with non-physical attacks such as ones with the Drain or Psychic Enhancements.

INSIDIOUS

Counts as 3 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 3 Levels). Insidious Weapon damage completely bypasses any normal Armour Rating (use discretion with extremely large objects, such as mountains and planets), though the Immutable Attribute still provides an Armour Rating of 10 per Attribute Level against it. It is usually applied to exotic physical attacks such as poison gas or radiation, often in conjunction with the Toxic Limiter. It may also be appropriate for attacks such as death spells, ageing curses, or other paranormal abilities that affect the body while ignoring normal physical barrier protections. Insidious Weapons cannot usually have the Contact or Psychic Enhancements or the Ingest Limiter.

LINKED

An attack with this Enhancement is attached to one of the character's other Weapons (the "master" Weapon). If the master attack is successful, this Linked attack automatically hits as well with no defence roll allowed; if the master Weapon misses or fails to penetrate Armour Rating, the linked attack automatically fails too. If the master attack hits and delivers enough damage to successfully penetrate the target's Armour Rating, then the Armour Rating does not provide any protection against the Linked attack. Massive Damage, Superstrength, extra damage from the Attack Combat Value, and similar damage bonuses only apply to the master attack, though, and not to the secondary Linked attack. A Weapon with the Linked Enhancement may not be given the Accurate or Range Enhancements or the Inaccurate Limiter since its range and accuracy are dependent solely on the master Weapon. A Weapon can usually only be a master to one other Weapon and a Weapon is rarely both a master and a Linked Weapon.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL

This Weapon can reach across dimensional boundaries and consequently can affect individuals as normal who are in an incorporeal or energy state (see the Change State Attribute, page 82). If the attack can only affect such incorporeal beings and not normal targets, also assign the Exclusive Limiter.

MUSCLE

The Muscle Weapon gains the Damage Multiplier benefit of Superstrength (page 124). Typical melee and thrown ranged Weapons also normally gain that benefit without the need to assign the Muscle Enhancement. Characters do not gain the Superstrength Damage Multiplier bonus when using Weapons at Level 0 or -1, or those with the following Enhancements, unless the Muscle Enhancement is also assigned: Contagious, Flare, Indirect, Irritant, Insidious, Psychic, Range, Tangle, and Trap.



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PENETRATING

The Armour Attribute does not stop damage from Penetrating attacks as efficiently. The Armour Rating of Armour is reduced by 10 against such Weapons (to a minimum of 0) each time Penetrating is assigned. For example, two assignments of Penetrating reduces the amount of damage the target's Armour stops by 20.

PIERCING

The Force Field Attribute does not stop damage from Piercing attacks as efficiently. The Armour Rating of Force Fields is reduced by 10 against such Weapons (to a minimum of 0) each time Piercing is assigned. For example, three assignments of Piercing reduces the amount of damage the target's Force Field stops by 30.

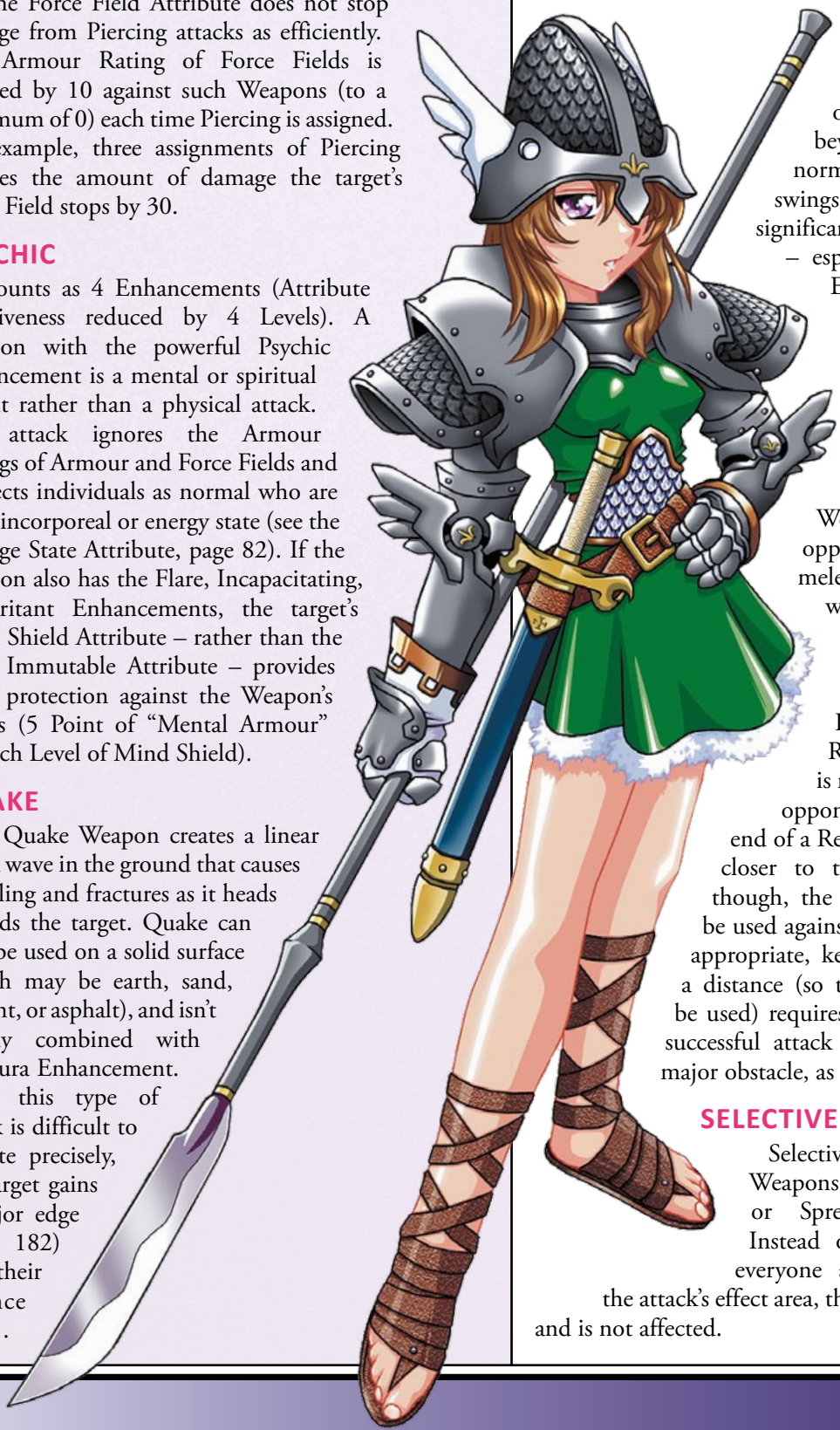
PSYCHIC

Counts as 4 Enhancements (Attribute effectiveness reduced by 4 Levels). A Weapon with the powerful Psychic Enhancement is a mental or spiritual assault rather than a physical attack. The attack ignores the Armour Ratings of Armour and Force Fields and it affects individuals as normal who are in an incorporeal or energy state (see the Change State Attribute, page 82). If the Weapon also has the Flare, Incapacitating, or Irritant Enhancements, the target's Mind Shield Attribute – rather than the usual Immutable Attribute – provides some protection against the Weapon's effects (5 Point of "Mental Armour" for each Level of Mind Shield).

QUAKE

A Quake Weapon creates a linear shock wave in the ground that causes rumbling and fractures as it heads towards the target. Quake can only be used on a solid surface (which may be earth, sand, cement, or asphalt), and isn't usually combined with the Aura Enhancement. Since this type of attack is difficult to execute precisely, the target gains a major edge (page 182) on their defence roll.

The Quake "fault" will only be large enough for one person to fall into unless it is combined with the Area Enhancement as well, though nearby non-targetted people can avoid falling into the fissure with a successful Body Stat check. The depth of the fissure depends on the number of Quake assignments: up to 2 metres for one assignment; 5 metres for two assignments; 10 metres for three assignments, 30 metres for four assignments; and continuing upwards.



REACH

If a long melee Weapon can strike opponents who are beyond the reach of normal attacks such a sword swings or spear jabs, it can offer significant advantages in combat – especially when charging. Examples of Reach Weapons (with a reach of three to five metres) include: tourney or war lance, pike or poleaxe, longspear, whip, etc. If a character with a Reach Weapon is confronting an opponent with a shorter melee Weapon, the character with the longer Weapon will always attack first, regardless of the combatants' Initiatives. If both opponents have a Reach Weapon, Initiative is resolved as normal. If an opponent ever gets past the end of a Reach Weapon and moves closer to the wielding character, though, the Reach Weapon cannot be used against that opponent. When appropriate, keeping the opponent at a distance (so the Reach Weapon can be used) requires the character to make successful attack rolls with a minor or major obstacle, as appropriate (page 182).

SELECTIVE

Selective is only assigned to Weapons with the Area, Aura, or Spreading Enhancements. Instead of potentially affecting everyone and everything within the attack's effect area, the user may select who is and is not affected.

SPREADING

This type of attack spreads to cover an expanding area, such as a cone of energy or a spray of energy bolts or projectiles (such as a shotgun blast). The target suffers a major obstacle (page 182) on their defence roll due to the wide attack spread. Additional nearby targets in the Weapon's attack spread may also receive damage if they are lined up or in a dense formation. The number of additional nearby targets that may be hit equals the number of Spreading assignments.

STUN

A Weapon with this Enhancement inflicts only temporary damage such as an unarmed melee attack or an electric shock. Lost Health Points from the Weapon attack are recovered at a rate equal to the character's Body Stat every hour. Stun damage cannot kill. Although it may seem odd that a nonlethal attack is an Enhancement and not a Limiter, such Weapons have the advantage that they may be used to incapacitate foes without the risk of killing them. Stun is not often assigned to Weapons with an effective Level 0, but can be in some instances (such as with normal unarmed attacks).

TANGLE

Weapons that can Tangle the victim may include an assault that freezes the target in ice or traps them in the branches of an animated plant, or simple webbing that immobilises the target. The physical entanglements produced by these Weapons have 5 Health Points for each assignment of the Tangle Enhancement. If a target does not successfully defend against a Tangle attack, they are trapped until sufficient damage is delivered to the entanglement to reduce its Health Points to zero and destroy it. An entangled character has restricted movement and performs any movement-related activities (such as attacking, defending, gesturing, etc.) with a major obstacle (page 182) on the appropriate dice roll. A victim who has partially destroyed an entanglement may regain some body movement (GM's discretion), reducing the major obstacle to a minor obstacle on dice rolls. A Tangle attack also inflicts damage as normal unless the Weapon Level was reduced to 0. To design an attack that Tangles the target without inflicting other types of damage, create an effective Level -1 Weapon.

TARGETTED

The Weapon must be specified when it is designed as being Targetted against a specific individual or group. For example, the Weapon might use good energy (extra damage to evil creatures) or life energy (extra damage to undead creatures), or have a "trollslayer" enchantment (extra damage against trolls), or be an electromagnetic pulse (extra damage against robots and cyborgs). Against the Targetted opponent type, the damage the Weapon inflicts is doubled as are the additional effects of Enhancements such as Drain, Flare, Incapacitating, Irritant, and Tangle. Targetted is assigned once if it affects only a single individual (such as the red dragon Emberfang) or a specific title-holder (perhaps "the Demon King"), twice if it affects a specific group or relatively uncommon race (for instance, all dragons or all members of the royal army of Ikaris), or three times if it affects a common race or condition (such as all elves, all robots and cyborgs, all evil creatures). The GM may forbid Targetted Enhancements that affect an extremely common race or condition (for example, all humans or anyone with eyes). Add the Exclusive Limiter for a targetted attack that only affects a small set of opponents, with no damage delivered to other opponents.

TRAP

The Weapon lays a mine, booby trap, or some other similar device that "sits and waits" until someone triggers it. The Weapon cannot be reused until it has been triggered. If someone blunders into a Trap, no attack roll is needed, but a successful difficult Mind Stat roll (Target Number 15) will reveal the trap's presence to the target before it activates and give the target time to avoid it. Trap is usually assigned without the Range Enhancement to simulate a device that must be carefully planted. If Range was added as well, the Weapon can be deployed to attack anyone nearby, with a successful attack roll indicating that the Trap was fired or tossed into the correct area. The Area Enhancement is commonly added to enable a Trap to affect multiple foes.

UNIQUE

The Weapon has some other unspecified ability that is not listed and is subject to GM approval. Examples can include an attack that alters the target's memories, one that affects the appearance of the target, and many more. The number of Unique Enhancement assignments required is determined by the GM based on the benefit the Unique Weapon provides.

VAMPIRIC

Upon a successful Vampiric attack, the lost Health Points, Energy Points, or Stat values (as appropriate) are transferred to the attacker. Any values or Points in excess of the user's normal Level fade at a rate of 10 Health or Energy Points or one Stat Level per minute. Vampiric is not usually combined with the Area, Autofire, or Spreading Enhancements. Vampiric must be assigned two times if it can only restore lost Health/Energy Points or Stat values to their normal level, or four times if it can increase such Points or values even higher (to a maximum of twice their normal level).

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10 WEAPON LIMITERS

Limiter	Ranks	Limiter	Ranks
Alt-Munition	Special	Ingest	1
Ammo	1-4	Non-Penetrating	1+
Backblast	1-2	Stoppable	1-4
Exclusive	1-3	Toxic	1-2
Fieldless	1	Unique	1+
Hands	1	Unreliable	1-3
Inaccurate	1-2		

▶ LIMITERS

ALT-MUNITION

This special type of Limiter is usually only assigned to Items. Some Weapons are designed to fire different types of ammunition for different purposes, such as a tank firing different types of shells from its single main gun. Since Weapon attacks are usually assigned Levels, Enhancements, and Limiters based on their ammunition type, each alternative ammo (which must have a lower Weapon Level than the primary ammunition type) is assigned the Alt-Munition Limiter. Rather than assignments like regular Limiters, tagging a Weapon ammunition type with Alt-Munition instead halves the Weapon Character Point cost.

For example, a heavy tank (page 218) uses both sabot and HEAT ammo. Sabot shells are a Level 22 Weapon and HEAT shells are a Level 21 Weapon; consequently HEAT is designated as the Alt-Munition (since the Weapon Level is lower). Normally, a Level 21 Weapon costs 42 Character Points, but the Alt-Munition designation halves the HEAT ammo cost to only 21 Points instead. The Level 22 Weapon sabot still costs the regular 44 Character Points since it is the primary ammunition type.

AMMO

The Ammo Limiter – which is often assigned in conjunction with the Range Enhancement – represents the total ammunition typically carried by the character relative to the Weapon's rate of fire. When the Ammo is depleted, the character cannot use the Weapon again until the Ammo is replaced (which usually cannot occur until the current combat or dramatic scene is completed). Note that Ammo does not refer to the number of shots a Weapon can fire with a loaded projectile (which is one for a longbow, six for a revolver pistol, etc.) if additional ammunition is readily available and the Weapon can be reloaded easily to allow continued use. If a Weapon such as a crossbow or cannon has plenty of ammunition available but requires time to reload between shots, assign the Activation Limiter instead. One assignment of Ammo means the Weapon can fire 4-6 shots before ammunition runs out; two assignment means 2-3 shots; and three assignments means only 1 shot. Four assignments of Ammo represents a Weapon that is destroyed after a single use, such as a grenade or mine.

BACKBLAST

The Weapon produces some sort of Backblast or other side effect that affects people and objects directly behind the attacker (within 1-2 metres). An example is a rocket launcher that produces a hazardous backblast to anyone standing behind the gunner, with some spells or supernatural abilities potentially having similar risks. With one assignment, such Weapons inflict one-fifth their normal damage (round up) to people or objects caught in the Backblast. With a two assignments, the attacking character is also unavoidably caught in their own Weapon Backblast. Backblast cannot normally be combined with a Weapon that has both the Area and Aura Enhancements.

EXCLUSIVE

The Weapon has no effect on anyone beyond a small class of targets specified during character creation. One assignment limits the effect to a large target group (such as a common race or ethos), two assignments limits the effect to a small target group (such as a rare race or organisation) and three assignments limits the effect to a single individual (or to a singular position, such as the King of a specific country).

FIELDLESS

This Limiter can only be assigned if the character or Item also has the Force Field Attribute. The Weapon cannot be used unless all Force Fields are turned off before using the attack. The Force Fields remain off until the character's first opportunity to act in the following combat round.

HANDS

The Weapon requires two appropriately sized hands or equivalent appendages/devices to operate and wield properly and is typically not usable with only one hand (either due to extreme weight, size, awkwardness, or design).

INACCURATE

The Weapon is extremely inaccurate and gives the character a minor obstacle (1 assignment) or major obstacle (2 assignments) on attack rolls (see page 189). Normally only assigned to Items.

INGEST

The Weapon – usually a poisonous liquid, powder, or plant – must actually be ingested by the target in order to have an effect. This Limiter is often associated with the Blight and Drain Enhancements, as well as the Toxic Limiter. The nature of the Weapon usually makes it incompatible with the Trap Enhancement.

NON-PENETRATING

The Weapon has an inferior ability to penetrate existing Armour and Force Fields (with Armour Ratings of at least 5 AR) to inflict damage. Examples include unarmed attacks, shotgun blasts, hollow-point bullets, unbated swords, caltrops, a storm of icicles, etc. The Armour Rating of Armour and Force Fields is increased by 10 against such Weapons each time Non-Penetrating is assigned. For example, two assignments of Non-Penetrating increase the target's chainmail Armour Rating by 20. This Limiter can only be assigned to Weapons that are somehow reduced in effectiveness by a target's Armour Rating, and consequently cannot be assigned to those with Enhancements such as Insidious and Quake.

STOPPABLE

Stoppable is only assigned to Weapons that also have the Range Enhancement. These Weapons fire projectiles or energy bolts that are sufficiently massive and slow enough to be shot down since the attack does not reach the target quickly. One assignment means the attack takes one round to reach its destination; two assignments means the attack takes 5 rounds; three assignments means the attack takes one minute; four assignments means the attack takes one hour. Thus, a cannon shell, bullet, or lightning bolt would usually not qualify since the projectiles travel incredibly quickly over a short distance, but a guided missile (fast, but travels a long distance) or fireball (short distance, but may travel slowly) might have Stoppable.



Attacking the Stoppable projectile requires a successful attack with a major obstacle (page 182) on the attack roll. Furthermore, the defending Weapon attack must deliver at least 10 damage to the Stoppable projectile for each Level of the Stoppable Weapon or the projectile is not intercepted. For example, an attack must inflict at least 60 damage to a Level 6 Weapon with the Stoppable Enhancement in order to block/intercept/destroy it.

TOXIC

The Weapon is a gas, toxin, biological agent, sound, radiation, or other harmful effect that only damages living things. One assignment means that targets who have the appropriate Resilient Attribute is completely immune to its effects. Two assignments means that a target who is expecting the attack can also render themselves immune for at least one round (usually enough time to escape) if they had prepared for the attack by taking a simple precaution such as holding one's breath or using a wet rag to resist a toxic gas.

UNIQUE

The attack has some other unspecified limitation, which is subject to GM approval. Examples could include a weapon that fires in a random direction, one that is extremely costly to operate, an attack that drains Heath Points from the user, etc. The number of Unique Limiter assignments required is determined by the GM based on the ineffectiveness of the Unique Weapon.

UNRELIABLE

Any time an Unreliable Weapon is used and the attack roll results in an unmodified (or "natural") 2, the attack fails to take place and the Weapon burns out, jams, overheats, or otherwise malfunctions. For two assignments, an unmodified roll of 2 or 3 produces the same results and for three assignments, unmodified rolls of 2, 3, or 4 also trigger the malfunction. The Weapon will not work again until some condition is fulfilled as determined by the GM. For example, repairing a technological weapon may require a skilled individual to make a successful average Mind Stat roll (Target Number 12). Other remedies might be appropriate for recovering different attacks, such as a supernatural monster whose breath weapon has "burned out" might have to eat a hearty meal first.

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CHAPTER 6
CUSTOMISATION

06: CUSTOMISATION

CUSTOMISE ATTRIBUTES

As you design your character, you may find that some Attributes don't function exactly the way you envision them. Perhaps they're too limited in scope – not offering enough options or alternatives – or maybe they're too broad and need to be scaled back. Fortunately, BESM Attributes are easy to customise using Enhancements and Limiters to increase or decrease an Attribute's effect. You may have already assigned some Attribute-specific customisations detailed in Chapter 5 (particularly for the Weapon Attribute, for which there are many options), but there are also Enhancements and Limiters described in this chapter that have broader application across a wide range of Attributes.

Changing the way Attributes function from their baseline abilities can have unintended consequences on the game and therefore adding additional Enhancements and Limiters is only allowed with your Game Master's approval.

EFFECTIVE ATTRIBUTE LEVEL

As mentioned briefly at the beginning of the previous Chapter 5 (page 74), adding an Enhancement or Limiter to an Attribute does not change its Character Point cost but it does decrease (Enhancement) or increase (Limiter) the effective functioning Level of the Attribute by 1 Level for each assignment. With the exception of the circumstances detailed under the Weapon Attribute (page 132), additional Enhancements cannot be added if the effective Level of the Attribute would drop below Level 1.

ENHANCEMENTS

The four standard Enhancements described herein – Area, Duration, Range, and Targets – offer creative ways to make your Attributes unique and function differently from those of the other characters. Not every Attribute can have all four of these Enhancements assigned to them, however, and some Attributes cannot take any Enhancements at all. Even if a particular Enhancement can be assigned to an Attribute, give serious consideration to the story and game balance if you plan to make more than one or two assignments of an Enhancement. Table-11: Allowable Enhancements lists which of these four Enhancements are appropriate for the Attributes your character may have (which, of course, may be modified or ignored with GM permission).

If the effect of an Attribute already exceeds one Assignment of an Enhancement, you'll need to assign the Enhancement enough times to improve the Attribute's function or there will be no effective change. For example, the baseline Sixth Sense Attribute (page 119) already functions within a 10-metre proximity to the character – equivalent to two assignments of the Area Enhancement. To improve this Attribute further and widen the Area, you must make a minimum of three assignments of the Area Enhancement to extend the effectiveness to 100 metres.

There is an additional fifth standard Enhancement available called Potent, which helps balance a character that has so many Limiters assigned to one of their Attributes that it functions at a Level higher than what best fits the player's specific vision.

Note that characters can typically use the Attribute Enhancements at less than their maximum effectiveness – anywhere up to the Assignment value – even if the Attribute also has the Maximum Limiter (page 151).

AREA

Area defines the radius of influence of the Attribute, which is usually centred on the character. If the Area Enhancement is not assigned to an Attribute, it usually means the Attribute can affect only a single individual person or object.

AREA AND WEAPONS

If Area is assigned to the Weapon Attribute, the attacking character only makes one attack roll, but everyone in the Area of effect makes their own defence roll. Consequently, some targets in the Area may be affected by the Weapon while others may defend successfully. Furthermore, the GM may decide that a successful defence roll is not enough to escape the attack completely if there is no nearby cover to move behind that would completely block the effects of the Attribute. In these situations, instead of negating the Area Weapon effect completely, a successful defence roll reduces damage by half.

0 Assignments	Single individual person/object
1 Assignment	Affects a small Area within quick reach (3 metres radius)
2 Assignments	Affects a moderate Area within a short sprinting distance (10 metres radius)
3 Assignments	Affects a building-sized Area (100 metres radius)
4 Assignments	Affects a neighbourhood-sized Area (1 km radius)
5 Assignments	Affects a city-sized Area (10 km radius)
6 Assignments	Affects a county-sized Area (100 km radius)

11 ALLOWABLE ENHANCEMENTS

Attribute Name	Enhancements
Control Environment	Area, Duration, Range
Dimension Walk	Area
Dynamic Powers	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Exorcism	Area, Range, Targets
Force Field	Area, Duration, Range
Healing	Area, Range, Targets
Illusion	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Merge	Duration
Metamorphosis	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Mimic	Duration, Range
Mind Control	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Nullify	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Plant Control	Duration
Portal	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Power Flux	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Power Variation	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Projection	Area, Duration, Range
Sensory Block	Area, Duration, Range
Sixth Sense	Area
Size Change	Duration
Summon Creatures	Duration
Telekinesis	Area, Range
Telepathy	Area, Range, Targets
Teleport	Area, Range, Targets
Transfer	Duration, Range
Transmute	Duration, Range, Targets
Unique Attribute	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Unknown Power	Area, Duration, Range, Targets
Weapon	Area, Duration, Range

DURATION

Duration determines the maximum period of time that the Attribute's effect will influence a target (requires no concentration to maintain after it is activated). Most Attributes indicate in their descriptions how long it operates normally; adding the Duration Enhancement will increase this time. Duration does not usually apply when using the Attribute when affecting themselves (with the exception of the Mimic Attribute), since the character can simply reactivate the Attribute at will. At the end of an Attribute's Duration, its effects will cease. In circumstances where an Attribute's effects should be permanent, 10 assignments of Duration can be applied with GM permission (10 assignments = 1,000 years, which can be considered permanent).

DURATION AND WEAPONS

If Duration is applied to the Weapon Attribute, it is usually assigned in conjunction with the Area Enhancement. This means the Weapon attack remains active within the affected area for a prolonged period. Examples of this type of attack include chemical clouds, sheets of fire, electrical charges, or freezing vapours. If someone enters the Area while the Duration is still ongoing, they suffer damage or other effects as if they have been struck by the attack and will continue to suffer the effects each round until they leave the vicinity. The starting time for Duration when assigned to Weapons is different than for other Attributes as noted.

0 Assignments	Remains in effect as long as the Attribute description indicates
1 Assignment	Remains in effect for 10 minutes (or 2 rounds for Weapons)
2 Assignments	Remains in effect for 1 hour (or 5 rounds for Weapons)
3 Assignments	Remains in effect for 1 day (or 10 rounds for Weapons)
4 Assignments	Remains in effect for 1 week (or 1 minute for Weapons)
5 Assignments	Remains in effect for 1 month (or 1 hour for Weapons)
6 Assignments	Remains in effect for 1 season (or 1 day for Weapons)
10 Assignments	Permanent (with GM permission)

POTENT

Potent is usually only assigned to Level 1 Attributes. To design an Attribute's functionality to match a specific vision for your character, it's sometimes necessary to assign more Limiters than Enhancements. Doing so increases the effective Level of an Attribute beyond the assigned Level. For example, a player might want their character to have a version of Flight that requires slight concentration while flying (one assignment of the Concentration Limiter) and burns 10 Energy Points for every minute of use (one assignment of the Deplete Limiter). An Attribute with two Limiters assigned functions at two Levels higher than the actual Attribute Level so the player would only need to purchase Flight at Level 1 (10 kph speed) to gain the benefits of the effective Flight Level 3 (100 kph speed).

But what if the player only wants their character to fly at a top speed of 10 kph (Level 1 Flight) or 30 kph (Level 2 Flight)? With the two Limiters assigned, the slowest speed from a Level 1 Attribute assignment is 100 kph (Level 1 + 2 Limiters = effective Level 3 ability). That's where the Potent Enhancement comes in, which provides a more robust application of the Attribute but reigns in the effective Level to match the player's intention with their character. The intended function

of this Limiter is why you usually only assign Potent to Level 1 Attributes (unless the GM decides otherwise to reflect a specific function, as is the case with some shields, page 212).

For details about minor and major edges, as well as Stat and Skill rolls, see Chapter 9: Action (page 172).

0 Assignments	Functions as indicated in the Attribute description
1 Assignment	The character receives a minor edge on Stat and Skill rolls in circumstances involving the Attribute's use
2 Assignments	The character receives a major edge on Stat and Skill rolls in circumstances involving the Attribute's use
3 Assignments	Similar to 1 Assignment, plus the character can also re-roll their dice once for each circumstance involving the Attribute's use (retaining the minor edge on the re-roll and keeping the best of the two rolls)
4 Assignments	Similar to 2 Assignment, plus the character can also re-roll their dice once for each circumstance involving the Attribute's use (retaining the major edge on the re-roll and keeping the best of the two rolls)
5 Assignments	Similar to 4 Assignments, but with the character gaining two re-rolls for each circumstance
6 Assignments	Similar to 4 Assignments, but with the character gaining three re-rolls for each circumstance

RANGE

Range is a measure of how far away from the character the centre of an Attribute can be manifested (or fired, in the case of Weapons) and should not be confused with the Area Enhancement. If the Attribute also has Area assigned, characters may centre the Area effect on any location within the Range. Without assigning the Range Enhancement, an Attribute can only be used on the character directly or when touching a target.

0 Assignments	Activated through touch
1 Assignment	Short Range (3 metres)
2 Assignments	Moderate Range (10 metres)
3 Assignments	Building-sized Range (100 metres)
4 Assignments	Neighbourhood-sized Range (1 km)
5 Assignments	City-sized Range (10 km)
6 Assignments	County-sized Range (100 km)

TARGETS

Targets refers to the maximum number of people (or mass of objects, as relevant) that the Attribute can affect. If Targets is not assigned, the Attribute usually only affects the character directly or one other person as indicated in the Attribute description.

0 Assignments	Affects the character directly or one target (as appropriate)
1 Assignment	Affect up to 2 Targets at once
2 Assignments	Affect up to 5 Targets at once
3 Assignments	Affect up to 10 Targets at once
4 Assignments	Affect up to 25 Targets at once
5 Assignments	Affect up to 50 Targets at once
6 Assignments	Affect up to 100 Targets at once



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12 LIMITERS

Activation	Deplete	Maximum
Assisted	Detectable	Object
Backlash	Emotional	Permanent
Charges	Environmental	Recovery
Concentration	Equipment	Semi-Permanent
Consumable	Imbue	Unique
Delay	Irreversible	Unpredictable
Dependent	Localised	

LIMITERS

Limiters are restrictions on the scope of an Attribute that reduces its functionality or make it more difficult to use, while increasing the Attribute's effective Level. For example, if your Mind Control Attribute is a magical spell that requires several seconds worth of chanting to cast, this is a Limiter. You do not usually apply Limiters directly to the Companion (page 84) or Item (page 101) Attributes, but you can apply Limiters to individual Attributes that are assigned to the Companion or Item.

ACTIVATION

The Attribute requires a high degree of concentration, such as chanting an incantation, focussing personal energies, loading individual shots, preparing ingredients, or programming a computer. The character cannot move or make defence rolls on the same round that they used or activated the Attribute. Activation is appropriate for Attributes that produce instantaneous effects, such as Healing or Weapon, and is also appropriate for ongoing Attributes like Armour or Flight – but only if they were assigned the Deplete, Detectable, Irreversible, or Recovery Limiters as well. Activation is not usually assigned to Attributes that can be kept on indefinitely without inconveniencing the user. Wearable Items are normally assumed to take an appropriate time to put on or remove, so do not assign Activation to Attributes embodied in such Items unless the individual Attributes requires further Activation once the Item is ready to use.

1 Assignment	Spend one round preparing the Attribute before it is used
2 Assignments	Spend one minute preparing the Attribute before it is used
3 Assignments	Spend one hour preparing the Attribute before it is used

ASSISTED

The Attribute requires supporting individuals who must be present for its ongoing function or activation. These assistants cannot be just anyone nearby since they must fulfil some sort of special requirement appropriate to the Attribute. This could be assigned to represent a major magical ritual that requires an entire congregation of chanting acolytes or true believers or an Attribute built into an Item that requires human or animal power (such as Water Speed requiring rowers or a carriage requiring a horse).

1 Assignment	A single assistant is required for the Attribute to function
2 Assignments	A small group of assistants (2-10) is required for the Attribute to function
3 Assignments	A large group of assistants (11-100) is required for the Attribute to function

BACKLASH

The character suffers an unfortunate side effect whenever the Attribute fails to work. If the character fails their appropriate Stat roll when using the Attribute or badly misses their target when attacking with a Weapon, the character is hit with the energy or essence that would have powered the Attribute's use. The Backlash could be physical damage, memory loss, Stat drain, disorientation, or many other effects that make the character's life more difficult. The player and GM should determine the game effect of the Backlash.

1 Assignment	The Backlash occurs if the character fails their roll by an extreme margin (6 or more)
2 Assignments	The Backlash occurs if the character fails their roll by a significant margin (3 or more)
3 Assignments	The Backlash occurs if the character fails their roll

CHARGES

The character can only use the specific Attribute occasionally. This may result from a need to recharge the Attribute (or a device), an incredible drain on the character's internal reserves, a depletion of fuel for a mecha, or a different form of limitation. Charges are normally applied to Attributes with instantaneous effects, such as Jumping or Teleport, or those that have a finite duration per use. The Recovery Limiter (page 152) is usually assigned to Attributes with an ongoing effect, such as Armour or Flight.

1 Assignment	Only use the Attribute four to six times a day (or session)
2 Assignments	Only use the Attribute two or three times a day (or session)
3 Assignments	Only use the Attribute once a day (or session)

CONCENTRATION

The character must concentrate while using the ongoing Attribute (it does not apply to Attributes with an instantaneous effect). If the character's concentration is interrupted voluntarily or by an outside event, the Attribute ceases to function.

1 Assignment	Requires slight Concentration. The character can still perform other general actions but cannot perform any combat-related actions or use other Attributes that also require Concentration.
2 Assignments	Requires intense Concentration. The character can move at slow speeds and talk with others while using the Attribute but cannot perform any complex actions (including combat) or use any other Attribute.
3 Assignments	Requires full Concentration. The character cannot do anything else while using the Attribute and must remain still to devote their full attention to the Attribute.

CONSUMABLE

The Attribute requires some form of focus to use properly, which is destroyed when the Attribute is activated. This focus could be anything from candles and incense to a rocket launch gantry.

1 Assignment	Focus is easy to replace
2 Assignments	Focus is hard to replace
3 Assignments	Focus is very difficult to replace

DELAY

The Attribute does not take effect immediately after its use but rather activates some time later. This latency period may provide the targets or other characters time to nullify or otherwise avoid the Attribute's effect (GM's discretion). For example, if a young boy is bitten by a vampire and will soon join the ranks of the undead (ie. the vampire used the Metamorphosis Attribute, page 106, with the Delay Limiter), his parents may still have time to take him to a local shrine to exorcise the evil (and thus countering the Metamorphosis before activation).

1 Assignment	Delay of a few minutes before it takes full effect
2 Assignments	Delay of a few hours before it takes full effect
3 Assignments	Delay of a few days before it takes full effect

DEPENDENT

The character cannot use this Attribute unless one or more other Attributes are used at the same time. Dependent is only a Limiter if this use is a significant disadvantage. For example, a character might have Armour that is Dependent upon Flight (the Armour ceases to function when the character is on the ground) but not Flight that is Dependent on Armour (since there is rarely a compelling reason to turn off the Armour Attribute). Dependent is also a valid if one Attribute requires the other to succeed, provided that a roll is required. For example, Mind Control might be Dependent on Metamorphosis – the character can only take control of people after they have transformed the targets. The player must justify the Dependent Limiter to the GM to avoid inappropriate combinations.

1 Assignment	Dependent Attribute does not take effect until one other Attribute is activated
2 Assignments	Dependent Attribute does not take effect until two other Attributes are activated
3 Assignments	Dependent Attribute does not take effect until three other Attributes are activated

DEPLETE

The character's Energy Points are used to power a particular Attribute. The Energy Points will either be reduced after the Attributes use (for Attributes for immediate effects, such as Teleport and Weapon), or while the Attribute is being used (for Attributes that are ongoing, such as Flight and Undetectable). For more information on Energy Points and their use, see page 195.

1 Assignment	Attributes with immediate effects burn 10 Energy Points for each use (or attempted use); ongoing Attributes burn 10 Energy Point each minute of use
2 Assignments	Attributes with immediate effects burn 20 Energy Points for each use (or attempted use); ongoing Attributes burn 5 Energy Point each round of use
3 Assignments	Attributes with immediate effects burn 30 Energy Points for each use (or attempted use); ongoing Attributes burn 20 Energy Point each round of use

DETECTABLE

While using the Attribute, the character can be pinpointed and possibly identified by others who have specific detection techniques. For example, the Attribute's use may create a loud noise or a bright flash, send vibrations through the ground, or emanate mental shock waves. Detection techniques that can pinpoint the Attribute's use include: astral, ethereal, human sight/hearing/smell, infrared, mental, radar, radiation, sonar, spiritual, ultraviolet, vibration, and others. The Weapon Attribute, which is Detectable by default, is an exception to this Limiter – characters must acquire the Inconspicuous Enhancement (page 138) to make the attack undetectable. Detectable only applies if the Attribute calls attention to itself in an especially noticeable fashion and thus is usually not appropriate for Items (which can normally be seen and identified).

1 Assignment	Detectable using 1-2 methods
2 Assignments	Detectable using 3-5 methods
3 Assignments	Detectable using 6-10 methods

EMOTIONAL

The Attribute only manifests in situations where the character is experiencing a very strong emotional trigger that calls for the use of the Attribute. For example, a cleric with this Limiter might only be able to use the Healing Attribute on someone with whom the character had a strong emotional tie (such as a friend or family member). Similarly, a Weapon may only function if the character was striking to avenge a loved one, reverse a humiliation, or save the world.

1 Assignment	Use requires significant Emotional investment
2 Assignments	Use requires strong Emotional investment
3 Assignments	Use requires extreme Emotional investment

ENVIRONMENTAL

The Attribute only functions in a particular limited setting or condition. For example Weapon (Environmental: Water) can represent a torpedo, while Alternate Form (Environmental: Virtual Reality) could represent an avatar of the character whose existence is limited to a lifelike cyberspace realm. The environment can be common (one assignment), but should not be one characters will always encounter during the campaign. For example, "only in atmosphere" is not a valid setting unless much of the game action takes place in airless environments. This Limiter is also inappropriate if a limited environment is implicit in the Attribute, such as Water Speed being limited to travel through liquids. Environmental is useful for creating an internal Attribute such as a Weapon or Sixth Sense that are only usable within a specific structure or inside a large Item such as a starship.

1 Assignment	Adventures often take place in or near the specific environment
2 Assignments	Adventures occasionally take place in or near the specific environment
3 Assignments	Adventures rarely take place in or near the specific environment



EQUIPMENT

The Attribute requires specific materials, machinery, furnishings, or accessories to properly use. Unlike an Item, the required Equipment does not embody the Attribute but rather helps the character activate effects.

1 Assignment	Equipment is easily portable, such as a smartphone, wagon, or spell book
2 Assignments	Equipment is awkward to move, such as a statue, portable altar, or large furniture
3 Assignments	Equipment is static, such as workshop, laboratory, or shrine

IMBUE

Imbue is usually assigned with the Charges Limiter. The character does not use the Attribute themselves directly but instead grants its use to others for the duration of one dramatic scene. Imbue can represent blessings performed by the character for protection, inspirational speeches that encourage others, a special wish-granting ability, technical upgrades performed by the character, etc. This Limiter is often assigned to one of the following Attributes, though the GM may expand this list as desired: Armour, Augmented, Heightened Awareness, Immutable, Massive Damage, Melee Attack, Melee Defence, Mulligan, Ranged Attack, Ranged Defence, Resilient, and Special Movement.

1 Assignment	Imbue 4-5 people
2 Assignments	Imbue 2-3 people
3 Assignments	Imbue 1 person

IRREVERSIBLE

This Limiter can only be taken in conjunction with Attributes that change the physical appearance or structure of the character, such as Alternate Form, Alternate Identity, Change State, Elasticity, or Undetectable. Once the character has transformed from their normal state, they cannot transform back to a prior form without meeting certain conditions. This might include a magical ritual, work by mechanics or lab technicians, consuming a specific substance, or simply the passage of time.

1 Assignment	It takes several hours of work or special circumstances to enable the character to transform back to an earlier form
2 Assignments	As above, but the process also requires expensive or rare replacement components, ingredients, or prerequisites
3 Assignments	As above, but the process takes several days

LOCALISED

Only part of the character's body is affected by a specific Attribute. Localised is most commonly used for the following Attributes: Absorption, Alternate Form, Armour, Change State, Conversion, Resilient, Superstrength, and Undetectable. For example, a character might only receive Armour benefits against abdominal attacks, or possess the ability to turn their left arm invisible only, or have bionic legs with Superstrength, etc.

LOCALISED ITEM ARMOUR

Creating a vehicle Item that has Armour with one assignment of the Localised Limiter usually indicates that the character rides on top of the vehicle rather than inside it (which is contrary to the normal use of most vehicles), and consequently it does not provide full Armour protection. For example, motorcycles, small motorboats, ultralight aircraft, etc. all have one assignment of the Localised Limiter on their Armour.

1 Assignment	Affects a large part of the body (torso, both legs or arms, etc.)
2 Assignments	Affects a small part of the body (one leg or arm, abdomen, chest, head, etc.)
3 Assignments	Affects a tiny part of the body (one hand or foot, face, groin, knee, etc.)

MAXIMUM

The character cannot use the specific Attribute at the lower end of its power range and always functions at its Maximum strength (consider effective Level, not actual Level). This could represent a character who is too talented for their own good, an Item that only functions within certain maximum parameters, a powerful character who pushes the Attribute's limits so often that they have forgotten how to use it at a lower Levels, etc.

This Limiter is usually only appropriate for the following Attributes: Change State, Dynamic Powers, Elasticity, Flight, Ground Speed, Illusion, Jumping, Plant Control, Projection, Spaceflight, Superspeed, Teleport, Transmute, and Water Speed. The GM must approve its exact application to ensure the Attribute is sufficiently limited.

1 Assignment	The character's Attribute is at Level 2 and always functions at its Maximum effectiveness
2 Assignments	The character's Attribute is at Level 3 or 4 and always functions at its Maximum effectiveness
3 Assignments	The character's Attribute is at Level 5+ and always functions at its Maximum effectiveness

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OBJECT

Object is usually assigned to Attributes contained within Items that are contrary to the Item's "normal use" and are only useful for the benefit of the Item itself and not the character who uses it. For example, a magic ring with Armour and the Object Limiter would be harder to destroy because it has Armour but would not give the wearing character any Armour (which would be the normal use of an Item with Armour). Similarly, a cloak with Flight and the Object Limiter might be able to fly to the wearer upon command but the character could not actually fly while wearing it (which would be the normal use of an Item with Flight). When in doubt what "normal use" for an Item is, consult the Game Master.

1 Assignment	The Item's Attribute still provides moderate benefit to the character
2 Assignments	The Item's Attribute still provides slight benefit to the character
3 Assignments	The Item's Attribute hardly provides any benefit to the character

PERMANENT

The Attribute is always functioning and the character cannot turn it off. This Limiter only applies to Attributes that would inconvenience the character if the Attribute is always active, such as Change State, Force Field, Nullify, Undetectable, etc. The player and GM should discuss the problems and limitations associated with an eternally active Attribute.

1 Assignment	Permanent Attribute is a slight inconvenience
2 Assignments	Permanent Attribute is a minor inconvenience
3 Assignments	Permanent Attribute is a moderate inconvenience

RECOVERY

After the character uses the ongoing Attribute, they cannot use it again for a specific period of time. The longer the Attribute is used, the longer the rest period must be. For example, the muscles of a character with Superstrength may need time to recuperate after use, or an Item that grants Flight may need to be recharged between uses. Only under exceptional circumstances (and at a great sacrifice, as determined by the GM) can the character use the Attribute again before the waiting period has elapsed. This Limiter is usually incompatible with the Deplete and Charges Limiter.

1 Assignment	For every 1 minute the character uses the Attribute, the Recovery time is 1 minute before the Attribute functions again. The Attribute can be used for a maximum of 12 hours.
2 Assignments	For every 1 minute the character uses the Attribute, the Recovery time is 10 minutes before the Attribute functions again. The Attribute can be used for a maximum of 4 hours.
3 Assignments	For every 1 minute the character uses the Attribute, the Recovery time is 1 hour before the Attribute functions again. The Attribute can be used for a maximum of 1 hour.

SEMI-PERMANENT

The Attribute is always functioning, though the character can turn it off for short periods by expending Energy Points (and thus enjoy a normal life for brief periods). This Limiter only applies to Attributes that would inconvenience the character if the Attribute is always active, such as Change State, Force Field, Nullify, Undetectable, etc. The player and GM should discuss the problems and limitations associated with an eternally active Attribute.

1 Assignment	Semi-Permanent Attribute is a minor inconvenience to the character; can be turned off at a cost of 1 Energy Points/minute
2 Assignments	Semi-Permanent Attribute is a moderate inconvenience to the character; can be turned off at a cost of 10 Energy Points/minute
3 Assignments	Semi-Permanent Attribute is a major inconvenience to the character; can be turned off at a cost of 10 Energy Points/round

UNIQUE LIMITER

This covers any and all possible Limiters that an Attribute might possess but are not detailed in the rules. This offers a near-endless number of restrictions and consequently the player and GM should discuss the ramifications of the Unique Limiter.

1 Assignment	Unique Limiter imposes minor restrictions on the Attribute
2 Assignments	Unique Limiter imposes moderate restrictions on the Attribute
3 Assignments	Unique Limiter imposes major restrictions on the Attribute

UNPREDICTABLE

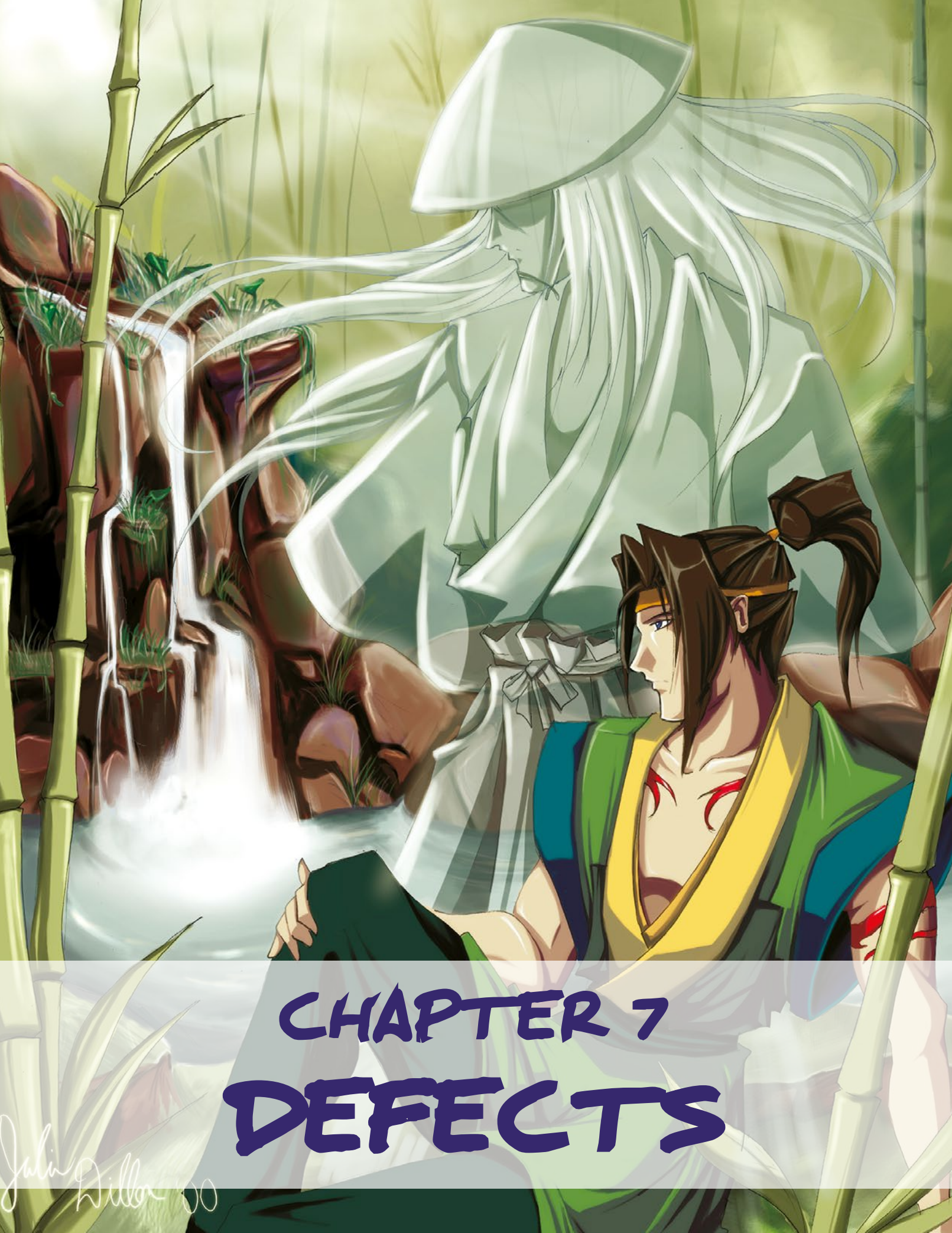
The character's Attribute frequently does not function when desired and requires a successful Stat roll to use. If the Attribute does not have a "Relevant Stat" entry, use the character's Soul Stat. At the GM's and player's discretion, Unpredictable can also represent an Attribute that does not always function in the manner desired. For example, a character with Plant Control might control the wrong plants, or a Force Field might not always appear in the correct place. For this alternative, the Stat roll determines if the Attribute operates properly with a failed roll indicating that it activates in an unexpected manner.

1 Assignment	The character must make a successful average Stat roll (TN 12) to use the Attribute
2 Assignments	The character must make a successful difficult Stat roll (TN 15) to use the Attribute
3 Assignments	The character must make a successful challenging Stat roll (TN 18) to use the Attribute

13 SAMPLE UNIQUE LIMITERS

Roll to maintain control	Naked form only
Easy to counteract	Restricts movement
Flawed results	Time limit
Initiative penalty to use	Under conditions
Limited functioning	Usage inflicts pain
Must remain still	Use weakens character





CHAPTER 7
DEFECTS

SELECT DEFECTS

Defects are disadvantages through which your character must suffer in order to overcome the hardships of day-to-day life. Defects serve as an excellent (and sometimes comical) role-playing opportunity and offer interesting plot hooks for your GM to use during adventures. They should only impede your character to a limited extent, though, and are not intended to totally negate their many abilities. If assigned to Items (see page 101), Defects indicate built-in flaws or drawbacks that make it more difficult to use or render it less effective than ideal.

Carefully consider the number of Defects that burden your character. One to five Defects is normally appropriate since your focus should be the capabilities of your character rather than their disadvantages. Additionally, it should be rare to assign a multitude of Defects above one Rank due to their restrictive nature (Size Templates excluded, page 32).

▶ DEFECT RANKS

Defects have a negative Point cost that give back Character Points to your character, depending on how severely the Defect will impact their life. Defects that do not inflict a significant disadvantage (such as a weakness to bullets made from the ice of dwarf planet Pluto) are not worth any negative Points. It's easy to think of Defects as negative Attribute Levels that hinder rather than help the character.

Defects are therefore categorised into three groups, depending on how much they reduce the final Point cost of the character:

Lesser – Lesser Defects reduce the final cost of your character by 1, 2, or 3 Points (-1 Point/Rank).

Greater – Greater Defects reduce the final cost of your character by 2, 4, or 6 Points (-2 Points/Rank).

Serious – Serious Defects reduce the final cost of your character by 3, 6, or 9 Points (-3 Points/Rank).

▶ UNUSED POINTS

If after assigning a few Defects your character's total Character Point cost is now less than the number of Character Points you were assigned by the GM, you have three options:

INCREASE YOUR BENEFITS

You can return to previous character creation steps and assign additional Stats, Templates, or Attributes, which increases your Character Point cost up to your correct starting total.

ADD UNKNOWN ELEMENTS

You can assign the unused Points to the Unknown Power Attribute (page 123), which allows the GM to assign hidden abilities to you that are appropriate for your role in the game's storyline.

BANK FOR THE FUTURE

You can save the unused Character Points for future consideration and allocate them at an appropriate time.

14 DEFECTS

Defect Name	Category	Points	Page
Achilles Heel	Greater	-2/-4/-6	156
Awkward Size	Greater	Special	156
Bane	Greater	-2/-4/-6	156
Blind Fury	Greater	-2/-4/-6	157
Conditional Ownership	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	157
Confined	Serious	-3/-6/-9	158
Cursed	Greater	-2/-4/-6	158
Easily Distracted	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	158
Fragile	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	158
Hounded	Greater	-2/-4/-6	158
Impaired Manipulation	Serious	-3/-6/-9	158
Impaired Speech	Serious	-3/-6/-9	160
Inept Attack	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	160
Inept Defence	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	160
Involuntary Change	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	160
Ism	Greater	-2/-4/-6	160
Magnet	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	161
Marked	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	161
Nemesis	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	161
Nightmares	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	161
Obligated	Greater	-2/-4/-6	163
Phobia	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	163
Physical Impairment	Serious	-3/-6/-9	163
Red Tape	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	163
Reduced Damage	Serious	-3/-6/-9	163
Sensory Impairment	Serious	-3/-6/-9	164
Shortcoming	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	164
Significant Other	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	165
Skeleton in the Closet	Greater	-2/-4/-6	165
Social Fault	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	166
Special Requirement	Serious	-3/-6/-9	166
Unappealing	Lesser	-1/-2/-3	166
Unique Defect	Special	Special	167
Vulnerability	Greater	-2/-4/-6	167
Wanted	Greater	-2/-4/-6	167
Weak Point	Greater	-2/-4/-6	167

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APPROPRIATE DEFECTS

Defects include both normal character flaws and some that are more appropriate for more-than-human characters or equipment. Most Defects are appropriate for all characters with the following exceptions: Achilles Heel, Awkward Size, Bane, Involuntary Change, and Vulnerability. These Defects are most applicable to nonhuman or superhuman characters as well as to Items.

DEFECTS AND DUAL IDENTITIES

If a character maintains a dual identity, some of their Defects may not affect them in one of the identities. For example, a masked vigilante may be wanted by the police on murder charges (the Wanted Defect), but their alternate identity may be a respected member of the Tokyo political assembly. In these instances, the character will receive fewer Points back from the Defect.

If either the character's normal or secret identity (but not both) suffers from a Defect, the value of the Defect is worth 1 Rank less. For example, if a character's secret identity has the Magnet Defect at -3 Points, it is only worth -2 Points to the character though it functions at -3 Points. In this way, single-identity Defects function in a similar way as Attribute Enhancements (page 145). If both identities suffer from the identical Defect, at the same or different Point values, use the one that returns the greatest number of Points. If a character only has one identity, the Defects return Points as normal.

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DEFECTS & SOCIAL AWARENESS

Assigning Defects can align the game mechanics of BESM to your vision for your character, as well as create excellent opportunities for engaging role-playing beyond hack-and-slash combat. It's important to approach the portrayal of Defects with maturity and sensitivity when touching upon many real-life physical and social issues that have far-reaching implications and impacts on others. Anime stereotypes can provide many laughs around the gaming table, but being mindful of the emotions and sensitivities of others should always take priority.

Role-playing is about having fun with friends. No one should ever feel marginalised, ridiculed, or targetted because a character's portrayal fails to consider how it may impact others.

ACHILLES HEEL

A Greater Defect. The character loses twice as many Health Points as normal from a particular attack form, which must fit with the character concept. It might be something with appropriate mystic resonance, such as wooden stakes for vampires or silver weapons for werewolves. It could also reflect the character's nature, such as a fire-based monster taking extra damage from water attacks, or an alien's weakness to weapons from their home planet.

-2 Points	The attack form is rare
-4 Points	The attack form is uncommon
-6 Points	The attack form is common

AWKWARD SIZE

A Greater Defect. This Defect only applies to non-living Items, since characters and creatures should acquire a Size Template instead (page 32). Awkward Size means the Item is notably larger and more massive than an ordinary human. An Item with Awkward Size may have trouble fitting through openings and moving through narrow alleys, and is much easier to notice. The larger the Item, the more Points this Defect will be worth (-2 Points/Rank). Size usually refers to the Item's longest dimension.

Additionally, larger Items make bigger targets in ranged combat. For every Awkward Size category the target is larger than the attacker, the attacker gains a +2 bonus to hit with a ranged weapon. Conversely, for every Awkward Size category the target is smaller than the attacker, the attacker receives a -2 penalty with a ranged weapon. For example, if a Huge Size 2 Item and a Gigantic Size 4 Item are in ranged combat, the Size 2 Item gains a +4 bonus to hit while the Gigantic Size 4 Item gains a -4 penalty to hit.

Table-15 shows the progression of mass and height. Select a size and then assign an appropriate mass (usually within the range provide). Size 0 (the usual human-sized Medium standard) is shown for comparison purposes.

BANE

A Greater Defect. A character with the Bane Defect is vulnerable to an otherwise non-damaging substance such as water or sunlight, or a specific element, material, or object. The Bane should relate to the character's background or Attributes in some way. The character suffers damage if their skin is physically touched by the Bane. If the Bane does not require direct physical contact (such as sunlight, seeing one's reflection, hearing the noise of a temple bell, or having the Bane in close proximity), the exposure damage is halved. Alternatively, if the Bane only affects the character when

ingested, the damage is doubled. Finally, the damage inflicted assumes that the Bane is common, such as water, sunlight, steel, or wood. If it is less common, such as a holy symbol, Buddhist scripture, or rare element, the damage is also doubled. If it is even more rare such as one particular artefact, the damage may be tripled or quadrupled as determined by the GM.

-2 Points	The Bane causes the character minor damage: 10 damage per round of exposure
-4 Points	The Bane causes the character moderate damage: 20 damage per round of exposure
-6 Points	The Bane causes the character major damage: 30 damage per round of exposure

BLIND FURY

A Greater Defect. Under specific conditions selected by the player (and approved by the GM), the character will enter a state of unbridled anger. While enraged, the character will furiously attack the closest person, whether that individual is a friend or foe. Once that person is defeated or flees, the berserk character will attack the next closest "threat." Examples of conditions that might initiate Blind Fury include: receiving a certain amount of damage, sight of blood, a specific sound or smell, being outnumbered in combat, seeing a friend in danger, confrontation with a specific opponent, etc.

The character can only return to a normal emotional state under another specific condition. This return could involve a Soul Stat roll, or could be an automatic reversion over time. Examples of return conditions include: no targets in the vicinity, a specific calming technique performed by an ally, solitude, injection of a particular drug, being knocked unconscious, etc.

-2 Points	Initiating the Blind Fury is difficult; reverting to a normal emotional state is easy
-4 Points	Initiating the Blind Fury and reverting to a normal emotional state are both moderately difficult
-6 Points	Initiating the Blind Fury is easy; reverting to a normal emotional state is difficult

CONDITIONAL OWNERSHIP

A Lesser Defect. This Defect can only be assigned to a Companion or Item, indicating that the person or object actually belongs to another individual or organisation instead of the creating character. The Companions or Items may be issued to the character but the organisation imposes mild, strict, or severe conditions on their use.

MILD CONDITIONS

The character can use the objects or allies for some personal business (such as travelling or recreational use), but if they are released from the organisation or disobey direct orders, the objects can be taken away. The character can also be assigned different objects at any time at the discretion of the organisation. For example, a police detective might have conditional use of an unmarked police car.

STRICT CONDITIONS

The character is only permitted to use the objects or allies for activities as ordered by the organisation. This is the way most military and police equipment is issued. If the character is caught using the objects for personal activities, they will receive a severe reprimand.

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AWKWARD SIZE

Rank	Size	Points	Height	Typical Mass Range
0	Medium	0	1 - 2 metres	50 - 150 kg
1	Large	-2	3 - 4 metres	200 - 1,200 kg
2	Huge	-4	5 - 8 metres	1.5 - 8 tonnes
3	Mammoth	-6	9 - 15 metres	10 - 60 tonnes
4	Gigantic	-8	16 - 30 metres	75 - 500 tonnes
5	Gargantuan	-10	31 - 60 metres	550 - 4,000 tonnes
6	Colossal	-12	61 - 125 metres	4 k – 30 k tonnes
7	Enormous	-14	126 - 250 metres	40 k – 250 k tonnes
8	Monstrous	-16	251 - 500 metres	300 k – 2 M tonnes
9	Titanic	-18	501 - 1,000 metres	2 M – 15 M tonnes
10	Monumental	-20	1,000 – 2,000 metres	15 M – 125 M tonnes

SEVERE CONDITIONS

The character can only use the objects or allies under specific orders. A government-owned time travel device would probably fall under this category. Using the objects at any other time results in incarceration, physical punishment, or even death.

-1 Point	Mild conditions are imposed on the object's ownership and usage
-2 Points	Strict conditions are imposed on the object's ownership and usage
-3 Points	Severe conditions are imposed on the object's ownership and usage

CONFINED

A Greater Defect. This Defect prevents the character from leaving a narrowly defined area. This may represent an undead villain that is cursed to haunt a particular place, an android that is programmed to follow a specific guard route, or someone under house arrest or forbidden to leave the country.

-3 Points	Confined to a large area (100 km radius), such as a single kingdom, country, or large city
-6 Points	Confined to a moderate area (1 km radius), such as a small town or large, multi-structure complex
-9 Points	Confined to a small area (100 m radius), such as a tiny village or single building

CURSED

A Greater Defect. A Cursed character has likely offended a great being of power in their past or is the direct descendent of someone who did (since Curses often pass through bloodlines). A Curse may also be assigned to an entire race of beings that have fallout out of disfavour with a god. The Curse can take a near limitless number of forms but should not provide a character with an obvious advantage (remember, it's a curse!). The exact nature, background, and limitations of the Curse should be discussed with the GM.

-2 Points	Curse imposes a slight disadvantage on the character
-4 Points	Curse imposes a moderate disadvantage on the character
-6 Points	Curse imposes a severe disadvantage on the character

EASILY DISTRACTED

A Lesser Defect. Some characters are Easily Distracted by events, objects, people, or ideas, which are collectively known as triggers. Notable examples of triggers include attractive members of the opposite or same sex, wealth, food, movie stars, hobbies, gossip, hot cars, music, one's own looks, books or scrolls of ancient lore, magical items, etc. A character with this Defect will become enthralled with the trigger until it can no longer influence them. Many characters have interests in a variety of triggers but do not possess this Defect because their interest is moderated by their sense of judgement and decorum.

-1 Point	Easily Distracted by a trigger that is encountered infrequently
-2 Points	Easily Distracted by a trigger that is encountered frequently, or by a few infrequent triggers
-3 Points	Easily Distracted by a trigger that is encountered constantly, or by a several infrequent triggers

FRAGILE

A Lesser Defect. The character is less durable than their Body and Soul Stats would otherwise suggest. This Defect is appropriate for characters with a "glass jaw" or those who succumb to physical trauma easily.

-1 Point	Health Points are decreased by 10
-2 Points	Health Points are decreased by 20
-3 Points	Health Points are decreased by 30

HOUNDED

A Greater Defect. The character is recognisable by many people, and thus it is difficult for them to keep secrets or maintain a private life. In a modern setting, journalists and photographers follow the character's movements regularly, and report their actions on television, in newspapers, and on websites. Hounded is a particularly significant disadvantage for someone who maintains a secret identity.

-2 Points	The constant attention the character receives is slightly inconvenient
-4 Points	The constant attention the character receives is moderately inconvenient
-6 Points	The constant attention the character receives is severely inconvenient

IMPAIRED MANIPULATION

A Serious Defect. The ability to manipulate objects with hands or other appendages is one of the major advantages that humans have over other species. If a character lacks these abilities, due to natural design or an unfortunate accident, they will be at a significant disadvantage.

-3 Points	The character only has one usable arm. They cannot easily hold objects during unarmed combat or while using a held-held Weapon.


SHILIN13

-6 Points	The character has rudimentary manipulative ability using paws or talons, such as that possessed by a bear, octopus, dragon, or bird. The character can grapple and lift things but cannot perform tasks that require fine manipulation (such as use tools or hand-held Items, or fire a pistol).
-9 Points	The character has no usable arms. They cannot carry or grab objects, nor can they easily engage in physical combat. This rank includes animals with no manipulative ability, such as horses, fish, and snakes.

IMPAIRED SPEECH

A Serious Defect. The ability to communicate through language is a major advantage that humans have over other animals. If a character lacks these abilities, due to natural design or serious injury, they will be at a significant disadvantage. This ability does not refer to comprehension of speech but the ability to produce it. A hearing-impaired individual will instead have the Sensory Impairment Defect (page 164).

-3 Points	The character either has a severe speech impediment or speaks clearly with their own species but on an unusual wavelength or mode that prevents easy communication with other races.
-6 Points	The character can communicate with a range of sounds that carry emotional content but which are not a language, such as the sounds made by most normal animals
-9 Points	The character is completely mute with no way to verbally communicate

INEPT ATTACK

A Lesser Defect. This Defect reflects a character's poor judgement or talent in offensive combat situations, which makes it much more difficult to strike an opponent successfully. The character suffers a penalty to their Attack Combat Value. This penalty is doubled, though, if it only applies in certain types of combat situations (such as ranged attacks, melee attacks, or against a type of opponent). See page 169 for more information on the Attack Combat Value.

-1 Point	-1 Attack Combat Value for all attacks; or -2 Attack Combat Value in certain situations only
-2 Points	-2 Attack Combat Value for all attacks; or -4 Attack Combat Value in certain situations only
-3 Points	-3 Attack Combat Value for all attacks; or -6 Attack Combat Value in certain situations only

INEPT DEFENCE

A Lesser Defect. This Defect reflects a character's poor judgement or talent in defensive combat situations, which can often place them in precarious positions. The character suffers a penalty to their Defence Combat Value. This penalty is doubled, though, if it only applies in certain types of combat situations (such as ranged attacks, melee attacks, or against a type of opponent). See page 169 for more information on the Defence Combat Value.

-1 Point	-1 Defence Combat Value for all defences; or -2 Defence Combat Value in certain situations only
-2 Points	-2 Defence Combat Value for all defences; or -4 Defence Combat Value in certain situations only
-3 Points	-3 Defence Combat Value for all defences; or -6 Defence Combat Value in certain situations only

INVOLUNTARY CHANGE

A Lesser Defect. This Defect is only available to characters who have the Alternate Form (page 78) Alternate Identity (page 80), or Merge (page 103) Attributes; assign it to their base form. The character may accidentally change from their base form to their other form (or vice versa) or an external trigger (such as an opponent, ally, natural force, etc.) may induce the change. This Defect may represent a character who: transforms between identities upon hearing or uttering a specific word; reverts to normal when a particular chemical in the body is in low quantities (such as sugar or salt); transforms when a button on an Item pushed; transforms in times of stress; transforms when a substance (such as water or sunlight) touches the character; etc.

-1 Point	Difficult to trigger the character's Involuntary Change
-2 Points	Moderately easy to trigger the character's Involuntary Change
-3 Points	Easy to trigger the character's Involuntary Change

ISM

A Greater Defect. Ism is discrimination based solely on one particular aspect of a character. Examples of Ism include: ableism, ageism, classism, cisgenderism, ethnocentrism, racism, or sexism, or discrimination based on education, species, genetics, sexual preference, occupation, religion, physical features, etc. The players and GM are strongly encouraged to discuss any contentious discrimination issues and their role in the game before play begins to ensure no one will be uncomfortable role-playing a character subject to them.

-2 Points	Experiences slight discrimination
-4 Points	Experiences moderate discrimination
-6 Points	Experiences severe discrimination

MAGNET

A Lesser Defect. The character attracts susceptible girls or guys (or even both sexes) like bees to nectar. For some reason, individuals are simply drawn to the character, fall helplessly in love (or lust) with them, and cannot stop thinking of them. Even worse, they will fight each other over the character to keep one another from advancing any relationship. This Defect should only be assigned if the character would be bothered by such attention but lacks the will to take extreme measures to drive away the admirers. The Magnet Defect does not represent some unusual charisma on the part of the character but rather their fate to constantly meet obsessed people.

-1 Point	At any specific time, only a few adoring fans are actively chasing the character
-2 Points	A handful of adoring fans are regularly chasing the character and new ones may appear infrequently
-3 Points	Swarms of adoring fans are regularly chasing the character and new ones typically appear frequently

MARKED

A Lesser Defect. A character is considered Marked if their body hosts a permanent and distinguishing design that may be difficult to conceal. The design may be a family symbol, an identifying birthmark, a permanent scar, or a unique tattoo. If the mark is not considered out of the ordinary (such as freckles or an unremarkable tattoo), this Defect does not apply. Characters who are obviously non-human (alternate race, robotic, demonic, alien, etc.) in a setting where most people are human (or vice versa) would also have the Marked Defect.

When considering assigning the Marked Defect, consider what would seem out of the ordinary and the focus of attention. Most animals, for example, would not have Marked since it's normal for them to be animals. A rare jade-green tiger would certainly qualify for Marked, though, since its colour is quite out of the ordinary. Similarly, a female monkey saving Tokyo as a magical girl would also qualify, since heroism is not a normal calling for a monkey. In a traditional high-fantasy setting, most of the standard races (elves, dwarves, halflings, etc.) would also not have Marked since these races are usually common enough to avoid attracting attention.

-1 Point	Mark is easily concealable because it is small or in an inconspicuous location
-2 Points	Mark can be concealed with moderate difficulty because it is large or in an obvious location
-3 Points	Mark cannot be concealed in most circumstances because it affects the character's entire body (or the character's species is the mark itself)

NEMESIS

A Lesser Defect. The character has someone in their life that actively interferes with goal achievement on a regular basis. This Nemesis can take several forms. They could be a professional rival such as someone competing for the favour of the character's boss. The Nemesis could also be personal, such as a criminal that is pursued by a specific law enforcement officer who devotes their existence to putting the character behind bars. The Nemesis may even be a romantic rival, such as someone chasing the same person the character is currently pursuing.

The Nemesis should be someone who makes the character's life difficult (and cannot easily be removed) but the Nemesis does not need to be a mortal enemy. It might be someone the character loves very much but one whom they cannot avoid, such as an overbearing parent who lives at home with the character. If for any reason the Nemesis is defeated or goes away, the GM should create another Nemesis unless the player also wishes to use Advancement Points (page 303) to eliminate the Defect permanently.

-1 Point	The Nemesis is merely annoying or interferes infrequently
-2 Points	The Nemesis occasionally tries to harm the character or interferes frequently
-3 Points	The Nemesis always tries to harm the character or interferes constantly

NIGHTMARES

A Lesser Defect. When the Nightmare Defect haunts a character, they have trouble sleeping at night and functions at less-than-optimum performance during the day. The nightmare can be a memory of a tragic event or traumatic experience or it might be something else such as a prophetic vision or warning. The nightmare may not occur every night but it will haunt the character regularly. Additionally, the nightmares do not need to portray the exact same events repeatedly but the visions should be related in some way. The details concerning the subject matter of the nightmares and why they occur is the responsibility of the GM and the player to create.

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-1 Point	Nightmares occur infrequently and have a slight effect on the character's daily life
-2 Points	Nightmares occur frequently and have a moderate effect on the character's daily life
-3 Points	Nightmares occur constantly and have a severe effect on the character's daily life

OBLIGATED

A Greater Defect. Free will has little meaning for a character who is Obligated to a corporation, government, crime ring, or other organisation or individual. Control over the character can be exerted through a variety of methods including blackmail, brainwashing, legal contract, technology, or just highly effective propaganda. Dire consequences await a character whose actions conflict with the mandate of the organisation. Obligated should not normally be assigned to Companions directly and is only applicable to Items if that Item itself impedes the freedom of the character who possesses it.

-2 Points	Small obligation to the organisation and subject to slight punishment for opposing it
-4 Points	Moderate obligation to the organisation and subject to moderate punishment for opposing it
-6 Points	Large obligation to the organisation and subject to severe punishment for opposing it

PHOBIA

A Lesser Defect. A Phobia is a fear (often irrational) of an event, object, or person that can limit a character's choice of actions. Avoiding situations that could trigger the phobia may take a high priority in the character's life. Note that a Phobia that effectively cripples the character with fear does not add constructively to the role-playing experience.

-1 Point	Slight Phobia or one that is encountered infrequently
-2 Points	Moderate Phobia or one that is encountered frequently
-3 Points	Severe Phobia or one that is encountered constantly

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT

A Serious Defect. The character has a physical impairment that makes aspects of daily life more challenging. Possible impairments include: one or more missing (or unusable) legs, amnesia, constant sickness, nagging injury, severe headaches, an android that requires frequent repairs, etc. The player and GM should discuss the problems and limitations associated with the impairment. See also the more specific Impaired Manipulation (page 158), Impaired Speech (page 160), and Sensory Impairment (page 164) Defects.

-3 Points	Physical Impairment is a slight inconvenience to the character
-6 Points	Physical Impairment is a moderate inconvenience to the character
-9 Points	Physical Impairment is a severe inconvenience to the character

RED TAPE

A Lesser Defect. The character must negotiate their way through a complicated bureaucracy in order to accomplish tasks. This Defect is often associated with characters who are members of law enforcement organisations or similar government agencies that require paperwork. A large criminal organisation, however, may also require a character to receive permission from several levels of bosses before undertaking certain high-profile jobs.

Red Tape also includes whatever measures the character must take "after the fact" to appease the organisation to which they belong. For example, a cop may need to fill out a report every time their weapon is fired or may have to follow a complicated series of steps to obtain a search warrant. A thug (or a medieval noble) may be required to pay a percentage of their take to the regional boss or face some very strict penalties.

The Red Tape Defect is usually inappropriate for allies created with the Companion Attribute.

-1 Point	Red Tape impedes the character before or after a major action (but not both) and is generally easy to manage
-2 Points	Red Tape impedes the character before and after a major action and it is moderately difficult to manage
-3 Points	Red Tape impedes the character before, after, and during a major action and it is difficult to manage

REDUCED DAMAGE

A Serious Defect. The character inflicts reduced damage in combat, possibly due to feebleness, lack of combat experience, youth, etc. For more information on combat and damage, see page 183.

-3 Points	Damage Multiplier is reduced by 1
-6 Points	Damage Multiplier is reduced by 2
-9 Points	Damage Multiplier is reduced by 3

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SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

A Serious Defect. One or more of the character's senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell) are either diminished or lost. An example of a diminished sense is being near-sighted or hard of hearing; the GM should take the impairment into consideration when deciding what the character is able to perceive. An example of a lost sense is blindness or deafness. Any diminishment or loss is based on the character's status after benefiting from any technological aids such as eyeglasses or hearing aids in the setting. For example, if a character has a hearing aid but is still hard of hearing, they have Sensory Impairment at -3 Points. In a setting where a hearing aid was unavailable or could not correct their particular impairment, the character would have Sensory Impairment at -6 Points instead. Stat rolls that relate to a character's Sensory Impairment receive a minor obstacle (secondary sense) or major obstacle (primary sense) on the roll.

-3 Points	Diminished primary sense (such as short-sightedness or being hard of hearing) or a lost secondary sense (such as taste or smell)
-6 Points	Lost primary sense (sight or hearing) or multiple lost secondary senses
-9 Points	Lost primary sense (sight or hearing) and multiple lost secondary senses

SHORTCOMING

A Lesser Defect. The three game Stats indicate the same level of ability or competency in all aspects of each Stat: the Body Stat represents all physical aspects, the Mind Stat represents all mental aspects, and the Soul Stat represents all spiritual and willpower aspects. Some characters may have one or more aspects of a Stat at a less proficient level than the rest of the Stat aspects, however, and this is when you can assign the Shortcoming Defect to provide more precision.

For example, a bulky brawler might have a high strength, excellence endurance, fast running speed, good manual dexterity, and healthy immune system ... but be rather clumsy. This would fit a character with a Body Stat of 8, with the Shortcoming (Agility) Defect at -3 Points. Similarly, a witty, perceptive, and insightful academic genius that happens to have a surprisingly bad memory might have a Mind Stat of 9, with the Shortcoming (Memory) Defect at -2 Points.

Every Stat has several aspects associated with it that are considered either Major Aspects (highly important aspects that arise frequently in a game) or Minor Aspects (less important aspects that arise infrequently). Each Stat usually has the three Major and three Minor Aspects listed below but players may create additional or alternative Aspects with the Game Master's input.



BODY STAT

Major Aspects – Agility, Endurance, Strength

Minor Aspects – Immune System, Manual Dexterity, Running Speed

MIND STAT

Major Aspects – Creativity, Perception, Reason

Minor Aspects – Common Sense, Intuition, Memory

SOUL STAT

Major Aspects – Charisma, Luck, Willpower

Minor Aspects – Composure, Empathy, Self-Discipline

NEW ASPECTS

These Aspects and their classification as Major or Minor are examples only. The GM can redefine or rename these Aspects, or create others that better reflect particular character concepts or the nature of a setting, or what elements of achievement the GM wishes to emphasise. A few examples of alternate Aspects, which could be Major or Minor depending on their emphasis and exact definition, may include: Co-ordination, Looks, Fitness, Lower-Body Strength, Muscle, Upper-Body Strength (for Body); Focus, Intellect, Judgement, Mechanical Aptitude; Savvy, Wit, Wisdom (for Mind); Artistic Ability, Courage, Charm, Gravitas, Leadership, Inspiration, Piety, Presence, Sanity (for Soul).

ALL STAT ASPECTS

Sometimes a character needs the Shortcoming Defect to apply to all aspects of a specific Stat. This usually applies to characters that undergo a radical change from one form to another, such as that induced by the Alternate Form Attribute (page 78). For example, a scientist character with a Mind Stat of 11 who transforms into a hulking beast may need to reduce their Mind Stat to 3 with a Shortcoming Mind Defect. For this application only, a -1 penalty is applied to all the character's specific Stat and Skill rolls for every -2 Points of the Shortcoming Defect assigned (ie. what could be considered negative Levels of the Augmented Attribute). All Derived Values must be recalculated for this application of Shortcoming.

-1 Point	For a Shortcoming Major Aspect, the character suffers a -1 dice roll penalty to Stat and Skill rolls with a minor obstacle. For Minor Aspects, this increases to a -2 dice roll penalty with a major obstacle.
-2 Points	For a Shortcoming Major Aspect, the character suffers a -2 dice roll penalty to Stat and Skill rolls with a minor obstacle. For Minor Aspects, this increases to a -4 dice roll penalty with a major obstacle.
-3 Points	For a Shortcoming Major Aspect, the character suffers a -3 dice roll penalty to Stat and Skill rolls with a minor obstacle. For Minor Aspects, this increases to a -6 dice roll penalty with a major obstacle.

SIGNIFICANT OTHER

A Lesser Defect. A character with this Defect has someone for whom they will go to any lengths to keep safe from harm – even at the risk of their own life. The S.O. should be a regular fixture in the campaign. A one-night stand or a cousin visiting for two weeks is a plot complication and not an appropriate S.O. The character's sense of obligation towards the S.O. is enough that the character will take great pains to ensure their safety and well-being. Examples include spouses and steady romantic partners, teammates, immediate relatives (parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, perhaps very close cousins), and close co-workers (such as a cop's partner). It is acceptable for a character to take another character as an S.O. provided the players role-play this relationship appropriately. In this case, the S.O. relationship is always worth just -1 Point but is treated as a -3 Points Defect by the GM in terms of the frequency with which it affects the game. The S.O. Defect is inappropriate for most Companions and almost all Items.

-1 Point	Significant Other is rarely placed in great danger and appears infrequently
-2 Points	Significant Other is often placed in great danger and appears frequently
-3 Points	Significant Other is regularly placed in great danger and appears constantly

SKELETON IN THE CLOSET

A Greater Defect. The character has a dark secret. Exposure of this secret could cause harm to the character in the form of public humiliation, loss of a job, arrest, injury, or even death. The Point Rank of this Defect is based on the severity of the consequences if the secret is revealed. The secret must be important enough that the character will actively take steps to keep others from learning of it. If the Skeleton is ever revealed, the character will suffer the associated consequences and the GM should replace it with appropriate Defects worth at least as many Points as Skeleton in the Closet.

For example, most criminals have a -2 Point Skeleton in the Closet – they have committed crimes that could send them to jail or worse but usually there is no easily available evidence. If their secret is discovered, they will usually have Skeleton in the Closet replaced by an equal or higher value of the Wanted Defect (page 167). A -6 Point Skeleton is usually reserved for characters who

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face destruction or death if their secret is discovered, such as a flesh-eating alien living among humans or an undercover special agent that has infiltrated a terrorist organisation.

The Skeleton in the Closet Defect also applies to someone who has a secret identity that they wish to conceal. The value depends on the consequences if the secret is revealed and thus is heavily dependent on the nature and actions of the character. For example, if an undercover agent's identity is revealed, enemies can target the character and their family more easily. Whether this is a -2, -4, or -6 Rank Defect depends on the position of the character, popularity of the character, how many enemies they have, how easily the character can maintain a normal lifestyle, etc. When in doubt, assume that most characters who have secret identities gain the -4 Points Defect.

Skeleton in the Closet is only appropriate for Companions if their allied character is aware of the secret and must strive to protect it, since its exposure would be harmful to the character as well through "guilt by association" and the loss of an important ally or friend.

-2 Points	Skeleton is difficult to discover and/or the consequences of discovery are slight and/or the character's reputation will be impacted slightly
-4 Points	Skeleton is moderately easy to discover and/or the consequences of discovery are moderate and/or the character's reputation will be impacted moderately
-6 Points	Skeleton is easy to discover and/or the consequences of discovery are severe and/or the character's reputation will be impacted severely

SOCIAL FAULT

A Lesser Defect. The character exhibits a Social Fault that produces hardship for either the character or their companions and allies (or both). Social Faults are primarily role-playing opportunities rather than strict mechanistic rules that provides a framework for character action based on a background story or plot hook – but they are not intended to cripple your character's participation. When a Stat or Skill roll is required in circumstances that touch upon the Social Fault, the GM can impose a major or minor obstacle (page 182) to the roll, raise the Target Number, or impose other penalties. For most characters, assigning more than two or three Social Faults is not recommended.

A non-exhaustive list of Social Faults include: abusive, aimless, antisocial, anxious, arrogant, bigoted, borderline, boring, cowardly, demanding, depressed, envious, greedy, histrionic, honour code, impulsive, inflexible, loquacious, narcissistic, nihilistic, obnoxious, obsessive, overconfident, overly sensitive, pacifistic, passive-aggressive, perfectionist, puritanical, sadistic, shy.

-1 Point	Imposes a slight disadvantage on the character and/or their allies
-2 Points	Imposes a moderate disadvantage on the character and/or their allies
-3 Points	Imposes a severe disadvantage on the character and/or their allies

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT

A Serious Defect. This Defect means the character has a Special Requirement that must be fulfilled in order for them to continue to function normally. This might include: a mechanical device that needs constant maintenance for proper functioning, a cyborg's need for batteries, a vampire's thirst for blood, a chronically ill patient's requirement for medicine, a god's need for worship, a fairy's need for belief in its existence, an addict's need for a fix, or a baby's need for constant attention. The Special Requirement may involve a physical object, an event, an action, an environmental condition, or even a state of mind. Everyday activities, such as eating and sleeping, are not considered to be Special Requirements unless they must be carried out under unusual conditions or more frequently for some reason. For example, if a robot requires regular changes of batteries instead of (rather than as well as) food, this is not a Special Requirement unless these batteries are rarer or more costly than ordinary food would be. This Defect covers a wide range of possibilities and the details should be discussed with the GM.

-3 Points	Easy to obtain and/or is needed infrequently
-6 Points	Moderately difficult to obtain and/or is needed frequently
-9 Points	Difficult to obtain and/or is needed constantly

UNAPPEALING

A Lesser Defect. An Unappealing character may find it difficult to blend into a crowd because their appearance is distinctive. Alternatively, the term "unappealing" may not necessarily mean ugly, but can also refer to a bad smell, manner of speech, or even an unpleasant habit that provokes a consistently negative reaction. A monstrous, ugly creature is usually both Unappealing and Marked (page 161), while conversely a beautiful winged angel would be Marked (the presence of wings) but not Unappealing.

-1 Point	Slightly Unappealing
-2 Points	Moderately Unappealing
-3 Points	Severely Unappealing

UNIQUE DEFECT

This section covers any and all possible Defects that a character might possess but are not detailed in the rules. The boundaries and limitations of the Defect should be discussed with the GM.

-1 to -3 Point	Unique Defect occurs infrequently and/or has a slight effect on the character
-2 to -6 Points	Unique Defect occurs frequently and/or has a moderate effect on the character
-3 to -9 Points	Unique Defect occurs constantly and/or has a severe effect on the character

VULNERABILITY

A Greater Defect. The character has a critical weakness to a specific object, environment, thought, activity, or condition. When in close proximity to the Vulnerability, it can temporarily strip the character of their Attributes that are derived from one particular source (such as magic or technology or supernatural ability; see page 258). The Vulnerability should only affect the character rarely, however, since it impacts them so severely. This Defect is mostly applicable to non-humans or superhumans.

-2 Points	The character's source-related Attribute Levels all drop by one-quarter (round up) when affected by the Vulnerability
-4 Points	The character's source-related Attribute Levels all drop by one-half (round up) when affected by the Vulnerability
-6 Points	The character cannot use any source-related Attribute when affected by the Vulnerability

WANTED

A Greater Defect. The character is Wanted by the law, a powerful criminal, or private organisation that has placed a price on their head. Being Wanted is different from having a Nemesis since there is no single person devoting their life to annoying or hunting down the character but the character needs to conceal their identity or move around regularly to avoid having strangers calling the police or pursuing the character (depending on the circumstances).

-2 Points	The reward, contract, or other incentive offered is slight
-4 Points	The reward, contract, or other incentive offered is moderate
-6 Points	The reward, contract, or other incentive offered is extreme

WEAK POINT

A Greater Defect. Weak Point is usually applied to non-humans or vehicle Items but can represent a character's old injury or wound that an opponent can exploit. The Item possesses an abnormal weak point that, if targetted and hit during combat (suffering penalties to the roll, at the GM's discretion), it inflicts double damage. If the GM deems the attack has been wildly successful, the target is instead immediately reduced to 0 Health Points and falls unconscious or is destroyed (again, at the GM's option). The opponent, or even the character, may not be aware the Weak Point exists, however, until its presence is discovered by accident or through careful study.

-2 Points	Weak Point is tiny and difficult to hit
-4 Points	Weak Point is small and moderately easy to hit
-6 Points	Weak Point is large and easy to hit





CHAPTER 8
DERIVED VALUES

08: DERIVED VALUES

CALCULATE DERIVED VALUES

The end of your character creation journey is nearly here and soon you'll be ready to play!

Once you have allocated all the Character Points by acquiring Stats, Attributes (including Skill Groups), and Defects – plus any associated Enhancements and Limiters – it's time to calculate your character's Derived Values. These derived numbers are based directly on your character's Body, Mind, and Soul Stats (modified by Attributes and Defects) and thus do not afford any choices of Character Point distribution. If your Derived Values don't reflect the vision for your character accurately – such as a berserker barbarian character that has a too-low Attack Combat Value and too-high Defence Combat Value – you can always return to the Stats, Attributes, and Defects chapters to refine your assignments to better match your expectations.

COMBAT VALUE

Combat Value governs all facets of physical conflict, including your character's abilities in attacking, defending, and delivering damage. A higher Combat Value reflects fighting spirit and an increased knowledge of all physical combat forms: armed, unarmed, martial arts, and ranged weapons. There are two separate components of the Combat Value – Attack Combat Value (ACV) and Defence Combat Value (DCV). Attributes and Defects may modify either component separately.

Prowess in combat can only be achieved through harmony of the Complete Self. Lack of self-unity through weakness of any facet of the character will restrict their ability in combat. Consequently, the Body, Mind, and Soul Stats are all of equal importance to the combat master: Body Stat for a forceful attack and defence; Mind Stat for quick wit, knowledge of combat techniques and anticipation of an opponent's actions; and Soul Stat for the winning spirit and good fortune. For example, a petite character with martial arts training can take down an opponent nearly twice their size since knowledge and determination is just as important as brute force.

Your character's base Combat Value is calculated by adding together all the Stat Values and divide by three, rounding down.

$$\text{COMBAT VALUE} = (\text{BODY STAT} + \text{MIND STAT} + \text{SOUL STAT}) \div 3$$

The Attack Combat Value is equal to the base Combat Value, +1 per Level of the character's Attack Mastery Attribute (page 80). ACV may be increased in specific circumstances as determined by the Enemy Attack (page 90), Melee Attack (page 102), and Ranged Attack (page 116) Attributes.

The Defence Combat Value is equal to the base Combat Value, +1 per Level of the character's Defence Mastery Attribute (page 88). DCV may be increased in specific circumstances as determined by the Enemy Defence (page 90), Melee Defence (page 103), and Ranged Defence (page 116) Attributes.



HEALTH POINTS

Health Points measure the amount of physical damage your character's body can sustain before it ceases to function (i.e. your character is knocked unconscious or even dies). Damage delivered in combat is subtracted from your character's current Health Point total. If the total ever falls below zero, the character is rendered unconscious and may die if they do not receive medical attention.

Your character's base number of Health Points is equal to the sum of the Body Stat and Soul Stat multiplied by 5 ([Body + Soul) x 5]). Increase Health Points by +10 for every Level of the character's Tough Attribute (page 128). Reduce Health Points by -10 for every -1 Rank of the Fragile Defect (page 158).

$$\text{HEALTH POINTS} = (\text{BODY STAT} + \text{SOUL STAT}) \times 5$$

ENERGY POINTS

Characters possess a personal reserve of energy that may be burned when carrying out difficult tasks. Energy Points are needed to fuel Attributes that are associated with the Deplete Limiter (page 149). If your character's Energy Point total is ever reduced to 0, they will fall unconscious from exhaustion.

Energy Points are also used to represent deprivation such as hunger, thirst, fatigue, lack of sleep, and even intense emotion such as crippling fear or stress. In some instances (such as hunger and thirst), if a character's Energy Points are at 0 and continue to decline, they will begin to lose Health Points instead.

In extreme moments, player characters can use Energy Points to temporarily provide a bonus to a dice roll. The character may spend these Points after rolling the dice, applying a +1 dice roll bonus for every 10 Energy Points the character burns. A character may add a maximum bonus to a single roll equal to their Soul Stat. See Dramatic Feats (page 195) for more information on modifying dice rolls with Energy Points.



Players and the GM are cautioned that the over-use of Energy Points can slow the pace of a game and greatly increase the amount of bookkeeping. Additionally, your character may tire quickly if you assign the Deplete Limiter to several Attributes, which prevents your character from using them over sustained periods. Whether this is appropriate for your character or not depends on how you envision your hero.

Your character's base number of Energy Point is equal to the sum of the Mind Stat and Soul Stat multiplied by 5 ([Mind + Soul] x 5). Increase Energy Points by +10 for every Level of the character's Energised Attribute (page 91).

$$\text{ENERGY POINTS} = (\text{MIND STAT} + \text{SOUL STAT}) \times 5$$

DAMAGE MULTIPLIER

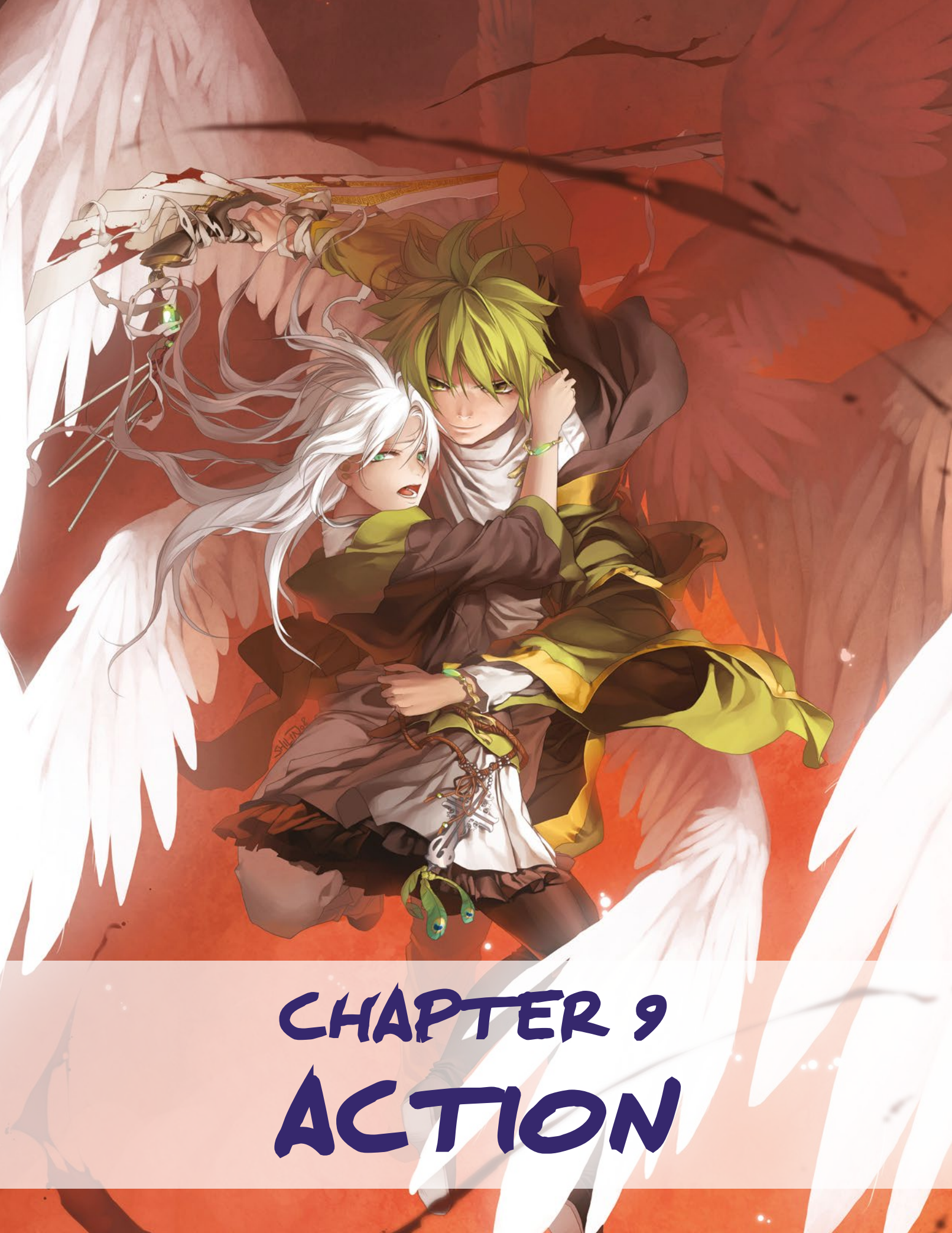
A character's base Damage Multiplier is 5. It is increased by +1 per Level of the character's Massive Damage Attribute (page 102). Also, when muscle-power Weapon attacks are involved – such as for normal melee and thrown Weapons or Weapons with the Muscle Enhancement (page 138) – the Superstrength Attribute (page 124) increases the character's Damage Multiplier by +1 for each Attribute Level as well.

For more information on physical combat and damage, see page 193.

FINISHING UP

Once you have calculated your character's Derived Values, you should show your creation to the GM since they may have a few suggestions for fine-tuning your character to better fit the game storyline. Otherwise, your have finished the creative process and your character is ready for play!





Chapter 9
Action

TAKING ACTION

In a role-playing game like BESM, most character or NPC actions do not require any particular rules. A player simply states that their character walks across a room, picks up an object, drives a vehicle, talks to someone, etc., and if the GM agrees that the action is possible and can be performed without much difficulty, this simply happens. Personal interaction between characters or NPCs is at the heart of role-playing games and this is what sets them apart from other tabletop games such as board, miniature, and party games. The players and GM will spend most of their role-playing time talking "in character" and describing what their alter egos are doing from scene to scene. In addition to speaking with the voice of all the background and supporting characters they control, the Game Master also describes what the player characters are seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting to provide context and understanding for the characters' actions.

Throughout the course of a game, circumstances may arise where specific rules can help determine what happens. This is usually the case when the outcome of an action or event is uncertain and the result is important to the story. If a character needs to fix a broken reactor pump to prevent a nuclear meltdown, can they do it in time? If a character's car drives off a cliff, can they jump clear in time, and if not, how badly will the crash injure the character? If two people fight, who wins?

A character's Stats, Attributes, Skill Groups, and Derived Values help resolve these dramatic questions. In many cases, dice rolls can add additional hazard and drama to the action. The dice rolls represent elements beyond the direct control of the character or the uncertainty that results when opposing characters interact. In some situations, the GM may elect to determine the results without rolling dice (see Should You Roll The Dice?, page 180). The GM may do so if they think a particular outcome is certain (whether a success or a failure) or a particular outcome is dramatically necessary to the game.

One situation the rules cover in greater detail is combat. The game mechanics for physical conflict are explicit to give players greater control over their characters' actions when engaged in a mortal struggle. If they lose, they will know the GM has not arbitrarily injured or killed their characters. The GM can also follow a similar procedure with any other actions that affect a character's fate: treat routine activities in passing and delve into more detail whenever an action impacts the characters physically or emotionally.

DESCRIBING ACTIONS

Characters can perform or attempt a nearly endless list of actions. These can be mundane activities (talking, breathing, thinking, etc.), skilled activities (building a suit of power armour, hacking into a computer, moving silently, climbing the side of a building, etc.), or combat activities (fighting, dodging, shooting, etc.).

Every GM has a preferred method for having players describe their characters' actions. Usually this involves the GM moving from player to player and asking, "What is your character doing?" Experienced GMs try to give each person equal role-playing time so that everyone is an important facet of the story (switching between characters as necessary). Players are responsible for relating their characters' intended actions to the GM, who describes the results of those actions or requests a Stat or Skill roll to determine the outcome.

Consider the three action descriptions below:

» "My character, Akira, is going to search for the missing sword."

» "My character, Akira, is going to search for the missing sword in the basement of the building."

» "My character, Akira, is going to quickly search for the missing sword in the basement of the building. He will knock down doors if necessary in order to find it as quickly as possible."

All three accounts involve Akira looking for a lost sword but the level of detail is quite different. You should not be overly concerned with detail if it is irrelevant to your character's actions (such as exactly how Akira is forcing open the doors in the final description), but sometimes a little detail can greatly alter the GM's interpretation of the event.



There is an expansion book in our anime and manga RPG adventure line called **BESM Extras** that is dedicated to rules variations, extended game system mechanics, expanded optional notes and guidelines, and plenty of ready-to-use examples. See our website for detailed release information: **dyskami.ca** or **BESM4.life**.

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Movement Speed (kph)

WALK	JOG	RUN	SPRINT
1x	1.5x	2x	4-5x
Body Stat	Body Stat	Body Stat	Body Stat

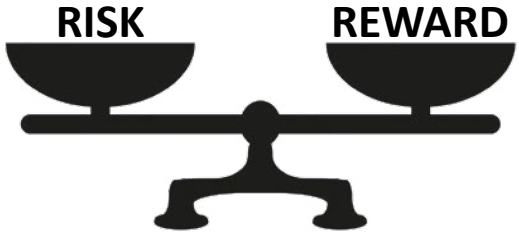
Jumping Distance (m)

1/8 BODY STAT	1/4 BODY STAT	BODY STAT	1/4 TOP SPEED
UP/BACK	FORWARD	FORWARD	FORWARD
From Stationary	From Stationary	With Running Start	Vehicle With Ramp



Swimming Speed (kph)

SHORTER DISTANCES	LONGER DISTANCES
1x	1/2x
Body Stat	Body Stat



Hedging Dice Rolls

NORMAL CHECK	MINOR EDGE	MINOR OBSTACLE	MAJOR EDGE	MAJOR OBSTACLE
7	8	6	9	5
Auto Result	Auto Result	Auto Result	Auto Result	Auto Result

Game Rounds

3-4

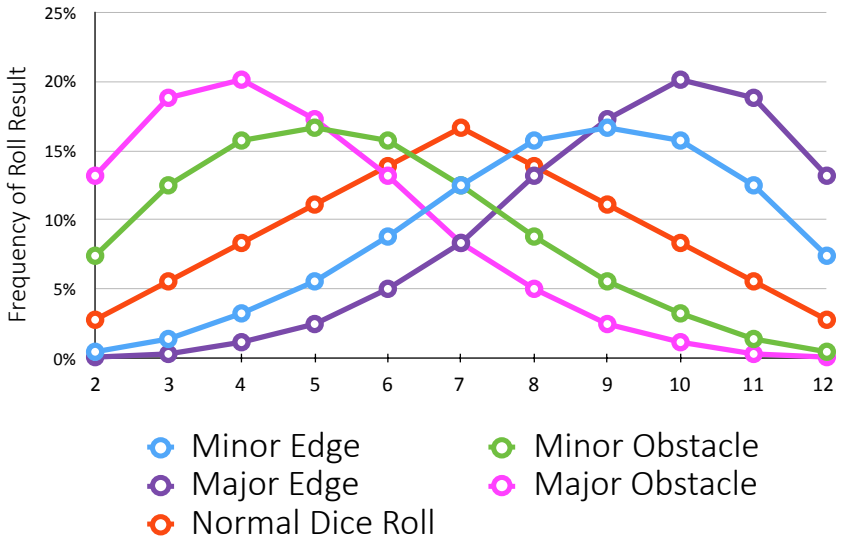
Each Seconds In Length

Speed Conversion

1 = 1

Kilometre/hour (kph) — metre/round

Dice Distribution Results





Opposed Dice Rolls

Stat + Skill Group + DICE vs. **Stat + Skill Group + DICE**

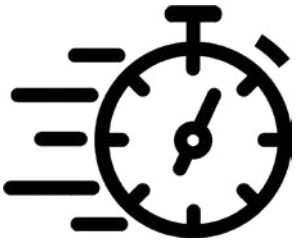
Alternatively, vs. Target Number (TN) for unopposed rolls



Attack vs. Defence

ACV + Attack Attributes + DICE vs. **DCV + Defence Attributes + DICE**

Highest total result succeeds – attacker wins ties



Initiative

ACV + DICE

Lightning Reflexes gives a major or minor edge



Damage

Weapon Level X **Damage Multiplier**

+ ACV + Size Modifier

Unarmed damage equals ACV alone



Recovery Rate

HEALTH POINTS — **BODY** Each DAY of rest Normal Damage; **BODY** Each HOUR of rest Stun Damage

ENERGY POINTS — **½(MIND + SOUL)** Each HOUR of rest



Target Numbers (TN)

SIMPLE	EASY	AVERAGE	DIFFICULT	CHALLENGING	UNLIKELY	IMPROBABLE
6	9	12	15	18	21	24



Weapon Ranges (m or km)

RANK 1	RANK 2	RANK 3	RANK 4	RANK 5	RANK 6	RANK 7
3	10	100	1K	10K	100K	1000K

GAME TIME

The "in game" passage of time in a role-playing game is fluid, just as it is in a story. In some situations, such as a conversation between two characters, the flow of game time normally matches real world time. More often, the amount of time that passes depends on the characters' activities as set by the players' actions – things happen as soon as dramatically appropriate. Climbing a high mountain may just takes a few short minutes of description, or a few die rolls, to resolve. It does not take the many hours that climbing a mountain would really take. The GM should telescope time until something interesting happens: "Two weeks pass while you investigate the crime. Then the terrorist broadcasts a message, announcing their plans to destroy Tokyo Tower if their demands are not met." GMs may go back in time as well to employ flashback scenes, which are useful tools to establish the background for a story without simply recounting the information in dry fashion. Finally, in very dramatic situations such as combat, the GM may keep very precise track of time by using individual "combat rounds" (see Combat, page 183).

SCENE, ROUND, AND INITIATIVE

Two common measures of game time are a dramatic scene and a round. A dramatic scene is any situation where the events remain linked, moment-to-moment. Think of it in movie terms – a scene lasts until the camera cuts to an entirely new setting, potentially with new characters. If, for example, a player-character is speaking with an informant in a diner, the entire conversation constitutes a scene. Once the GM switches scenes to the character entering a back alley, following up on the informant's lead, the diner scene ends and a new scene begins in the back alley. If the conversation was interrupted instead by a villain attacking the informant, intent on shutting them up before he could reveal any important information, the scene would not yet end when the character chased the villain down a back alleyway. Since the events are still linked moment-to-moment, it is still a part of a singular dramatic scene even if the setting has changed.

A round is a measure of time of approximately 3-4 seconds in length, while an Initiative is one specific moment in time. A round is primarily used for combat situations and is the amount of time in which an average person can react to a situation, make a decision, and perform a significant action during a battle or other stressful situation.

When combat occurs, characters roll Initiative (page 182) and each character is allowed to act in order of their Initiative (with those characters with higher Initiative numbers acting earlier in the round than those with lower Initiative numbers).

DICE ROLLS

BESM uses standard six-sided dice (also known affectionately as 2d6) during game play. When a random number needs to be generated, two dice are usually rolled (see Edges and Obstacles, page 182, for exceptions to this). By adding the two numbers shown on each die, values between 2 and 12 are generated. The range of dice rolls produces a triangular distribution (a cousin to the bell curve), with the middle value of 7 generated most frequently (one-sixth of all rolls).

Rolls are made during a BESM game to determine the success or failure of important actions performed by the player characters or by NPCs interacting with them. Rolls are only needed for actions where the character's success is uncertain. The GM can decide that an action succeeds or fails without a roll, and many routine or minor actions should be resolved this way. See Should You Roll The Dice? (page 180)

If the GM decides a dice roll is required, the player rolls two dice and adds the relevant Stat, Combat Value, or Attribute Level modifier to the number rolled. The resulting sum is called the "total roll." The higher the total roll, the better the character's attempt. The total roll is compared to either a Target Number (page 177) or opposed roll (page 178) to determine if the task was successful.

WHO ROLLS THE DICE?

In most cases, a player rolls dice to determine the success of an action their character performs, while the GM rolls the dice to determine the results of NPC actions when they impact the characters. In situations where NPCs are only involved with other NPCs, the GM should simply decide what happens rather than rolling dice.

In some circumstances, the GM may roll the dice to determine the results of a character's action instead of having a player roll to keep the actual dice roll – and the reason for rolling – secret. This is normally done if having the player roll would give away an event that should remain unknown to the character. For example, if there is something hidden that the character may or may not notice, the GM can secretly roll dice to see if the character spots it. If the GM allowed the player to roll the dice, the player would know that a clue existed even if the character did not succeed in noticing it.

16 TARGET NUMBERS

Difficulty	Target Number	Interpretation
Simple	6	Almost everyone will succeed
Easy	9	Characters will very rarely fail
Average	12	Success often requires some talent or training
Difficult	15	Success often requires above-average ability
Challenging	18	Success often requires significant ability
Unlikely	21	Success requires exceptional ability
Improbable	24	Success requires unparalleled ability

TARGET NUMBERS

The success of most non-combat rolls is determined by comparing them to a Target Number or TN (see the table above). The GM assigns the task under consideration a Target Number before the roll is made. If the total roll is equal or higher than the Target Number, the task succeeds. If it was lower, it fails.

GMs should assign Target Numbers based on how easy or difficult the task is to perform. When in doubt, assign an average difficult Target Number of 12. For example, driving a car along a busy highway would not normally require any dice rolls for most people in a modern setting, since driving is routine. Driving on the highway at high speeds during inclement weather might require a dice roll, though ... probably a Simple task (TN 6) or an Easy task (TN 9). Racing along in a complex construction zone in ideal weather conditions is perhaps an Average task (TN 12) or perhaps a Difficult task (TN 15) in inclement weather. If the car's brakes no longer work, racing along the highway may become a Challenging task (TN 18) or Unlikely task (TN 21) instead. Attempting to do so while blindfolded – and merely using the sound of the traffic to guide the wheel – is an Improbable task (TN 24).

The GM usually tells the player the task's Target Number before the player rolls. In some instances, though, the GM can keep the Target Number a secret to create dramatic tension and only reveal it after the character's total roll resulted in success or failure.



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UNDERSTANDING TARGET NUMBERS

So how does the GM set the Target Number for a given task? You can better understand what the reasonable values should be used if you grasp the probabilities of success or failure.

Consider a person with values of 4 in each Stat (human average) and slightly skilled in an area (Skill Group at Level 1). Since a value of 7 is rolled a little more than 50% of the time on two dice, this average person will succeed a little more than 50% of the time when performing Average tasks (Stat 4 + Skill 1 + Roll 7 = 12 ... equalling the average Target Number of 12). All Target Numbers were set with these parameters in mind. For your convenience, the probabilities for rolling specific values or higher are listed below:

Dice Value	Chance of Rolling This Value or Higher
2	100%
3	97%
4	92%
5	83%
6	72%
7	58%
8	42%
9	28%
10	17%
11	8%
12	3%

When setting a Target Numbers for the task, remember that a 7 or higher will be rolled about half the time. If you subtract 7 from the Target Number, the remaining number is the minimum Stat + Skill Group total the character must have to succeed, on average, half the time. For example, if you look at a Challenging task (TN 18), and subtract 7 from that target value, the remaining result is 11. Consequently, to have a roughly average chance of succeeding, the character's Stat + Skill Group must equal 11 – clearly not common in a low-powered game! While it is possible for a slightly above-average character with a Stat of 5 and Skill Group of 1 to succeed while performing a Challenging task (only if they roll a 12), it is extremely unlikely – only a 3% chance! That's why it's called Challenging.

Setting Target Numbers is not difficult, provided you understand what your goal is regarding the chance for character success and failure.

OPPOSED ROLLS

Instead of setting a specific Target Number, the GM may decide that a task requires an opposed roll. This is appropriate for any situation that involves a direct competition between opponents, such as arm wrestling, a game of chess, an interrogation, or combat.

In an opposed roll situation, the two (or more) characters involved each roll their own dice. The character with the higher total roll (for example, a dice roll + Stat + Skill Group) succeeds. If the result is a tie, the active character (such as the attacker in combat or the challenger in a game of chess) wins over the reacting character. If both characters can reasonably be considered active and a tied result is reasonable – such as in a running or car race – the contest is a draw; otherwise, re-roll to break the tie.



ROLL TYPES

There are five types of dice rolls used during game play: a Stat roll, a Skill roll, an Initiative roll, an attack roll, and a defence roll. Each of these rolls test a particular facet of a character's abilities. When a player announces the intended actions of their character, the GM must decide if a dice roll is necessary. Should a roll be required, the GM chooses which type of roll is most appropriate, based on these guidelines.

Attack and defence rolls are described in additional detail in the combat sectionlater in this chapter (page 183). The other three types of rolls are explored below.

STAT ROLLS

A Stat roll is used when the GM believes that innate ability is more important than any learned expertise or combat capability in resolving the success of a particular action. An example of a Stat roll would be a Body Stat roll to force open a locked door using brute strength. Another important use for Stat rolls is to see if a character can resist the effects of something bad, such as mind control, poison, or shock.

The GM decides which Stat (Body, Mind, or Soul) is being tested by the action or situation. See the Stat descriptions in Chapter 4 (page 70) for a list of activities that are associated with particular Stats. For Stat rolls that relate to an Attribute, the relevant Stat is often suggested in the Attribute description. If the GM feels two or three Stats are closely related to the action, an average Stat Value can be calculated instead, rounding up to the closest whole number.

The success of a Stat roll is determined by rolling two dice and adding the relevant Stat and any situational modifiers. The result is the total roll. This is compared to either the Target Number (page 177) or to an opposed roll (page 178) to determine if the task was successful.

The GM must decide whether a Stat roll is made against a Target Number or is an opposed roll. If it is an opposed roll, the GM must decide what type of roll opposes it. This may be the same type of roll – for example, Body Stat versus Body Stat in a wrestling contest. Or it could be a different Stat, such as opposing Body versus Soul when seducing an innocent. In some situations, the GM may also decide that a Stat roll is opposed by another type of roll, such as a Skill roll.

A character's Attributes or Defects can sometimes modify certain Stat roll. For example, the Mind Shield Attribute (page 109) adds a +2 bonus per Level to any Mind Stat rolls when resisting psychic intrusion. Conversely, the Shortcoming Defect (page 164) penalises Stat rolls related to the specific deficient Stat aspect.

▶ USING ATTRIBUTES

If an Attribute does not specifically require a Stat roll, GMs can assume they function automatically in most situations. Of course, the Game Master may decide that a roll is necessary in unusual circumstances. For example, a character with the Features (Appearance) Attribute always looks good, but the GM might require a Soul Stat roll if they are attempting to attract someone's attention.

Certain Attributes occasionally require Stat rolls (or sometimes Attack, Defence, or Skill rolls) to properly use the Attribute, while other Attributes and Defects provide modifiers to existing rolls, as noted in their descriptions in Chapters 5-7.

SKILL ROLLS

A Skill roll is similar to a Stat roll, except it is used when the task is one that the GM decides would be governed by both a Stat and a particular Skill Group Attribute (page 120).

If a task requires general intellectual ability (such as remembering the name of a person the character had met), the character normally makes a simple Mind Stat roll. Deciphering a scroll written in a rare alien language would also require a Mind Stat roll, but this task falls under the umbrella of the Academic Skill Group. In game terminology, this task would require a "Mind-Based Academic Skill Group roll" – shortened to an "Academic Skill Roll". For such Skill rolls, add both the appropriate Stat and the Skill Group Level to the dice roll to determine the total roll.

The GM is responsible for deciding which Stat and Skill Group are relevant to a particular task. Of course, the GM should listen to the player's reasoning why a particular Skill Group would apply to their roll, but the final decision belongs to the GM.

The GM should select the Target Number before the player rolls, or decide if the roll is opposed. In opposed rolls, the GM also decides whether the roll is opposed by a Stat roll or Skill roll (or other type of roll) and what Stats or Skill Groups are involved. This may depend on a character's actions. Sometimes the opposing roll will involve the same Skill Group, but often a different Skill or a Stat roll is more appropriate. For example, during a tense interrogation scene, a Mind-based Street Skill roll could be opposed by: a Soul Stat roll (if someone tries to resist by sheer will power); a Mind Stat roll (if the character tries to trick the interrogator); a Body Stat roll (to tough out any physical abuse); a Business Skill roll (if the character tries to make a deal to stop the interrogation); an Adventuring Skill roll (if the character pretends to pass out during the interrogation);

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SHOULD YOU ROLL THE DICE?

Not all actions require a dice roll. Obviously many mundane character activities, such as hammering a nail, riding a horse down a road, or eating lunch, should never need dice rolls unless there are exceptional circumstances surrounding the character's actions. In other situations, the necessity to roll dice is less obvious. If a character is virtually guaranteed to succeed at a task, then the GM should consider whether the roll is necessary. While it is true that the character might fail, having the player roll the dice will slow the game down. Consequently, GMs should recognise when a character is almost certainly going to succeed at an unopposed task and not request a dice roll. Game play can then continue uninterrupted.

The following is a list of suggestions when the dice should and should not be rolled. If a roll is unnecessary, the character should gain an automatic success for the action.

ROLL DICE WHEN...

- the unpredictability of dice adds to the excitement of the game
- the action is foreign to the character
- the action has been a weakness for the character in the past
- the character is somewhat distracted or cannot concentrate on their task
- another character or NPC is working directly against the character
- the action is not of trivial difficulty
- outside forces influence the actions
- the player wants to roll the dice

DO NOT ROLL DICE WHEN...

- rolling dice would reduce the enjoyment of the game
- the action is routine for the character
- the action requires a trivial amount of talent compared to the character's Skill Group Level
- the character is hedging on a roll (page 182)
- story flow is more important than the roll

etc. The GM decides which Stats or Skill Groups are valid, and there is plenty of opportunity for creativity when role-playing.

SKILL SYNERGY

It is possible for a character to have two or more Skill Groups that work well together during a specific task, such as the Technical and Scientific Skill Groups when trying to bypass a complex biomechanical lock. If the GM allows multiple Skill Groups to assist in the task, the character makes a Skill roll using the Skill Group ranked at the highest Level, gaining a minor edge (page 182) on the roll for one synergistic Skill Group or a major edge for two or more synergistic Skill Groups.

COMBINING SKILL ROLLS

When more than one character applies the same Skill Group at the same time towards the same goal, their efforts may overlap – they can work together and help each other out. In this case, one character is considered the leader of the effort and the other characters are helpers. The leader receives a minor edge (page 182) if one or two other skilled characters are helping or a major edge if there are more than two helpers. The GM may limit co-operation in any situation where it would be inappropriate.

▶ UNSKILLED ATTEMPTS

Often, a character will attempt an action for which they do not possess the relative Skill Group. The approach in these situations is dependent on the nature of the action.

FAMILIAR ACTION

If the character is undertaking a familiar action, yet lacks a relevant Skill Group, make a Stat roll instead of a Skill roll. The familiarity should have been established previously, such as in the character's background story, or should be consistent with the character's role within the setting. The player should explain to the GM why their character is familiar with the current task, with the GM having final say whether the character is sufficiently familiar with the task to avoid an unfamiliar action penalty (see below).

For example, a student who attends university to study astronomy undoubtedly has at least a cursory familiarity with many academic fields. Similarly, almost all characters living in a big city may be familiar with the process of driving a car, even if they do not possess a relevant Skill Group. A hermit living in the depths of the Amazon, however, is likely not familiar with motor vehicles and therefore driving would be an unfamiliar action for that character.


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UNFAMILIAR ACTION

If the character is undertaking an action with which they are unfamiliar, the task should be treated as a normal Stat roll but with a minor or major obstacle (page 182) applied to the roll – depending on how much the GM feels training is required and how background aspects of the character could affect the attempt.

For example, keeping a plane in the air after the cabin crew suddenly falls unconscious is a daunting task for anyone who is not trained as a pilot. An average character might therefore receive a major obstacle to their Mind Stat roll. A character who is an aficionado of combat jets and aircraft documentaries might only receive a minor obstacle on the roll ... even if they have never actually piloted a plane before.

REQUIRED SKILL

The GM may decide certain tasks automatically fail when performed by characters lacking the required Skill. Examples of required Skill activities include: performing brain surgery, deciphering ancient hieroglyphics, concocting an antidote for a poison, estimating the value of a rare piece of art, etc.

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INITIATIVE ROLLS

Initiative rolls are a special type of roll made by participants at the start of a combat scene to determine the order in which they will act. Each participant in the battle makes an Initiative roll using the sum of two dice plus their Attack Combat Value (after modification by specific Attributes and Defects). In addition, the Lightning Reflexes Combat Technique (page 83) gives the character a minor or major edge on their roll. Initiative rolls determine the Initiative order, from the highest to the lowest total roll. See Initiative, page 188.

BEYOND TWO DICE

Although most dice rolls involve simply rolling two six-sided dice as described earlier, situations may arise that result in the player rolling additional dice or no dice.

▶ EDGES AND OBSTACLES

Sometimes an Attribute, Enhancement, Limiter, or Defect provides distinct changes to your character's dice rolls known as edges and obstacles. These modifiers shift the probability distribution of the dice rolls away from a symmetrical triangular distribution (that has a value of 7 in the middle) to an asymmetrical skewed curve as shown on page 174.

For example, a character with the Elasticity Attribute (page 90) receives a minor edge on unarmed attack rolls to express their flexibility advantage. Conversely, a Weapon with the Inaccurate Limiter assigned twice (page 142) gives the character a major obstacle on attack rolls to reflect the imprecise nature of the attack.

MINOR EDGES AND OBSTACLES

When a minor edge or obstacle is applied to a roll, you roll three dice instead of just the normal two dice. You add together the two highest numbers for a minor edge (discarding the lowest roll), or two lowest numbers for a minor obstacle (discarding the highest roll). For example, if you roll three dice that come up as a 1, 3, and 6, the final roll result for a minor edge would be 9 (3+6) and for a minor obstacle would be 4 (1+3).

MAJOR EDGES AND OBSTACLES

When a major edge or obstacle is applied to a roll, you roll four dice instead of just the normal two dice. You add together the two highest numbers for a major edge (discarding the lowest two rolls), or two lowest numbers for a major obstacle (discarding the two highest rolls). For example, if you roll four dice that come up as a 2, 2, 3, and 5, the final roll result for a major edge would be 8 (3+5) and for a major obstacle would be 4 (2+2).

MODIFYING THE DIFFICULTY

The GM can also apply edges and obstacles to character rolls when situationally and dramatically appropriate to increase or decrease the difficulty of an action. For example, a character attempting an emergency appendectomy (a Challenging task with TN 18) might receive a minor edge to their Skill roll under ideal conditions, such as being walked through the procedure by an expert surgeon. Conversely, a character riding a horse through an obstacle course (an Easy task with TN 9) might suffer a major obstacle to their Skill roll under exceptionally adverse conditions, such as having to avoid enemy gunfire while negotiating the obstacle course.

▶ HEDGING ROLLS

At the GM's discretion, a player may eliminate the random element of a dice roll for their character by assuming an automatic result of 7 instead of rolling the dice (known as "hedging"). Any Attribute bonuses or penalties still apply as normal, adding to or subtracting from the 7 result. A character can use hedging on any roll if the GM permits, including Stat, Skill, Initiative, attack, and defence rolls.

The hedging value of 7 is increased to 8 for a minor edge and 9 for a major edge, or decreased to 6 for a minor obstacle and 5 for a major obstacle.

COMBAT IN BESM

Conflict is an essential component of nearly all role-playing games. Physical conflict, or combat, is an important element of BESM – but important need not be the same as frequent. Combat should be a vital element of a scene and not just a distraction that the GM uses to pass the time. The combat rules created for BESM were designed to mimic the dynamic and fast-paced battles of anime and manga adventures. Whenever a character enters physical conflict with another character or NPC, combat begins.

At the beginning of any new combat scene, the characters all make Initiative rolls (page 182). This determines the order they can act in during the combat: the Initiative order. This remains constant for the duration of the combat and under normal circumstances does not change round to round.

After the Initiative order has been determined, combat proceeds through a series of one or more rounds. Each round of combat covers from 3-4 seconds of time from the characters' perspectives, depending on the characters' actions and the circumstances (the exact time scale is not particularly relevant, with anything from 1-10 seconds appropriate for a round). GMs can have rounds represent more time if it would be dramatically appropriate – for example, a huge long-ranged space battle. A round is simply the period of time in which an ordinary character can perform one significant action.

Characters are normally permitted to take one action per round, though characters with the Extra Actions Attribute (page 92) can act multiple times in a single round. An action is a major activity, such as attacking an opponent (an attack action) or doing something else significant like performing magical ritual, using a special ability, or running away with no thought to doing anything else (a general action). An action can typically also incorporate limited movement while carrying out the activity. Defending against someone else's attack is not an action, but rather is an automatic reaction in response to an action (see the section on Defence, page 192)

Each round of combat is subdivided into two parts: Initiative and character action. The GM resolves Initiative first, then all the participants in a combat get to perform a character action. After they have done so, the round ends and if combat is still ongoing, a new combat round begins.



EXAMPLE OF COMBAT

The following brief description of how combat can work in BESM continues the example of play from pages 17-19 in Chapter 1. Two members of the Psychic Assault Corps – Julian (playing Kozoh, a weapons master) and Lynne (playing Sparks, an augmented tech genius) – had just run into a small hoard of Bazaroth demons on a spaceship in Earth's orbit. Rae, the Game Master, was setting the scene.

Julian: Kozoh rushes to attack, assuming that Sparks will back me up.

Lynne: You know I will!

Rae: Because Kozoh is attacking, I want Julian and Lynne to roll Initiative. Dr. Chaz and Hogarth, you may get a chance to influence things later, but hold tight for now.

Julian: (rolls dice) Kozoh has Combat Technique (Lightning Reflexes) so that's a minor edge. With three dice, my highest two results are 5 and 6 so that's 11. His ACV is 6, for a total of 17.

Lynne: (rolls dice) Sparks rolls 5, plus her ACV of 7, for a total of 12.

Rae: You are both fast! (She secretly rolls Initiative for the demons and their leader, Azok. Final results are 15 for Azok, and 10 for the demons) Kozoh is first with 17, so you're up.

Julian: I don't care about the stupid regular demons – my top priority is taking down the archfiend. I'm going to dodge between the hoard, then launch a flying katana slice at the fiend.

Rae: OK, roll your attack.

Julian: Kozoh's ACV is 6, and he has Melee Attack (Sword) Attribute at Level 2 for +4. I rolled an 8 so that's a final total of 18.

Rae: You came around the corner, ran into the demons, and then launched your assault immediately before any of them truly even realised you were there. You fly over the railing, zip past several demons, and the archfiend Azok is too surprised to defend. Your sword slices across its chest. How much damage?

Julian: My katana is a Level 3 Weapon and my Damage Multiplier is 7, so that's a base of 21 points. Add my ACV of 6 and that's 27 total damage.

Rae: (Looks at Azok's character sheet; it has Armour Level 4, which stops 20 damage, so Kozoh's sword only inflicted 7 damage.) Azok composes itself, smiles, and wipes away a thin line of blood from its naturally armoured chest.

Julian: Uh-oh. (to Rae) Do I know if the PAC radiotelepathy gear is still working?

Rae: It was last time you checked a few minutes ago. It should be fine, unless something has changed since then. Now as you're pondering that, at 15 Initiative, Azok pulls back a mighty fist and lashes out with a powerful blow. Do you defend?

Julian: Damn straight. I duck and weave. (rolls dice) My final defence total is 14. Is that enough?

Rae: (rolling, Rae gets 9 on two dice and adds Azok's ACV of 10 for a final attack roll of 19) Unfortunately, no. Azok isn't like its lesser brethren and I made a solid attack roll. Azok's leathery fist smashes into your jaw. (Calculates unarmed attack damage, including Azok's Superstrength Attribute) You take 32 damage to the chin!

Julian: Ow. Quite a punch! Hey, can I quickly talk to Dr. Chaz via radiotelepathy while I was trying to defend?

Rae: If the conversation is short, and if Azok lets you keep any teeth, sure.

Lynne: Brutal. Azok is owning you!

Julian: Funny, Lynne, funny. (as Kozoh) Chaz, are you there? We've encountered hostiles.

James: (as Doctor) Oh geez. What?

Julian: (as Kozoh) Dammit Doctor, we're fighting an archfiend and a small hoard of demons. Do something! Why aren't you here?

James: Splitting up was Sparks's plan! Okay, we'll get there as soon as we can. Leave some for us! (to Rae) Hogarth and Chaz will abandon the engineering room and race towards the bridge to join in the fight.

Rae: (to James) Got it. You'll be there soon, but not this round obviously. (to Lynne) Sparks, you're up next at 12 Initiative so what are you doing?

Lynne: I've Power Fluxed my left hand into a nasty Level 3 Weapon machine pistol that has one assignment of the Spreading Enhancement, so I'm going to strafe two of the demons.

Rae: Cool. As you know, that's a major obstacle on the attack roll. What do you get?

Lynne: My ACV is 7 with +2 from Level 1 Ranged Attack with the handguns focus – see what I did there? (rolls dice, showing 2, 4, 5, 6) The bottom two dice add to 6, so that's 15.

Rae: (rolls defence once to speed things up for two demon targets since the pistol has Spreading, getting a 14 total) Sparks, your aim is true! You see a look of shock on the demons faces – first as your hand shapechanges into a gun and then again as they get sprayed in the face with hot lead. How much damage do you inflict?

Lynne: Well, a Level 3 Weapon times my Damage Multiplier of 6 is 18, plus 7 for my ACV, so that's 25 to each beast.

Rae: Ouch, that's substantial since, unlike their boss, they don't have armour to soften the blow. They'll remember that, though. In fact, the two of them rush you on Initiative 10. The other three are climbing over each other to claw at Kozoh.

Julian: Hey, I already have my hands full fighting their boss!

Rae: Yup, and they want to help Azok tear you apart. First, let's resolve the two on Sparks since they seem to be quite angry for some reason. (rolls dice twice, since each demon attack is calculated separately; final attack rolls results are 9 and 12). Fortunately, Sparks, their attacks are slow because they're in pain. Did you want to avoid both demons?

Lynne: Of course! I'm clearly stronger, faster, and cuter than those beasts and will taunt them as I step and weave away from their flails. (rolls two defence rolls; a 7 and 9 result). With my DCV of 7, I have a 14 and 16 defence rolls. Is that enough?

Rae: Yeah, you're too fast for them. (to Julian) And now, let's resolve the three uglies racing towards you.

James: (interrupting) Wait, are the Doctor and Hogarth there yet to join the battle?

Rae: Umm, no. It's the same combat round as when Kozoh radioed out so it's only been a few seconds. You have just started running towards the battle. I'll let you know.

James: But I want to hit something!

Rae: (to Julian) As I was saying, you have three demons on you, Kozoh. They don't seem very smart because they're just wildly attacking head-on with their claws instead of trying to flank you with their greater number. (rolls three times; final attack rolls are 7, 10, and 15). Defending, I presume?

Julian: Oh, yeah. With four of the bads on me, I don't have a lot of options. I'm trusting our backup will be here shortly, so my enhanced weapons and tactics training will keep me calm and focussed. (rolls dice) My final defence roll is 14 again so I'm assuming that'll keep my sore chin away from their claws?

Rae: It's difficult to keep your katana between you and Azok and the three demons. Your blade defence is admirable, but one demon feints high and then claws with its foot talons against your thigh. (Calculates unarmed attack damage) Only 9 damage.

Julian: Hey team, I'm down one half of my Health Points and it's only the first round. We gotta do something!

Rae: Four-on-one battles do indeed tend to go that way sometimes. Julian and Lynne, roll for Initiative again for the second combat round. (checks with players) OK, with that natural 12 roll, you're first up Sparks.

Lynne: My two demon are wounded but I see that Kozoh is outnumbered and in jeopardy. I'll Power Flux my right hand into a powerful strobe light like I did when we took down that giant spider in the crypt last month. That's the Control Environment: Light Attribute so I can try to blind everyone in the room. Kozoh can fight blind, so that'll give him the advantage.

Rae: Smart thinking. Your hand quickly morphs into a powerful strobe and you pulse an intense flash of light. Everyone, including, Kozoh, is temporarily blinded. You closed your eyes, Sparks, so you're fine. (to Julian) Kozoh's has gained the next Initiative.

Julian: Excellent. Blindness is just another form of sight for me. Let the slicing continue!





DETERMINING INITIATIVE

Initiative regulates the order in which characters act. It is checked only once, at the beginning of the combat scene, and remains constant for the entire fight.

Each participant in the battle makes an Initiative roll using the sum of two dice plus their base Attack Combat Value (after modification by specific Attributes and Defects). In addition, the Lightning Reflexes Combat Technique (page 83) gives the character a minor or major edge on their roll. The GM does the same for any NPCs engaged in the conflict.

The GM should make a note of the Initiative total rolls of each character and NPC and rank them from highest to lowest (ties remain as ties). This is the Initiative order. The character with the highest total roll has "gained Initiative" and acts first (using all actions, if they has the Extra Actions Attribute), followed by others in descending order. Alternatively, characters can decide to holder the Initiative until some time later in the round. Should two or more characters or NPCs have the same Initiative, the character with the highest Attack Combat Value acts before the others. In the event of another tie, the tied characters act simultaneously. Should additional characters enter the scene mid-way through the combat, roll Initiative for them and assign them a place in the Initiative order based on their rolls.

CHARACTER ACTION

Characters act in the sequence determined by the Initiative order. When it is time for a character to act, they may take their single action. If the character has the Extra Actions Attribute (page 92), they may take additional subsequent actions at this time.

▶ TYPES OF ACTIONS

There are two categories of action: attack actions and general actions. A character who can perform multiple actions may perform the same or different types of action. For example, a character with one Extra Action could choose to take two attack actions, a general action and an attack action, or two general actions. Furthermore, decisions concerning the specifics of the subsequent actions can be made after the results of the previous action is known.



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The Game Master should encourage players to give broad in-character descriptions of what their characters do, and simply use these rules as guidelines for adjudicating game effects.

ATTACK ACTIONS

An offensive attack action can combine an attack with limited movement, such as charging toward a foe or a description of a colourful combat manoeuvre. For example: "I grab the chandelier and swing down to kick my opponent."

GENERAL ACTIONS

This includes all other types of actions, such as using an Attribute, picking up a dropped object, performing a ritual, unlocking a door, performing first aid on a friend, running full tilt, or doing nothing except screaming for help. The effects of general actions are normally adjudicated by the GM. General actions may include movement, unless it would be incompatible with the action. For example, one can run forward while drawing a sword, but not usually while performing first aid.

ATTACK ACTIONS

An attack is an attempt to strike a target, either physically or with an ability of some sort. It can also be used for similar non-violent actions that involve hitting a target, such as passing a ball to a sports teammate or serving in a tennis match.

ATTACK ROLL

An attack roll is used to resolve the success of an attack action in combat, such as an attempt to strike a blow or fire a weapon at an opponent. The attacking character rolls two dice and adds their Attack Combat Value to the result. The Enemy Attack, Melee Attack, and Ranged Attack Attributes may increase their Attack Combat Value when appropriate. The attacker's total roll is equal to the sum of the dice roll, Attack Combat Value, and appropriate Attribute modifiers.

Before rolling the dice, the player should clearly describe the method of attack, the weapon their character uses (if any), and the target. If the character is trying something unusual, they should specify this beforehand. If attacking at a distance, they must also be within range (see below).

An attack roll is normally an opposed roll. The target gets a defence roll, representing their ability to dodge, block, or parry the attack. If the attacker's total roll equals or exceeds the target's defence roll, the attack is successful and damage is usually applied (see page 193). If not, the character has missed the target or simply does not hit with sufficient force or accuracy to inflict damage. The attacker's action is over, and the attack has no effect – though a miss with a ranged weapon may cause collateral damage if the shot strikes somewhere else instead (GM discretion) or if it has the Area (page 145) or Spreading Weapon Enhancement (page 141).

UNOPPOSED RANGED ATTACK ROLLS

An unopposed ranged attack against an inanimate target usually succeeds automatically. An inanimate target includes buildings, areas of ground, unconscious or restrained foes, etc. An unopposed ranged attack roll made against a character who is capable of defending but chooses not to is an Average task (TN 12).

UNOPPOSED MELEE ATTACK ROLLS

An unopposed melee attack against an adjacent inanimate target – or against a character who is capable of defending but chooses not to – usually succeeds automatically (or has a Target Number of 0).

MELEE VS. RANGED ATTACKS

Some attacks are useful at a distance, while others are limited to close-ranged hand-to-hand fighting known as a melee attack. It is up to the GM to decide whether they wish to track accurate ranges and distances or simply approximate them.

▶ MELEE ATTACKS

A Weapon without a Range Enhancement (page 147) is a melee attack. It is only usable against adjacent opponents within touching distance (usually one to two metres). This is the range for swords, punches, bites, etc. and is the default range for all attacks if no range is listed. Weapons with the Reach Enhancement (page 140) are also considered melee attacks, but their effective distance is much further (three to five metres) due to their size.

The Melee Attack and Enemy Attack Attributes adds to the Attack Combat Value if the character is performing a melee attack with an appropriate weapon or against specific opponents. For example, Melee Attack (Sword) adds to Attack Combat Value when attacking at melee range with a sword while Enemy Attack (Undead) adds to Attack Combat Value while fighting zombies, vampires, ghouls, etc.

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The Melee Defence Attribute (and similarly, the Enemy Defence Attribute, against specific opponents) adds to the Defence Combat Value if the character is defending against a melee attack with an appropriate weapon. For example, Melee Defence (Unarmed) adds to Defence Combat Value when dodging another melee attack (rather than parrying with a weapon).

THROWING MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon Items with Range 0 may optionally be thrown out to a range of three to five metres. The character loses the thrown Item and it will take at least one general action to recover it. The character suffers a major obstacle (page 182) on the attack roll when throwing such weapons, unless it is also balanced for throwing (such as a throwing knife). The Ranged Attack (Thrown Weapons) Attribute (rather than Melee Attack) adds to Attack Combat Value.

RANGED ATTACKS

A Weapon or offensive Attribute with a Range Enhancement is considered a ranged attack. A ranged attack may be made against a target as far away as the Range Enhancement's maximum range (see page 147): 3 metres for one assignment, 10 metres for two assignments, 100 metres for three assignments, 1 km for four assignments, etc. In many situations, a weapon with a Range Enhancement can still be used against an immediately adjacent opponent in melee range.

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RANGE 1 (3 METRES)

Since most physical Weapons and Items can be thrown longer distances, this Range category is usually reserved for such special attacks like hypnotic or petrifying gazes, breath weapons, ki-powered blasts, etc.

RANGE 2 (10 METRES)

Most grenades and hurled weapons such as thrown knives, shuriken, and spears fall into this category.

RANGE 3 (100 METRES)

Most fireballs, lightning bolts, mind blasts, bows, pistols, and submachine guns are in this category, as are most archaic firearms such as muskets.

RANGE 4 (1 KM)

Most rifles, machine guns, and autocannons are in this category, as are archaic black powder cannons.

RANGE 5 (10 KM)

Most portable missiles, artillery, and mecha cannons are in this category.

RANGE 6 (100 KM)

Heavy missiles and spacecraft beam cannons may fall into this class.

RANGE 7-8 (1,000 - 10,000 KM)

Long range strategic missiles, cruise missiles, and heavy spacecraft weaponry may fall into these classes, or be even longer ranged (Rank 9+).



GENERAL ACTIONS

Rather than taking an attack action during a combat round, a character may use a general action on their Initiative. Such actions include using an Attribute, untying a rescued captive, running, changing weapons, climbing into or out of a vehicle, writing a note, changing clothes, etc. Players may also use general actions to run away or safely withdraw from armed or melee combat, provided the opposition does not attack at a later Initiative number in the same round (if this does happen, the withdraw fails).

A general action may succeed automatically or the GM can require a Stat roll or Skill roll to determine whether it succeeds. Some general actions may require several rounds to perform at the GM's option.

▶ FREE ACTIONS

Some activities do not count as attack or general actions. A character can perform all of the following activities in addition to an action:

» Move a short distance or manoeuvre their vehicle.

» Say anything that fits within the span of only a few seconds.

» Make defence rolls in response to any attacks against them.

CHARACTER MOVEMENT

The GM decides whether they wish to keep detailed track of movement, ranges, and distances. In most close-in combat situations, GMs should not worry about exact speeds and distances since a general idea of the overall situation is sufficient.

Alternatively, GMs can measure ranges in a more abstract fashion: "you're behind them and in melee range" or "you can reach them in three rounds, if you hurry." The GM should judge how quickly range shifts from relative speeds to dramatic necessity. For example, in a race between two opponents with equal speeds, the GM can allow the character who keeps winning Initiative (perhaps rolled every round instead of only once at the beginning) to increase the gap gradually between them and the other runner. A good way to resolve long distance chases is for the GM to establish a certain number of combat rounds between the starting point and the goal – it then becomes a simple matter of reaching the target first.

▶ MOVEMENT SPEED

If the GM wishes to keep precise track of movement and distances, assume an average human adult can:

» walk approximately 1 metre/round (or kph) times their Body Stat for great distances

» jog approximately 1.5 metres/round (or kph) times their Body Stat for extended distances

» run approximately 2 metres/round (or kph) times their Body Stat for moderate distances

» sprint approximately 4-5 metres/round (or kph) times their Body Stat for short distances

» swim or crawl approximately 0.5 metres/round (or kph) times their Body Stat for extended distances

» swim or crawl approximately 1 metres/round (or kph) times their Body Stat for short distances

CONVERTING KPH TO METRES/ROUND

Movement Attributes such as Flight, Ground Speed, Superspeed, and Water Speed that are rated for a speed in kilometres per hour (kph) allow characters or vehicles to move at a speed of 1 meter per round for every kph of speed. This guideline assumes 3-4 seconds per round (ensuring that every kilometre per hour of speed equals 1 metre per round) but the GM can modify exact speeds as desired.

▶ JUMPING DISTANCE

GMs can allow characters to jump as far as seems dramatically appropriate for the game. If distance is important, a stationary person can jump a number of metres forward equal to one-quarter their Body Stat, or about one-eighth their Body Stat (in the range of one metre) up or back. A successful Body Stat roll allows a moving character to jump (in metres) one-quarter of their top speed (in kph); a failed roll means the character falls short. Thus, a moving character can normally jump a distance, in metres, equal to their Body Stat (since a character sprint at up to 4-5 metres x their Body Stat in a round). Similarly, a car racing along at 250 kph could "jump" 63 metres (250 ÷ 4) – but a wheeled or tracked vehicle or a boat can only "jump" if it has a ramp.

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DEFENCE

Defence is not an action but a reaction – it is an attempt to avoid being hit by an attack and includes dodging, parrying, diving for cover, and similar defensive manoeuvres.

DEFENCE ROLL

If a character is the target of an attack, they may immediately attempt to defend against it. Defences are not dependent on Initiative order but resolved as the attack roll is made. A defence roll represents dodging, blocking, or parrying. It is always an opposed roll against an attack roll. The defending character rolls two dice and adds their Defence Combat Value to the result. The Enemy Defence, Melee Defence, and Ranged Defence Attributes may increase their Defence Combat Value when appropriate. The defender's total roll is equal to the sum of the dice roll, Defence Combat Value, and any modifiers. If the defence roll exceeds the opposing attack roll, the attack was successfully dodged, blocked, or parried. Each character can attempt only one defence against a particular attack, though a character may defend against more than one attack in each round.

DEFENDING WITH A SHIELD

Though usually reserved for Level 1 Attributes, some larger shields (page 212) have the Potent Enhancement, which provides the targetted character a minor edge (for Potent -1) or major edge (for Potent -2) when defending with a shield. Small shields without the Potent Enhancement may provide situational benefits during combat as determined by the GM and player. See page 182 for more information about how minor and major edges change dice rolls.

DEFENDING IN A VEHICLE

If a vehicle is the target of an attack, its driver or pilot usually makes the defence rolls. If a vehicle is unable to manoeuvre (trapped in a confined space, for example) the GM may decide that it cannot defend at all. A vehicle driver cannot normally defend against attacks made by a character who is riding in or on it.

INABILITY TO DEFEND

A character can usually defend regardless of the other actions they have performed that round, provided they are aware of the attack and free to move to avoid or stop it. The exception to this is if the character's concentration is so focussed that it precludes defending, such as that required by the Activation (page 148) and Concentration (page 149) Limiters.

CHOOSING NOT TO DEFEND

If a target is capable of defending, but chooses not to for whatever reason, the attacker succeeds automatically for melee attacks or the attacker makes an unopposed attack roll against an Average task (TN 12) for ranged attacks. If successful, damage is delivered as normal.

DEFENCE IN NON-COMBAT SITUATIONS

The GM may also allow a defence roll in non-combat situations such as accidents in which quick reflexive action can benefit the character. This can include leaping out of the way of a speeding car, diving for cover to avoid a sudden explosion, etc. If not fighting a particular opponent, the GM should assign a Target Number, rather than ask for an opposed roll. A defence roll is also appropriate in some sports events to represent the ability to intercept a pass or hit an incoming ball.



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DAMAGE

Successful attacks, accidents, and other hazards can all inflict damage, which measures the degree of physical injury inflicted by blows, burns, broken bones, lacerations, toxins, penetrations, and other physical trauma. Damage is subtracted from the Health Points of the victim.

NON-COMBAT DAMAGE

Damage can occur from disasters such as falling, crashes, other impacts, or environmental hazards. GMs should assign the amount of fixed damage determined on the severity of the disaster: from 5-10 damage for minor incidents to 20-50 for major incidents to 60-100+ for massive (and perhaps fatal!) incidents.



WEAPON DAMAGE

The Weapon Attribute is used to define most Attacks that are innate to the character (such as spells, ki powers, or fiery breath) or which are built into Items (like swords or guns). A large number of Weapon Items are detailed in the Items Chapter (page 199).

If a character successfully attacks using a Weapon Attribute, multiply the Weapon Attribute's Level by the character's Damage Multiplier (page 171) and add it to their Attack Combat Value to determines the damage inflicted. This Attack Combat Value includes bonuses from the Attack Mastery, Enemy Attack, Melee Attack, and Ranged Attack Attributes, when appropriate.

Example: Undercover cop Ryoko Yamagi successfully strikes Toshi, a drug-dealing yakuza punk, with her depleted uranium-weighted combat yo-yo. Her yo-yo is a Level 2 Weapon Item (with no Enhancements or Limiters) and she has a Damage Multiplier of 6 and Attack Combat Value 5. Ryoko's yo-yo attack inflicts 17 damage on Toshi (Level 2 Weapon x 6 Damage Multiplier + 5 ACV = 17 damage).

Damage = Weapon Level x Damage Multiplier + Attack Combat Value

SIZE DAMAGE MODIFIERS

If a character is any Size Rank other than Medium (see page 32), the appropriate damage modifier is also added to the attack damage formula:

Damage = Weapon Level x Damage Multiplier + Attack Combat Value + Size Damage Modifier

WEAPON DAMAGE DEFAULT

When a Weapon delivers damage without much character intervention (such as caltrops on a floor or a guided missile impact), assume that the Damage Multiplier is 5 and do not add any Attack Combat Value to the final damage value.

Damage = Weapon Level x 5

UNARMED DAMAGE

An unarmed person can strike an opponent using fists, feet, head, etc. This is a free Weapon Attribute (page 134) that all characters automatically have. Such attacks are considered a Level 0 Weapon with the Stun Enhancement and Non-Penetrating Limiter. Consequently, the damage inflicted upon a successful unarmed attack is simply equal to the character's Attack Combat Value. An exception to this guideline applies to characters with the Superstrength Attribute (page 124), since such powerful characters also gain +5 damage to their unarmed attacks for each Level of Superstrength.

Damage = Attack Combat Value

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ARMOUR RATINGS AND DAMAGE

The Armour (page 80) and Force Field (page 94) Attributes can protect against injury by reducing the damage sustained by the Attribute's Armour Rating. If this reduces the damage to 0 or lower, the attack bounced off or was absorbed by the protection and no harm comes to the target.

The Penetrating and Piercing Weapon Enhancements (page 140) reduces the effective Armour Rating by 10 for each assignment (to a minimum Armour Rating of 0). Conversely, the Non-Penetrating Weapon Limiter (page 143) increases the effective Armour Rating of Armour and Force Fields by 10 for each assignment.

Continuing the earlier example: If Toshi is wearing a light body armour with an Armour Rating 10, this value is subtracted from the yo-yo's 17 damage, leaving only 7 damage inflicted upon Toshi.

DAMAGE AND HEALTH POINTS

If the target has no Armour Rating (or if some damage penetrates after subtracting the target's Armour Rating), reduce the target's current Health Point total by the amount of excess damage. Damage is applied in a similar way to both characters and Items.

If a character's current Health Points ever drop to zero or lower, the target is immediately knocked out (or ceases to function, if an Item receives damage). Further damage may kill the victim – see Effects of Damage to a Character (page 194).

APPLYING MASSIVE DAMAGE

The Massive Damage Attribute (page 102) adds +1 per Level to the character's Damage Multiplier if the attack is of the style or type specified as applicable when the Attribute was chosen.

SUPERSTRENGTH AND DAMAGE

Each Superstrength Level (page 124) adds +5 damage to unarmed attacks such as punches, kicks, grappling, or body slams. Each Superstrength Level adds +1 to a character's Damage Multiplier when using normal melee and thrown Weapons, as well as when using Weapon attacks with the Muscle Enhancement (page 138). If such a Weapon Attribute is defined as a form of unarmed combat as well, the +5 damage bonus does not also apply – the character only receives the +1 Damage Multiplier bonus.

LOW OR NO INJURY ATTACKS

The damage delivered by effectively Level 0 Weapons (page 134) only considers the character's Attack Combat Value since the Weapon's Base Damage is 0. For Weapons with an effective Level of -1, no actual damage at all is delivered and consequently such Weapons only have utility if they have been assigned specific Weapon Enhancements.

EFFECTS OF DAMAGE TO A CHARACTER

Suffering damage in combat or through other actions results in the loss of Health Points. Total loss of Health Points can cause a character to pass out or die.

Should a player character or NPC's Health Points ever drop to zero or below, they suffered a severe wound and are rendered unconscious from the trauma. If a character is reduced to the negative value of their Health Points (for example, to -40 if the character's normal Health Point total is 40), they have suffered a mortal wound and will soon die – or possibly fall into a coma, depending on the tone of the game – unless medical attention arrives promptly. The GM may allow a dying character to linger long enough to say a few last words or perform some other final, heroic action.

▶ CHARACTER DEATH

Death in a game adventure can occur rarely, often, or never, depending on the tone and theme of the campaign. The default rule position in BESM is that character death is a real consequence of extreme actions; it happens rarely, but is the result of deadly force or careless negligence. Characters are responsible for keeping their powers in check and not laying waste to their targets haphazardly if they wish to avoid the potential for killing indiscriminately.

Not all anime and manga stories should have the possibility for combat death or the chance of accidental death, however. In these games, characters may hit an enemy full force and be comfortable that the GM won't announce they've unwittingly decapitated their opponent. Wounds may require medical attention, and knockouts, concussions, and comas are all possible, but death only occurs when a player announces that their character has had enough and is seeking to inflict mortal injury. Playing with this rule gives players the freedom to let loose a little but still maintains the option for intense role-playing.

RECOVERY

A character who suffers lost Health Points or Stat Points due to damage may heal naturally (or be repaired, for mechanical characters).

▶ RECOVERING HEALTH POINTS

Health Points regenerate at a rate equal to the character's Body Stat for each day of rest. For example, a character with a Body Stat of 5 rejuvenates 5 Health Points daily. The healing rate doubles if the character is in the care of someone with an appropriate Skill Group, but halved if they do not spend time resting.

▶ RECOVERING STUN DAMAGE

Health Points lost as a result of a Weapon Attribute with the Stun Enhancement (page 141) are recovered at a rate equal to the character's Body Stat every hour.

▶ RECOVERING DRAINED STATS

Stat Points lost as a result of a Weapon Attribute with the Drain Enhancement (page 136) return at a rate of one Point every hour.

▶ REPAIRING EQUIPMENT

Items, such as weapons, vehicles, or other gadgets can become damaged in the course of adventures. Characters can repair damage to equipment by making an appropriate Skill roll, usually applying either the Occupation, Technical, or Scientific Skill Groups (as best suited to the work). If the object has Health Points, each successful Skill roll repairs 10 Health Points. Each Skill roll should take approximately one day of work (approximately six to ten hours), depending on the extent of the repairs required. Many mechanical, non-organic characters do not recover Health Points automatically and must be repaired.

ENERGY POINTS

Energy Points represent a character's reserve of personal stamina, luck, and spiritual power. They are used to power Attributes that have the Deplete Limiter (page 149) and may be drained as a result of attacks by Weapons with the Enervation Enhancement (page 136) or general fatigue.

▶ FATIGUE

The GM may rule that a character will lose Energy Points if they are travelling or working without taking any time to rest. As a guideline, every 5-10 minutes of hard work or tiring travel (jogging, swimming, etc.) can result in a loss of one Energy Point. In most situations, this is too much trouble to worry about tracking precisely, but the GM may wish to impose it during a situation where characters balance their exhaustion with a race against time.

OUT OF ENERGY

If a character's Energy Point total is ever reduced below zero, they will collapse due to exhaustion until their Energy Points are sufficiently recovered.

▶ RECOVERING ENERGY POINTS

The average of the Mind and Soul Stats (rounded up) equals the number of Energy Points that the character recovers every hour with rest. A character with a 7 Mind Stat and a 3 Soul Stat, for example, regains 5 Energy Points ever hour of rest (7+3=10; 10÷2=5).

A character who is in the presence of an ally with the Inspire Attribute will recover additional Energy Points equal to the Inspire Level every hour, whether or not they rest.

DRAMATIC FEATS

A character's Energy Points can also represent a character's reserve of luck or karma that can be used in moments of high drama or extreme emotion to transcend a character's normal limits. Only player characters and significant NPCs may use Energy Points in this way.

A moment of high drama is one in which something the character holds dear is at risk. This could be the character's own life, of course, but should usually be something that transcends that, such as the safety of a loved one or close friend, or the success of an important cause (including revenge against a hated nemesis).

In such circumstances, Energy Points can be spent to temporarily provide a bonus to any dice rolls the character makes. The character may spend these Energy Points after rolling the dice. Each +1 bonus to a die roll burns 10 Energy Points. A character may add a maximum die roll bonus equal to their Soul Stat.

Energy Points spent activating a dramatic feat return at the character's normal recovery rate.



CHAPTER 10
ITEMS

10: ITEMS

THINGS AND STUFF

What would an anime game be without the baroque weapons, sleek vehicles, towering mecha, magical artefacts, and high-tech toys that so many characters wield in their adventures?

This chapter provides further context for the Item Attribute (page 101), which you may have assigned to your character during their creation. You'll find a wide range of example Items across the historical spectrum that can either be used as they are, or used as templates to assist you create a plethora of weapons and vehicles for use in your game – whether you're a player or a Game Master. Of course, these listed examples aren't exhaustive since the Item Attribute is only limited by your imagination; many real-world variations exist for the generic weapons and equipment provided herein. Just remember that getting the right feel for your Items is more important than ensuring the creation game math is exact.

▶ POINT COSTS

BESM is an effects-based game. This means that if one character has a blaster pistol and the other can fire an equally damaging energy bolt out of their hands, it would make sense that both characters should pay the same Character Point cost for the ability to inflict equivalent damage on their enemies. Items can be lost, though. They also tend to be somewhat obvious, and are not always available to their owners. As a result, Items cost half as many Character Points as an equivalent amount of abilities built into the character to account for the inherent disadvantages they impose.

SHARED ITEMS

The GM may allow a group of characters to own a single important Item – for example, a base of operations, giant robot mecha, spaceship, seafaring galleon, street vehicle, or unique artefact – in common and evenly split the Character Points amongst themselves. Companions (page 84) may not contribute to the shared Item costs, though. Record a shared Item in a character's description and clearly indicate their ownership share and Character Point cost (for example, "one-sixth of the starship JSDF Cherry Blossom").

CREATING ITEMS

When designing an Item for your character, there are numerous guidelines you need to consider. Since your vision for your Item may be different than the GM's vision, it's important to discuss the Item specifics with them during character creation to ensure you're on the same page in advance of the game adventures.

▶ ITEM HEALTH POINTS

An Item's Health Points are equivalent to it's Armour Rating, which in turn is normally determined by its material composition. In other words, hard and tough Items (ie. high Armour Ratings) are also quite durable and able to withstand excess damage (ie. high Health Points). Usually, an Item's Health Points does not play a role in adventures, but can be useful to understand should you want to track damage to objects (see Breaking Items, page 223).

▶ ITEM DEFECTS

In most instances, Defects associated with an Item only affect the character if they are using it (considered the "normal use" for the Item). For example, if a gas mask restricts peripheral vision and is assigned one Rank of the Sensory Impairment Defect at -3 Points, the character's vision is only impaired while they are wearing the mask. Additionally, Defects that are implied by the Item's status as an inanimate object – such as Impaired Manipulation, Impaired Speech, Marked, Owned, Physical Impairment, Sensory Impairment, etc. – should not be assigned unless they indicate specific deficiencies. For example, a rickety space ship with instruments that sometimes fail to work properly might have the Physical Impairment Defect.

▶ NAKED ENHANCEMENTS AND THE FEATURES ATTRIBUTE

You can design some Items with only Enhancements – usually Weapon Attribute (page 135) Enhancements, but others can also be used with GM permission. For example, a gun scope simply has an Accurate Enhancement that makes it easier to hit targets while a vibration amplification system could add the Area Enhancement to Weapons and Attributes that function though the use of sound waves. Such "naked" Enhancements are considered as part of the Features Attribute (page 92).

▶ MUNDANE ITEMS

Mundane Items are Items that are so unimportant, everyday, or ubiquitous for the purpose of an adventure that the GM decides that they are free (ie. cost no Character Points to acquire). In our own Earth world, things like clothes, televisions, wrist watches,

TEMPORARY ITEMS

Although characters are expected to pay Character Points to acquire Items they use on a regular basis, it would be unrealistic for a character to be prohibited from picking up an opponent's dropped sword and attacking them with it. Similarly, if the character finds themselves in sudden need of something simple and commercially available, they can often run into a store and buy it.

As a campaign guideline, though, characters should stick with the Items to which they have allocated Character Points. If players seem to be abusing the spirit of this rule regulating temporary character Items, GMs may insist that any earned advancement Character Points (page 303) be applied to acquiring Items that the characters use regularly.

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smartphones, family homes, etc. can be classed as mundane Items. This decision is largely based on use. A car could be classed as a mundane Item for one character (who rarely if ever uses it, save as a minor background detail) but an actual Item for another character (who uses it all the time during the game). The GM may instead decide that some Items are best acquired through the Gear (page 95) or Features (page 92) Attributes instead of being free – though only a single such Attribute Level at a cost of 1 Point may be considered free anyway, once the Point cost is halved as part of the Item Attribute (since it is rounded down).

All Items benefit from the Character Point protection rule, while mundane Items do not. Character Point protection means that if an Item is sufficiently important enough to cost Character Points, it's part of the character's concept. The GM should ensure the Item is replaced within the next game session if the Item is lost, stolen, or broken (provided this will not totally upset the logic of the story, naturally). Mundane Items do not benefit from this replacement guideline and they may be taken from the characters as appropriate for the story. Players may use Character Points to acquire otherwise mundane Items should they wish to benefit from such Point protection if the mundane Items are important to the character's concept.



WEAPONS

The Weapons listed in this chapter are described briefly so that players may either assign them to their characters directly or use them as templates when creating other similar Weapons. For example, by simply increasing the Weapon Level (and thus damage) of a longsword, it is possible to create various magic or high tech swords, or simply swords made from more durable and damaging materials.

SPLASH WEAPONS

Acid: A flask of acid can be thrown at opponents, damaging the target and those in the vicinity (and often equipment as well).

Boiling Oil (Barrel): Boiling oil is most frequently used in the defence of a fortification by pouring it onto aggressors that get too close to the fortress walls. It is deadly painful and thus extremely effective.

Molotov Cocktail: A crude explosive made by filling a glass bottle with flammable liquid (usually gasoline) and fitting a rag wick in the neck. The wick is lit before throwing and the liquid bursts into flames when the bottle shatters upon impact.

ARCHAIC MELEE WEAPONS

Axe, Throwing: A short axe similar to a hatchet but designed primarily to chop armour and flesh rather than wood. They are balanced well for throwing but are not the most accurate weapon.

Battleaxe: This is a heavy, broad-headed axe that can be wielded with one hand. Most are single bladed but double-bladed axes are not uncommon.

Bokken: A martial arts wooden practise sword.

Caltrops: Caltrops resemble large metal game jacks with sharpened points on the ends of their arms rather than balls. They are essentially multi-pronged iron spikes designed so that one point is always facing up. A character can scatter them on the ground so enemies will step on them or are at least forced to slow down to avoid them.

Club: A wooden or metal club, such as a baseball bat, lead pipe, etc.

Garrotte Wire: A length of wire (or sometimes chain or rope) used to strangle someone.

Gauntlet, Spiked: This is a metal glove strategically adorned with assorted spikes and blades. A character using a spiked gauntlet cannot normally be disarmed.

Greatsword: This is a large sword that can only be wielded with two hands – unless the character is much larger than the normal Medium size.

Katana: The Japanese equivalent to the longsword.

Knife or Dagger: A short, bladed weapon with a pointed end.

Lance, Tournament: This light lance is designed specifically for tournament jousts that inflicts temporary stunning damage instead of regular damage. Such lances are not banded with metal and thus are designed to shatter on impact. Typically four to five metres long, it consequently cannot be used against an adjacent foe.

Lance, War: This is a long spear designed for attacking from horseback. They are typically three to five metres in length (ie. cannot be used against an adjacent foe), made of ash wood, banded with metal against splitting, and tipped with a steel point.

Longaxe: This is a two-handed version of a battleaxe. It often has a spiked head.

Longsword: Also known as a broadsword or simply a sword, this is a one-metre blade set into a hilt.

Mace: A club topped with a flanged metal head used to crush armour.

Maul: A heavy, long-handled warhammer.

Morningstar Flail: This is a spiked metal ball connected to a rod by a length of chain.

Nunchaku: A martial arts weapon made from two short shafts connected together with a short chain or rope.

Polearm: A long two-handed spear with a great reach. A polearm ends in a variety of sharp ends and is thus called many different names: bardiche, fauchard, glave, guisarme, halberd, longspear, partisan, pike, ranseur, spetum, voulge, etc.

Quarterstaff: A staff made from a length of wood or metal, which can be deadly in skilled hands.

Sap: This is a short, flexible shaft made from or wrapped in a nonlethal material, primarily used to stun opponents or knock them unconscious.

Scythe: While it resembles the standard farm implement of the same name, this two-handed scythe is honed for war. The design of the scythe focuses tremendous force on the sharp point, as well as allowing devastating slashes with the blade edge.

Shield (Bash): Although not designed as an offensive weapon, a shield can still inflict serious damage when bashing someone in combat.

Spear: A simple weapon consisting of a long shaft with a sharpened tip (most often of iron), favoured by militias and city guards. Magical anime spears are often designed as Targetted Weapons to destroy a particular foe such as a demon or dragon.

Sword, Bastard: A bastard sword is a sword that has a larger blade and a more elongated grip than a longsword. This allows for a second hand to be used in swinging it for more accuracy and power.

Shortsword: Shortswords are roughly a half-metre in length and primarily designed for thrusting. This sword is popular as an off-hand weapon when using two weapons.

Wakizashi: The Japanese equivalent to the shortsword, often paired with a katana.

Warhammer: This is a one-metre shaft topped by a metal head with a spike on one side and a blunt hammer on the other.



Weighted Chain: A heavy ball or weight at the end of a long thin chain, also known as a manrikigusari. By holding the unweighted end, a character can swing the chain rapidly above their head to deliver a crushing blow when it strikes the enemy. Alternatively, the chain can be used to entangle limbs or disarm an opponent. Used improperly, it can be dangerous to the wielder.

Whip: The standard whip consists of a long, flexible thong (usually leather) attached to a handle. Although the whip is held in the hand, it can strike with Range 1. It's a favourite weapon of bad girls, villains, and swashbuckling archaeologists.

Wooden Stake: The favourite weapon of vampire slayers, this pointy wooden shaft is dangerous to anyone.

ARCHAIC RANGED WEAPONS

Arrows: A straight and slender shaft with a pointed tip on one end and stabilising vanes on the other, typically fired from a bow. An arrow can be used as an improvised melee weapon as well (see Knife, page 199).

Blowgun: A long tube or reed used to blow a dart at a foe. Commonly used by primitive hunters and classic ninja. The dart is often tipped with poison to either kill or render unconscious.

Bolas: A throwing weapon consisting of heavy balls at the ends of three or four connected cords, typically used to entangle animals.

Bolts, Crossbow: Similar to an arrow, these shafts are shorter and designed to be fired from a crossbow. A crossbow bolt can be used as an improvised melee weapon as well (see Knife, page 199).

Bullets, Sling: Bullets are lead spheres that are similar to stones of the same size but a significantly heavier.

Crossbow: A crossbow is a bow affixed to a wooden stock to aid in accuracy of firing. It is drawn by turning a winch (heavy), pulling a lever (light), or simply pulling it back (hand).

Lasso: This loop in a rope is thrown around an enemy, tightening when it is pulled.

Longbow: A two-handed ranged weapon that fires arrows. Archery ("kyudo" – the way of the bow) is a popular school sport amongst Japanese teens.

Longbow, Double-Curved: Beautiful double-curved longbows are made from laminated horn, wood, bone, or composite materials. Unlike the normal longbow, a character can add damage bonus from Superstrength when using a double-curved.

Net: A webbing, usually made of rope, that is designed to tangle and control opponents. Fighting nets have small barbs in the weave as well. Nets are thrown ranged weapons but can only be used against very close opponents (and thus it has a Range 0).

Rocks: A rock weapon can be used to represent any large and bulky thrown object, whether it is made of stone or not.

Shortbow: A two-handed weapon used to fire arrows.

Shuriken: Often termed "throwing stars," the word shuriken actually means "hidden hand blade". Thus, any thrown object small enough to conceal in the palm is classified as a shuriken. Their design ranges from stars to triangles to needles or darts. Attackers usually carry dozens of them at a time and sometimes tip them with poison.

Sling: The sling is a looped strap used to hurl lead bullets or stones. While neither as easy to use as the crossbow nor as powerful as a bow, it is cheap and easy to improvise from common materials.

ARCHAIC SIEGE WEAPONS

Ballista: A projectile siege engine similar to a massive crossbow that uses torsion springs made of horsehair, animal sinew, or advanced fibres to launch large bolts.

Bolts, Ballista: More like a spear than an arrow or crossbow bolt, these large, sharpened shafts are designed to be fired from a ballista. A ballista bolt may also be used as an improvised spear (see Spear, page 199).

Catapult: A projectile siege engine that utilises counterweights to propel huge stones or flaming pitch at opponents. In addition to specially prepared loads, a catapult can also launch more improvised ammunition such as diseased bodies.

Ram: A heavy shaft – either made from a tree limb or trunk, or cast from metal – primarily used to batter down doors and walls. They require several people to gain sufficient momentum to inflict damage.

MODERN MELEE WEAPONS

Battle Yo-Yo: A favourite weapon of school girl undercover cops and assassins, this consists of a yo-yo with a heavy metal weight concealed within.

Chainsaw: A portable power saw, with teeth linked together to form a rotating chain.

Machete: A hacking blade about half a metre long that is used to cut through thick underbrush.

Pepper Spray or Mace: A chemical irritant spray which is deployed from a small can (only 2-4 doses per can). Technically mace is a ranged weapon, but since the range is no greater than a person can reach, it is better classed as having Range 0.

Police Baton: A wooden or metal club, often with an attached handle (resembling a martial arts tonfa), that is used riot control and wrestling.

Stunner: This is a hand-held device that, when touched to a victim, produces an electric shock intended to daze or knock out its target. After several uses, the battery must be recharged.

Sword Cane: A slender sword hidden within a cane.

MODERN RANGED WEAPONS

Flame Thrower: A weapon that projects an ignited stream of liquid for short distances.

Gatling Gun: An early rapid-fire, spring-loaded, hand cranked weapon that usually required a crew of 3-4 people to operate. With 6-10 rotating gun barrels and a high rate of fire, Gatling guns were the forerunners of modern machine guns.

Grenade, Concussion: A hand explosive with a small blast radius that is used against opponents in close combat while minimising damage to nearby allies.

Grenade, Flash-Bang: A grenade that releases a blinding flash and deafening sound as it explodes that disorients opponents.

Grenade, Fragmentation: Similar to the concussion grenade, but the blast area is larger and the damage less severe.

Grenade, Smoke: This grenade creates a cloud of thick smoke that obscures vision, but does not inflict damage. The Weapon also has the Sensory Block Attribute Level 1 (Sight).

Grenade, Tear Gas: A hand grenades filled with a riot gas that creates a choking cloud that blocks vision and irritates the eyes. The Weapon also has the Sensory Block Attribute Level 1 (Sight).

Machine Gun, Heavy: A large tripod-mounted belt-fed machine gun that is usually fired from a seated or standing position, such as the .50 calibre M2 Browning. These are also mounted on assault vehicles like tanks.

Machine Gun, Light: A bipod-mounted belt-fed machine gun that is usually fired from the prone position. Modern armies assign one to every squad.



Paintball Marker: A handheld weapon in the shape of a gun that rapidly fires small balls of paint. The balls burst upon impact, leaving a washable, temporary mark.

Pistol, Light: A very small handgun, such as a Beretta 950 or Colt Mustang XSP.

Pistol, Heavy: A very powerful handgun, such as a .44 Remington Magnum.

Pistol, Machine: A pistol-format submachine gun such as a Micro-Uzi or Skorpion. It has no real shoulder stock, although it may have a front hand grip. Its high rate of fire makes it difficult to control.

Pistol, Medium: A typical handgun such as a 9 mm or .45 calibre pistol.

Rifle, Assault: The standard weapon of modern military forces that is capable of short bursts of automatic fire, such as an AR-15, M-16, or AK-47.

Rifle, High-Powered: A typical bolt action or semi-automatic rifle. These weapons were the basic military arms from the 1890s to the 1950s, and remain popular as hunting and sniper rifles.

Rifle, Sniper: A precisely crafted high-powered rifle with carefully calibrated sights. It fires a large, heavy-calibre bullet.

Rotary Cannon: These large, Gatling-style machine guns are typically mounted on aircrafts or ships and are useful against heavily armoured targets.

Shotgun: A pump-action rifle that fires a burst of tiny pellets called shot. The double-barrelled variety fires two rounds at once to inflict more damage.

Slingshot: A strong elastic stretched over a handheld Y-frame is pulled back and released to launch small rocks, shot, or marbles.

Submachine Gun: A compact fully automatic weapon with a fixed or folding stock. Weapons of this sort are usually illegal for civilians, but are favoured by SWAT and special ops teams.

Taser: This weapon fires a small dart into the victim, which is connected by a cable to a battery in the weapon. After the victim is hit, the battery discharges an electric shock. The battery must be recharged after a few uses.

Water Cannon: A hose that fires water at very high pressure to control and disperse crowds.

MODERN ORDNANCE

Rocket Launcher: A semi-portable reloadable rocket launcher such as an RPG or bazooka. Usually only available to the military.

Stinger Missile: An infrared homing surface-to-air missile fired from the shoulder of a single operator and designed to target aircraft.

Tank Gun, 120 mm HEAT: High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) rounds are used against troops or lightly armoured vehicles.

Tank Gun, 120 mm Sabot: Rounds designed to puncture through armoured vehicles.

Tomahawk Missile: A subsonic cruise missile usually launched from submarines and surface ships.

FUTURISTIC MELEE WEAPONS

Energy Whip: Often used by female pirates and secret agents and frequently concealed within a lipstick tube, these dramatic weapons feature a powered hilt that emits a glowing energy whip that can either slash or entangle foes.

Garrotte, Monofilament: A wire one molecule thin. It is so sharp that it doesn't strangle opponents – it usually decapitates them!

Light Sword: A powered hilt emitting a glowing sabre-sized blade of energy that can cut through almost anything. A cherished weapon in a space opera campaign.

FUTURISTIC RANGED WEAPONS

Blaster Pistol: A typical space opera energy pistol firing a brilliant beam or packet of energy.

Blaster Rifle: A longer ranged and more powerful version of the blaster pistol.

Blaster Hand Cannon: A very powerful blaster gun that is capable of firing at very long ranges.

Mass Driver: A huge cannon usually found on spaceships and satellites. A large chunk of mass, such as an asteroid, is accelerated towards a target (usually a planet), causing great earthquakes and widespread destruction upon impact. They are outlawed by most civilised space-faring worlds.

Mini-Missile Launcher: A lightweight, portable rocket launcher with a multi-shot magazine firing infrared homing mini-missiles.

Sniper Laser: This is a more realistic implementation of a laser rifle, suitable for hard science fiction settings. It is a large, bulky weapon with a backpack power supply that fires an invisible high-energy beam. The beam only inflicts moderate damage, but will rarely miss its target. Such a weapon is not very sporting, but is perfect for assassinations.

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WEAPONS

Unarmed Attacks	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Normal Punch or Kick	0	Stun	Non-Penetrating	-	-
+ Brass Knuckles	1 (0)	Potent 2	Non-Penetrating	2	1
+ Brutal 1 Combat Technique	1	Stun	Non-Penetrating	-	-
+ Spiked Gauntlet	1	Potent	Non-Penetrating	2	1

Splash	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Acid (Flask)	5 (2)	Area 1, Contact 2, Continuing 3, Range 2	Ammo 4, Inaccurate	10	5
Boiling Oil (Barrel)	3	Area 2, Contact 2, Continuing 5	Activation 2, Ammo 4, Assisted 1, Inaccurate, Hands	6	3
Molotov Cocktail	2 (1)	Area 2, Continuing 3, Range 2	Activation 1, Ammo 4, Inaccurate	4	2

Archaic Melee	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Battleaxe	3	-	-	6	3
Bastard Sword (One-Hand)	3	-	-	6	3
Bastard Sword (Two-Hands)	3	Accurate	Hands	6	3
Bokken (Wooden Sword)	2	-	-	4	2
Caltrops (Bag)	1	Area 1, Trap	Non-Penetrating 2	2	1
Club	2	-	-	4	2
Garrotte Wire	1 (5)	-	Hands, Non-Penetrating 3	2	1
Greatsword	4 (5)	-	Hands	8	4
Katana	3	-	-	6	3
Knife or Dagger	1	-	-	2	1
Lance, Tournament	1 (2)	Reach	Non-Penetrating, Unreliable	2	4
Lance, War	5 (3)	Penetrating, Reach	-	10	5
Longaxe	3 (4)	-	Hands	6	3
Longsword	3	-	-	6	3
Mace, Heavy	3	-	-	6	3
Mace, Light	2	-	-	4	2
Maul	3 (4)	-	Hands	6	3
Morningstar Flail	3	-	-	6	3
Nunchaku	2 (1)	Flexible	-	4	2
Polearm	3	Reach	Hands	6	3
Quarterstaff	1 (3)	-	Hands, Non-Penetrating	2	1
Sap	2	Stun	Non-Penetrating	4	2
Scythe	3 (4)	-	Hands	6	3
Shield (Bash)	1 (2)	-	Inaccurate	-	-
Shortsword	2	-	-	4	2
Spear	2	-	-	4	2
Wakizashi	2	-	-	4	2
Warhammer	3	-	-	6	3
Weighted Chain	1 (2)	Flexible	Backlash, Inaccurate	2	1
Whip	2 (1)	Flexible, Range 1	Non-Penetrating	4	2
Wooden Stake	1	Potent 1	Non-Penetrating	2	1

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WEAPONS

Archaic Ranged	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Axe, Throwing	1 (2)	Potent 1, Range 2	Ammo 3, Inaccurate	2	1
Blowgun	1	Range 2	Non-Penetrating 2	2	1
Bolas	1 (0)	Range 2, Tangle 2	Ammo 3, Non-Penetrating 2	2	1
Crossbow, Hand	3 (1)	Range 2	-	6	3
Crossbow, Heavy	6 (4)	Penetrating 2, Range 3	Activation 2, Hands	12	6
Crossbow, Light	3 (2)	Penetrating, Range 2	Activation 1, Hands	6	3
Knife, Throwing	1	Potent 1, Range 2	Ammo 3	2	1
Lasso	1 (-1)	Range 2, Tangle 2	Inaccurate 2	2	1
Longbow	5 (3)	Range 3	Hands	10	5
Longbow, Double-Curved	6 (3)	Muscle, Range 3	Hands	12	6
Net	1 (-1)	Range 0, Tangle 3	Inaccurate	2	1
Net, Fighting	1 (0)	Range 0, Tangle 3	Inaccurate, Non-Penetrating	2	1
Rock or Object, Huge	7	Range 2	Inaccurate 2	14	7
Rock or Object, Large	5	Range 2	Inaccurate 2	10	5
Rock or Object, Medium	3	Range 2	Inaccurate 2	6	3
Rock or Object, Small	1	Range 2	Inaccurate 2	2	1
Sling	1	Range 2	Inaccurate, Non-Penetrating	2	1
Shortbow	4 (2)	Range 3	Hands	8	4
Shuriken	1	Potent 1, Range 2	Ammo 2, Non-Penetrating	2	1
Spear, Throwing	1 (2)	Range 2	Ammo 3	2	1

Archaic Siege	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Ballista, Small	8 (10)	Range 3	Activation 3, Hands, Inaccurate	16	8
Ballista, Medium	10 (12)	Range 3	Activation 3, Hands, Inaccurate	20	10
Ballista, Large	12 (14)	Range 4	Activation 4, Hands, Inaccurate	24	12
Catapult, Large	19 (20)	Area 2, Indirect, Range 4	Activation 2, Assisted 3, Hands, Inaccurate 2	38	19
Catapult, Medium	16 (18)	Area 1, Indirect, Range 3	Activation 2, Assisted 2, Hands, Inaccurate 2	32	16
Catapult, Small	14 (16)	Indirect, Range 3	Activation 2, Assisted 2, Hands, Inaccurate 1	28	14
Ram, Large	6 (12)	-	Activation 2, Assisted 3, Hands	12	6
Ram, Medium	5 (10)	-	Activation 2, Assisted 2, Hands	10	5
Ram, Small	3 (6)	-	Activation 1, Assisted 1, Hands	6	3

Modern Melee	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Battle Yo-Yo	2	Flexible	Non-Penetrating	4	2
Chainsaw	2	Penetrating	Hands	4	2
Machete	2	-	-	4	2
Pepper Spray or Mace	2 (1)	Irritant 2, Range 1, Stun	Ammo 2, Toxic	4	2
Police Baton	2	Stun	Non-Penetrating	4	2
Stunner	2 (-1)	Incapacitating 4	Ammo 1	4	2
Sword Cane	2	-	-	4	2

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WEAPONS

Modern Ranged	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Flame Thrower	6 (2)	Continuing 3, Range 2, Spreading 2	Ammo 1, Hands, Inaccurate	12	6
Gatling Gun	5 (4)	Autofire 3, Range 3	Ammo 1, Assisted 2, Hands, Inaccurate	10	5
Grenade, Concussion	6 (8)	Area 1, Range 2	Ammo 4, Inaccurate	12	6
Grenade, Flash-Bang	1 (-1)	Area 2, Flare (Hearing) 2, Flare (Sight) 2, Range 2	Ammo 4, Toxic 2	2	1
Grenade, Fragmentation	5 (6)	Area 2, Range 2	Ammo 4, Inaccurate	10	5
Grenade, Smoke	1 (-1)	Area 2, Duration 4, Range 2	Ammo 4, Toxic 2 + Sensory Block (Sight) Level 1	3	1
Grenade, Tear Gas	3 (-1)	Area 2, Duration 3, Irritant 3, Range 2	Ammo 4, Toxic 2 + Sensory Block (Sight) Level 1	7	3
Machine Gun, Heavy	12 (6)	Autofire 3, Penetrating 1, Range 4	Ammo 1, Hands	24	12
Machine Gun, Light	10 (5)	Autofire 3, Range 4	Ammo 1, Hands	20	10
Paintball Marker	1 (-1)	Range 2, Unique: Marks	Hands, Inaccurate 2, Unreliable 2	2	1
Pistol, Heavy	7 (4)	Range 3	-	14	7
Pistol, Machine	7 (3)	Autofire 3, Range 3	Ammo 1, Inaccurate	14	7
Pistol, Light	5 (3)	Range 3	Inaccurate	10	5
Pistol, Medium	6 (3)	Range 3	-	12	6
Rifle, Assault	9 (4)	Autofire 3, Range 4	Ammo 1, Hands	18	9
Rifle, High-Powered	7 (4)	Range 4	Hands	14	7
Rifle, Sniper	10 (5)	Accurate 2, Range 4	Hands	20	10
Rotary Cannon	24 (10)	Autofire 3, Penetrating 4, Range 4, Spreading 3	-	48	24
Shotgun	6 (5)	Range 3, Spreading	Ammo 1, Hands, Non-Penetrating	12	6
Shotgun, Double-Barrelled Heavy	6	Range 3, Spreading	Ammo 2, Hands, Non-Penetrating	12	6
Slingshot	1	Range 2	Inaccurate, Non-Penetrating	2	1
Submachine Gun	7 (3)	Autofire 3, Range 3	Ammo 1, Hands	14	7
Taser	2 (-1)	Incapacitating 4, Range 2	Activation 1, Ammo 1, Inaccurate	4	2
Water Cannon	9 (4)	Range 3, Spreading 2, Stun	Hands	18	9

Modern Ordnance	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Rocket Launcher	12	Area 2, Penetrating, Range 3	Activation 1, Backblast 1, Ammo 2, Hands, Inaccurate	24	12
Stinger Missile	15	Area 2, Homing: Infrared, Penetrating, Range 5	Activation 2, Backblast, Ammo 4, Environmental 1 (Air Targets), Stoppable 1	30	15
Tank Gun, 120mm Heat	21 (12)	Area 2, Helper, Penetrating 4, Range 5	Activation 1, Assisted 1, Hands	42	21
Tank Gun, 120mm Sabot	22 (15)	Accurate, Helper, Penetrating 3, Range 5	Activation 1, Assisted 1, Hands	44	22
Tomahawk Missile	35 (30)	Accurate 2, Area 4, Penetrating 6, Range 7	Activation 3, Assisted 2, Ammo 4, Stoppable 4, Unreliable	70	35

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WEAPONS

Futuristic Melee	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Energy Whip	8 (4)	Flexible 2, Penetrating 2	-	16	8
Garrotte, Monofilament	12 (10)	Insidious 3	Hands	24	12
Light Sword	10 (5)	Penetrating 5	-	20	10

Futuristic Ranged	Level	Enhancements	Limiters	Points	Item Cost
Blaster Pistol	7 (4)	Range 3	-	14	7
Blaster Rifle	10 (7)	Range 4	Hands	20	10
Blaster Hand Cannon	15 (10)	Indirect, Range 5	Hands	30	15
Mass Driver	55 (40)	Area 10, Insidious 3, Quake 5, Range 7	Activation 4, Assisted 3, Stoppable 3	110	55
Mini-Missile Launcher	12 (8)	Area 2, Homing: Infrared, Range 4	Activation 1, Ammo 1, Hands	24	12
Sniper Laser	15 (7)	Accurate 2, Range 5, Inconspicuous 3	Ammo 1, Hands	30	15







ARMOUR

Body armour has been worn in many eras by warriors, police, military, black ops, and others. Although shunned by martial artists and swashbuckling heroes, armour can be worn comfortably if properly designed and if the character is trained to use it.

The Armour values listed in this section represent average-quality construction and materials. Shoddy workmanship, poor construction techniques, or weak materials can penalise the given Armour Ratings by -1 to -4 (a Unique Limiter). Conversely, exceptional workmanship, advanced construction techniques, or resilient finishings can increase the given Armour Ratings by +1 to +2 (a Unique Enhancement). Armour with one assignment of the Localised Limiter only covers a portion of the body, often leaving the head and other extremities unprotected.

ANIMAL ARMOUR

Fur: If an animal's fur is sufficiently thick or matted, it can provide light protection.

Hide: Thicker animal skin can provide enhanced protection, though the Armour Rating is usually less than hide armour worn by characters since those hides have been boiled and stiffened.

Scales: Shelled or scaled animals, such as dragons and turtles, often have thick scales that can protect them from predators.

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ARCHAIC ARMOUR

Brigandine: A brigandine is a cloth- or leather-covered armour made from overlapping layers of iron plates. The brigandine itself protects the torso and shoulders, but it usually comes with a full suit of mail. If desired, the mail can be worn without the brigandine, reducing the armour's protection to that of chainmail.

Chain Shirt: A shirt of light chainmail, often worn over clothing without any other significant armour.

Chainmail: Also called simply "mail", this armour is made of interlocking metal rings. It includes a layer of quilted fabric underneath it to prevent chafing and to cushion the impact of blows. Several layers of mail are frequently hung over vital areas. Most of the armour's weight hangs from the shoulders, making chainmail uncomfortable to wear for long periods of time.

Full Plate: This armour consists of shaped and fitted metal plates riveted and interlocked to cover the entire body. It includes gauntlets, pointed steel boots, and a helmet (either visored or open-faced) – though sometimes a breastplate is simply worn with chainmail. Buckles and straps distribute the weight over the body, so full plate hampers movement less than splint mail even though splint is lighter. Each suit of full plate must be individually fitted to its owner by a master armourer, although a captured suit can be resized to fit a new owner at a reasonable cost. Full plate is also known as field plate.

Hide: This armour is prepared from multiple layers of leather and animal hides. It is stiff and hard to move in, and is rarely used by any but the most tribal civilisations.

Leather: The breastplate and shoulder protectors of this armour are made of thick leather that has been stiffened by boiling in water. The rest of the armour is made of softer and more flexible leather.

Padded: Padded armour features quilted layers of cloth and batting.

Ringmail: An armour made of interlocking metal rings, similar to chainmail, but with larger rings. It is normally worn over pieces of boiled leather (included with a full suit of armour), with a padded layer beneath the rings to prevent chafing and to cushion the impact of blows. In the cold of winter, it is worn with heavy wool. It is lighter than chainmail and easier to wear, although not as durable.

Scale Armour: This is a coat and leggings (and perhaps a separate skirt) of leather covered with overlapping pieces of metal, much like fish scales.

Splint Armour: This armour is made of narrow vertical strips of metal riveted to a backing of leather that is worn over cloth padding. Flexible chainmail protects the joints.

MODERN ARMOUR

Thick Leather Jacket: A leather jacket, or one made of other durable materials, can provide adequate protection against small weapons and projectiles.

Light Body Armour: A basic flexible body armour vest of the sort worn by police officers or VIPs. The armour can be concealed under a jacket or suit.

Medium Body Armour: This medium-weight flak jacket gives enhanced protection against attacks, but it can only be concealed under bulky clothing.

Heavy Body Armour: This armour is a heavy bullet-resistant outfit (with a visored helmet and leggings) incorporating both ballistic fibre and ceramic plates, of the sort worn by SWAT teams and soldiers. It cannot be concealed.

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ARMOUR

Animal Armour Type	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Thick Fur	Features	1	2	-	1	-
Tough Hide	Features	1	3	-	1	-
Thick Hide	Armour	1	5	-	2	-
Thin Scales	Armour	1	5	-	2	-
Light Scales	Armour	2	10	-	4	-
Medium Scales	Armour	3	15	-	6	-
Heavy Scales	Armour	4	20	-	8	-
Mighty Scales	Armour	8	40	-	16	-

Archaic Armour Type	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Padded	Armour	1 (2)	10	Localised 1	2	1
Hide	Armour	1 (2)	10	Localised 1	2	1
Leather	Armour	2	10	-	4	2
Chain Shirt	Armour	1 (2)	10	Localised 1	2	1
Ringmail	Armour	2	10	-	4	2
Scale Armour	Armour	2	10	-	4	2
Chainmail	Armour	3	15	-	6	3
Splint Armour	Armour	3	15	-	6	3
Brigandine	Armour	3	15	-	6	3
Full Plate	Armour	4	20	-	8	4

Modern Armour Type	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Thick Leather Jacket	Features	1	2	Localised 1	1	-
Light Body Armour	Armour	3 (4)	20	Localised 1	6	3
Medium Body Armour	Armour	4 (5)	25	Localised 1	8	4
Heavy Body Armour	Armour	6	30	-	12	6

Futuristic Armour Type	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Ceramic Armour	Armour	6	30	-	12	6
Light Force Armour	Force Field	3	30	-	12	6
Heavy Force Armour	Force Field	5 (4)	40	Regenerating	20	10
Tactical Force Armour	Force Field	6 (5)	50	Regenerating	24	12
Low-Intensity Power Armour	Armour	8	40	-	16	8
Medium-Intensity Power Armour	Armour	12	60	-	24	12
High-Intensity Power Armour	Armour	16	80	-	32	16

FUTURISTIC ARMOUR

Ceramic Armour: High-density yet lightweight ceramics provide excellent protection against attacks.

Force Armour: A force field surrounds a character during a battle, but it can be weakened by repeated blows. Heavy and tactical versions can quickly regenerate their effectiveness.

Power Armour: These sleek and agile powered suites are optimised for urban combat. In addition to their Armour Ratings, these power suits usually offer a range of other helpful features and special protections of the players' choice, such as comms, life support systems, detection systems, body enhancements (Superstrength, Superspeed, etc.), built-in Weapons, etc.

SHIELDS

Shields are designed to deflect blows and turn them aside when possible, but can also absorb the impact of blows when interposed between the character and an attack. See page 192 for more information on defending with a shield. Shields are rarely seen in many anime shows, perhaps because they are not historically part of Japanese martial arts tradition.

Though usually reserved for Level 1 Attributes, some larger shields have the Potent Enhancement, which provides the targetted character a minor (for Potent -1) or major (for Potent -2) edge when defending with a shield. See page 182 for more information about how minor and major edges change dice rolls.

SHIELD SIZES

Shields are usually available in four sizes: buckler, small, large, and special.

Buckler Shield: A buckler is approximately 30 cm in diameter – small enough to be strapped to an arm while still leaving the hand free to grasp and hold objects. Bucklers are often used by duellists or skirmishing barbarians.

Small Shield: A small shield is approximately 50-80 cm in diameter (though it may be oblong), and requires one arm to hold it secure. It is small enough that it doesn't hinder the actions of the warrior to any significant extent – nor does it provide much protection.

Large Shield: Due to its bulky size, a large shield is usually oblong with the largest dimension measuring up to 100-150 cm. Since they are quite heavy, large shields are often strapped to the arm and wrist to assist in carrying it.

Special Shield: Tower or tactical shields are extremely large, allowing an average person to crouch behind it and be protected completely from one direction. They are extremely useful on a field of battle to protect against hails of projectiles (arrows, stones, etc.) as well as during urban infiltration assignments. High-tech shields (ie. smart shields) adjust their size in battle automatically and track the opponent's attacks during defence.

SHIELD MATERIALS

A shield can be constructed from any material, but the most common ones are listed below.

Plant: Leaves, vines, and even roots can be lashed together and strung over a wooden frame to provide a modicum of protection.

Leather: After boiling, layering, and binding animal hide to a frame, primitive warriors are afforded extra protection in battle.

Animal Scales: Though scales lose some durability after they have been removed from the original animal (usually a dragon or similar large creature), they still make solid shields. Scales from specific beasts may even provide additional protection optimised against a specific type of attack, such as lightning, fire, or acid. See the Emphasised and Optimised Armour Limiters (page 80).

Wood: Hardwood is banded with metal strips to make these shields as durable as many suits of armour.

Metal: Usually forged from steel, bronze, or other alloys, metal shields offer ideal protection on the battlefield. Unfortunately, large metal shields are quite heavy, and thus cannot be carried for extended periods in combat.

Composites: The light-weight and ballistic-resistant materials used in tactical shields are preferred by modern urban insertion squads worldwide.

Energy: Practically weightless and often translucent, these high-tech force shields can stop nearly all modern firearms and futuristic blaster weapons. Top-quality smart shields are seemingly impenetrable.

PROTECTIVE DEVICES

Many types of suits and masks offer more protection than simply the Armour Attribute. A few examples are included below.

▶ HAZMAT SUIT

This hazardous materials suit provides extreme protection against any radiation, viruses, toxins, or gasses that exist in the atmosphere.

HAZMAT SUIT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Armour (Armour Rating 5)
2	2	Features (Chemical Resistance, Comms, Life Support Systems)
4 (2)	8	Resilient (Lack of Air, Radiation; All Complete -2)
	12	TOTAL (6 POINT ITEM)

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SHIELDS

Buckler Shield	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Plant	Armour	1 (2)	10	Localised 1	2	1
Leather	Armour	1 (2)	10	Localised 1	2	1
Animal Scales	Armour	1 (2)	10	Localised 1	2	1
Wood	Armour	2 (3)	15	Localised 1	4	2
Metal	Armour	3 (4)	20	Localised 1	6	3
Composites	Armour	5 (6)	30	Localised 1	10	5
Energy	Force Field	3 (4)	40	Localised 1	12	6

Small Shield	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Plant	Armour	2	10	-	4	2
Leather	Armour	2	10	-	4	2
Animal Scales	Armour	2	10	-	4	2
Wood	Armour	3	15	-	6	3
Metal	Armour	4	20	-	8	4
Composites	Armour	6	30	-	12	6
Energy	Force Field	4	40	-	16	8

Large Shield	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Plant	Armour	3 (2)	10	Potent -1	6	3
Leather	Armour	3 (2)	10	Potent -1	6	3
Animal Scales	Armour	3 (2)	10	Potent -1	6	3
Wood	Armour	4 (3)	15	Potent -1	8	4
Metal	Armour	5 (4)	20	Potent -1	10	5
Composites	Armour	7 (6)	30	Potent -1	14	7
Energy	Force Field	5 (4)	40	Potent -1	20	10

Special Shield	Attribute	Level	AR	Modifiers	Points	Item Cost
Tower - Metal	Armour	7 (5)	25	Potent -2	14	7
Tactical - Composites	Armour	9 (7)	35	Potent -2	18	9
Smart Shield, Standard - Energy	Force Field	5 (4)	40	Regenerating	20	10
Smart Shield, Heavy - Energy	Force Field	7 (5)	50	Offensive, Regenerating	28	14

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▶ CHAMELEON SUIT

This high-tech suit covers the body completely and adapts its colour dynamically to match the surrounding environment. This makes it very difficult to see the wearer.

CHAMELEON SUIT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1 (2)	2	Undetectable (Sight 2; Nonadjacent -1)
	2	**TOTAL (1 POINT ITEM)**

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DEEP-SEA DIVING SUIT

This pressurised helmeted suit allows a person to dive to depths of nearly 800 metres.

DEEP-SEA DIVING SUIT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
6	12	Armour (Armour Rating 30)
3	3	Features (Camera, Comms, Data Backup, Lights, Life Support Systems, Sensors)
6 (3)	6	Resilient (Intense Cold, High Pressure, Lack of Air; All Complete -3)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-6	Impaired Manipulation
2	-6	Physical Impairment (Can't move without help)
	9	**TOTAL (4 POINT ITEM)**

GOGGLES AND EAR PROTECTION

This gear provides a major edge (page 182) to resist the effects of laser blinding, flash-bang grenades, and similar audio or visual hazards, but it prevents the character from hearing any normal conversations except via radio.

GOGGLES/EAR PROTECTION

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Resilient (Intense Light, Intense Sound)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-3	Sensory Impairment (Hearing)
	1	**TOTAL (0 POINT ITEM)**

GAS MASK

A gas mask protects against tear gas and similar attacks, but imposes a major obstacle (page 182) on all dice rolls requiring peripheral vision.

GAS MASK

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2 (1)	4	Resilient (Airborne Toxins; Complete -1)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-3	Sensory Impairment (Sight)
	1	**TOTAL (0 POINT ITEM)**

GRIZZLY SUIT

Though strong enough to withstand a grizzly bear attack, this suit is not very useful to researchers since it restricts movement too greatly.

GRIZZLY SUIT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
8	16	Armour (Armour Rating 40)
2	2	Features (Camera, Comms, Lights)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-6	Impaired Manipulation
2	-6	Physical Impairment (Slow walking; can't get up alone after falling down)
	6	**TOTAL (3 POINT ITEM)**

WET SUIT

This skin-tight suit provides thermal protection while under water by trapping a layer of water between the diver's skin and the suit that is naturally heated by the body.

WET SUIT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Feature (Light Armour - Armour Rating 3)
1	2	Resilient (Cold Water 1)
	3	**TOTAL (1 POINT ITEM)**

▶ SPACE SUIT

This sturdy suit can sustain its wearer for a few hours in space but has restricted mobility.

SPACE SUIT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (Armour Rating 10)
2	2	Features (Comms, Lights, Life Monitors)
1 (2)	3	Flight (Environmental: Vacuum +1)
9 (5)	18	Resilient (Intense Cold, Intense Heat, Lack of Air, Low Pressure; All Complete -4; Radiation)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-3	Physical Impairment (Restricted Mobility)
	24	**TOTAL (12 POINT ITEM)**

MECHA AND VEHICLES

Along with their specialised Weapons and Items, many anime heroes and villains use specialised mecha. "Mecha" is the term used by Japanese animators and fans to refer to any mechanical designs that appear in anime, such as giant robot, tank, racing car, jet fighter, spaceship, or even a sailing ship.

As with all Items, halve the Point costs of all mecha (rounding down) if they are acquired as part of the Item Attribute.

USING MECHA

A mecha must usually be piloted or driven by a character. The mecha's operator uses their Stats when the mecha must make a dice roll. If a mecha has multiple occupants, only one operator can control it at any one time. Some Attributes the mecha possesses can be used by any appropriate driver or passenger, though Weapons must have the Helper Enhancement to permit alternate or multiple gunners. Other Attributes, such as Resilient (page 118), will protect the occupants and the mecha itself. Consider the normal use of the mecha when adjudicating the Attributes and Defects.

▶ USEFUL ATTRIBUTES

Certain Attributes are especially useful to mecha. First, it must be assigned one or more of Flight, Jumping, Ground Speed, Spaceflight, Superspeed, Teleport, or Water Speed Attributes to move. Assign the Capacity Attribute to carry more than one person or 100 kg of cargo. If the mecha can manipulate things with arms – the Extra Arms Attribute is only required for more than two mecha arms – giving it equivalent Levels of Superstrength is a good idea as well. All mecha made of durable materials should be assigned multiple Levels of the Armour Attribute. Assign the Features (Basic A.I.) Attribute to a semi-autonomous mecha if it can operate independently without a driver or pilot.

▶ USEFUL DEFECTS

Certain Defects are also very appropriate for many mecha. Awkward Size (page 156) should be assigned to any mecha massing over 200 kg or measuring over 3 metres long, wide, or high. Special Requirement (page 166) is suitable for mecha that require extra fuel or regular maintenance. Defects that are implied by the mecha's status as an inanimate object (like Impaired Manipulation, Physical Impairment, etc.) should not be assigned.

DESIGNING MECHA: SIMPLICITY

You should design mecha based on the correct feel for the campaign rather than strict adherence to what is or is not in the mecha. In particular, GMs should not go overboard with Features. Anything that is implied by the mecha's size or by other Attributes can be assumed to be there.

For example, a large modern naval vessel has dozens of navigation systems, workshops, mess halls, television sets, winches, and numerous other elements. These might be Features worth mentioning on a small vessel, but since the vehicle has already been assigned the Capacity Attribute at Level 10 (ie. it can host 1,000 occupants), such Features are assumed to be included.

ARCHAIC VEHICLES

These vehicles may travel transportation routes in any pre-industrial culture such as the Anime Multiverse worlds of Aradia or Ikaris.

▶ SAILING VESSEL

This is a medium-sized sailing ship such as a late medieval caravel. A vessel of this sort needs a minimum crew of a half-dozen or so to manage the sails and can carry up to 50 extra people (10 tonnes). Some sailing ships may carry cannon or catapult weapons as well. Possible variations include: rowing galley (extra Water Speed, additional Assisted assignment, remove Environmental), pirate ship (add Weapons), cargo ship (higher Capacity Attribute), etc.

SAILING VESSEL

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
3	6	Armour (Armour Rating 15)
6	6	Capacity (50 People or 10 Tonnes)
1	1	Water Speed (10 kph; Potent -3; Assisted: Sailors +2; Environmental: Wind +1)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
4	-8	Awkward Size (Size 4: Gigantic - 30 metres)
	5	**TOTAL (2 POINT ITEM)**

▶ WAGON

A covered wagon can be a mobile base for pre-industrial adventurers. It requires one or two horses, oxen, or similar beasts to pull. Speed is limited to the lower of the wagons' or the pulling animals' speed. Possible variations include: wheelhouse (extra Capacity Levels, add Features: Luxurious Interior, increase Assisted), cart (lower Capacity and Assisted), dog sled (lower Capacity, remove Road-Bound, add Environmental: Snow), chariot (remove Capacity, lower Assisted), etc.

WAGON

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (Armour Rating 10)
3	3	Capacity (5 People or 1 Tonne)
1 (2)	1	Ground Speed (10 kph; Potent -1; Assisted: Draft Animals +1; Road-Bound +1)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-2	Awkward Size (Size 1: Large - 4 metres)
	6	**TOTAL (3 POINT ITEM)**

MODERN VEHICLES

These are vehicles suitable for a modern day or near future setting such as the Anime Multiverse worlds of Enid, Imago, or Earth. Unless noted otherwise, a vehicle's fuel endurance is assumed to be similar to a human: for best operation, it needs refuelling or recharging every eight hours or so.

▶ ATTACK HELICOPTER

A helicopter similar to the AH-1Z Viper or AH-64 Apache. It is powered by turbine engines and armed with a chin-mounted auto cannon and stub wings with rocket or missile pods. Attack helicopters are a common sight in contemporary mecha stories, often attacking invading alien spaceships or monsters and being shot out of the sky in droves. It seats two crew. Possible variations include: rescue helicopter (increase Capacity, add Features: Medical Equipment, remove Features: Radar Detector, Sensory Block, Supersense, and Weapons); news chopper (reduce Armour, Capacity, and Flight, remove Features: Radar Detector, Sensory Block, Supersense, and Weapons); etc.

▶ AUTOMOBILE, MID-SIZE

The basic motor vehicle of the 21st century. Automobiles have four wheels and are normally powered by a gasoline internal combustion engine or rechargeable battery. It has room for five people or one tonne of cargo. Possible variations include: ambulance (add Features: Medical Equipment and Lights/Siren, increase Awkward Size), VIP limousine (add Features: Luxurious Interior and Puncture-Proof Tires, increase Armour and Awkward Size); environmental mini-car (reduce Armour, Capacity, and Awkward Size); etc.

ATTACK HELICOPTER

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
6	12	Armour (Armour Rating 30)
1	1	Capacity (2 People)
2	2	Features (Comms, Lights, Radar Detector)
3 (4)	9	Flight (300 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1)
2	2	Sensory Block (Infrared, Radar)
3	3	Supersenses (1 km; Infrared)
27 (20)	54	Weapon: Anti-Tank Missiles (Area -2; Helper -1; Penetrating -2; Range -5; Activation +1; Ammo +1; Stoppable +1)
19 (12)	38	Weapon: Rocket Pods (Area -2; Helper -1; Range -4; Spreading -2; Ammo -1; Inaccurate -1)
15 (8)	30	Weapon: Automatic Cannon (Autofire -3; Helper -1; Range -4; Ammo +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
3	-6	Awkward Size (Size 3: Mammoth - 15 metres)
1	-3	Special Requirement (Frequent maintenance)
1	-2	Weak Point (Rotors)
	140	**TOTAL (70 POINT ITEM)**

AUTOMOBILE, MID-SIZED

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (Armour Rating 10)
3	3	Capacity (5 People)
1	1	Features (Modern Vehicle Tech Suite)
3 (5)	3	Ground Speed (250 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1; Road-Bound +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Awkward Size (Size 2: Huge - 5 metres)
	7	**TOTAL (3 POINT ITEM)**

AUTOMOBILE, SPORTS CAR

This agile vehicle accelerates rapidly, steers precisely, and brakes positively. It sacrifices comfort for speed, and only has room for one driver and one passenger. Possible variations include: racing car (decrease Armour and Capacity, add Features: Camera); assault car (increase Armour, add Weapons and Features: Oil Slick and Rotating License Plate); etc.

AUTOMOBILE, SPORTS CAR

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (Armour Rating 10)
1	1	Capacity (2 People)
1	1	Features (Modern Vehicle Tech Suite)
4 (6)	4	Ground Speed (500 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1; Road-Bound +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-2	Awkward Size (Size 1: Large - 4 metres)
	8	**TOTAL (4 POINT ITEM)**

BUS

A passenger coach bus has room to seat 30-50 passengers comfortably, and is well protected if it gets into an accident. Possible variations include: touring bus (Features: Luxurious Interior); tow truck (reduce Capacity and Awkward Size, add Features: Towing Equipment); etc.

BUS

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (Armour Rating 10)
6	6	Capacity (50 People)
1	1	Features (Comms, Modern Vehicle Tech Suite)
2 (4)	2	Ground Speed (125 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1; Road-Bound +1)
1	1	Tough

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
3	-6	Awkward Size (Size 3: Mammoth - 15 metres)
	8	**TOTAL (4 POINT ITEM)**

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HEAVY TANK

Heavy tanks are the backbone of modern military forces. They provide strong mobile firepower while ensuring protection for the crew in almost any environment. The vehicle has a crew of four: a driver, a gunner who uses the main 120mm cannon and its coaxial 7.62mm machine gun, a loader who assists the gunner and also performs maintenance, and a commander who also uses the .50 calibre machine gun, sensors, and smoke grenade launcher. A tank of this sort can stand up to almost any foe ... except for towering giant robots and invading aliens! Possible variations include: armoured personnel carrier (reduce Armour, increase Capacity, remove sabot and HEAT Weapons, remove Unique Defect); mini-tank (reduce Armour, reduce Weapons); etc.

HEAVY TANK

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
12	24	Armour (Armour Rating 60)
2	2	Capacity (4 People)
2	2	Features (Comms, Low-Light Vision, Tools)
2 (3)	2	Ground Speed (50 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1)
2 (1)	4	Resilient (Airborne Toxins; Complete -1)
4 (2)	4	Sensory Block "Smoke Grenade Launchers" (Infrared, Sight; Area -2; Duration -2; Activation +1, Ammo +1)
3	3	Supersenses (1 km; Infrared)
22 (15)	44	Weapon: 120mm gun, sabot ammo (Accurate -1; Helper -1; Penetrating -3; Range -5; Activation +1; Assisted +1; Hands +1)
21 (12)	21	Weapon: 120mm gun, HEAT ammo (Alt-Munition; Area -2; Helper -1; Penetrating -4; Range -5; Activation +1; Assisted +1; Hands +1)
16 (8)	32	Weapon: Commander's .50-calibre machine gun (Autofire -3; Helper -1; Penetrating -1; Range -4; Ammo +1)
12 (6)	24	Weapon: 7.62mm coaxial machine gun (Autofire -3; Helper -1; Range -4; Ammo +1; Hands +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
3	-6	Awkward Size (Size 3: Mammoth - 9 metres)
2	-6	Unique Defect (Half Armour on Side and Rear)
	150	**TOTAL (75 POINT ITEM)**

JET FIGHTER

If the grunts can't handle the problem, call for air support! Used by the USA, Japan, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, these statistics are based on the F-15 Eagle – one of the most effective jet fighters in service. Possible variations include: stealth bomber (add Undetectable: Radar and Weapons), fighter plane (remove Features, Resilient, Sensory Block, Supersense, and Missiles, reduce Flight and Awkward Size); etc.

JET FIGHTER

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
5	10	Armour (Armour Rating 25)
2	2	Features (Comms, Ejection Seat, Modern Vehicle Tech Suite, Radar Detector)
4 (6)	12	Flight (3,000 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1, Maintain +1)
2 (1)	4	Resilient (Lack of Air; Complete -1)
1	1	Sensory Block (Radar)
3 (4)	3	Supersense (10 km; Radar; Detectable: Radar -1)
27 (22)	54	Weapon: Air-to-Air Missiles (Homing: Radar -2; Range -6; Ammo +1; Stoppable +2)
14 (8)	28	Weapon: 20mm Gatling Gun (Autofire -3; Range -4; Ammo +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
4	-8	Awkward Size (Size 4: Gigantic - 20 metres)
1	-3	Special Requirement (Frequent Refuelling)
1	-3	Special Requirement (Frequent Maintenance)
	100	**TOTAL (50 POINT ITEM)**

▶ MOTORCYCLE

A motor bike is popular with street gangs, highway patrol officers, and urban vigilantes, as well as the coolest high school students. Possible variations include: police cycle (add Features: Radio and Lights/Siren); rocket motorcycle (increase Ground Speed); etc.

MOTORCYCLE

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1 (2)	2	Armour (Armour Rating 10; Localised +1)
1	1	Features (Modern Vehicle Tech Suite)
3 (5)	3	Ground Speed (250 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1; Road-Bound +1)
	6	TOTAL (3 POINT ITEM)

▶ POWERBOAT

A typical cruising speedboat, with room for four passengers. Its open top provides little protection to the occupants. Possible variations include: hydrofoil (reduce Armour and Water Speed); racing speedboat (reduce Capacity); etc.

POWER BOAT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1 (2)	2	Armour (Armour Rating 10; Localised +1)
3	3	Capacity (5 People)
1	1	Features (Modern Vehicle Tech Suite)
2 (3)	2	Water Speed (100 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-4	Awkward Size (Size 2: Huge - 8 metres)
	4	TOTAL (2 POINT ITEM)

FUTURISTIC VEHICLES

These ultra high-tech vehicles would be at home in a space opera or harder science fiction setting, such as the Anime Multiverse world of Cathedral.

▶ ASSAULT MECHA

A six-metre-tall, flight-capable piloted giant robot used as a high-tech space-capable mobile assault system. It is equipped with rockets for space manoeuvring (for a short time, before running out of fuel) and twin ducted fans for relatively quiet atmospheric operations.

ASSAULT MECHA

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
12	24	Armour (Armour Rating 60)
2	2	Features (Comms, Ejection Seat, Modern Tech Suite)
1 (3)	3	Flight (100 kph; Potent -1; Recovery +3)
3	3	Ground Speed (50 kph)
10 (5)	20	Resilient (Intense Cold, Intense Heat, Lack of Air, Low Pressure, Radiation; All Complete -5)
2	2	Sensory Block (Infrared, Radar)
1	1	Spaceflight (10,000 kph; Potent +3; Recovery -3)
3	3	Supersense (1 km; Infrared)
4	16	Superstrength (10 Tonnes)
15 (9)	30	Weapon: Missile Pack (Area -2; Homing: Radar -1; Range -4; Ammo +1)
13 (7)	26	Weapon: 30mm Gatling Gun (Autofire -3; Penetrating -1; Range -3; Ammo +1)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
2	-4	Awkward Size (Size 2: Huge - 6 metres)
1	-3	Special Requirement (Frequent Refuelling)
1	-3	Special Requirement (Frequent Maintenance)
	120	TOTAL (60 POINT ITEM)

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SHIJN15

▶ SPACE FREIGHTER

This interstellar freighter makes a good smuggling or pirate ship in a space campaign. It has wings and vectored thrust systems that enable it to land or take off on a planet, as well as a reactionless drive that can exceed light speed in deep space.

SPACE FREIGHTER

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
15	30	Armour (Armour Rating 75)
8	8	Capacity (10 people and 50 Tonnes; 50,000 Tonnes In Space)
1	1	Features (Tachyon Radio)
6 (7)	18	Flight (10,000 kph; Detectable: Hearing +1)
11 (6)	22	Resilient (Intense Cold, Intense Heat, Lack of Air, Low Pressure, Radiation; All Complete -5; Mechanical Endurance)
6	6	Spaceflight (Slow Faster-Than-Light)
4 (5)	4	Supersense (100 km; Radar; Detectable: Radar +1)
24 (15)	48	Weapon: Laser Turret A (Accurate -2; Helper -1; Range -6)
24 (15)	48	Weapon: Laser Turret B (Accurate -2; Helper -1; Range -6)
15 (8)	30	Weapon: Mini Laser (Accurate -1; Helper -1; Range -5)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
6	-12	Awkward Size (Size 6: Colossal - 80 metres)
1	-3	Special Requirement (Frequent Maintenance)
	200	**TOTAL (100 POINT ITEM)**

LOCATIONS

The same guidelines that apply to vehicle Items apply to stationary Items. The exception is that all locations are assumed to be permanently immobile – they cannot be moved or manipulate anything outside themselves. They usually do not have any Attribute that permits them to move themselves, nor are they assigned any Defects such as Confined that are redundant with their lack of mobility. They may be assigned specific movement Attributes, such as Teleport (page 127), to indicate that it can translocate other people, though.

ADVENTURING GEAR

The majority of miscellaneous adventuring Items can be simply created by assigning them one or more Features and applying the Item modifier to the cost. Other Gear, like a gun scope, might just have naked Enhancements (page 197).

▶ ADVENTURER'S PACK

A backpack or bundle with all the ordinary gear an adventurer or soldier might need on the march, such as camping gear and a week's rations.

ADVENTURER'S PACK

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
3	3	Gear (Adventuring Supplies)
	3	**TOTAL (1 POINT ITEM)**

▶ FIRST AID KIT

A kit that provides necessary gear for light emergency medical response.

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FIRST AID KIT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Feature (Medical Kit)
	1	**TOTAL (0 POINT ITEM)**

▶ LASER SIGHT

A laser sight adds accuracy to the Weapon, but the visible red dot might warn the target before the shot.

LASER SIGHT

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (Naked Enhancement: Accurate 2; Potent -1; Detectable: Sight +1)
	1	**TOTAL (0 POINT ITEM)**

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

These light-amplifying goggles reduce the difficulty of firing in darkness, provided there is at least some small amount of light.

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (Low-Light Vision)
	1	**TOTAL (0 POINT ITEM)**

RIFLE SCOPE

A sniper scope can be attached to any rifle-type weapon to add accuracy to the weapon.

RIFLE SCOPE

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (Naked Enhancement: Accurate 1)
	1	**TOTAL (0 POINT ITEM)**

INFRARED GOGGLES

Advanced infrared goggles have a 1 km range capable of seeing even in total darkness.

INFRARED GOGGLES

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
3	3	Supersense (1 km; Infrared)
	3	**TOTAL (1 POINT ITEM)**

VIRTUAL REALITY SET

A VR helmet and special programme lets the user access an exclusive massively multi-player virtual reality world where users can create complex avatars. A normal game wouldn't be worth any Points at all but Big Things happen in this VR world!

VIRTUAL REALITY SET

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
10 (12)	40	Alternate Form (60 Point Form; Environmental: Virtual Reality World +2)
	40	**TOTAL (20 POINT ITEM)**

ITEMS OF POWER

Many anime worlds host a wide multitude of magic artefacts and other relics that may play an important role in the game.

WORLD GATES

World gates, usually just called gates, are places where characters can enter an Anime Multiverse wayline and travel between worlds. Each wayline connecting two worlds usually has a few gates that open to it, scattered around the world (and often guarded or kept secret). If the wayline is an extradimensional highway, gates are their exit and entrance ramps. Common forms for gates include: a ring of toadstools in a forest grove; a large painting; an actual door; an ancient stone circle; an enchanted mirror; a painting of a distant place; a clear mountain pool; a deep well; a tomb; the mouth of a giant idol; a mysterious "stargate" machine; etc. A gate connects to a corresponding gate at the other side, which is considered a distinct and separate Item. Note that special individuals called Skeleton Keys (page 310) can open access points to waylines between worlds without using gates.

WORLD GATES

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
13 (2)	26	Dimensional Portal (Two-Way Door Between Worlds A and B; Area -1, Duration: Permanent -10)
RANK	**POINTS**	**DEFECT**
1	-2	Cursed (Can be Destroyed by a Skeleton Key - see page 309)
	24	**TOTAL (12 POINT ITEM)**

BREAKING ITEMS

Battles between powerful foes often result in a great deal of collateral damage. How effective is a manhole cover as a shield? How much damage can a telephone pole deliver before it breaks?

ITEM ARMOUR RATINGS

The Armour Rating of an Item indicates how much damage the object can stop and it is dependent on the hardness and thickness of the material from which the object is made, the size of the object, how fragile the working parts may be, and how well it is constructed. For example, a hollow, aluminium pole will be far weaker than a solid aluminium pole of the same size. Table-20: Item Armour Ratings provides rough Armour Ratings for common objects. GMs are encouraged to use this chart as a basis when determining the Armour Rating of other objects encountered in their games, adjusting for the material from which the object is made, the thickness of the material, the quality of construction, and other similar factors. For Ranged Weapons, "working Weapons" – Items with delicate working mechanisms, like those found in guns and crossbows – are classified differently than "simple Weapons" (which are Items without working parts).

ITEM HEALTH POINTS

An Item's Health Points are equal its Armour Rating. This value can be increased or decreased with the Tough Attribute or Fragile Defect.

ITEM DAMAGE

If the Item suffers more damage than its Armour Rating, the excess damage is deducted from its Health Points. If its Health Points are ever reduced to zero, it ceases to function in its given task (ie. a car will no longer run, a gun will no longer fire, etc.). The Item is not destroyed – it is simply rendered non-functional and can be repaired later and returned to normal. Additionally, if the Item suffers five times its Armour Rating in damage in one attack, regardless of how many Health Points it has remaining, it is completely destroyed – it is beyond repair and must be completely rebuilt or replaced. Finally, if an object suffers repeated damage – roughly 5 to 10 times within a short period of time (GM discretion) – it has suffered sufficient damage to break.

20 ITEM ARMOUR RATINGS

Object	Armour Rating
Bench/Table, Metal	15
Bench/Table, Wood	15
Cement Barrier	30
Door, Car	15
Door, Vault	200
Door, Wooden	15
Dumpster, Metal	20
Furniture, Wood	10
Ladder, Metal	5
Manhole Cover	30
Steel Cables	20
Steel Girder	40
Stop Sign	5
Telephone Pole, Metal	10
Telephone Pole, Wood	30
Tree, Giant	100
Tree, Large	50
Tree, Medium	25
Tree, Small	15
Armour	See Tables-18: Armour
Shields	See Table-19: Shields
Melee Weapons	Equal to 2 times Weapon Level* (see Table-17: Weapons)
Simple Ranged Weapons	Equal to 2 times Weapon Level* (see Table-17: Weapons)
Working Ranged Weapons	Equal to Weapon Level* (see Table-17: Weapons)
Buildings	See Table-21: Building Armour Ratings
Planetary Objects	See Table-22: Planetoid Armour Ratings

*actual Weapon Level of the Item's highest Weapon Attribute

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PENETRATING VS. ITEMS

If a Weapon with the Penetrating Enhancement (page 140) attacks an Item, the attack is more likely to destroy the Item. Each assignment of Penetrating reduces the multiplier required to destroy an Item by 1. For example, if a Weapon hits a steel girder, the character must inflict over 200 damage (Armour Rating of 40 times 5) to destroy it. If the Weapon had special claws with Penetrating assigned three times, however, the character only needs to inflict over 80 damage (Armour Rating of 40 times 2 [5 minus 3 due to three assignments of Penetrating= 2] = 80).


RATBAT 03

DESTROYING BUILDINGS

As a general guide, large Items like buildings – whether they are mainly comprised of stone, brick, wood, or steel – have a 10 Armour Rating for each Size Rank above Medium. If a building suffers more damage than its Armour Rating, it has suffered structural damage – there will be holes in walls and/or floors, powered systems begin to cease working, etc. If the building ever suffers five times its Armour Rating in damage in one attack, some or all of the building will collapse. For example, a mid-sized office building partially collapses if it suffers 250 damage in one attack. Characters within or adjacent to a collapsing building may suffer damage equal to half the building's original Armour Rating, unless they can reach safety (GM's discretion). As with normal Items, repeated damage may eventually destroy a building.

Weapons without the Area or Spreading Enhancements are much less effective against large structures such as buildings. Any damage that penetrates the building's Armour Rating is halved, representing the attack only damaging a small area of the structure.

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BUILDING ARMOUR RATINGS

Type of Building	Size Ranking	Armour Rating
Phone Booth	1	10
Wood Shed	2	20
Three-Bedroom House	3	30
Small Office Building (6 Floors)	4	40
Mid-Sized Office Building (12 Floors)	5	50
Large Office Building (24 Floors)	6	60
Skyscraper (50 Floors)	7	70
Huge Skyscraper (100 Floors)	8	80

BLOWING UP WORLDS

Really large and dense objects like an asteroid, moon, or planet has an exceptionally high Armour Rating (20 Points for each Size Rank above Medium) representing the massive thickness of rock or gas that surrounds its core. In order to do any significant damage to the planet itself (rather than just blowing away cities, vegetation, or other surface features), this Armour Rating must also be penetrated. Only weapons with Area assigned many times (twice the Awkward Size Rating) are useful, since all other attacks simply do not affect a large enough section of the object to be noticeable. Table-22: Planetoid Armour Ratings shows the Armour Rating of such enormous objects. If an attack delivers more damage than this value, the object has suffered damage necessary to blow away its atmosphere, cause massive earthquakes and (if it has oceans) tsunami, and other similar disasters. If an attack inflicts five times this value in one blast, it will actually destroy the world, blasting it into smaller chunks or an asteroid belt. As with normal Items, repeated damage may eventually destroy a planetoid.

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PLANETOID ARMOUR RATINGS

Size of Planetoid	Awkward Size	Armour Rating
Meteor (100 metre radius)	7	140
Small asteroid (1 km radius)	10	200
Medium asteroid (10 km radius)	14	280
Big asteroid (100 km radius)	16	320
The Moon	20	400
Mars	21	420
Earth or Venus	22	440



CHAPTER 11
COMPANIONS

11: COMPANIONS

ALLIES AND ENEMIES

BESM adventures are filled with a plethora of people besides the players' characters. From throwaway background encounters to regular associates – and everything in between – non-player characters or NPCs are vital components of the rich tapestry of your game world.

This chapter includes a small sampling of the diverse NPCs characters may encounter during any gaming session. These examples can be used as they are written, or they can be modified to better fit the setting, genre, and storyline. NPCs are created from Character Points using the same guidelines in Chapters 4 through 8 that apply to the players' characters.

For details about NPCs acquired with Character Points, see the Companion (page 84) and Minions (page 109) Attributes.

NEOMORPHS

Neomorphs are artificially grown mini-monsters produced through genetic engineering and gene reconstruction. They were created by scientists working at Typhon – a giant multinational conglomerate that is a major player on the prime world of Imago (page 336) – but thanks to multidimensional espionage, neomorphs are now grown on many worlds across the Multiverse.

Their first neomorph series were pint-sized replicas of long-extinct dinosaurs, but consumer demand guided development of later generations of adorable taking chimera fusions between different animal species. Lately there have been rumours of even stranger rare creatures appearing, such as mythical beasts, demons, and angels.

▶ ORGANISED PLAY

On Imago, neomorphs are typically adopted by children and teens, who buy neogenesis eggs and incubate them over the course of several weeks until they hatch and start growing. Many neomorph owners participate in sponsored organised play battles, which Typhon refers to as the Neo-Evolution Grand Prix, at the neighbourhood, city, continental, and world level. Prizes also include ultra-rare limited edition neomorphs and trips to special training areas.

▶ ENGINEERED FOR COMPETITION

Breeds of neomorphs that are engineered for competitive arena battles are usually assigned additional combat capabilities not seen in their domestic pet cousins. These talents usually focus on either ranged attacks or melee attacks, but rarely both since that could unbalance a competition. Creating mini-monsters for cockfighting arena combat is supposed to entertaining, after all, and not too devastating.

Some advanced neomorphs can even evolve into new forms during their lifespan, gaining different capabilities and slightly modified appearances. These evolution triggers are genetically coded during incubation.







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CABBIT

Cabbits are a cute hybrid of a domestic cat and a bunny rabbit. They maintain the athletic agility and overall traits of both parent species, making them excellent pets for younger children. Cabbits are naturally empathetic, and are distracted by the sad emotions they detect in nearby creatures.

BATTLE CABBIT

Cabbits bred specifically for organised play arena events have enhanced jumping abilities. Their primary weapon is their Sonic Meow, which drains the spirit and willpower of other neomorphs caught in its sound wave.

CABBIT - PET

Size Rank -2: Tiny (30 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
6	12	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
3	Attack Combat Value
5	Defence Combat Value
65	Health Points
45	Energy Points
4	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (Low-light Vision)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell)
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Easily Distracted (Sadness)
2	-2	Inept Attack
1	-3	Reduced Damage
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷ 25)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	10	**TOTAL**

CABBIT - BATTLE

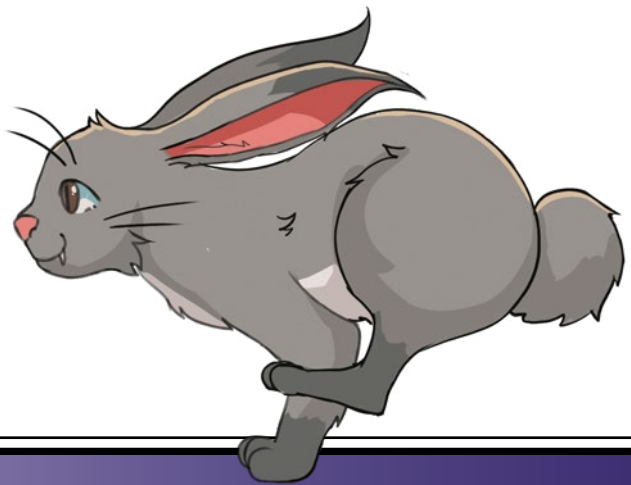
Size Rank -2: Tiny (30 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
6	12	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value (Ranged 9)
5	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 9)
65	Health Points
45	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (Low-light Vision)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell)
1	1	Jumping
2	2	Ranged Attack (All)
2	2	Ranged Defence (All)
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
5 (2)	10	Weapon: Sonic Meow (Drain: Soul -1; Penetrating -1; Spreading -2 Range +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Easily Distracted (Sadness)
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷ 25)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	30	**TOTAL**



ELEPHOX

The hybrid of an elephant and a red fox, most stocky elephox stand nearly one metre tall. They are naturally tough with thick fur and maintain the playfulness of their fox parent. Elephox are surprisingly agile and dexterous for their size and shape.

BATTLE ELEPHOX

Battle Elephox have thick armoured skin and enhanced attack traits. They execute their Scamper Trample attack by playfully bounding across the arena floor and smashing into any opponents in their path, stunning them temporarily.

ELEPHOX - PET

Size Rank -1: Small (90 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
3	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
75	Health Points
35	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Armour (AR 5)
1	1	Features (Low-light Vision)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell)
3	3	Tough

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Inept Attack
1	-2	Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage)
1	-4	Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	25	TOTAL

ELEPHOX - BATTLE

Size Rank -1: Small (90 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
4	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
75	Health Points
35	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (AR 10)
1	1	Features (Low-light Vision)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell)
3	3	Tough
6 (2)	12	Weapon: Scamper Trample (Spreading -3; Stun -1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-2	Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage)
1	-4	Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	40	TOTAL

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GRYPHON

Gryphons are traditionally huge chimera hybrids between a lion and eagle, but smaller versions were engineered as elegant pets. All gryphons can fly and have dangerously sharp talons and beak, which are often capped by owners for safety around children.

BATTLE GRYPHON

Their natural weapons are effective in battle when unblunted, but battle gryphon prefer using their powerful Wing Buffet attack in the area. It drains the energy reserves of opponents caught in its flurry and knocks them off their feet and back several metres.

GRYPHON - PET

Size Rank -1: Small (90 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
7	14	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value
5	Defence Combat Value
60	Health Points
50	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Extra Arms
1	1	Features (Mimic Sound)
1 (2)	3	Flight (30 kph; Spread +1)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Sight 2)
1	2	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
2	4	Weapon: Talons and Beak

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-6	Impaired Manipulation (Talons)
1	-2	Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage)
1	-6	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷5)
1	-1	Unique Defect (Running Speed ÷2)
1	-4	Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	25	TOTAL

GRYPHON - BATTLE

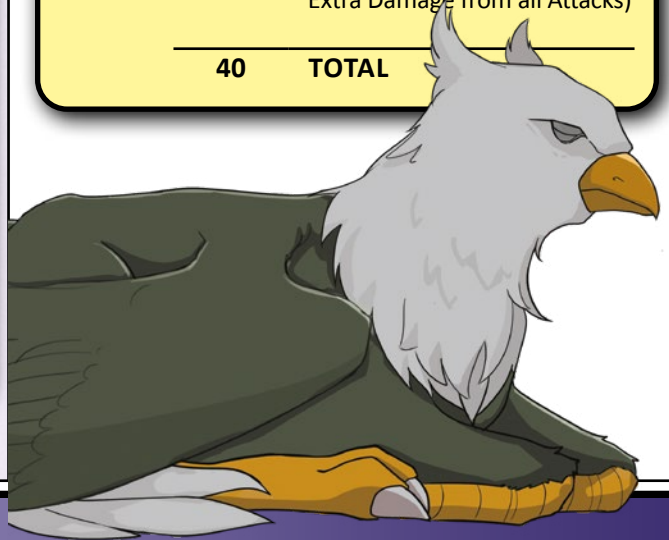
Size Rank -1: Small (90 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
7	14	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value (Ranged 9)
5	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 7)
60	Health Points
50	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Extra Arms
1	1	Features (Mimic Sound)
1 (2)	3	Flight (30 kph; Spread +1)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Sight 2)
2	2	Ranged Attack (All)
1	1	Ranged Defence (All)
1	2	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
2	4	Weapon: Talons and Beak
6 (2)	12	Weapon: Wing Buffet (Enervation -1; Range -2; Spreading -3; Unique: Knockback -1; Inaccurate +1; Non-Penetrating -2)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-6	Impaired Manipulation (Talons)
1	-2	Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage)
1	-6	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷5)
1	-1	Unique Defect (Running Speed ÷2)
1	-4	Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	40	TOTAL



JACKALOPE

Long thought to be an urban legend, the jackalope is a hybrid between a desert hare (or jackrabbit) and an antelope. Though small in stature, it can jump great distances. Jackalope can detect even small vibrations in the ground and have an innate danger sixth sense that helps them avoid predators and unruly children.

BATTLE JACKALOPE

With many natural instincts and abilities, jackalope are difficult to catch unaware in the arena. Their primary Antler Slap attack offers no surprises, yet is part of an effective jump-and-jab technique given the battle jackalope's enhanced leaping range (nearly 40 metres).

JACKALOPE - PET

Size Rank -2: Tiny (40 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
5	10	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
4	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
50	Health Points
40	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (Vibration Detection)
1	1	Jumping
1	1	Sixth Sense (Danger)
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	10	TOTAL

JACKALOPE - BATTLE

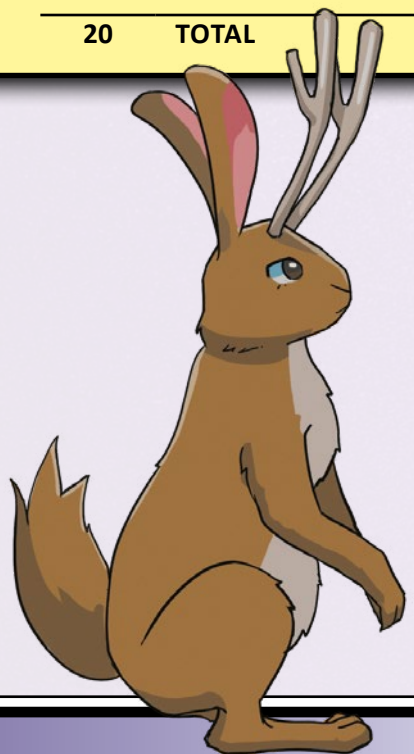
Size Rank -2: Tiny (40 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
5	10	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
4	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
50	Health Points
40	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	4	Extra Actions
1	1	Features (Vibration Detection)
2	2	Jumping
1	1	Sixth Sense (Danger)
2	2	Special Movement (Fast, Wall-Bouncing)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
2	4	Weapon: Antler Slap

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	20	TOTAL



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NUE

Nue are advanced, next-generation hybrids that combine a monkey head, raccoon body, tiger legs, and snake tail. They seem more "human" than most neomorphs and have an intellectual range that exceeds some owners. Thanks to dexterous fingers and sharp nails, nue can scale walls and other surfaces with ease.

BATTLE NUE

The snake tail of battle nue are engineered to inflict a powerful Tail Sting attack that not only injects a long-lasting poison into the opponent, but also heals the nue's injuries at the same time. The best defence against the Tail Sting is a thick hide, since the snake's bite does not penetrate armour effectively.

NUE - PET

Size Rank -2: Tiny (40 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
5	10	Mind Stat
6	12	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
6	Attack Combat Value
6	Defence Combat Value
65	Health Points
55	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Special Movement (Wall-Crawling)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
2	-2	Unique Defect (÷4 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	15	TOTAL

NUE - BATTLE

Size Rank -2: Tiny (40 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
5	10	Mind Stat
6	12	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
6	Attack Combat Value (Unarmed 8)
6	Defence Combat Value (Unarmed 8)
65	Health Points
55	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
1	1	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
2	2	Special Movement (Light-Footed, Wall-Crawling)
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
6 (2)	12	Weapon: Tail Sting (Continuing -4; Vampiric -2; Non-Penetrating +2)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
2	-2	Unique Defect (÷4 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	30	TOTAL



WOLVERPOTAMUS

A tiny hybrid of a wolverine and hippopotamus, the wolverpotamus is both cute and ferocious. It has the thick skin and body proportions of a hippo and the keen senses and natural weapons of a wolverine. Its scent glands discourages many potential owners, though.

BATTLE WOLVERPOTAMUS

In the arena, wolverpotamus tend to close on their enemy to attack with sharp claws and fang. When feeling vulnerable, it unleashes its smelly Musk Spray attack, which physically exhausts and distracts opponents caught in the fine mist.

WOLVERPOTAMUS - PET

Size Rank -2: Tiny (40 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
5	10	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
7	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
75	Health Points
40	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Armour (AR 5)
3	3	Attack Mastery
1	1	Features (Retractable Claws, Scent Glands)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Smell, Taste)
3	3	Tough
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
1	2	Weapon: Claws and Fangs

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-2	Unique Defect (Running Speed ÷4)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	15	TOTAL

WOLVERPOTAMUS - BATTLE

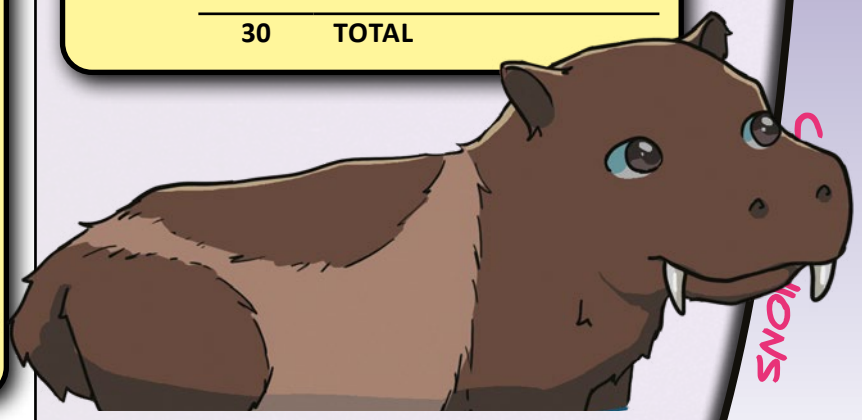
Size Rank -1: Tiny (40 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
5	10	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
7	Attack Combat Value (Ranged 11)
4	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 8)
85	Health Points
40	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Armour (AR 5)
3	3	Attack Mastery
1	1	Features (Retractable Claws, Scent Glands)
2	2	Heightened Senses (Smell, Taste)
2	2	Ranged Attack (All)
2	2	Ranged Defence (All)
4	4	Tough
2	4	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
2	4	Weapon: Claws and Fangs
4 (-1)	8	Weapon: Musk Spray (Blight -2; Drain: Body -2; Irritant -1; Spreading -2; Range +1; Toxic +1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Unique Defect (-20 Strength Damage)
2	-12	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷25)
2	-2	Unique Defect (Running Speed ÷4)
2	-8	Unique Defect (Suffers 20 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
	30	TOTAL



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COMPANION VARIATIONS

When assigned to a character, the Companion Attribute (page 84) represents an ally, pet, or associate that is tied to the character in some way and is an integral part of the group's adventures. Not all applications of Companion are quite so straight forward or permanent, though, since some allies may be present for only a short period of time. This could reflect a magical summoning spell, a bonded contract between the character and the companion, or a pure psionic creature creation. Note that companions who can be "summoned" to visit the character occasionally by a text message or phone call are best described as normal "friends" instead.

SUMMONING COMPANIONS

Normally, the Companion Attribute will not have Limiters (page 148) assigned to it. To reflect a non-permanent application of the Attribute, where the companion is summoned for a temporary duration, the following Limiters could be appropriate:

- Activation, if the summoning takes time to perform
- Charges, if the summoning can only be used a specific number of times each day or session
- Concentration, if the character must focus to complete the summoning
- Delay, if the ally does not arrive immediately, but at some point in the future after summoning
- Deplete, if the character burns Energy Points to keep the summoned companion present and active
- Environmental, if the summoning can only occur in limited settings or under specific conditions
- Recovery, if the character has a required rest period between summonings
- Unique Limiter, if the summoned companion has a contract with the character that calls for some sort of special payment due upon summoning

DUPLICATE COMPANIONS

An exotic summoned companion is the creation of a duplicate of the summoning character. This may be a magical ability, ninja technique, paranormal power, or even the property of a technological device.

Duplicate companions are created just like any other summoned companion, but most of their Stats, Attributes, and Defects will be identical to (or proportionate with) the summoning character. Duplicates will not usually have Companion Attribute assigned, though, and will often omit Attributes or Defects incompatible with their status as Companions.

HUMANOIDS

Though the list of potential companions for your character is unlimited, it's helpful to have a baseline of ideas from which you can build your creation. We have provided 20 example human or humanoid companions in this chapter that you can use as they are or use for inspiration. The GM can also use these entries as NPC encounters for the players.

CONVERTING TO TEMPLATES

These companion entries can easily be converted into new Race or Class Templates as well by modifying them slightly as follows:

- Convert the Stat values into modifiers instead, by subtracting 4 from each Stat. For example, the Demon Companion (Body 6, Mind 6, Soul 3) would instead have a template entry of "Body +2, Mind +2, Soul -1".
- Deleting the Derived Value section, since those are calculated after completing the character.
- If desired, add or subtract additional Attributes and Defects to round the new Template cost to the nearest 5 or 10 Character Points.

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HUMANOID COMPANIONS

Race Template	Point Cost	Page
Apprentice	40	237
Centaur	40	238
Cultist	30	238
Demon	50	240
Elementalist	50	240
Goblin	10	241
Golem	70	241
High School Delinquent	30	242
Highway Bandit	30	242
Hired Sword	40	243
Imp	30	244
Informant	40	244
Noble	40	245
Shinobi	60	247
Soldier	40	247
Street Urchin	20	248
SWAT Officer	50	248
Techknight	80	250
Thug	30	251
Zombie	10	251

APPRENTICE

Potions and spells are the call to arms for these magic users. Or at least they would be if they actually showed up for class when they were supposed to. Apprentices are the plucky sidekick you never knew you wanted and can provide you with a much needed magical boost when you least expect it. Of course, they are still in training so there's a chance their spells will blow up in their face. Perhaps one shouldn't get too close to them in the heat of battle. Apprentices aren't particularly powerful but can still hold their own.

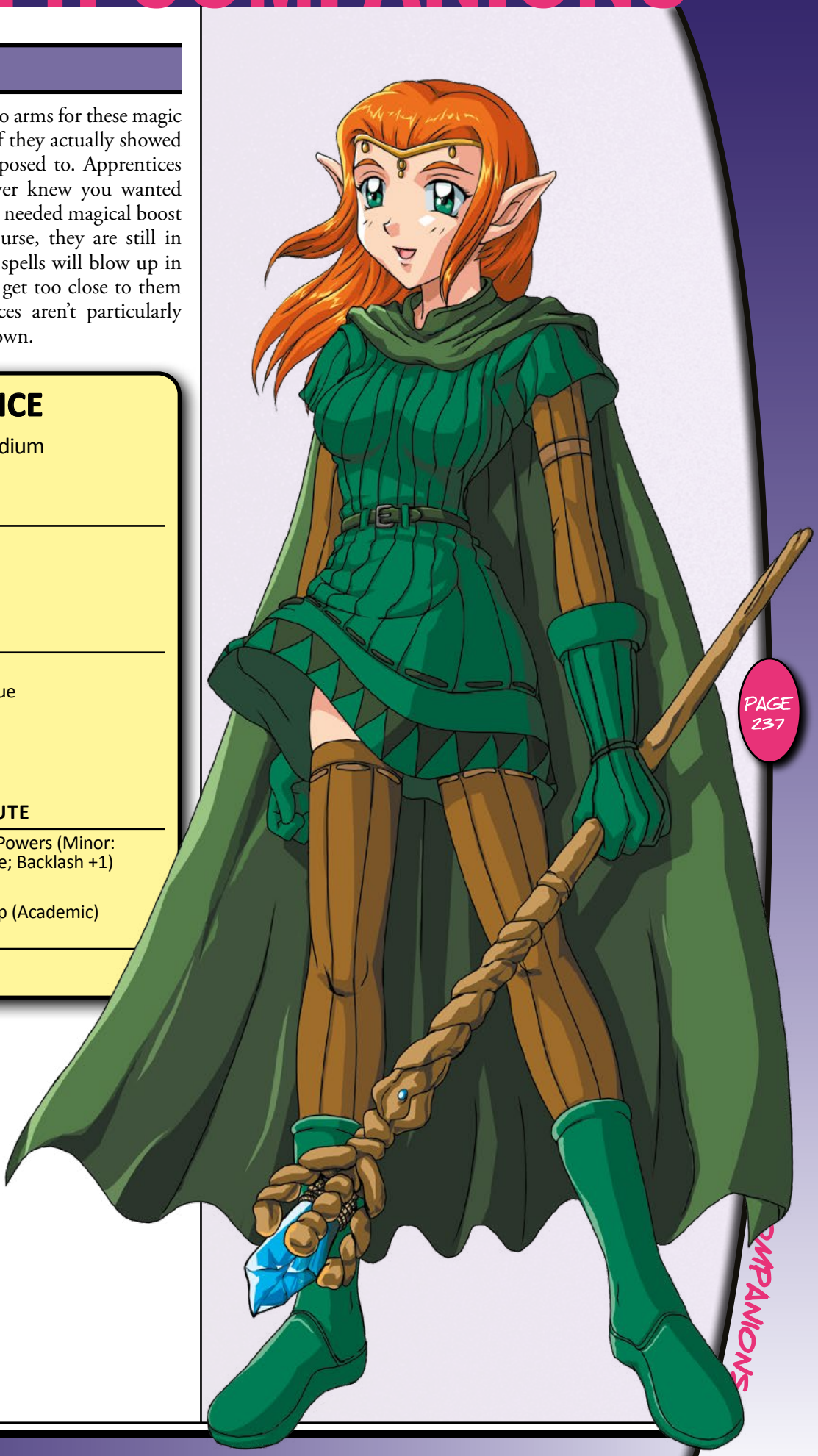
APPRENTICE

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Body Stat
6	12	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
4	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
40	Health Points
50	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1 (2)	10	Dynamic Powers (Minor: Select One; Backlash +1)
1	1	Gear
1	1	Skill Group (Academic)
	40	TOTAL



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CENTAUR

Born with the body of a horse and a humanoid torso, centaurs are not the most social of creatures. Found in the forest lands of Ikaris, they usually prefer the company of their own kind rather than forming a party with other races. Regardless of this, they are also loyal to the extreme and if you can prove yourself to them, you'll have a friend for life. Preferring to arm themselves with spears and lances, they can charge into fights at a high speed and do massive amounts of damage to their enemies. One should never anger a member of the centaur race.

CENTAUR

Size Rank 1: Large (3 metres)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
4	8	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value (Ranged 3)
5	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 3)
55	Health Points
40	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (AR 10)
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
2	8	Superstrength
1	1	Unique Attribute (x2 Thrown Weapon Distance)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Inept Attack (Ranged)
1	-1	Inept Defence (Ranged)
1	-2	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	40	TOTAL

CULTIST

Easily led towards the dark side of life, cultists are mindless drones who are more likely to talk your ear off to get you to join their cause rather than actually attack. Taking the word of their leader as law and bond, cultists vary wildly in physical traits as they can come from any level of social standing and any age. Even children have been taken in by honeyed words and devoted themselves to a cause. While most are harmless (though you'll want to watch your wallet around them), some are capable of truly terrifying mystical displays of power. Unfortunately, it's impossible to tell the difference between the harmless and not so harmless until it's far too late to do anything about it.

CULTIST

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Body Stat
4	8	Mind Stat
6	12	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
4	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
50	Health Points
50	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Skill Group (Social)
	30	TOTAL



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DEMON

Demons from the Prime World of Bazaroth can come in many different shapes, sizes, and varieties. They tend to be beings of extremes, with some kind to humanoids and others the embodiment of pure evil. Regardless of their temperament, demons are ultimately violent creatures by nature. Ranging beyond Bazaroth, demons have been known to pollinate other realms as well and are usually searching for trouble. Adventuring with a demon will always lead to a great story to tell later but first, you'll have to survive the journey which will be travelled on a road paved with violent intentions.

DEMON

Size Rank 1: Large (3 metres)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
6	12	Body Stat
6	12	Mind Stat
3	6	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
8	Attack Combat Value (Ranged 6)
5	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 3)
45	Health Points
45	Energy Points
6	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	4	Armour (AR 10)
3	6	Attack Mastery
2	2	Combat Technique (Brutal, Lethal Blow)
1	3	Massive Damage
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
2	8	Superstrength
1	1	Unique Attribute (x2 Thrown Weapon Distance)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Inept Attack (Ranged)
1	-1	Inept Defence (Ranged)
1	-1	Social Fault (Select One)
1	-2	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	50	**TOTAL**

ELEMENTALIST

One of the more powerful types of magic user in the realm, elementalists are capable of conjuring the primary elements for offensive and defensive purposes. This is a tough feat that requires plenty of personal energy, and so most Elementalists specialise in controlling one specific element. Don't be mistaken, however, as mystics capable of controlling more than one element are not unique. Having an Elementalist by your side is always a good idea for when times get tough and someone wants to get physical.

ELEMENTALIST

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Body Stat
7	14	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value
5	Defence Combat Value
40	Health Points
55	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2 (3)	20	Dynamic Powers (Minor Category: One Element; Deplete +1)
	50	**TOTAL**

GOBLIN

While not very intelligent or particularly clean, goblins can be a handful for anyone to overcome due to their penchant for attacking in large swarms. Armed with daggers and other simple weapons, goblins can wreak havoc on any party of adventurers who are unfortunate enough to cross their path. It's even worse if you happen to walk into one of their traps at night since they have the ability to see in the dark. One should be extra cautious when traversing through forests and caves in their territories, lest one find themselves in a goblin stew pot!

GOBLIN

Size Rank -1: Small (90 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
2	4	Mind Stat
2	4	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
3	Attack Combat Value (Small 5; Ranged 5)
3	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 5)
45	Health Points
20	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (Low-Light Vision)
1	1	Melee Attack (Small Weapons)
1	1	Ranged Attack (All)
1	1	Ranged Defence (All)
1	1	Tough
1	2	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Unappealing
1	-2	Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage)
1	-6	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷ 5)
1	-1	Unique Defect (÷2 Running Speed)
1	-4	Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
1	-1	Unique Defect (÷2 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	10	TOTAL

GOLEM

A large, mindless, magical construct made of various materials which can include flesh, clay, and stone (though other materials can be used as well), golems are useful to have on your side but are a hassle when they are under the control of an enemy. With little concept of good or evil and lacking substantial intelligence, golems frequently remain bound to the mage who created them. Standing upwards of three to four meters tall, golems are a powerful force to have in combat situations, so hope that they are on your side when they start smashing objects or people into dust.

GOLEM

Size Rank 1: Large (4 metres)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
3	6	Body Stat
2	4	Mind Stat
2	4	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value (Ranged 3)
4	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 2)
85	Health Points
20	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
4	8	Armour (AR 20)
3	6	Attack Mastery
2	2	Combat Technique (Brutal, Lethal Blow)
2	4	Defence Mastery
10 (5)	20	Resilient (Ageing, Airborne Toxins, Disease, Lack of Air, Poisons; All Complete -5)
1	1	Special Movement (Fast)
3	12	Superstrength
6	6	Tough
1	1	Unique Attribute (x2 Thrown Weapon Distance)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Inept Attack (Ranged)
1	-1	Inept Defence (Ranged)
1	-2	Unique Defect (Big, Heavy, and Obvious)
	70	TOTAL

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HIGH SCHOOL DELINQUENT

"Hand over your lunch money!" is a phrase that you might hear coming from the mouth of this wannabe thug, but in truth they are mostly bark and little bite. Skipping class to hit the convenience store, smoking behind the gym, and petty larceny is about as troublesome as these foes can get. When backed into a corner, however, or when there's someone present who can spread the word of their cowardice, they can pack a mean punch. Be wary if one of these delinquents starts to get in your face.

HIGH SCHOOL DELINQUENT

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
4	Attack Combat Value (Unarmed 6)
4	Defence Combat Value (Unarmed 6)
55	Health Points
35	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Gear
1	1	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
1	1	Melee Defence (Unarmed)
1	2	Skill Group (Street)
1	1	Tough
	30	**TOTAL**

HIGHWAY BANDIT

Monsters aren't the only thing that can waylay adventurers while travelling the long roads between towns. Highway bandits are always on the lookout for parties who aren't paying close attention to their surroundings so they can rob them clear down to their skivvies! Sometimes alone and sometimes with a small army of followers, highway bandits work quickly to relieve you of your possessions with efficient charm and wit. You can certainly try to escape them if you aren't up for a fight, but bandits probably know the surrounding areas much better than you.

HIGHWAY BANDIT

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
6	12	Body Stat
4	8	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
6	Attack Combat Value
6	Defence Combat Value
50	Health Points
40	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Attack Mastery
1	1	Defence Mastery
1	1	Gear
1	3	Skill Group (Adventuring)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-4	Wanted
	30	**TOTAL**

HIRED SWORD

Hired swords are exactly what the name implies. They aren't interested in the whys of your quest; all they care about is that you can afford to pay them when the job is done. Coming in all shapes, sizes, experience levels, and personality types, hired swords are only there for as long as the money lasts. While some might call this "ruthless" or "cold", sellswords refer to it as "living in the real world". If you know that you're going to be headed into a dangerous area and you have the spare coins, it might be worth hiring one of these mercenaries to watch your back.



HIRED SWORD

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
5	10	Mind Stat
4	8	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value (One Melee 7)
5	Defence Combat Value (One Melee 7)
55	Health Points
45	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Gear
1	1	Melee Attack (One Type)
1	1	Melee Defence (One Type)
1	2	Skill Group (Business)
1	3	Skill Group (Military)
	40	TOTAL

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IMP

A small devil-type creature who measure under a meter tall, these fiends can flash in and out of your field of vision easily using their powers of invisibility. Armed with leathery wings and a tail complete with a dangerous stinger, imps prefer the stick-and-move method of fighting that involves hitting fast and hard before flying high out of reach before the defender can strike back. Any party of adventurers who encounter these little monsters should consider themselves unfortunate at best and dead at worst.

IMP

Size Rank -1: Small (70 cm)

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
2	4	Mind Stat
2	4	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
3	Attack Combat Value (Melee 9; Ranged 5)
3	Defence Combat Value (Ranged 5)
35	Health Points
20	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	2	Armour (AR 5)
1	1	Features (Low-Light Vision)
2	6	Flight (30 kph)
3	3	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
1	1	Ranged Attack (All)
1	1	Ranged Defence (All)
2	4	Undetectable (Sight 2)
1	2	Unique Attribute (Small, Light, and Unobtrusive)
3 (2)	6	Weapon: Tail Sting (Piercing -1)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-2	Unique Defect (-10 Strength Damage)
1	-6	Unique Defect (Lifting Capacity ÷ 5)
1	-1	Unique Defect (÷2 Running Speed)
1	-4	Unique Defect (Suffers 10 Extra Damage from all Attacks)
1	-1	Unique Defect (÷2 Thrown Weapon Distance)
	30	**TOTAL**

INFORMANT

Information is like currency; everyone has to have it to survive. Without good intel regarding where you're going or who you're looking for, you are a sitting duck waiting to be eliminated by your enemies. Before you start any adventure, locate a good informant to better understand the current state of affairs concerning your objectives. Just remember not to share the information you learn too widely because, as the saying goes, "snitches get stitches". You don't want to be on the bad side of any informant network.

INFORMANT

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Body Stat
6	12	Mind Stat
5	10	Soul Stat

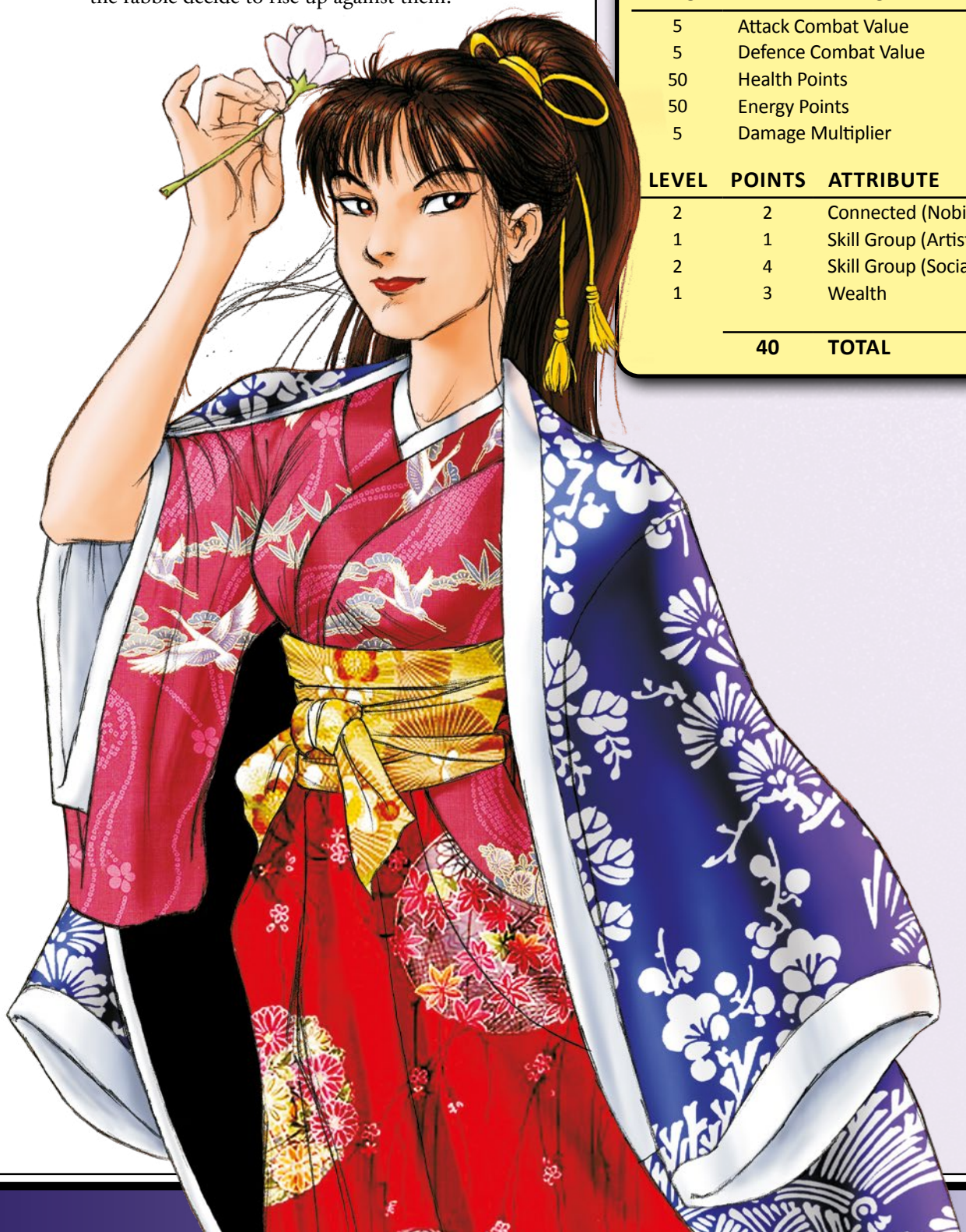
VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
4	Attack Combat Value
4	Defence Combat Value
45	Health Points
55	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Skill Group (Academic)
3	6	Skill Group (Social)
2	4	Skill Group (Street)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Inept Attack
1	-1	Inept Defence
	40	**TOTAL**

NOBLE

Rich by blood and birth, nobles look down on the "wretched masses" with their noses in the air. They have little interest in the plight of the working class and are typically more concerned with what they are going to do with their leisure time. Don't think that nobles waste their time on commoner activities though. As members of the upper crust, they prefer to sharpen their intelligence or learn how to protect themselves should the rabble decide to rise up against them.



NOBLE

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
5	10	Body Stat
5	10	Mind Stat
5	10	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value
5	Defence Combat Value
50	Health Points
50	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Connected (Nobility)
1	1	Skill Group (Artistic)
2	4	Skill Group (Social)
1	3	Wealth
	40	TOTAL


Julia Dillon

SHINOBI

Shinobi are an enigma cloaked in a mystery. With a rich and full history, the shinobi of modern times are proud of their lineage and their ability to accomplish jobs quickly and efficiently. The difference between a shinobi and a hired sword is that a hired sword might have scruples about what they are doing; shinobi usually do not. Never afraid to get their hands dirty with the stain of blood, shinobi will take on any job that crosses their path from spying on the enemy to assassinating them in the night.

SHINOBI

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
8	16	Body Stat
6	12	Mind Stat
6	12	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
8	Attack Combat Value
8	Defence Combat Value
70	Health Points
60	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Attack Mastery
2	2	Defence Mastery
2	2	Gear
2	4	Skill Group (Street)
2	6	Skill Group (Adventuring)
1	3	Skill Group (Military)
1	1	Special Movement (Select One)
	60	**TOTAL**

SOLDIER

Having a true soldier in your group means that you'll always have someone ready to accept an assignment and carry it out exactly as you order. That's the hallmark of their training. A soldier's mission isn't always beneficial to the entire society, but that's the concern of their superiors alone. Soldiers are mostly loyal to their officers, though they do have independence of thought. Be careful to not push soldiers too far lest you have a rebellion on your hands.

SOLDIER

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
6	12	Body Stat
4	8	Mind Stat
5	10	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
5	Attack Combat Value (One Melee 9)
5	Defence Combat Value (One Melee 7)
55	Health Points
45	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Gear
2	2	Melee Attack (One Type)
1	1	Melee Defence (One Type)
2	6	Skill Group (Military)
	40	**TOTAL**

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STREET URCHIN

Many street urchins beg for coins so that they can have a simple piece of bread for the evening. They may have had a stroke of bad luck that led them to the streets and perhaps still dream of returning to their former simple lives. Some urchins prefer their current situations, though, and would rather beg for their meagre food and shelter than return to the conditions of their former lives.

STREET URCHIN

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
3	6	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
3	6	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
3	Attack Combat Value
3	Defence Combat Value
30	Health Points
30	Energy Points
4	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Skill Group (Domestic)
3	6	Skill Group (Street)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-2	Ism (Classism)
1	-3	Reduced Damage
	20	TOTAL

SWAT OFFICER

These Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) police officers have seen it and done it all. Hard as nails, these heavily armed and well-trained members of the police force do not shy away from situations that impede their missions. This is even true if their lives may be placed in danger. Taking on the baddest of the bad guys, swat officers protect the streets from criminal masterminds and armed thugs to keep the innocent safe.

SWAT OFFICER

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
6	12	Mind Stat
6	12	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
6	Attack Combat Value (Long Gun 10)
6	Defence Combat Value (Shield 8)
65	Health Points
60	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Connected (Law Enforcement)
2	2	Gear
1	1	Melee Defence (Shield)
2	2	Ranged Attack (Long Gun)
1	3	Skill Group (Detective)
1	3	Skill Group (Military)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-1	Red Tape
	50	TOTAL



TECHKNIGHT

Clad in suits of advanced armour, techknights handle missions that even the police aren't properly equipped to handle, such as the occasional rogue droid that is terrorising the city. Techknights use their advanced technology to deal massive amounts of damage in combat. Some call them vigilantes, some call them unsung heroes, but either way they are a thorn to law enforcement who don't know their secret identities. If you're outgunned and outmatched, a techknight might be your only solution.

TECHKNIGHT

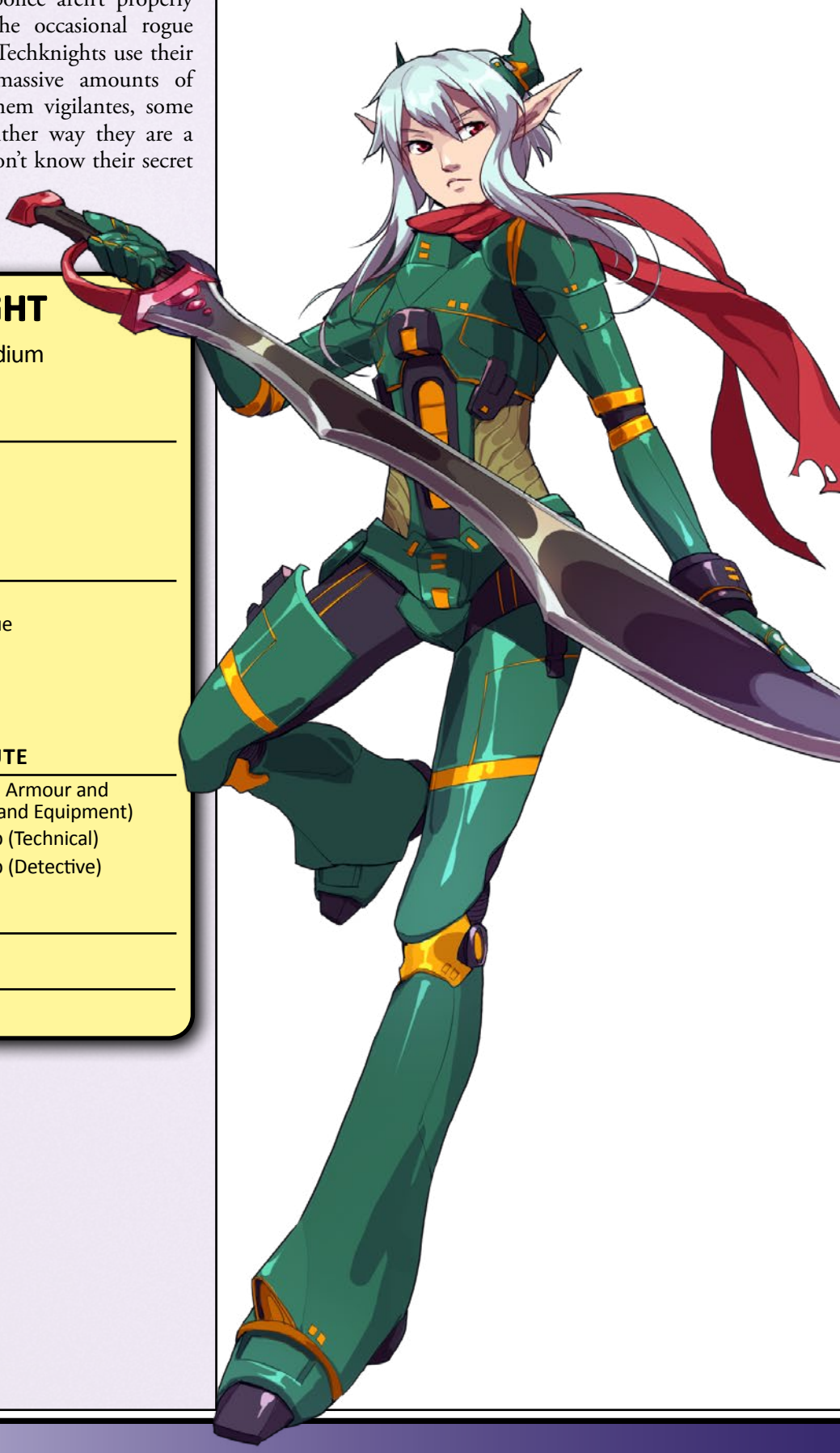
Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
7	14	Body Stat
7	14	Mind Stat
7	14	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
7	Attack Combat Value
7	Defence Combat Value
70	Health Points
70	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
	30	Item (Tech Armour and Weapons and Equipment)
2	4	Skill Group (Technical)
2	6	Skill Group (Detective)

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
1	-2	Wanted
	80	**TOTAL**



THUG

These common punks are in every city and can usually be found in busy downtown areas. They deal in petty crimes and can usually be bought with only a handful of dollars for your low-level enforcement needs. Most of them are not very smart, though, so if you're looking for a mastermind mercenary, you will likely find better options at higher prices. These thugs are the ones you call when someone owes you money and needs to be reminded.

THUG

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
4	8	Body Stat
3	6	Mind Stat
3	6	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
3	Attack Combat Value (Unarmed 7)
3	Defence Combat Value (Unarmed 5)
65	Health Points
30	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
2	2	Melee Attack (Unarmed)
1	1	Melee Defence (Unarmed)
2	4	Skill Group (Street)
1	4	Superstrength
3	3	Tough

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
2	-2	Social Fault (Select Two)
1	-2	Wanted
	30	**TOTAL**

ZOMBIE

They're not just dead, but undead. Risen from their graves, zombies are not easy opponents. Exercise caution when you hear rumours of an evil sorcerer experimenting with dead bodies, or that some charlatan has found a "cure" for death. Zombies are usually animated with magic and can install fear in the hearts of even the most steadfast warrior. Zombies feel no pain, and ceaselessly shamble forwards towards their objective.

ZOMBIE

Size Rank 0: Medium

VALUE	POINTS	STAT
3	6	Body Stat
1	2	Mind Stat
1	2	Soul Stat

VALUE	DERIVED VALUE
2	Attack Combat Value
2	Defence Combat Value
40	Health Points
10	Energy Points
5	Damage Multiplier

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE
1	1	Features (No Pain)
2	2	Immutable
8 (4)	16	Resilient (Airborne Toxins, Disease, Lack of Air, Poisons; All Complete -4)
2	2	Tough

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT
3	-3	Easily Distracted (Food)
2	-6	Impaired Speech
3	-3	Marked (Undead)
3	-9	Physical Impairment (Undead)
	10	**TOTAL**

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ANIMALS

Animals abound across the Anime Multiverse and make an appearance in most adventures, whether it's as a riding steed, food source, battle ally, or background details. Unlike most humanoid companions presented earlier, most of the exact mechanistic statistics for animals are not vital since the focus is usually on a few important Attributes and relevant combat details.

▶ REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLES

Obviously, no two animals of the same species are exact; consequently, trying to assign an exact numerical value to an entire animal type is impossible. That's why Stats of value 4 is considered average for an adult human, rather than the precise value for every human. The assigned values in Table-24 are reasonable representative samples of the animal species, which can be raised or lowered as appropriate when necessary.

For example, a war horse may be slightly slower and stronger than a racing horse. Similarly, a racing dog such as a greyhound may possess the Special Movement (Fast) Attribute, while a trained attack dog such as a Rottweiler may have a higher Combat Value.

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ANIMAL STATS

The following entries provide behind-the-scenes details concerning how the animals were assigned the numerical values in Table-24.

SIZE TEMPLATE

If an animal is any Size Template (page 32) other than medium, it will have a standard package of Attributes and Defects to reflect this as outlined in Chapter 3. This means animals Large or bigger will have the Superstrength Attribute, even if it's not listed in the Notable Attribute column. As suggested in Chapter 3, most species do not have the capacity to throw weapons or launch ranged attacks, and consequently those relevant entries associated with Size Templates were ignored for these types of animals.

STATS

The Body Stat reflects the whole athletic capabilities and heartiness of the animals. Some strong animals (such as Ox) may have Body Stats lower than expected because their musculature is reflected by their assignment of the Superstrength Attribute.

Most animals have Mind Stats that indicate mental acuity beneath average human adults. Many mythical creatures such as dragons, hydra, pegasus, and winged lemur have Mind Stats to reflect above-average capacity.

Assigning a Soul Stat to animals is difficult. The numbers are a reflection of the animal's self-awareness and state of consciousness, placing greater emphasis on animals with which humans seem to share empathy.

COMBAT VALUE

An animal's Combat Value (Attack and Defence are considered equivalent) is calculated as the Stat average as normal, and then modified appropriately by adding the relevant combat-related Attributes and Defects.

ATTACK DAMAGE

To keep the damage numbers easy to apply, animals were assigned to either a "has no weapons" category or "has natural weaponry" category. For animals without weapons, its attack damage is equal to its Combat Value, as normally calculated for unarmed Weapon Level 0 attacks (page 134). For those with weaponry, a damage value was assigned that reflects both its Combat Value and an appropriate Weapon Level to the claws/fangs/etc. (assuming a Damage Multiplier of 5). This damage value was then rounded to the nearest 10.

The second damage value in parentheses reflects the bonus or penalty that is then assigned to the attack damage to reflect the animals' Size Template strength-related component. For example: a Cheetah is Size Medium and thus has no modifiers; a bat is Size Fine and has a -40 damage modifier; and a hydra is Size Huge and has a +20 damage modifier. The modifier is added or subtracted from the base damage listed before the total damage is inflicted upon the target.

HEALTH POINTS

An animal's Health Points is calculated as normal (Body + Soul, multiplied by 5) and then modified as necessary by adding relevant Attributes and Defects.

NOTEWORTHY ATTRIBUTES

Not every Attribute the animals possess is listed in this column, just the ones that are important to highlight about the species such as speed, senses, movement, etc. Note that any entries listed here (such as Armour and Superstrength) are in addition to Size Templates.

APPROXIMATE POINT TOTALS

The listed Point total is a summation of all the entries detailed above, including Size Templates, and then rounded up to the nearest 5 or 10 to account for variations in miscellaneous talents, Attributes (especially Features, page 92) and Defects.

DEFECTS

Though not explicitly listed, many animals have Defects that reflect their status as non-humanoid animals. These can include: Easily Distracted, Fragile, Impaired Manipulation, Impaired Speech, and Shortcoming.

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ANIMALS

Animal Type	Stats Body/Mind/Soul	Combat Value	Attack Damage	Health Points	Notable Attributes	Size Template	Points (Approx)
Alligator	9 / 1 / 1	5	20 (+10)	50	Armour AR 10, Water Speed 30 kph	Large	40
Bat	2 / 1 / 1	1	1 (-40)	15	Echolocation, Flight 30 kph	Fine	< 0
Bear, Grizzly	8 / 2 / 2	7	20 (+10)	70	Heightened Smell 30 km	Large	40
Camel	3 / 2 / 1	2	2 (+10)	30	Fast 60 kph, Resilient (Sustenance)	Large	30
Cat, Domestic	10 / 3 / 6	6	6 (-20)	40	Heightened Hearing and Smell	Tiny	20
Cheetah	10 / 3 / 2	7	15	60	Fast 100 kph, Heightened Hearing and Smell	Medium	40
Chimpanzee	8 / 4 / 6	6	6	70	Extra Arms 2, Swinging	Medium	40
Dragon, Eastern	12 / 18 / 18	16	40 (+60)	200	Armour AR 40, Control Environment, Flight 300 kph	Colossal	200
Dragon, Western	10 / 10 / 15	11	60 (+50)	125	Armour AR 60, Flight 100 kph	Gargantuan	180
Direwolf	7 / 3 / 4	8	20 (+10)	80	Fast 100 kph, Heightened Hearing and Smell	Large	50
Dog	7 / 3 / 7	5	10	70	Heightened Hearing and Smell	Medium	40
Dolphin	6 / 4 / 7	5	5 (+10)	50	Water Speed 30 kph, Sonar	Large	40
Eagle, Giant	4 / 2 / 4	5	10 (+20)	40	Flight 300 kph	Huge	50
Elephant	3 / 2 / 2	2	2 (+20)	60	Heightened Hearing	Huge	40
Elk, Riding	8 / 3 / 6	5	5 (+10)	50	Heightened Hearing, Jumping 10 m	Large	40
Fox	6 / 3 / 3	4	4 (-10)	40	Heightened Hearing and Smell	Small	20
Frog	2 / 1 / 1	1	1 (-40)	15	Jumping 10 m	Fine	< 0
Gorilla	7 / 3 / 6	5	5 (+10)	65	Extra Arms 2	Large	40
Hamster	2 / 1 / 1	1	1 (-40)	15	Tunnelling (slow)	Fine	< 0
Hare	3 / 2 / 1	2	2 (-10)	20	Fast 60 kph, Jump 5 m	Small	10
Honey Badger	7 / 3 / 5	8	15 (-10)	60	Armour AR 15, Fast 30 kph	Small	30
Horse	7 / 2 / 5	4	4 (+10)	60	Fast 60 kph, Heightened Hearing	Large	40
Hydra	6 / 6 / 8	9	40 (+20)	100	Armour AR 50, Regenerates Heads, Weapon Poison (Continuing)	Huge	140
Iguana	2 / 1 / 1	1	1 (-20)	15	Regenerates Tail	Tiny	< 0
Kraken	4 / 1 / 1	6	20 (+40)	60	Armour AR 10, Extra Arms 4, Resilient (Pressure)	Gigantic	70
Lemur, Winged	8 / 6 / 7	7	7 (-10)	75	Extra Arms 2, Flight 30 kph, Jump 10 m	Small	40
Ostrich	3 / 2 / 1	2	2 (+10)	20	Fast 60 kph	Large	20
Owl	3 / 2 / 2	4	4 (-10)	25	Flight 60 kph, Heightened Sight	Small	10
Ox	2 / 2 / 1	1	1 (+10)	40	Superstrength (Pulling)	Large	20
Pegasus	9 / 6 / 10	8	10 (+10)	70	Flight 100 kph	Large	70
Penguin	2 / 2 / 1	1	1 (-10)	15	Water Speed 30 kph	Small	5
Raccoon	6 / 3 / 3	4	4 (-10)	45	Heightened Touch, Wall-Crawling	Small	20
Rat	6 / 3 / 4	4	4 (-30)	30	Jumping 1 m	Diminutive	5
Raven	3 / 2 / 3	2	2 (-20)	30	Flight 60 kph	Tiny	5
Shark, Tiger	4 / 1 / 1	6	20 (-10)	60	Heightened Smell, Water Speed 30 kph	Large	30
Skunk	4 / 2 / 2	2	2 (-20)	30	Weapon Spray (Irritant, Toxic)	Tiny	5
Sky Manta	9 / 4 / 4	5	5 (+30)	80	Armour AR 20, Flight 100 kph	Mammoth	80
Snake, Constrictor	4 / 1 / 1	4	10 (+10)	40	Slithering, Water Speed 10 kph	Large	30
Snake, Poisonous	6 / 1 / 1	6	15 (+10)	30	Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Poison (Continuing)	Large	30
Whale, Sperm	2 / 1 / 1	1	1 (+40)	80	Water Speed 30 kph, Resilient (Pressure)	Gigantic	50

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CHAPTER 12
PLAYING BESM

12: PLAYING BESM

YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS

The earlier chapters provide you with the tools to create the anime and manga characters of your heart's desire, and soon it will be time to pull those creations from the static page and into the realm of dynamic adventures.

This chapter examines some of the meta-questions behind the functioning of the game system (such as the structure behind an effects-based system like BESM), provides clarification into the more open-ended Dynamic Powers and Power Flux Attributes, and explores a wide range of anime and manga tropes that may help shape the role-playing of your characters. Additionally, the geographical and social aspects of Japan and Tokyo are detailed herein, since many BESM groups may use those settings as a backdrop for their campaigns.

FOUNDATION OF BESM

As you will have concluded by now, the game system mechanics behind BESM are both straightforward and easy to comprehend. Although you can play through adventures with only brief consideration given to the core structure that provides the foundation for BESM, having a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms behind the system design decisions can guide your character creation in innovative ways. Furthermore, recognising early which Attributes and power sources most closely align with the vision for your character – and how such Attribute choices affect game balance – can avoid awkward future situations.

EFFECTS-BASED SYSTEM

BESM is an effects-based system. This means that the game rules provides the effects or outcome of an Attribute and you define the specific application of those effects. For example, a character might achieve the capabilities of the Flight Attribute using: wings, magic, anti-gravity fields, psionics, force of will, reality-warping techniques, thermal riding, or many other methods. Similarly, a Level 2 Weapon inflict damage that could take the form of a near-infinite number of sources, such as physical trauma, fire, electricity, cold, acid, mental, poison, etc.

A power-based system defines both the effects and application of an Attribute. Dungeons and Dragons, for example, details magic attack spells such as Burning Hands, Fireball, Lightning Bolt, and Magic Missile. They all inflict damage, but the way in which they deliver damage is determined by the rules, not the players. As an effects-based game, what BESM contains in a single Weapon Attribute can require many distinct ability options in a power-based game.

▶ DETAILS DON'T CHANGE THE EFFECT

Since BESM's effects-based system is highly flexible, the broad rules do not account for the specific way an Attribute functions in each game campaign since it can vary from group to group. By decoupling associations between an ability's game effect and the description of the ability, players can build the functionality as they see fit.

For example, the Flight Attribute at Level 3 allows a character to fly at speeds up to 100 kph. Exactly how the flyer executes their flight is not important to the results of assigning the Attribute: 100 kph top speed when flying. This base assignment could represent magical power, psionics, high-tech, willpower, and more. It could also represent using wings to fly, though the player could optionally assign the Spread Limiter to the Attribute to reflect the ample space that the large wingspan requires. Assigning Spread is not necessary to reflect the use of wings when flying, since it's the players choice whether that game mechanism applies to their character's Flight. The effect of the Attribute (flying) and the description of how it functions (wings needing space) are unassociated in BESM's effects-based system unless the player chooses to describe the details through game mechanics.

Weapons, in particular, often have Enhancements and Limiters assigned to the base Attribute to provide additional details. For example, that Level 2 Weapon described earlier may have the Continuing Enhancement to reflect the ongoing damage inflicted from an acid attack; or a cold attack could have the Incapacitating Enhancement that freezes opponents; or it could have both the Ingest and Toxic Limiters to reflect the damage that a poison inflicts. Without assigning Enhancements and Limiters, all Level 2 Weapons inflict the same damage in the same way, regardless of how that attack is expressed.

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SOURCES OF POWER

Why do the various Attribute abilities exist in your game world? The Anime Multiverse offers a wide range of different origins and power sources for characters, depending on their home dimension. Players could create any plausible origin for their characters' abilities, or the GM may decide to limit the sources of Attributes as appropriate for the game setting.

For example, there may not be any magic in your game world. Therefore, any character with magical powers or a magical origin would not be appropriate, unless the character merely thinks that their powers are magical. In reality, that character's abilities may actually be based on psionics or sufficiently advanced technology. The default assumption in the broad spectrum of anime and manga series, and in the BESM Multiverse setting, is that there are an unlimited number of different sources for the characters' Attributes. Some of the more common single sources of special abilities are outlined herein.

HIGH-TECHNOLOGY

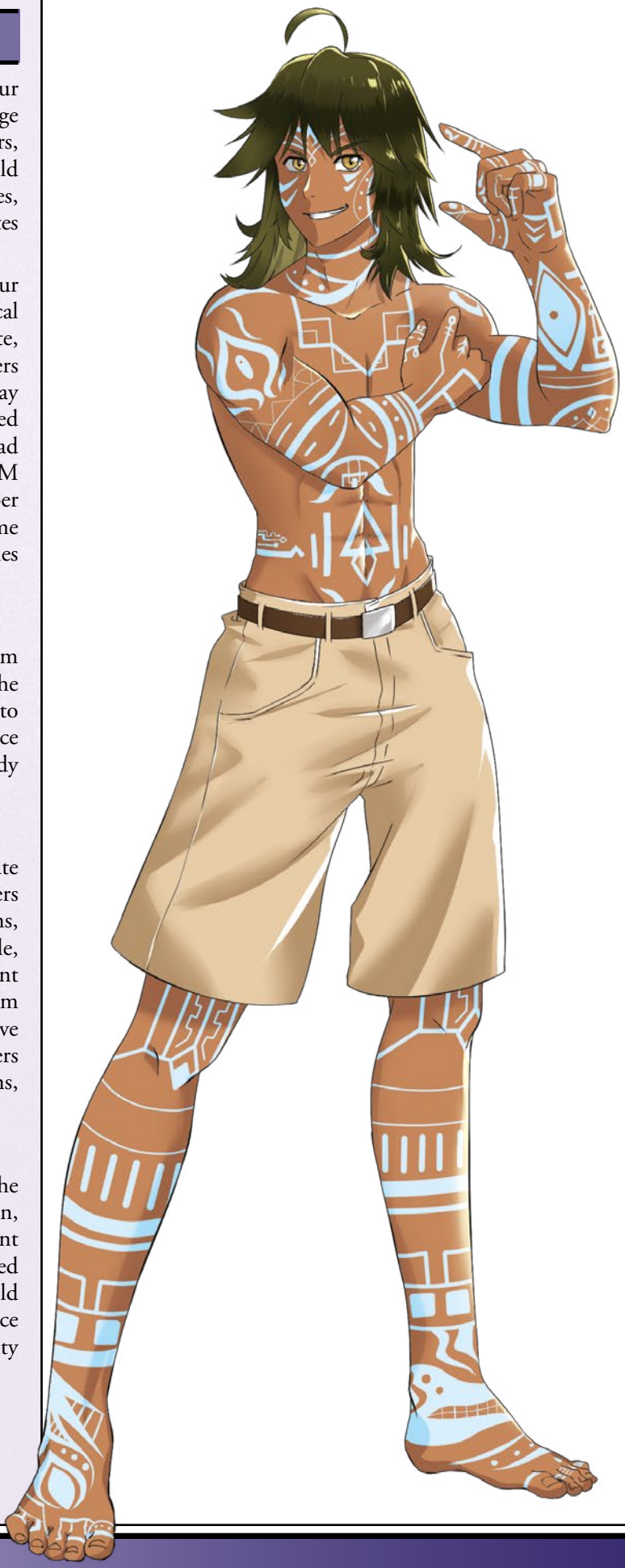
Attributes could come from various gadgets or from technological procedures that can be performed on the characters, ranging from cybernetic augmentation to radiation exposure to genetic engineering. This source option is ideally suited to a futuristic setting that already has advanced technology.

MAGIC

The arcane arts could be the source of Attribute effects. Some may be overtly magical, from sorcerers who cast spells to magical creatures such as demons, elementals, spirits, and ghosts. Others may be subtle, such as characters exposed to magical energies, ancient spells or curses, or similar events that transform them in various ways. Some may have magical items that give them their powers, while a few may be latent sorcerers channelling their powers into gadgets or inventions, making them "technomancers."

NON-HUMANS

Everyone with special abilities that are beyond the scope of what humans are capable are, by definition, non-humans. They could be from numerous different species (see Race Templates, page 36) or an evolved form of humans. While the character's abilities could seem strange for a human, they may be a commonplace feature of their own species (such as an Asrai's ability to fly).



PSIONICS

Attributes could come from the unleashed power of the mind. Since the mechanism for psionics may be unknown, this explanation is similar to magic except with the trappings of science rather than the occult. Psionic abilities may be a potential latent in everyone, brought out by stress or trauma, or they might arise from a particular mutation, either natural or induced. Since psionic abilities are based in the mind, the power of belief may be a strong factor in how they work.

DYNAMIC POWERS VS. POWER FLUX

To reflect the wide range of flexible powers and abilities demonstrated by anime and manga characters, it is vital for a universal role-playing game to have a similarly flexible game mechanism to accommodate them. Whether these abilities stem from magic, psionics, tech, genetics, or superpowers, a robust game engine should integrate with player creativity to expand the realm of possibilities to encompass nearly anything.

There are two main perspectives that players and GMs have regarding these abilities. Either gamers want a more open-ended and narrative framework that gets out of their way and allows powers to unfold under the guidance of their game story, or they want a broad mechanistic structure that still provides great flexibility yet is prescriptive in the specific (and often, numerical) application of the powers. In BESM, the former is best represented by the Dynamic Powers Attribute (page 89) while the latter is reflected in the Power Flux Attribute (page 113). Neither of these two Attributes are better or superior to the other since they accomplish similar functions and have comparable scopes. The primary difference is how player account for their character's changing powers during the game.

▶ DYNAMIC STORIES

Dynamic Powers is guided primarily by the story. There are very few hard numbers and rules that adjudicate its use and consequently is recommended for advanced players only who are comfortable with the narrative leading the application of Attributes. Players and GMs need to discuss in advance the range of the characters' powers to determine the limits of what can be done at each Level. What can be accomplished with "minor control" (Level 2) over the specific area of influence, for example, compared to "minimal control" (Level 1) or "moderate control" (Level 3)? Similarly, which Attributes can be justified to function under a character's specific area of influence? If the character has influence over a minor aspect of nature such as "friction", how does that govern the use of the Armour Attribute? Or Teleport? Or Superspeed? Creative players justify a rationale for just about anything ("Teleporting is really just frictionless time, so it applies!") – and getting to "yes" is important, of course – but balancing the game and fostering a great story for the entire group requires the player and GM to operate from the same baseline.

LEVEL GUIDELINES

For players and GMs who desire at least some guidance when using Dynamic Powers, consider this suggestion: characters can influence their specific ability area with maximum control approximating the abilities listed for other Attributes, with total Levels corresponding to twice the Dynamic Powers Level simultaneously. Furthermore, no single Attribute effect can exceed the Level equal to the Dynamic Powers Level.

For example, a character with Level 4 Dynamic Powers (Wind) can initiate effects similar in scope to a total of 8 Levels of other Attributes at once; the maximum single effect is limited to Level 4 abilities, though. This means that the character could activate wind-associated abilities (such as Flight, Heightened Sense, Jumping, Special Movement, Tunnelling, etc.) approximating: 8 Level 1 Attributes; or 2 Level 4 Attributes; or 1 Level 4, and 2 Level 2 Attributes; or 1 Level 3, 2 Level 2, and 1 Level 1 Attributes; or any other combination of Levels that adds to 8 Levels total, provided no effect exceeds a Level 4 ability.

▶ FLUXING POINTS

Power Flux is guided primarily by the redistribution of Character Points and mechanistically is easier to understand. The Egyptian cat goddess example under the Attribute description provides a detained example of how Character Points are fluxed between different abilities. Many of the same challenges arise with Power Flux as with Dynamic Powers relating to the scope and breadth of which Attributes fall under the character's influence ("Explain again how Mind Control falls under the influence of Earth, Marcelo?"), and so advanced and ongoing communication between the players and GM makes for a smooth role-playing experience.

THEN THERE'S POWER VARIATION

An often overlooked third reassignable Attribute is Power Variation (page 114), which is best viewed as a highly restricted version of Power Flux. Rather than the player justifying each application of fluxing Points, a set of Attributes are selected in advance and any Character Points assigned to these specified Attributes can be redistributed as needed. The details under the Attribute description provide a simple example that's straightforward and easy to grasp.

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WHICH ATTRIBUTE TO USE?

Aside from the easy answer of "Use whichever Attribute suits your needs best", the following suggestions may point you in the direction of the most appropriate Attribute:

DYNAMIC POWERS IS IDEAL FOR...

- Magic and sorcery
- Psionics
- Unrestricted shapeshifters
- Divine (or infernal) creatures
- Characters that embody an aspect, like a Guardian of Time
- Highly creative players

POWER FLUX IS IDEAL FOR...

- Advanced technology
- Downloadable knowledge programmes
- Nature-based shapeshifters
- Superheroes
- Technomages
- Players that enjoy game mechanics

POWER VARIATION IS IDEAL FOR...

- Paranormal character with highly restricted abilities
- Partial or novice shapeshifters
- Energy allocation in vehicles and ships ("Divert all power to shields!")
- Spellbook-based sorcerer with limited spell slots
- Technology with multiple, but finite, functions
- Characters that only need a little flexibility

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MIN/MAXING

Since the first edition of BESM, it has been possible to min/max the system. That is, focus the majority of Character Points on a small pool of Stats and Attributes to create the most optimised and unbalanced character possible. The resulting character can be excessively powerful in certain ways (such as a particular Stat, or in combat, or with a specific Attribute) and incredibly weak in other areas. In some games, this weakness creation is known as having a "dump stat".

This is not inherently a problem with BESM or with any point-buy system. Focussed or specialised characters are common in many anime and manga series (and movies, and superhero comics, and, and, and…), and naturally BESM can emulate this. Rather, the challenge often lies in the perspective of the players who believe that the goal of role-playing adventures is to "win" – when rather the enjoyment from playing, and not the success at a scenario, is the actual winning condition.

DIFFICULTIES MIN/MAXING CREATES

The GM may encounter challenges with min/maxed characters when building adventures since they can unbalance the game somewhat. It can be stressful creating a game challenge that provides engagement with all characters relatively equally if one or more of the characters is exceedingly adept or incompetent at the task. This obviously applies to combats – when one character is massively more capable at fighting – but also applies to any Stat or Attribute, such as a genius character with a 12 Mind or a hulking hero with Level 6 Superstrength.



BENCHMARKS HELP

Table-02: Character Benchmarks provide players and GMs with guidelines that can help avoid wildly divergent player abilities, since BESM's flexibility can present challenges to players and GMs unfamiliar with the game. Of course, players and the GM can collectively decide to modify or ignore these benchmarks, as desired.

▶ BALANCE IS A MYTH

Alternatively, the game group can take the position that balance is a myth and optimised characters provide excellent role-playing opportunities for everyone. When the combat expert needs to diplomatically talk their way out of a confrontation, the wizard needs to pick up a sword and defend a helpless family, or the puppet master needs to turn off their mind control and trust the stranger before them … that's where the role-playing takes over and everyone wins.

ANIME TROPES

There are numerous common background, character, or plot elements that recur in many anime and manga series. Note that some of the best series avoid overusing them since many have now become cliché. You can incorporate a few of them into your character concepts for a distinct BESM flavour.

ATTACK PHRASES

In classic giant robot, magical girl, hero team, and martial arts anime, the characters will name each of their main attacks or spells and shout them out as they do it. "Ultimate Omega Photon Beam Attack!"

CUTE ANDROIDS

These are robots made in the image of humans, except they are usually attractive, super strong, and durable. The first to be featured in anime was a cute boy, but most series prefer cute girls. In more serious anime, they may be victims of prejudice or spend a lot of time worrying about what it really means to be human.

CAT GIRLS

There are legendary cat-spirits (bakeneko) in Japan that often take the form of beautiful girls to tempt or devour the unwary. In fantasy anime, girls (more rarely, guys) with cat ears and a tail are nearly as popular as elves or dragons. These nekojin (cat-people) also pop up in science fiction series or supernatural comedies. Some nekojin are more feline with fur, claws, and fangs, while others are much more human. Occasionally cat eyes, ears, or tails are drawn on a human character as a visual gag.

BOSOZOKU

A Japanese motorcycle or hot rod gang. These are less violent and more flamboyant than American gangs. Bososoku bikes are often very heavily customised (even with attached flags!). This is a good background for a "tough guy" teenager.

BISHONEN

A bishonen ("beautiful boy") is a very attractive male who has beautiful, somewhat effeminate features such as long flowing hair and a delicate build. A bishonen can be easily mistaken for a girl, although he is often a skilled warrior. Heroic bishonen are very elegant and chivalrous, while villains are often exceedingly ruthless and deadly. Bishonen are often either gay or thought to be so, even when they are not.

KI POWERS

The life energy of a person is called "ki" in Japan and "chi" in China. With proper training, a character can take control of this energy. Sickness is often ascribed to an imbalance in one's ki that can be cured with various techniques including acupuncture. In order to master martial arts, breathing exercises and meditation are supposed to help a student focus one's ki. In anime, a master martial artist trained in secret techniques may use ki to sharpen senses, super-charge their punches or weapon strikes, heal with a touch, or even throw fireballs. In BESM, ki correlates with Energy Points and a ki master will usually have plenty of Combat Techniques and superhuman Weapons.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Inspired by the tradition of Japanese monster movies, many anime do not shrink from showing the massive destruction that giant robots or big guns can inflict on an urban landscape. The GM should remember that any shot that misses its intended target is going to land somewhere, and when a 60' tall robot falls over, it is going to flatten anything beneath it, including buildings, cars, and people! A heroic robot pilot may feel less heroic after they find the battle destroyed a neighbourhood and next time may take risks to "lure the enemy away from the civilians." This is very much in-genre. In more comedic fare, an "oops, it's not our fault" disregard for such damage is usual.

CUTE PETS

These show up in many anime series, even serious mecha dramas. Usually it is one of the female characters who has a cute cat, robot, penguin, monster, or other entity but sometimes they are all over the place. They may be guides, companions, advisors, living weapons, or simple comic relief pets. Occasionally a cute pet is capable of transforming into a more potent form. Create them using the rules for Companions (page 84).





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DYING SPEECHES

In anime, even important characters die. This awareness of mortality is one thing that separates it from Western cartoons and television. Dead anime heroes rarely return from the grave (villains are another matter), so to make up for it, a character will often deliver a lengthy "dying speech." As a player, if your character is killed, this is a chance to make that death matter. The GM should encourage this by allowing any character who is "dead" (has reached negative Health Points) proper airtime to say a few words. The GM may even allow the character to linger on until the end of a battle, so the player can think of something memorable.

ELVES

Anime versions of Western-style elves often have huge pointed ears. Does this have any game effect? No, but an extra Level of Heightened Senses (Hearing) might be appropriate anyway.

FACE CUTS

A cut on someone's face is a deadly insult and considered to mar their good looks (even if it really doesn't). For this reason, it's a good way for a hero or villain to start a fight.

GIANT PILOTED ROBOTS

Why are these so common? Mostly because they look really cool. Also, a humanoid machine has more story potential. Robots can cross any terrain, they can sword fight and wrestle and pick things up, and, if fitted with jets or rockets, they can fly through the air or space. A robot allows human-level action but on a super scale. Also, if each character has their own robot, they can all be involved in the action. In many military anime, ace pilots will be rewarded with "custom" versions of the machines with which they first started or newer and better mecha. This is simply simulated by allowing characters to redesign them using any earned Character Points earned through advancement.

GHOSTS

Japanese ghosts (yurei) are similar in motivation to those of the West, normally being unable to rest until they get revenge or satisfaction for some injury done to them in life. The traditional ghost appears in a white kimono and their feet are not visible. Ghosts and spirits are often associated with balls of fire, similar to will-o'-the-wisp.

The Yurei Race Template (page 55) provides a sample game entry that details its powers, abilities, weapons, and Defect.

THE GREAT TOKYO EARTHQUAKE

This severe quake in 1923 destroyed much of Tokyo and killed 100,000 people. Tokyo (like Los Angeles) is on a fault line, and another big quake is predicted. As a result, many near-future anime postulate a high-tech "neo-Tokyo" rebuilt after this disaster, ascribe supernatural causes to the earlier or a future quake, or assume that a ruined Tokyo will be abandoned and the capital will move to Osaka.

HYPER-DIMENSIONAL HAMMER

In comedy anime shows, a common sight gag is for a jealous character (usually female) who has been offended by one of her rude or lecherous companions to materialise a huge mallet and whack him. This is really just a sight gag, but if you want to formalise it in rules, it can be acquired as Item:

Weapon Level 1 (3) (Stun -1; Unique Limiter: Only on Lecherous or Annoying Friends +3) 1 Point Item.

IDOL SINGERS

Cute, young pop singers are often heavily promoted as a popular idol. Idols were at the peak of their popularity in eighties Japan and feature in many anime of that period. An idol singer hopes to break out and become a "real star." Taking the idea of a manufactured star one step further, robotic or virtual reality (computer-generated) idols appear as plot elements in some science fiction anime series.

KARMIC BONDS

Belief in reincarnation is common in Japanese society, where Buddhism (along with Shinto) is one of the two major religions. This is often used in anime to explain events that draw a group together: the characters met in their past lives. A character might have a Sixth Sense (page 119) that allows detecting such attachments or possibly Nightmares (page 161) to represent visions from an earlier lifetime.

KENDO

The "way of the sword" is a two-handed Japanese fencing technique based on samurai swordplay (kenjitsu). Kendo normally uses a wooden training sword (bokken), which in proper hands can be quite deadly. It is something that school students may learn, and thus provides a good excuse for teenagers to have combat Attributes.

KITSUNE

Magical fox spirits with the abilities to assume human shape (often as sexy women) or possess people are a common element in Japanese folklore. Magical foxes often have multiple tails. Like nekojin, kitsune usually appear in anime either as spirits or as a non-human race with fox ears and one or more bushy tails.

KYUDO

Kyudo is the "way of the bow," or Japanese archery. It is a popular high school sport for both boys and girls and, like Kendo, gives a teenage boy or girl a reasonable justification for proficiency with archaic weapons … which can come in handy!

LATE FOR SCHOOL

There seems to a genetic defect in anime females that prevents them from getting to school on time while at the same time causing them to obsess about being late. Japanese schools are strict about being on time, so minor punishments (being made to stand in the hall, for example) are common.

MAIN GUN

A classic ability of many spaceships and a few mecha is the "main gun" – a super weapon of astounding power that fires a huge wave of energy that can destroy entire squadrons of the enemy. Usually the weapon is unreliable, takes a long time to warm up, or burns out after firing one shot. Thus, its use requires a certain amount of strategic thinking to lure all of the enemy into range. The Weapon Attribute (page 132) can build this sort of weapon for a vehicle Item by taking plenty of Levels (greater than Level 6) plus multiple Ranks of Area or Spreading Enhancements along with appropriate Limiters such as Ammo.

MASCOTS

Mascot characters hang around the heroes and cheer them on. They include cute pets, cute robots, and cute little brothers or sisters. Sometimes the mascot doubles as an advisor, assistant, or spirit guide for the hero, and, in rare instances, it can also transform into a weapon or mecha. Every magical girl anime needs mascots – usually taken as Companions and sometimes wiser than the heroes – but they also pop up in all kinds of series including serious mecha drama.

MECHA CHILDREN

Anime series often have 10- to 16-year-olds piloting advanced mecha. The real reason is so the like-aged audience can identify with the hero, but there are story reasons that can make sense. Perhaps all the adult pilots in the area are dead, sick, or injured and only some kids (from the local space academy or the children of the mecha's inventor) are left. By the time new pilots arrive, the kids will be veterans. Another possibility is that the mecha is semi-alive or intelligent and bonds with the first person who happens to use it (a kid). Perhaps the most popular option is that the mecha requires a specific ability in order to be activated (a pilot who must be psychic or a clone of the original owner or part-alien) and the only candidates are children.

MECHA INVENTORS

A traditional mecha anime should give thought to the inventor of the cool technology the characters use. They may have been murdered and the invention stolen by the villains (but a prototype or two is left behind for a son, daughter, or young assistant to use to gain revenge). Sometimes the inventor is still around but usually is a little unbalanced (either absent minded or obsessed with modifying or perfecting it).

CHOOSING BETWEEN GIRLS NEXT DOOR VS. EXOTIC GIRL FRIENDS

A common element in anime romance is the guy who must choose between the Girl/Guy Next Door and the Exotic Lover. The one is familiar, has grown up with the character since childhood, has common sense, etc.; the other breaks taboos but is mysterious, sexy, dangerous, and sometimes not even human.

MECHA BASES

In a mecha campaign, the characters will often have a base that acts as their home and shelters their mecha. It is usually a secret underground base hidden below a mundane shop, residence, or city, a giant high-tech citadel, or a mobile battle fortress. Popular examples are big spacecraft, cloud bases, giant aircraft carriers, big submarines, and giant hovercraft. Sometimes the fortress can retract into the ground or transform into a huge giant robot. The base usually has a crew of NPCs and sometimes is home to a group of dependants (family, refugees, etc.) aboard. Its brain is a control room or bridge occupied by a stoic commander and a group of young and attractive communication officers. It is often defended by various weapon turrets and sometimes a huge "main gun" with devastating firepower that is only occasionally usable. It will also have workshops, medical bays, and laboratories, usually with their own expert NPCs. Some are large enough to be virtual cities with homes, shops, classrooms, and so on, allowing entire adventures (or full-scale mecha battles) to take place inside them. In game terms, mecha bases can be designed as Items (if they are likely to be attacked) or simply left as background detail. If they are built as Items, give them plenty of Levels of Capacity, Tough, and Awkward Size.

NAUGHTY TENTACLES

Demons with masses of writhing tentacles are a common sight in anime horror, inspired by early examples of the genre and H.P. Lovecraft. In game terms, such a creature has the advantage of being able to grapple, grope, and menace the protagonists without killing them (the way fangs and claws would). The most notorious such demons follow the Bug Eyed Monster tradition: "they want our women."

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NOSE BLEEDS

Another comedy anime gag is the idea that if a male (usually a virgin) sees something arousing, blood will rush to his head causing a nosebleed. In game terms, a boy with Easily Distracted (Girls) may get a nosebleed if he encounters an attractive female character in a compromising position: they are stunned on a failed average (TN 12) Soul Stat check.

OFUDA

These are strips of paper with divine names or holy scriptures written on them. In anime, Buddhist monks and Shinto priests or shrine maidens can use them to exorcise evil spirits or drive off demons. See the Exorcism Attribute.

ONI

Variously translated as Ogre or Demon, these are Japanese monsters. They are traditionally portrayed as humanoid monsters with horns, often dressed in tiger skins and just as often with magical powers. Some oni interbreed with humans; the children may be cursed or have magical abilities. In anime, oni and oni motifs (like horns or tiger stripes) appear in various forms from hideous monsters to sexy space aliens in genres ranging from comedy to horror. Otherwise ordinary-looking oni will usually have the Marked Defect.

PUBLIC BATHS AND HOT SPRINGS

Bathing is a more social occasion in Japan, and people especially enjoy vacations in hot spring resorts. Male and female baths are segregated, but many comedy anime have shy guys or lechers blundering into the girl's baths, resulting in nosebleeds, slaps, and much silly mayhem. When not being interrupted by slapstick, a social bath is also a time when people can unburden themselves to their friends.

SDF

The Self Defence Forces are the modern Japanese military. In the real world, they are divided into Ground, Air, and Maritime branches and are well trained and equipped (with weapons similar to that of the USA), but they are also inexperienced because Japan's constitution forbids foreign military adventures. In anime, they tend to be "red shirts" who get wiped out to demonstrate the power of alien invasions or monster attacks until the heroes arrive to save the day with their super powers or top secret battle mecha.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

The current Japanese school system inherited many of its traditions from British and German schools. One of these is the uniforms worn in elementary and high school. Boys wear dark pants and either a German-style black button-up tunic with a high collar, or a normal white shirt. Girls are often dressed in a British-style "sailor suit" (sailor fuku): a pleated skirt and a blouse with a sailor collar. Both sexes may add a school jacket in cool weather. Different schools have somewhat varying uniforms, so a new student can be easily spotted. Gym uniforms consist of a sweatshirt and sneakers with girls wearing form-fitting shorts ("bloomers") and boys wear ordinary shorts.

TERRIBLE COOKS

Girls are traditionally supposed to be good cooks. In high school anime, a common comedy element is the female character who is a terrible cook, but who does not realise it. Her friends are regularly forced to taste her cooking to avoid hurting her feelings. Being a terrible cook is usually just a role-playing choice, but in a silly campaign GMs may allow a Unique Defect, Terrible Cook (-1 Point).

TOKYO TOWER

A replica of the Eiffel Tower was built in Tokyo in 1958. At a height of 333 metres, it is a major landmark and a popular destination for school trips. Tokyo Tower often appears in modern-day anime, and its high observation deck often serves as a focus for monster attacks, bizarre rituals, or extra-dimensional manifestations. It must have been destroyed so many times, it is a wonder they can keep rebuilding it!

TRANSFORMATION SEQUENCES

Most magical girls can switch from their street clothes into their battle costume. This involves saying a few magic words and posing dramatically. This often takes several seconds (which saves a lot of money later in the series when several magical girls transform, and they can use a lot of stock footage). However, this can be assumed to be simply a "slow motion" kind of shot. The villains cannot usually attack while the character is transforming. In anime designed to appeal to teenage boys, the character often ends up briefly naked, while in those aimed at general audiences the transformation is disguised by special effects or occurs more or less instantaneously. Transformation sequences are usually best handled with the Alternate Identity Attribute.

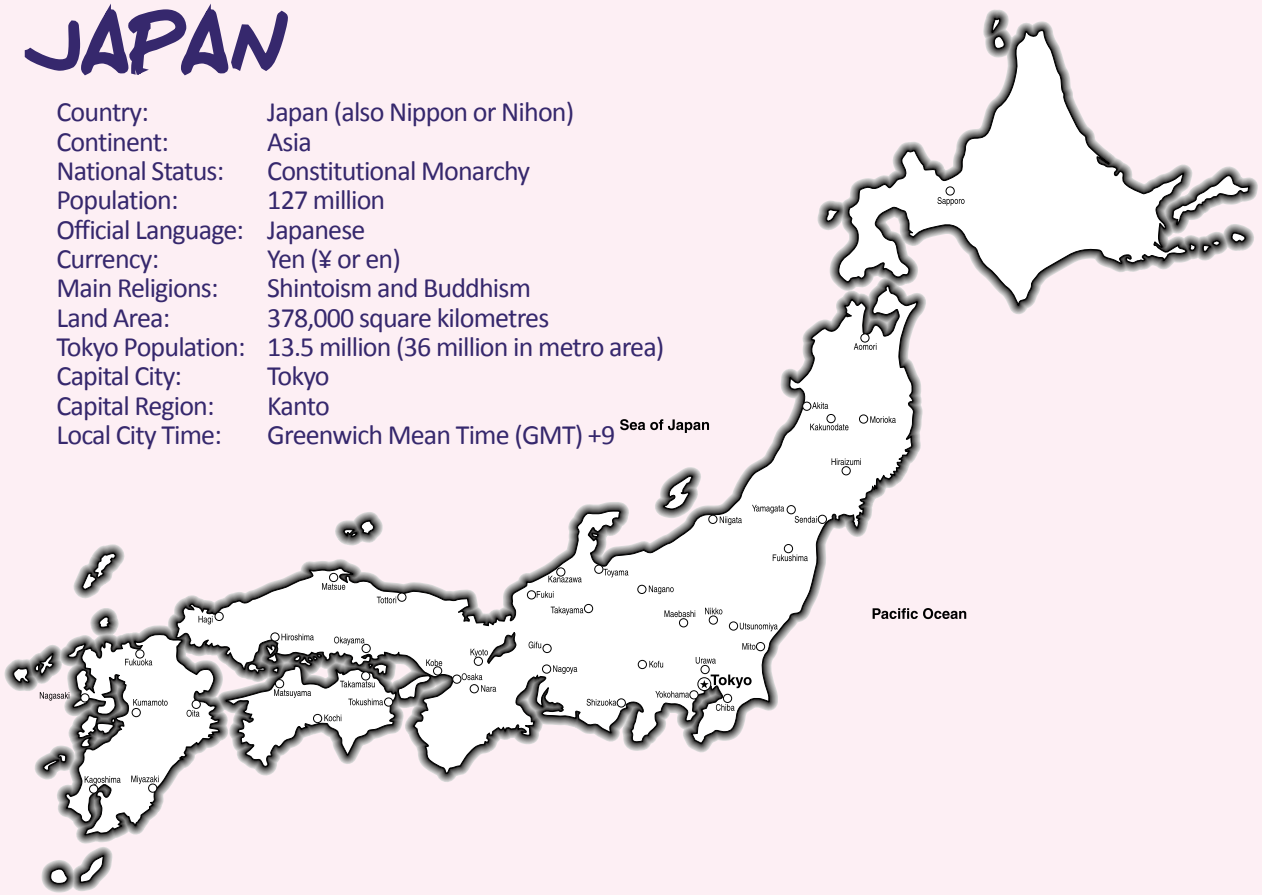
TRANSFORMING MECHA

Giant robots are even cooler if they can transform, shifting their shapes so that a humanoid robot can turn into a fighter plane or mechanical beast. A mecha with Alternate Form covers this genre convention. More "realistic" mecha series usually limit or forgo entirely mecha transformations. In some anime, multiple mecha can link together to form an even bigger machine, which is best represented with the Merge Attribute (page 103).


SHILIN16

JAPAN

Country:	Japan (also Nippon or Nihon)
Continent:	Asia
National Status:	Constitutional Monarchy
Population:	127 million
Official Language:	Japanese
Currency:	Yen (¥ or en)
Main Religions:	Shintoism and Buddhism
Land Area:	378,000 square kilometres
Tokyo Population:	13.5 million (36 million in metro area)
Capital City:	Tokyo
Capital Region:	Kanto
Local City Time:	Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) +9



Japan is an archipelago (group of islands) in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Asia. There are four main islands, but the biggest and most heavily populated is Honshu (where Tokyo is located). The next largest is the north island of Hokkaido, which is colder, less densely populated, and has wilderness regions. Just south of Honshu are the smaller, but heavily populated islands of Shikoku and Kyushu, separated from Honshu by the narrow Inland Sea. Even further south is the island of Okinawa. Additionally, there are thousands of smaller islands in and around Japan.

The Japanese islands are rugged and mountainous. There are many dormant and some active volcanoes (and also plenty of hot springs). The climate ranges from tropical in the south to cool temperate in the north; Tokyo often gets sweltering-hot summers and snow in winter.

Japan's climate varies significantly from the northern to the southern islands. Hokkaido has long winters and short summers, while the southern islands have a sub-tropical climate. Tokyo (and much of the rest of central Japan) has a winter with occasional snowfall that runs from late November to late February and a hot and humid summer from June (late June is the rainy season) to August (when it is hottest).

The nation is ethnically very homogeneous, with approximately 1.6% of the population being of non-Japanese origin in 2012 (approximately 676,000 Chinese; 530,000 Korean; 203,000 Filipino; 193,000 Brazilian; and 436,000 others). More than 75% of Japan's population live in major urban centres, with a very high population density. The country is divided into eleven political regions: Hokkaido, Tohoku, Hokuriku, Kanto, Tosan, Tokai, Kinki, Chugoku, Shinkoku, Kyushu, and Okinawa. These are subdivided into 47 smaller areas - 43 prefectures (or ken), plus the district (or do) of Hokkaido, the metropolis (or to) of Tokyoto, and the urban prefectures (or hu) of Osakohu and Kyotohu.

Japan's economy has had its ups and downs in recent decades, but it remains one of the seven richest and most heavily industrialised nations in the world. Of concern is an ageing population with a long life expectancy and median age over 47, which may result in escalating high healthcare costs and labour shortages in coming decades.

TOKYO

Tokyo is Japan's largest city, and one of the biggest urban centres in the world. The city of Tokyo is divided into 23 city wards (or ku) including Bunkyoku and Taitoku in the north, Shinjuku and Shibuyaku in the west, Chuoku to the east, Minatoku to the south, and Chiyodaku in the centre.

Tokyo today is a collection of cities, towns, and villages that all grew together. It is comprised of 24 smaller cities, seven towns, and eight villages, all sprawling along an area of 88 km from east to west, and 24 km from north to south. Tokyo does not really have any single landmark that defines it, the way that the Eiffel Tower, CN Tower, or Empire State Building are the "centres" of Paris, Toronto, or New York respectively. Most buildings are rather small, with no more than 10 floors. The only significant group of skyscrapers is found in a small area north-west of Shinjuku Station. Even so, Tokyo is a big and loud city, filled with energy. Tucked away from the blazing neon signs, overhead expressways, and towering office blocks and department stores, however, are tiny shops and cosy suburban neighbourhoods where everyone knows everyone else.

Originally named Edo ("gate of the river"), Tokyo began as a sleepy provincial town located at the point where the Sumida Gawa River made its way inland from the ocean. Everything changed in 1603 when Shogun Tokukgawa Ieyasu established the Shogunate there and made Edo the seat of Japan's military government. The city grew in population and prosperity over the years. When the emperor was restored to power in 1868, the Imperial Palace was officially moved from Kyoto (the old capital) to Edo, and the city was renamed Tokyo ("eastern capital").

Tokyo has been destroyed and rebuilt a number of times and few structures are more than 70 years old. The high population density and wooden construction used in traditional Japanese buildings have made the city very susceptible to fire ("the flowers of Edo"), and entire neighbourhoods have burned to the ground many times. The city is also located near an earthquake fault, and in 1923 a great earthquake and the resulting fires levelled much of Tokyo. The city was rebuilt in more modern fashion (with many western-style office blocks) only to be largely destroyed again by American bombing raids in the closing years of World War II. In the 1950s, Tokyo again rose like a phoenix, and has experienced continuous development since, sprawling in to the surrounding area, and in the case of Shinjuku, rising into the sky. Real estate in Tokyo has some of the highest land prices in the world.

Travel in Tokyo is relatively easy, since nearly everything is located within 5-10 minutes of a rail (chikatetsu) station. In comparison to America, very few older teenagers and young adults drive cars – most will walk or rely on public transport or bicycles, with a few owning motorcycles or motor scooters.

Some famous neighbourhoods in Tokyo include:

AKIHABARA (IN THE CHIYODAKU WARD)

The "electronics capital" of Japan. It extends over a few city blocks and is devoted to a bustling trade in new, discount, and used electronics with over 700 shops of all sizes. In some anime or manga, this may extend to sales of robots.

AKASAKA (IN THE MINATOKU WARD)

This somewhat glitzy nightlife district is also the home to some posh hotels and a number of foreign embassies. Unlike Roppongi, Akasaka businesses cater more to salarymen on expense accounts, with pricey restaurants and hostess clubs.

ASAKUSA (IN THE TAITOKU WARD)

The original north-eastern downtown of Tokyo. Asukusa still has some surviving traditional narrow streets, tiny shops, and old-style houses. The most famous landmark is the busy and popular Sensoji Temple, devoted to Kannon, the Buddhist goddess of mercy. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Asakusa was the city's most famous pleasure district until the puritan military government and allied bombing of World War II forced change upon it.

GINZA (IN THE CHUOKU WARD)

This very expensive and fashionable shopping district in central Tokyo, has more than its fair share of swanky bars and hostess clubs. Ginza also contains many art and photographic galleries and is known for Kabukiza, a venue for Kabuki theatre.

HARAJUKU (IN THE SHIBUYAKU WARD)

This fashion and entertainment district with trendy shops is popular with teenagers and young adults. Some areas are relatively inexpensive, while others are packed with top-line designer fashion boutiques.

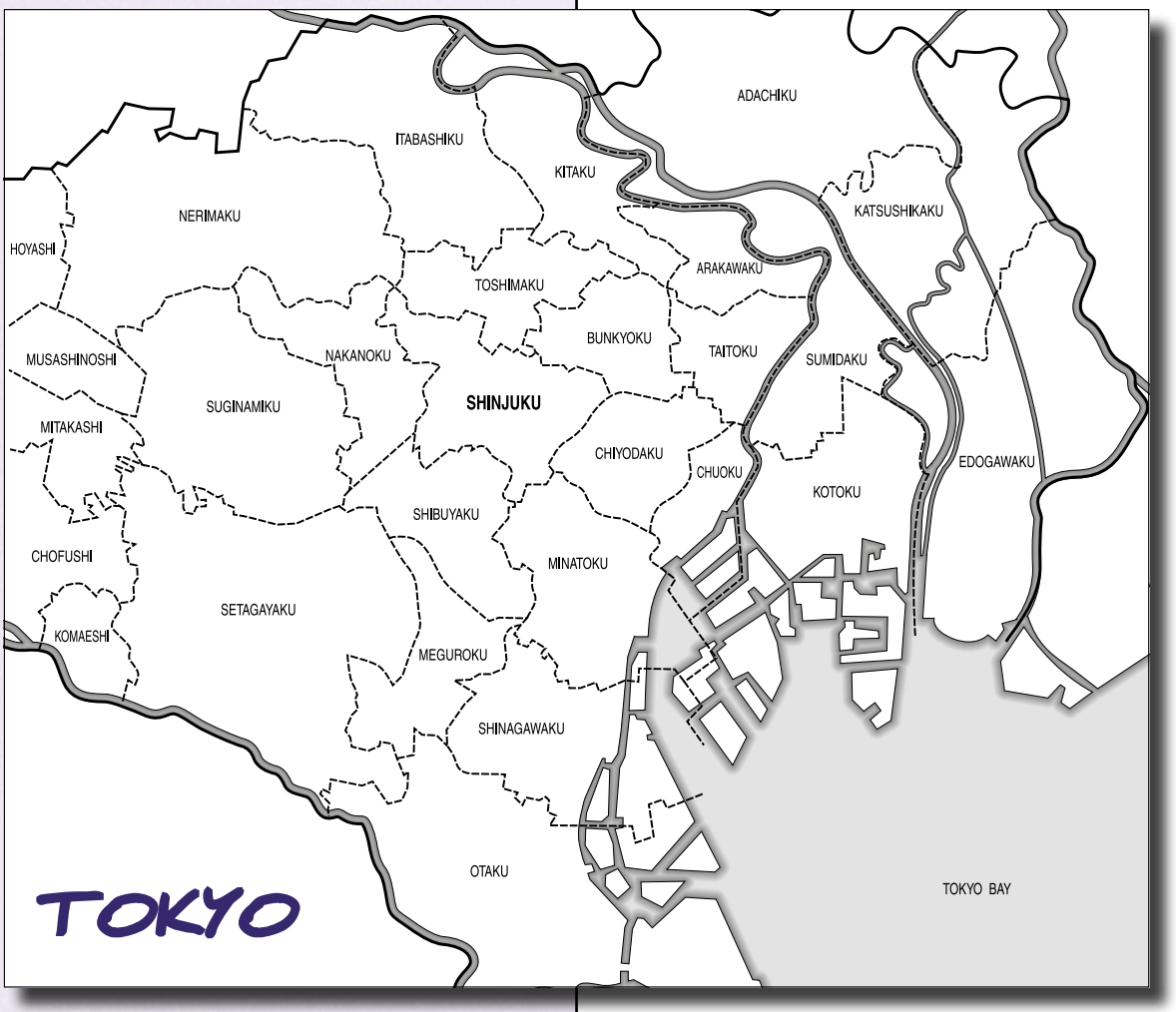
HIBIYA (IN THE CHIYODAKU WARD)

Hibiya is one of Tokyo's main financial districts. It is the original centre of the old Edo, and is the home of the Imperial Palace.

IKEBUKURO (IN THE TOSHIMAKU WARD)

An entertainment, business, and shopping district which is also home to two of the world's largest department stores – the huge Tobu and Seibu buildings – as well as many classy boutiques and restaurants.

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ROPPONGI (IN THE MINATOKU WARD)

This young nightlife capital is home to more discos and dance clubs than anywhere else in Tokyo. There are many international restaurants, and it is a traditional place for Tokyo youth to hang with jet-setting gaijin (foreigners).

SHIBUYA AND DAIKANYAMA (IN THE SHIBUYAKU WARD)

These fashionable shopping and entertainment areas host over a dozen large department stores, as well as many boutiques and trendy restaurants. Within the busy Shibuyu railway station is a bronze statue of the famous faithful dog, Hachiko, which is a well-known Tokyo landmark and meeting point

UENO (IN THE TAITOKU WARD)

This downtown district hosts the city's popular Ueno Park (a huge green space boasting a concert hall), Ueno Zoo, and many museums (the largest of which is the Tokyo National Museum). One can also find the popular Ameyokocho Arcade, which is a lively bargain shopping district. To the north is Nippori, a nice residential area with narrow streets, and old temples and houses.

OTHER NEIGHBOURHOODS

Surrounding many of these famous neighbourhoods are residential areas, office buildings, condos, and commercial developments. Most private homes are found in the suburbs to the north and west, an hour or more from the city's core. To the south-east is Tokyo Bay and the bustling port city of Yokahama. Tokyo's main transportation artery is the Yamanote Line train loop that runs through the city. Also girding the city is the Tokyo Metropolitan Expressway, 200-plus kilometres of multi-level elevated highway that surrounds Tokyo like a concrete and asphalt belt. The many concrete bridges and overpasses for the expressway are perhaps Tokyo's most dominant architectural feature, which GMs can use to good effect in any urban chase.

▶ SHINJUKU

Shinjuku is the beating heart of Tokyo: a massive, sprawling, administrative, shopping, entertainment, and business district centred on a huge railway terminal, Shinjuku Eki. This is a vast, interconnected complex of tracks, terminals, and shops, where seven railway lines and two subway lines converge, and with 2 million

plus commuters, is one of the busiest commuter railway stations in the world. Since Shinjuku is a very popular location for anime adventures, several maps are included herein to help kick-start your game.

NISHI-SHINJUKU

Since the 1970s, the western half of Shinjuku has risen as a towering skyline that symbolises the financial and industrial might of Japan. Some 20 skyscrapers house Tokyo and Japan's most important corporate and political offices, as well as major hotels. The ultimate expression of this is the giant Tokyo Metropolitan Government building, a mega-skyscraper completed in 1991 that houses Tokyo City Hall. The skyscrapers have a significant effect on the neighbourhoods' micro-climates. They trap the chill of the north-west winds, which results in strong and unpredictable cold gusts blasting down open streets. This also makes the landing of helicopters or the flying of light aircraft through the Nishi-Shinjuku area a very hazardous endeavour.

HIGASHI-SHINJUKU

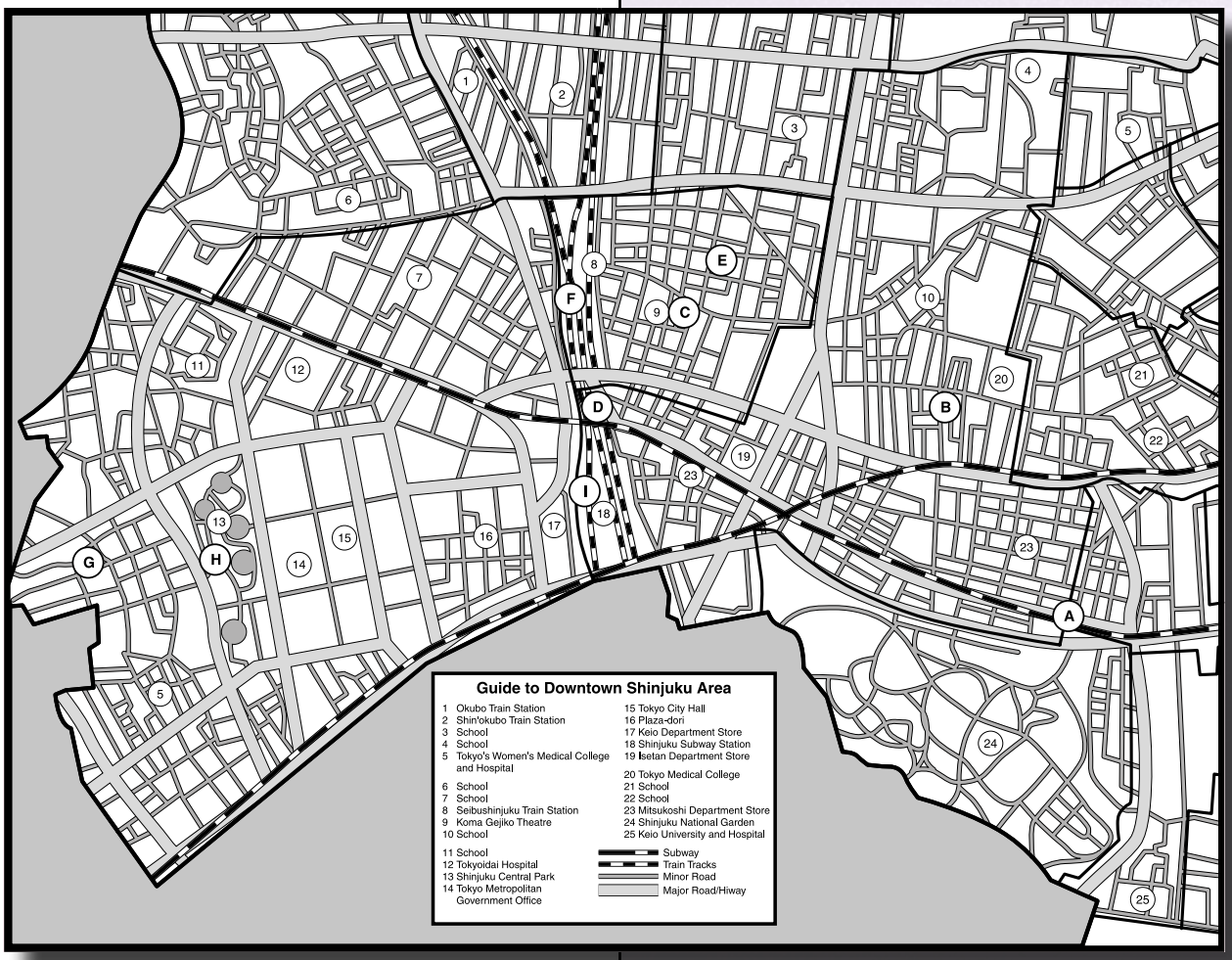
This area is east and south-east of Shinjuku Station and houses a high density of retail stores, high-rise malls, subterranean shopping plazas, discount warehouses, and an equally impressive collection of bars and clubs.

KABUKICHO

Six blocks north-east of Shinjuku Station is the Kabukicho area, which has been known as Japan's centre of seediness and prostitution since the 19th century. Its streets were devoted to countless coffee shops, game arcades, gambling parlours, snack bars, topless bars, strip joints, love hotels, and "soaplands" (massage parlours), as well as many restaurants, big department stores, a few government offices, and a number of shrines. Also near Kabukicho are the grounds of the Flower Garden Shrine (Hanozono Jina, circa 17th century). The central landmark of Kabukicho, the Koma Gejiko is a 2,000-seat theatre complex that also houses discos and bars, centred in a rectangular plaza and surrounded by cinemas.

SHINJUKU-GOYEN IMPERIAL GARDENS

Located in the south-west corner of Shinjuku Ward, the Shinjuku-Goyen Imperial Gardens is one of Tokyo's largest garden parks, covering over 144 acres. It dates to 1906 and was designed in a European style, with hills, bridges, stone lanterns, and artificial ponds. The gardens include over 1900 flowering trees of 65 different species, as well as a greenhouse containing tropical plants.



JAPANESE INSTITUTIONS

A number of major institutions that may appear in games set in Japan are detailed here.

GOVERNMENT

Japan's federal government is a parliamentary system (similar to Canada or the United Kingdom). The emperor is the ceremonial head of state, with no real powers, but he commands enormous respect. The main legislative body is the Diet (parliament), whose members are chosen in nation-wide elections. It is divided into a lower House of Representatives (which holds the real power) and an upper House of Councillors (a rubber-stamp body similar to the Canadian Senate or British House of Lords). The party that controls the majority of seats in the Diet is "in power" and appoints the Prime Minister, who then chooses their cabinet, usually of other Diet members. As in Britain, while politicians come and go, Japan is actually run behind the scenes by career civil servants. These often appear in serious anime as shadowy bureaucratic figures running various secret organisations such as special police forces or monster-battling teams.

THE MILITARY

Japan's military is known as the JSDF (Japanese Self Defence Force) and is divided into the ground, air, and maritime branches. Anime often add a fictional Space or Special SDF equipped with spacecraft or mecha. Members are reasonably well-trained and very well equipped with high-tech weaponry (often Japanese versions of US hardware). Until recently, the JSDF was constitutionally forbidden from intervening in the matters of foreign countries. In the 21st century, they have participated in various international peacekeeping and nation-building operations in the Middle East and Asia, but this role remains controversial, and relatively few JSDF soldiers have seen action. The United States also has air and naval bases in Japan, and is obligated by treaty to help defend the country. Most large-scale military exercises are held in Hokkaido.

LAW AND ORDER

"Real" modern day Japan is relatively non-violent compared to some countries, with fewer guns and drugs on the street. . . but it still has terrorism, street gangs, and organised crime, and cops dedicated to stopping it. Anime Japan can be even more crime-ridden – in fact, quite a few anime portray Japan as turning into a lawless free-fire zone after natural disasters, war, social change, or economic collapse ravages the society. Even if this does not happen, modern Japan still has plenty of room for comedy or serious cops-and-crime games.

POLICE AND JUSTICE

Policing is based around the "koban" system, in which beat cops operate from a network of local police boxes (koban) located one per neighbourhood. Each koban is assigned a car and a couple of officers. Cops carry batons, and some have pistols as well. Female officers are rare (less than 10%) and normally only assigned to office jobs, traffic patrol, juvenile or undercover duties – although this is slowly changing.

Japan's public prosecutors have more autonomy than an American District Attorney and have considerable power to investigate cases on their own, even without police. They can also decide whether or not a crime should be prosecuted (even if they can prove a crime has been committed). Suspects have similar rights to those in America, but Japanese cops do have a tradition of using more of a "third degree" than is typical in the US to get suspects to confess.

Suspects may be detained up to 10 days pending trial. In Japan, there is no trial by jury. Instead, a tribunal of judges handles all cases. As a result, criminal proceedings are often quite rapid. Japanese civil trials can take a long time to go to court, though, since there are many legal obstacles that a defendant with deep pockets use. There is no guilty plea in a Japanese court. The evidence must always be examined even if the subject confesses, but confessions are given considerable weight, and if a first-time offender appears sincerely contrite, they will usually get a substantially lighter sentence. Often before a trial (even in serious cases like assault or rape), the defence will try to meet with victims or their families and arrange a settlement based on confession and reparations, to speed up the actual trial or get charges dropped.

SENTENCING

Japanese courts strongly favour the prosecution, and the conviction rate is very high. Young children are normally tried in Juvenile court, with lighter sentences. It is much harder for civil or criminal cases to get retrials in Japan, even if new evidence is discovered that might suggest a miscarriage of justice.

In order of severity, the sentences a court can execute are: death by hanging, imprisonment with labour, imprisonment, heavy fines (over 10,000 yen), penal detention (short imprisonment up to 30 days), and minor fines (less than 10,000 yen). The death penalty is usually only assigned to murder when committed during robberies (rather than crimes of passion). Very few (0-10) death sentences are usually assigned in any year.

THE YAKUZA

Some Japanese gangsters belong to organised crime families, known as Yakuza. They can be distinguished by their dark suits, big foreign cars, habit of covering their bodies with colourful tattoos, and the custom of cutting off a little finger to atone for any mistake that displeases their boss. Yakuza often appear as "heavies" in modern-day anime.

The Yakuza are somewhat on the decline in the real world due to legal changes, foreign competition, and police crack-downs, but still continue to exist. The Yakuza achieved their greatest power in the 1950s and 60s as a result of the black markets and rationing that followed World War II. Each gang is headed by an oyabun who acts as the gang's father figure; under him are various high-ranking kobun. Traditionally, they have cultivated an "honourable gangster" image, although this has faded in recent decades.

Yakuza operations involve all the usual forms of criminal activity (extortion and protection rackets, gambling – especially pachinko or Japanese pinball – prostitution, and smuggling of contraband include guns and drugs. A major drug traffic is in amphetamines imported from other Asian countries, rather than cocaine or heroin. As in much of Asia, drug crimes are punished harshly, and drug use is lower in Japan than in America. In 1992, the Act for Prevention of Unlawful Activities by Boryokudan Members was enacted. It was aimed at yakuza or criminal gangs, similar to US RICO legislation. This legislation designates the term "boryokudan" as a group with a good proportion of members who have criminal records, and gives strong powers to prosecutors and cops in going after them, especially to crush protection rackets and money laundering. This has seriously harmed Yakuza operations.

Foreign criminals (Russians, Tongs, Triads, Korean gangsters, etc.) have also attempted to muscle in on the Japanese crime scene, which can be a source of conflict.

CULTURAL DETAILS

Dropping some accurate cultural titbits into a game set in Japan is a great way to build atmosphere.

FOOD AND DRINK

The traditional Japanese diet has somewhat less red meat than that of North America, mainly consisting of rice, noodles, vegetables, chicken, fish, pork, and some beef. Favourite drinks include tea, sake, beer, coffee, and various soft drinks. Most of these – including coffee and beer – are available as canned beverages from vending machines.

RELIGION

The majority of Japan's citizens practice two major religions, Shintoism and Buddhism, with many Japanese who follow both religions. Modern Japan is home to many religious cults, which often mix Buddhist, Shinto, and sometimes Christian beliefs with new-age mysticism. Many different psychics, wandering exorcists, fortune tellers, and practitioners of western or neo-pagan beliefs are also in abundance. Shinto and Buddhist priests and priestesses – some with supernatural powers – are an especially common element in both modern and historical anime.

SHINTOISM ("THE KAMI WAY")

Shintoism is the old indigenous animistic religion of Japan, in which manifestations of nature and sacred places have their own god or spirit (Kami), who have various spheres of responsibility. There is no central hierarchy or written dogma. Instead, thousands of individual shrines decorate Japan, which are built at sacred places, both in cities and the countryside. People pray to the Kami, usually for good luck in the sphere over which that Kami has influence. The shrines are maintained by priests (Kannushi, who wear blue and white robes), and sometimes shrine maidens (Miko, in red and white robes who are known for performing ceremonial dances). Community festivals also centre on the shrines.

Shrines consist of archways (Torii) at their entrance to the grounds, a path to the main house of worship (often flanked by stone lions), a basin where visitors wash their hands and mouth to purify themselves, and a house of worship where a gong and offering box are located. To pray to the Kami, one puts a coin in the box, sounds the gong twice, bows twice, and then departs. It is also possible to acquire ofuda (usually paper talismans with the name of the Kami written on them) for good luck. In the hands of a Kannushi or Miko, the ofuda may be able to dispel ghosts or demons. Only the Kannushi and Miko are allowed in the worship hall, which may contain sacred relics. Shintoism is very concerned with purification.

In legend and in anime and manga, Shinto shrines often contain magical relics or are run by families whose Kannushi and Miko have passed down ancient shamanistic secrets through the generations. Some wandering female exorcists also exist who are known as Miko as well, even though they do not belong to any particular shrine.

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BUDDHISM

Buddhism has co-existed with Shintoism in Japan for centuries. While Shinto deals with matters of nature and daily life, Buddhism is concerned with enlightenment, spiritualism, death, and the after-life. The basis of Buddhist philosophy is that all suffering comes from desire, and only by suppressing our sensual wants, can one enter a state of nirvana (a divine state in which there is no suffering, desire, or sense of self; it is a release from the effects of karma). This may require a long process, however, as well as reincarnation over many lifetimes to accumulate enough karma. Buddha (not a god, but rather an enlightened person) taught that the way to nirvana was through an Eightfold path of "right" thinking and behaviour: right understanding, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditation. Buddhism centres on temples inhabited by priests and monks (usually identified by robes and shaven heads), although some monks are unaffiliated. Nirvana is viewed differently by the two main Buddhist schools. The Hinayana school is the older and more conservative form of Buddhism and regards Nirvana as the means by which the individual is liberated from existence on Earth. The Hinayana philosophy is dominant in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Laos, Burma, and Kampuchea. The second school, known as Mahayana, teaches that those who gain enlightenment remain in the world as Bodhisattva to guide others along the path. Mahayana ideology is supported in Japan, Tibet, China, Korea, and Mongolia. There are hundreds of gods (or god-like beings), demons, and spirits in the Japanese Buddhist pantheon, many of which have been adopted from the Shinto Kami.



Buddhist temples are everywhere in Japan. The heart of a temple contains images and statues of Siddhartha Gautama, also known as the Buddha. The sacred scriptures (sutras) are stored in temples, and are chanted by priests and monks as part of worship or meditation. The sutras are also believed to dispel ghosts and demons and are used in Buddhist exorcism.

LEGENDARY SECTS

Various "esoteric" sects exist in legend, whose study of the sutras or special training has given them supernatural abilities (sometimes in conjunction with martial arts). A real-life example is the (now mostly extinct) Shugendo order of "mountain priests" whose rites incorporated shamanic Shinto rituals and who gained fame as exorcists. The concept of reincarnation also gives rise to groups of game characters who may have battled a particular ancient evil, or been comrades or lovers in their past lives. Thus, an ordinary teenager may have once been a famous mystic warrior, and (although they do not remember it) are now again fated to fight the same evil when it has arisen once more in the present. This can be an ideal method to justify the unification of a group of diverse characters. Someone with an appropriate Sixth Sense Attribute may be able to recognise such karmic connections.

ADVICE FOR THE PLAYER

The following 10 suggestions provide some kernels of player wisdom to consider during your BESM adventures. The most notable game moments occur when players all share the same understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

BE INNOVATIVE IN CHARACTER DESIGN

BESM was designed to be flexible, allowing you to create the anime character of your desire. Do not hesitate to develop Attributes or Defects not listed in these rules, talking with the GM about your ideas and co-creating with them. Playing an original character of your design is much more enjoyable than limiting yourself to someone else's ideas.

GO BEYOND A CLONE

It's fun to play a character who is perhaps inspired by a particular anime series or movie in your group's original setting, but do not simply clone a well-established media character. It is quite difficult to accurately portray a character created by someone else, yet easy to be disappointed should you be unable to role-play them "correctly." Develop your own character and give them their unique voice in the adventures ahead. Naturally, if the GM plans to run a scenario based directly on an established anime production, this suggestion does not apply.

ASSIGN CHARACTER DEFECTS

Your purpose is not to create a perfect character, but a character that is fun to play. Defects not only generate laughter and levity during each session, but can also expand your role-playing opportunities. Besides, you will find that you never have enough Character Points to satisfy your desire for Attributes, so assign some Defects and you'll get a few more precious Character Points to spend.

AVOID THE LONE WOLF

Do not create a character with a brooding backstory who prefers sealing themselves away from society to be alone. Role-playing is primarily about connections – GM/player and player/player interaction. Deny yourself one of those opportunities, and the enjoyment of the game is diminished for everyone.

DON'T OBSESS ABOUT THE RULES

Every Game Master has their own individual style when running a game. If your GM wants to play fast and loose with the system, go with the flow. The rules should only be used when the structure and guidance they provide benefits the game. If you and your group can thrive on fewer rules (or without any), do not let this book hold you back.

IT'S CO-OPERATIVE, NOT COMPETITIVE

You and the other players are working together to weave incredible role-playing stories, even when your characters are in conflict. Intra-party competition adds an exciting dynamic to your group, though most character conflicts are best maintained at reasonable levels. Characters killing other player characters for real or imagined slights during the game usually falls outside the realm of a healthy rivalry.

EMOTION IS REAL

Playing through an engaging adventure, especially those of a long-running campaign with the same characters, may invoke surprisingly raw emotions as the events unfold. Everyone expresses emotions differently, and although some players may view a game with a sense of third-person detachment, others may be much more invested and sensitive to the storyline. Unexpected emotions are real, and should be treated by all players with compassion and understanding should they arise.

EMBRACE FAILURE

Your character need not always succeed at the tasks they are undertaking to create a satisfying game adventure. Character failure – whether instigated by bad dice rolls or outmanoeuvring opponents – provides excellent opportunities for character growth, story engagement, and exciting memories. Your mindset about how events unfold during a storyline have a direct and immediate impact on your level of enjoyment. Embrace your character's missteps and go with the flow.

TRUST THE GAME MASTER

Any worthy GM realises that player needs come before the story, and that it is their obligation to make the game enjoyable for everyone. The GM is always your ally, always has your back, and always works to evoke maximum enjoyment during each session. Trust their judgement, and the game will flow more smoothly.

GIVE THE GM CONSTANT FEEDBACK

Both positive and negative feedback is essential to create an exceptional gaming experience. On a regular basis – perhaps after each session or every few sessions – let the GM know what you like and dislike about the direction and momentum of the game. Without player input, the GM may not realise in which areas they need improvement. Be polite and diplomatic, but also be honest. The game can only get better, not worse, when you voice your comments and concerns.

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CHAPTER 13
GAME MASTERING

13: GAME MASTERING

HOSTING ADVENTURES

Everything presented in BESM Fourth Edition prior to this chapter provides ample ingredients to create amazing anime and manga adventures at your gaming table. The final component needed to blend everything together deliciously is the actual chef – also known as the Game Master, or GM. As Game Master, you create the opponents, plots, and situations that challenge the player character heroes. You take on the roles of all of the other characters in the story, resolve actions using the game rules, and adjudicate rules questions that arise during play.

This chapter provides suggestions, guidelines, and advice you need to be a BESM Game Master and run dynamic and exciting anime and manga adventures that you co-create with your player group.

GAME MASTERING BASICS

As Game Master, you fill many roles and handle all the parts of the game that the players do not. These roles can be broken down into four main areas: creator, actor, narrator, and referee.

▶ CREATOR

You are responsible for creating the world in which the player characters have adventures, from the opponents and supporting characters to history, geography, and current events. It requires great effort, but many anime and manga worlds could be similar to our own, and consequently a lot of the setting information would already exists. Alternatively, you can use the worlds of the Anime Multiverse setting (Chapter 14, page 308) for your game adventures, or use it as an example of how to create your own story background.

▶ ACTOR

You play the roles of the various non-player characters (or NPCs) in the game, including the major opponents and enemies, the characters' love interests and other allies, and anyone else the player characters might encounter. Keep these background characters' goals and motivations in mind when crafting stories, but also focus on keeping the game fun for everyone.

▶ NARRATOR

You also narrate events in the game, describing to the players everything that their characters see, hear, touch, taste, and smell. A good GM provides players with enough descriptive information for them to understand their characters' surroundings, but not so much that it slows down the game and turns it into a droning monologue of "flavour text." For example, you might say to the players:

"Your midnight patrol has been uneventful. The forest glade is peaceful, with twinkling starlight shining down on your homeland. You all pause for a moment on a tall tree branch, watching the distant lantern glow of your village. Suddenly, the ancient warning horn of your ancestors trumpets, and you hear the faint sound of hoofbeats galloping through the night."

You have explained to the players where they are and what they are doing, and have placed them in an active situation. The players may ask for clarification about your description. How many horses do they hear? Where exactly in the forest are they? Under what conditions would the sentries blow the ancient horn? Answer their questions to the best of your ability, while encouraging them to take action.

While providing narration for the players, try to avoid assuming actions or feelings on the part of their characters. For example, in the above description, do not end with "… the sound chills your blood with anticipated dread, so you leap into action, rushing toward the commotion!" Each player must decide their own character's actions.

Similarly, do not tell players how their characters feel about a particular NPC unless there is some outside force imposing those feelings. Rather than saying, "you take an instant dislike to them," when a character is dealing with an unpleasant NPC, you might try "they just does not seem very likeable". Better yet, simply play the NPC as unpleasant and rude, and the characters will start to dislike them naturally, without any prompting from you.

▶ REFEREE

Finally, you apply and interpret the game rules and answer any rules questions that arise during play. You make the necessary rolls for NPCs, apply the effects of characters' Attributes and actions, and use the rules presented in Chapter 9 – and throughout this entire manual – to resolve conflicts during the game.

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CAMPAIGNS, MINI-CAMPAIGNS, AND ONE-SHOTS

A role-playing game can range from a brief one-shot adventure that takes a few hours to play to a lengthy campaign that can run over many sessions for a period of months or years. The story pacing and plot depth of a campaign is different from that of a mini-campaign, which in turn differs from that of a one-shot adventure.

CAMPAIGNS

A campaign usually has a vast or epic scope with a number of shorter plot arcs that weave together to reveal the greater story. The characters have time to develop unique personalities as they are faced with challenges to their bodies, minds, and souls. The characters can also learn new Skills and Attributes and establish lasting relationships with NPCs. In a campaign, the players have ample time to explore the various aspects of the world that the GM has created. Additionally, antagonists will come and go over the course of a campaign as they are defeated, destroyed, or reformed by the characters. The GM should establish the outline of a plot for the beginning of the campaign before play begins, but the middle and the end of the story will be largely determined by the interests and actions of the characters.

MINI-CAMPAIGNS

A mini-campaign is a single story arc that usually takes place over 4-8 gaming sessions. The characters may not develop much over the course of a mini-campaign, since the plot only spans a few days to a few weeks. Antagonists are often present in every session, with the major villain, if any, usually surviving at least until the final climactic conclusion to the story arc. Mini-campaigns require a greater plot structure than an open-ended campaign, and thus the players are required to focus more on the story and less on their own characters. The GM should know where the characters will start (the beginning) and where they should go (the middle), but the closure at the end of the story is heavily dependent on the choices made by the player characters during the game.

ONE-SHOT ADVENTURES

A one-shot adventure covers one single story idea in a 3-8 hour gaming session. These adventures are frequently run at conventions and for demonstrations at game stores. The characters are unlikely to grow much during an adventure because the story only spans a few hours to a few days. To maintain a high level of intensity during the game, the role-playing of character personalities is often sacrificed for dramatic action and conflict. In order to finish the adventure in one session, one-shots are often highly structured and only offer the characters a limited number of choices for each dilemma that they face. Most GMs usually script the plot to establish the beginning and middle of the story, and have a rough outline of the story endings that can be influenced by the players' actions (for example, will the villain win, lose, or escape?)

The GM's decision on whether to run a campaign, mini-campaign, or one-shot adventure should hinge on a number of important factors:

» Does the scope of the GM's ideas require a minimum number of game sessions to complete?

» How much time are the players willing to commit to the game?

» Is the game introductory in nature, or is it for experienced players? Will it run at a gaming convention with people who have never met before or with players and a GM who are familiar with each other?

» How much role-playing and characterisation is desired for the game?

GENRE ELEMENTS

Here is a quick look at a small selection of genre elements from the perspective of the game:

ALIEN VISITORS

Do the characters or antagonists include aliens who are visiting, assisting, or invading our planet? This can be a good way to add people with strange powers or high-tech mecha to a present day campaign. The aliens might alternatively come from other dimensions or underwater, rather than outer space. Alien visitors may just be here to have fun, or they might want to conquer the world. One classic situation has a set of alien bad guys arriving on Earth, pursued by a different set of alien good guys, with the poor humans caught in a power struggle between two different factions.

EXOTIC GIRLFRIEND

Do you want a soap opera in which a whole bunch of superpowered girls orbit around a single guy? Just pick a few other genres elements (Alien Visitors, Mecha, etc.) to justify what special ability the girls have and then come up with a strange reason why their big focus in life would be attracted to a normal guy and you have a perpetual motion plot machine, with more and more jealous girls appearing and bringing with them their

own bizarre entanglements and plot baggage. Of course, this genre element can be gender bent to include exotic boyfriends or non-binary romantic interests.

GUN BUNNIES

Will the characters blaze away with guns, blasters, or rocket launchers? Gun Bunny anime often features cute girls with big weapons (hence the name), but male gun bunnies (handsome guys, normally) are quite common. The Gun Bunny genre is typically set in recent historical or modern day periods, but can work equally well in the near or far future with cyberpunk or space bounty hunters and secret agents.

HERO TEAMS OR MAGICAL GIRLS

Will the characters possess superpowers (either paranormal, racial, or technological) and use them to battle evil? Do they have secret identities or cute pets? In hero/sentai or magical girl anime, there is often a clear duality – the heroes directly oppose a particular evil organisation that is connected to their own origins.

HEROIC FANTASY

Will the characters be a party of fantasy hero archetypes such as brave warriors (with magical weapons), spell-casters, flighty elves, or crusty dwarves? They will face the usual threats, such as brigands or trolls, rampaging dragons, and dark lords attempting to get hold of super artefacts whose power threatens the world. Remember that in anime and manga, heroic fantasy often crosses over with mecha or science fiction.

HOT RODS

Are car chases, motorcycles, souped-up engines, and drag races a big part of the game? This variation of mecha story is often combined with Gun Bunny anime, but it can also involve relatively non-violent situations (racing, sports competition, traffic patrol, high school biker gangs, etc.).

IDOLS OR SPORTS

Are the characters up-and-coming stars? They could be anything from pop music idol singers to premiere racing drivers to pro wrestlers. They'll compete with rival stars, their own lack of confidence or overconfidence, and temptation from people who want to exploit them. This sort of adventure is often structured with a series of semi-final competitions or events that build to a big climax, and thus makes a good mini-campaign.

INTERDIMENSIONAL EXILES

Are the characters people from the modern world who have become stranded somewhere else? The characters may have a few items of present-day technology that are perceived as powerful magical objects to the natives, or they could have gained appropriate paranormal powers (see Fantasy) or talent as a mecha pilot (see Mecha). The alternate dimension may have its own surprises, too: monsters, magic, villains, or weird technology. A group of characters in such a campaign may include characters that come from both worlds.





MARTIAL ARTS

Do the characters know powerful martial arts techniques, either realistic (like karate or kendo) or over-the-top (such as secret ninjutsu, chi-powered fireballs, or "anything goes" techniques)? The campaign may feature action-adventure situations or be structured more like the idols genre with emphasis on teamwork and non-violent competitions.

MECHA

Will the game prominently feature giant robots, fighter planes, androids, cyborgs, or other mecha? Do the players have a secret base or mobile battle fortress? Appropriate stereotypes include the young angst-ridden rookie with great innate ability, the flamboyant show-off who loves fighting, the cool warrior with a mysterious past, the ordinary guy caught in the conflict, and the battle-hardened, somewhat cynical veteran. A mecha squad must put aside their rivalries, master their machines, and figure out a way to defeat their opponents – which can be tricky if they accidentally fall in love with them first or discover the Big War was all a mistake started accidentally by their own side.

PERIOD PIECE

Is the game set in some historical period (like Samurai Japan or Pre-Revolutionary France) where the characters can wear nifty costumes and rub shoulders with famous historical figures?

PET MONSTER

Are the characters cute kids with pet monsters (like the neomorphs from the Prime World of Imago, page 336) which they can train to beat up other people's pet monsters or anyone else who gets in their way?

SCIENCE FICTION

Do the characters use or encounter technology more advanced than the present day, such as robots or star drives, or do they meet alien races and have adventures on strange new worlds? See Alien Visitors, Mecha, and Space Opera.

SCHOOL DAYS

Do the characters get to dress up in school uniforms, attend classes, worry about who is dating whom, and try to avoid being late for school? Many other genres feature teenage heroes who spend some time in school between adventures.

SPACE OPERA

Do the characters travel around in a spaceship and visit strange new worlds on a regular basis? Space patrol, space pirate, bounty hunter, explorer, trouble-shooter-for-hire, and galactic war scenarios are all possible.

SUPERNATURAL

Do the characters battle monsters, ghosts, demons, and other scary entities who exist in the shadows? Or are they monsters themselves?

UNLIMITED COMBINATIONS

Many anime and manga series combine multiple elements together, and there is no reason why a role-playing game should not do so. For example, mix Mecha, Idols, and School Days, and you can create characters that are stars of the powered armour wrestling circuit, ... yet they still need to attend their high school classes.

CREATING A GAME SETTING

The setting is the milieu in which the game takes place. The scope of the game (campaign, mini-campaign, or one-shot) is the main determinant of how much work should be put into the setting. Ideas can be borrowed from an existing anime and manga series, or your creation may be entirely original. Example settings could include a near-future Earth menaced by alien invasion, a fantasy world populated with sorcerers, elves, and dragons, a high school haunted by ghosts, a cyberpunk future where humans and robots compete for dominance, or just about anything else. The GM should create a setting that they will enjoy developing and which will encourage creating interesting adventures.

The vast multi-dimensional and multi-genre Anime Multiverse setting detailed in Chapter 14 (page 308) provides ample examples and inspiration upon which you can build your own game world.

▶ PERIOD

Anime-inspired games can take place in any period from the distant past to the far future or on a world with no direct connection to our own. In settings far removed from present day Earth, the GM will have to spend additional time thinking about the geography, culture, technology, societies, and peoples of the world. A useful shortcut is to draw parallels with real cultures, ("like medieval Japan, except ...") and just note the differences, whether they are names of countries perhaps or using lizards as mounts instead of horses.

The choice of genre often implies a particular period, but need not dictate one. For example, although a giant robot mecha campaign is usually set in the future, it can also occur in the present (aliens arrive!) or the past (creating an alternate history where steam-powered or magical robots exist). Similarly, a high school romance could take place as easily between students in a futuristic space academy as in modern-day Tokyo.

Story periods often used in anime and manga adventures our briefly outlined herein.

SAMURAI JAPAN

The most popular period for historical anime is Japan's age of the Samurai (although in anime, it is perhaps better titled "the age of the ninja").

The Samurai were the aristocratic warrior class, sworn retainers to their lords. They dominated Japan for over a thousand years, with their power finally waning in the 1860's after Japan was opened to Western influences. Their power was greatest during the "warring states" (Sengoku) period (1467-1558) when bloody civil war was waged between rival clans. They followed Bushido ("the way of the warrior"), a code stressing obedience to one's lord and personal honour. Samurai warriors wore armour and fought with sword and longbow, although Japanese armies also used naginata pole weapons and firearms (post 16th century). The mark of the samurai was hair tied in topknot and possession of two swords: a long katana used for fighting and a short wakizashi.

Lurking in old Japan's shadows are the ninja: spies and assassins, sometimes servants of the government, sometimes serving individual clan lords. In anime, ninja are depicted as having their own codes of honour as strong as those of the samurai as well as being masters of invisibility, martial arts, and dirty tricks like poison and gunpowder. Not incidentally, the ninja also provide the main "historical" justification for skilled female fighters, as their ranks were reputed to have both men and women as agents.

Other archetypes encountered in a samurai era campaign include daimyo (the proud clan lords whom the samurai served), elegant samurai ladies and courtesans, Buddhist monks (some wise sages or exorcists, some fierce warriors), ronin (disgraced, masterless samurai, often hired bodyguards or slovenly bandits), Shinto priests and shrine-maidens (sometimes depicted with shamanic magical powers), skilled craftsmen (especially those who manufacture swords) and, of course, oppressed peasant farmers.

OTHER PRE-INDUSTRIAL PERIODS

There is no need to be limited to ancient Japan for a pre-industrial historical setting. Anime has occasionally transcended its Japanese roots and set stories in other historical periods. The difference between "anime-style history" and "real history" normally boils down to the introduction of female warriors and the addition of some supernatural elements. Knowledge of actual historical events is useful but not necessary; anime history often has no more resemblance to reality than Hollywood movies.

RECENT HISTORY

This is the period that starts with the Wild West, Victorian Era, and Meiji Restoration (the downfall of the samurai and rise of the middle classes) in the mid-to-late 18th century and continues through the two world wars up to the recent past. In anime, an increasingly popular period is the 1920s and early 1930s, where a vibrant, newly industrialised Japan was just becoming respected as a modern nation and had not yet stained its hands with the crimes of World War II or suffered the trauma of defeat. The 1923 Great Kanto/Tokyo Earthquake often figures in such periods. The level of detail and accuracy is in the hands of the GM. Many anime and manga series add supernatural elements or a dash of anachronistic technology, sometimes verging on alternate history.

ALTERNATE HISTORY

In this setting, the flow of time has taken a sharp bend into a different reality. One popular genre in anime are stories where the Japanese people somehow avoid the mistake of World War II. Perhaps demons or aliens invaded, forcing the Axis and Allies to fight together against a greater threat. Other anime settings follow the steampunk genre, where brilliant inventors develop anachronistic technology to fight evil (or each other). These settings often see steam-powered or gasoline-engined giant robots, submarines that resemble Jules Verne's Nautilus, and giant armoured locomotives. Magic, psionic, or other paranormal powers may also be added to the mix. Of course, it is also possible to do an alternative history campaign set further in the past or with a varying present day.

MODERN DAY

The modern day period represents the present, the recent past, or the very near future. This setting is the least work for the GM, and easily adapts for genres from adult horror to action thriller. Current technology can play an important role, as can the experience of attending high school. Common elements or include cops and crooks, magical girls, martial arts, teenage romance or comedy, the military, pop music, psychic powers, sports, and supernatural or alien invasions. The modern day period may include full-scale science fiction or fantasy action as well if aliens visit Earth or characters can travel between dimensions.

NEAR FUTURE

The setting is somewhere in the next fifty years or so. Technology is on the rise, but people still mostly live on Earth, although there may be bases in orbit, on the moon, or maybe on or in Mars. Some settings may be cyberpunk dystopias, where megacorps dominate the world, pollution runs rampant, cyborgs stalk the

street, and corrupt government agencies and the threat of global war keep the average citizen living in terror. Others may be more like our own world but feature the development of new technology that can create giant robots, psychic powers, and artificial intelligence, or can simply give Earth's military a fighting chance against invaders from another world.

The GM will have to devote time to thinking about what science fiction technologies exist and, in particular, which Items are classed as gadgets of a futuristic nature.

FAR FUTURE

In a far future setting, our world has changed beyond recognition. A large portion of humanity may now live in space, whether in huge colony cylinders between Earth and the Moon, on Mars, or on the worlds of distant solar systems. The campaign could be set on a single planet (Earth or another world), sprawl across a single solar system, or take place in a star-spanning empire where interstellar travel is commonplace. Alternatively, humanity may have never even reached the stars and instead the Earth may have been devastated by a terrible holocaust (such as nuclear war, pollution, or an asteroid strike). Our cities may be replaced by a barren wasteland or mutant-infested toxic jungle where a once-proud civilisation is but a distant memory. Post-apocalypse settings often have a wide mix of technology with barbarians wandering the wastes, new civilisations rising from the ashes, and high-tech relics of the past that are viewed with superstitious awe.

ANOTHER WORLD: FANTASY

The setting is a completely fictional world where magic works and other non-human races exist. The most common type of anime fantasy world is one inspired by heroic fantasy novels and RPGs, which can lead to interesting role-playing scenarios since you are playing a game, based on an anime, based on a game. It is usually inspired by Medieval Europe but populated by dozens of different races. Sorcerers weave powerful spells, heroic knights battle great dragons, and bands of adventurers quest for a means to overthrow sinister dark lords bent on world domination. One common addition is the mixing in of elements of modern day or futuristic technology. As a result, the forces of the evil dark lord are as likely to include flying metal battleships or piloted robots as they are trolls and goblins. The explanation for this may be magically powered technology, but just as often, the setting has a medieval (and magic-using) culture which exists on the ruins of a long-destroyed technological empire.

Another common setting is a fantasy world inspired by a mix of Eastern traditions such as those of China or India. This takes more work than simply adding magic to Medieval Japan, but it can be incredibly interesting. In such worlds, martial arts, priestly magic, reincarnation, and karmic destiny are often more important than swordplay or Western-style wizardry. Gigantic, centralised empires are typically more common than the tiny warring states common to fantasies inspired by medieval Europe or Japan.



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ANOTHER UNIVERSE: SCIENCE FICTION

A step further out from high fantasy, future history, or alternative history is the original setting that has no connection to our own Earth. Many of these fall into the fantasy category, but such a world (or galaxy) need not have magic to be interesting. These worlds are often similar in some ways to an existing Earth period, but have completely fabricated details of geography, history, and cultures. Again, the GM can often describe them in short form, such as: "the culture and technology is like 1920s Europe, except there's gasoline-powered robots, there's a fight brewing between an old decadent monarchy and a fascist state, and lots of anarchists and pseudo-communist revolutionaries are running about." It is possible to go beyond that to create an entire universe from scratch, such as an alien interstellar society that exists in the distant past.

▶ CATEGORISING THE GAME

What is the feel and tone of your game, and under which broad category would you place it. Consider the few brief possibilities below.

ACTION

An action game highlights the exploits of heroic characters. Comedic and dramatic moments provide character insight, but the story is primarily concerned with the main characters moving from one battle or adventure to another.

DRAMA

The characters face challenges where things that they value (life, liberty, happiness, wealth, friendship, the lives of others, etc.) are at stake, and their actions affect the lives of others. There may be comic moments, but failure has serious consequences.

COMEDY

Amusing, incongruous, or wacky things happen. Comedy is often a parody of a more serious genre (such as swords and sorcery or mecha action), provoking laughs by exaggerating its clichés (such as the angst-ridden mecha ace) or adding anachronistic bits (like a rock star or a tank in a medieval fantasy world), or contradictory elements (such as a hero who is really greedy, clueless, lecherous, or destructive).

ROMANCE

The characters will have a chance to fall into or out of love. To make things interesting, the GM should create NPC love interests and rivals, since many players are not entirely comfortable with romancing each other's characters. Elements in romances include love triangles, mysterious strangers, childhood vows, many romantic partners chasing one target, and mistaken identity. A powerful element is forbidden love, where a romance appears doomed by family or societal disapproval of the relationship, such as an affair with a married person, someone of different social status, or someone who belongs to the other side in a war or other conflict.

MIXED

A mix of two or three different themes such as action-comedy or drama-romance can often be more fun than maintaining a single tone.

▶ GAME CONCEPT AND THEME

The game concept is the basic idea of who the characters are and what they are doing that brings them together as a group and gets them involved with adventures. The GM should develop it in concert with their ideas on genre, period, and category, and always in conjunction with the players. The GM should develop a game concept that integrates the desired genre ("cool stuff"), period, category, and game length into an interesting concept: the game theme. The GM should imagine they are creating the basic concept of a new anime movie, video, or TV series.

Associated with the game concept is the theme, an underlying idea that pervades the individual arcs of a plot or even the entire story itself. The game's theme should be one that will give players a good idea regarding what kinds of characters to create. A theme may be as straightforward as a quest for someone or something, as specific as "are robots people?" or as abstract as "dark forces rising" or "love conquers all." Themes give the campaign a certain sense of narrative cohesion. The GM should come up with a name for the campaign or adventure that conveys an appropriate animesque feel.

▶ CONNECTING WORLDS

Gaming groups might play more than one BESM campaign regularly. These campaigns can be set in different worlds and times, or they can all take place in the same "shared world" setting.

For example, you could start a campaign set on a planet in the Cathedral Prime World (page 322). Eventually, one of your players may decide to start a BESM campaign as well. Instead of creating a completely new environment, they could pick a different part of your Cathedral setting and, with the group's permission, set their new campaign there. In this way, the group fleshes out the world and the various campaigns can build off of each other. Characters visiting one location can hear about the activities of those in another, and villains and NPCs (or even player character "guest stars") can move between campaigns, just like in the crossover anime series.

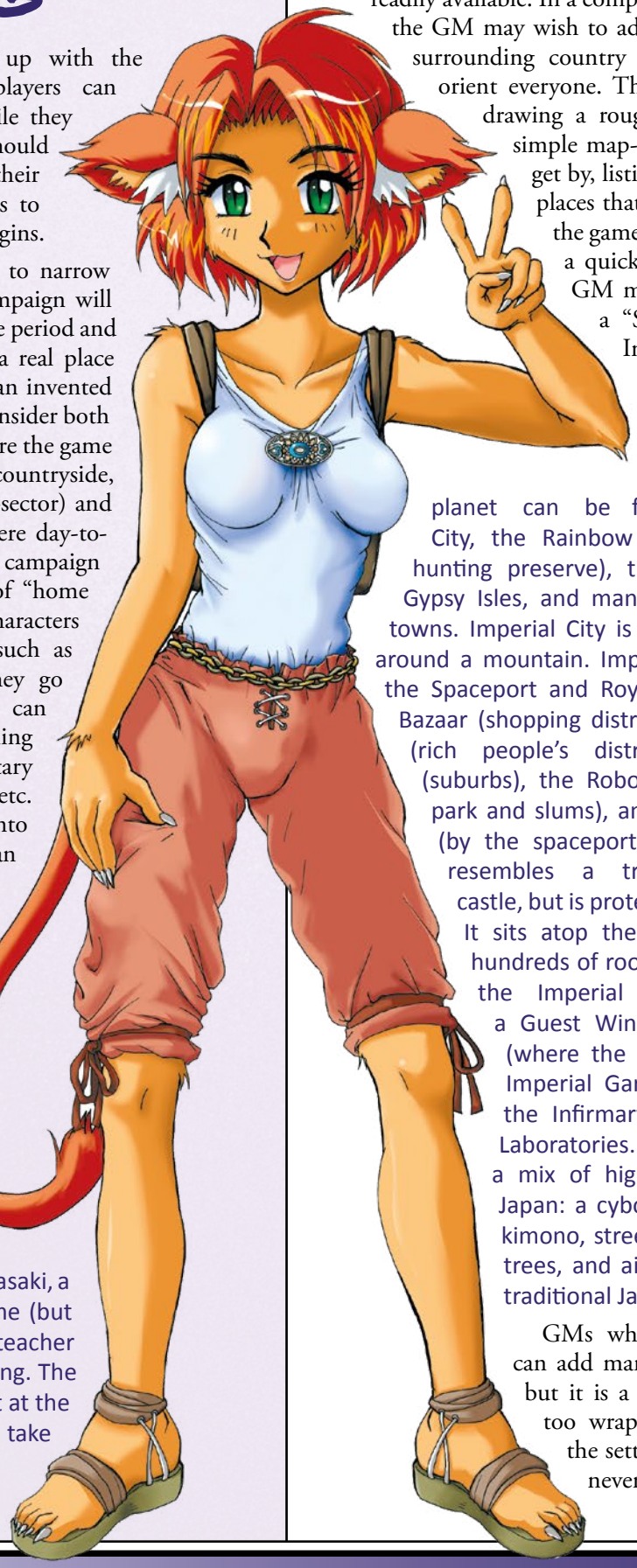

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WORLD BUILDING

After the GM comes up with the campaign concept, the players can create their characters. While they are doing that, the GM should work out the details of their campaign setting that needs to be established before play begins.

The first thing to do is to narrow down exactly where the campaign will take place. Depending on the period and game concept, it could be a real place (like Chicago or Tokyo) or an invented location. The GM should consider both the overall environment where the game will be set (such as a city, countryside, planet, solar system, or star-sector) and the individual locations where day-to-day events will occur. The campaign will often have a number of "home base" locations where the characters will spend a lot of time such as homes, work, or places they go to train or hang out. This can include their school, training hall, detective office, military barracks, police station, etc. There is no need to go into great detail here. The GM can usually get by with a line or two of description. For example, the GM might write down:

Keiko and her close friends attend Cicada High – an older and slightly decrepit high school located in a Tokyo suburban neighbourhood. Their new homeroom teacher this year is Mr. Yamasaki, a short-sighted and handsome (but scatterbrained) science teacher who loves butterfly collecting. The characters usually hang out at the Blue Wave video arcade or take the subway to the mall.



If the GM has set the game in the real world, there is usually no need to go into a great amount of geographical detail since real-world references are readily available. In a completely made-up world, the GM may wish to add some details of the surrounding country (or planets) to help orient everyone. This could be done by drawing a rough map, but often a simple map-in-prose is enough to get by, listing the names of a few places that can be dropped into the game. Here's an example of a quick verbal map that the GM might have created for a "Space Soldiers of the Imperial Bodyguard" campaign:

Neo-Kyoto is the Imperial Throne World. On the planet can be found the Imperial City, the Rainbow Forests (Emperor's hunting preserve), the Red Ocean, the Gypsy Isles, and many smaller cities and towns. Imperial City is built on top of and around a mountain. Important locations are the Spaceport and Royal Palace, the Alien Bazaar (shopping district), Crystal Terraces (rich people's district), the Foothills (suburbs), the Robot District (industrial park and slums), and the Alien Quarter (by the spaceport). The Royal Palace resembles a traditional Japanese castle, but is protected by a force field. It sits atop the mountain and has hundreds of rooms: a Throne Room, the Imperial Family's Quarters, a Guest Wing, a Royal Barracks (where the characters live), the Imperial Gardens, the Armoury, the Infirmary, and the Imperial Laboratories. The overall feel is a mix of high-tech and classical Japan: a cyborg ambassador in a kimono, streets lined with cherry trees, and air cars whizzing over traditional Japanese houses.

GMs who like lots of detail can add many more descriptions, but it is a good idea not to get too wrapped up in preparing the setting, or the game may never get started!

THE SUPPORTING CAST

There is no need to populate the entire universe, but the GM should usually come up with a starting group of 2-5 supporting NPCs who can act as continuing characters in addition to any villains or victims that the first adventure might also require. Of course NPCs related to the Nemesis or Significant Other Defects must also be developed. For example, in a game where the characters are a high-tech SWAT cyborg team, the NPC cast might be: the grumpy police chief, the station's perky radio dispatcher who talks to them on their missions, and the cute girl-next-door who runs the coffee and doughnut shop they hang out afterwards. The GM can usually assume a character's friends and comrades are the characters themselves. Most supporting cast only need a name and a very brief description ("grizzled veteran with eye-patch" or "spoiled rich girl and flunkies who rule the school"). The characters can also accumulate more supporting cast as adventures continue, like the pretty idol singer they rescued from alien invaders who becomes their regular mascot.

▶ ORGANISATIONS

If the characters or their enemies are part of an organisation (like the police SWAT team, high school magic club, or 22nd Earth Defence Force battle squadron), the GM should spend some time working out details that include "What is their purpose?" "What kind of resources do they have?" and "What is cool about them?" The latter might include possession of special mecha, paranormal powers, or just really neat uniforms. It is often a good idea to create one or more Class Templates that members might acquire.

ELEMENTS BEYOND THE HUMAN NORM

If elements such as paranormal powers, high technology, and non-human races are going to be part of the setting, the GM should spend some time considering how they work. For example, magic might be a gift that only certain creatures or bloodlines possess or something that anyone can learn with proper talent.

Aliens or monsters might be unique in the adventures or part of an entire race. Similar issues should be considered in regard to the technology: if objects like advanced robots exist, are they available to everyone or do they belong to a specific group or organisation? How do open-ended technologies, like that represented by the Spaceflight Attribute, actually function in the campaign? If future technology exists, is it a "hard science" approach where everything should be at least theoretically possible, or is anything possible as long as there is some technobabble to justify it?

If non-human characters are a major part of the setting, you may wish to create Race Templates for the player characters. You should also decide if the non-humans possess unusual paranormal or technological capabilities. In realistic games with mass-produced mecha, a similar approach can be taken: instead of having characters design their own personalised machines, the GM can design some production models that commonly exist.

DESIGNING ADVENTURES

Creating an interesting adventure is an art, not a science, and the following guidelines reflect only one way to proceed. An experienced GM can create adventures with almost no advance preparation, especially if they are familiar with character motivations and has NPCs and situations established as part of a continuing campaign. On the other hand, it is a good idea for a novice GM to take at least a few hours to plan ahead when creating an adventure. Having a binder or computer full of notes can greatly increase one's confidence when sitting across the table from a group of expectant players.

▶ STORY LINE

The first thing to do is to work out the backstory behind the adventure. This may follow naturally from earlier sessions, or it might be a completely new story arc. For instance, if the adventure involves a villain, decide what their goals are and the way that their plot will work itself out if the characters do not stop it. At this point, it is also a good idea to decide which major NPCs will play an important role in the adventure and what their goals are. In some cases, such as villains the characters will fight or allies who will work closely with the characters, the enemies should be wholly created as though they were player characters.

One technique that can help spark a story line is to think of one evocative image or idea that will help make this adventure different from the last, and then use this as a seed to inspire the story. For example, the image of a mechanical dragon or the characters disguised in school uniforms as part of an undercover operation or a castle floating in the clouds. Sometimes an idea will not work, and so just make a note of it for a future adventure.

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CHARACTER GOALS

Next, the GM should think about the adventure from the players' perspectives. How will they get involved and what actions are they likely to want to take? Does someone ask them for help or is the adventure something that revolves around them from the start? Will the characters want to become involved? Consider the steps the characters will likely have to follow to resolve the situation and (if necessary) make a few notes of how they might succeed. It is all very well to craft a really cunning plan for a villain, but if it is so foolproof the characters will never even learn of it, there won't be an adventure!

PLOT ELEMENTS

Now it is time to get down to the details of the plot. This is where the GM should work out a rough idea of what plot complications will develop, and the order that the characters may encounter them. It is wise to consider this from the perspective of "here is the villain's plan" rather than "this is what the characters must do to make the plot work." It is usually more rewarding as a GM to set up situations that engage and challenge the characters to make decisions or use their abilities rather than creating a complex puzzle box that they must solve in a certain way to progress to the next plot point.

If a villain drives the story, take some time to consider their back-up plan if the characters thwart "Plan A" early on. In a game where a main antagonist risks death or capture, they should not be introduced directly (as the characters may defeat them right away, ruining the suspense). Instead, introduce the villain through their henchmen and works ("we destroy this temple in the name of Lord Nobunaga!") or in situations where combat is impossible. It is wise to have the initial villains the characters encounter be henchmen, introducing the main villain in situations where no fighting takes place (like on a view screen or at a diplomatic ball). This way, the adventure will not go "off the rails" should the characters do the unexpected.

An adventure intended to come to some sort of resolution in one or two sessions should have four to six distinct plot elements, which can be thought of as various complications, encounters with interesting or hostile NPCs, or clues that will lead the characters to further situations. As GM, give some thought to making an interesting climax to the adventure. However, remember that this is a set of notes for a game, rather than the script for a play. The players will decide what their characters will do.

Plot elements come in two broad categories. First, there are those that tempt the characters into doing something, such as the space pirate characters discovering a clue to a lost treasure ship, or a mecha pilot on leave stumbling onto their long-lost high school love. Second, there are complications that add difficulty, such as rival pirates attacking the characters on the way to the treasure, or the old flame turning out to be an enemy spy. A mix of both carrot and stick helps keeps the story interesting without letting the characters feel railroaded. In a one-shot adventure, the GM should keeps things simple with clear objectives. In a continuing campaign, plot elements can be ambiguous or mysterious; if the characters do not pursue them during one session, they can be reintroduced at a later date.

GMs should usually make a few notes of what they plan to happen. The simplest way to prepare is to list the plot elements in point form and rely on one's own imagination to translate this into descriptions of encounters or events during the game session. It is a good idea to prepare some notes on the NPCs that will appear in the adventure, especially their appearances and goals. Some GMs also like to make detailed maps or diagrams of places where any chases or battles might take place. The abstract nature of the BESM combat system means this is usually unnecessary. However, if a new locale is introduced (like a haunted forest they must cross, a crime scene the characters will investigate, or a villain's fortress that they may have to capture), scribbling down a few lines of description in advance can pay dividends in helping describe a scene during the game.

One way to create an engaging adventure is to set situations where the characters must make tough decisions. These may be emotional ones: "do I date cute Maki or sexy Keiko – and what if Keiko catches me two-timing her?" They may be strategic ones: "do we send everyone against the fortress entrance, or should some of us create a diversion while the others sneak round the back way?" They may be heroic: "do I let the reactor melt down, or do I brave the radiation and shut it down manually?" They may be heart-rending: "we've only got a limited amount of room in the starship; we can dump our mecha and take all the refugees, or we can rescue the kids but leave enough weapons aboard to protect ourselves on the journey home." Ideally, the decisions will not be arbitrary, but will flow naturally from the adventure and choices the characters make.

IMPORTANT NPCS

The guidelines for Character Creation apply to NPCs, although the GM will rarely need to go into as much detail about character backgrounds as the players do. If the characters will be fighting with or against any NPCs, the GM should take time to work out their basic characteristics before the adventure: Stats, Attributes, Defects, Health Points, and Damage Multiplier. The

same is true of NPCs with whom they may be closely interacting on a regular basis, such as a prospective lover. Otherwise, it is often enough to just make a note of a name and position ("Takayuki, the handsome man who runs the video arcade that will be robbed by the thugs") and maybe something that the characters can remember ("he has long hair; he was once an elite car racer but was hurt in an accident, and now he walks with a cane").

Many minor NPCs need even less description, and the GM can simply make them up during the game if details are needed or (for minor villains like a henchman's thugs) just have a single list of game characteristics that apply collectively to an entire batch of them. It can be handy to make a short list of names that are ready to apply to NPCs that are invented on the spot, as "real-sounding" names are often hard to improvise.

In a mini-campaign or campaign, a good technique is to introduce an NPC in passing in one session and then promote them to a major role in a subsequent session. This gives the characters the sense they are living in a "real" universe and, since they are used to having that character around, makes the players care about their fate. For example, having the teenage magic club rescue a gym teacher kidnapped by demons is fine, but it becomes a more powerful story line if the gym teacher involved is their own gym teacher and has already appeared by name in several prior adventures.

▶ PRESENTING THE VILLAINS

The presentation of the antagonists (also known as villains or "bad guys") is crucial. The villains should be among the most notable and distinctive NPCs in a campaign to emphasise the threat they pose to the player characters. If the central antagonist rarely opposes the characters directly, it is possible to still make their presence known to the players by introducing appropriate mercenaries or henchmen. Consider each of the following details before presenting the villains to the characters:

EXACTLY WHO ARE THE ANTAGONISTS?

Establish the villains' names, physical appearances, origins, and hierarchical ranking (if applicable). If you have a detailed visualisation of the villains' personality, speech patterns, posture, and tone, it will be much easier to convey that character depth to the players.

UNDERSTAND THEIR MOTIVATIONS

Villains who do nasty things simply because they are evil make very uninteresting NPCs. Villains do not typically view themselves as bad guys either, but often believe that they are the only ones who can see the bigger picture. Ask yourself why these characters are plotting against the characters or working against the values of humanity. Do they want power or revenge? Are they merely delusional? Are they working for a cause they believe is good? Do their ends justify the means? The villains' motivations may never be perfectly clear to the players, but it is imperative that you understand what they are. In many cases, a villain is a matter of perception. Honourable antagonists (who may later ally with the characters against worse villains) are a common theme in anime and one well worth developing.

GIVE VILLAINS DISTINCT PERSONALITIES

Important NPCs will only stand out as individuals if you have spent the time to properly develop their personality. The more clearly you construct the antagonists' identities, the more real they will become to your players. Some villains will taunt the characters while others will try to convert them to their cause, yet they should all come across as distinct individuals with a spectrum of emotions and behaviours.

UNDERSTAND THE HENCHMEN ROLE

Do the villains work alone, or do they rely on henchmen to do their dirty work? How is their organisation structured, and what role do secondary and tertiary commanders play? Ordinary grunts need not be as well developed as their employers but should still possess some identifying traits such as physical appearances, weapons, or powers.

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WEAKNESSES ARE IMPORTANT

What are the villains' weaknesses that may eventually lead to their fall from power? Keep a few options in the back of your mind that can be explored in detail as the adventure progresses. Giving a villain weaknesses that the characters can exploit allows the players to use tactics other than brute force.

VILLAINS MUST MATCH THE THEME

Decide how the heinous acts that the villains perpetrate fit your chosen theme and tone. In a role-playing situation, if villains kill innocent victims, the player characters may not feel obliged to capture them alive. This means creating new villains every few adventures. The reverse is also true: to make a hated enemy, make sure the villains commit truly evil crimes and not simply petty misdemeanours. For greater motivation, introduce a likeable and virtuous NPC over several gaming sessions, and then make them the villain's next victim.

When important villains speak, they should command attention. When the villains fight, they should fight with passion. And if they die, they should be remembered forever.

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NAVIGATING THE GAME

Part of the Game Master's job is adjudicating and interpreting the various BESM rules. The game system is fairly simple and light, but players have a way of putting their characters in situations that the game rules may not contemplate explicitly. No rules system can take every possible situation into account, and BESM purposely leaves many aspects of the rules open for interpretation. As GM, you ultimately make the calls.

RULES QUESTIONS

Questions about the rules will arise during games and you must resolve them. They may be questions about how a rule works, what rule applies in a particular situation, or how to handle an unusual situation or application of a rule.

When a rules question arises, take a moment to handle it and make your answer as clear as possible to the players. When you first play the game, you are likely going to need to consult the rules more often, until you and the players understand BESM's underlying Tri-Stat System and its nuances. You may prefer to ask one of the players to look up rules for you during the game so you can focus on the story.

Most situations that arise during BESM adventures can be adjudicated without dice, or with a simple Stat or Skill check. Sometimes during the game you will make a "GM call," where you say, "this is how I want to handle it for now." Ask the players to respect your ruling and move on with the game. If necessary, you can talk after the game about the ruling and how to best handle similar situations when they arise in the future.

HOUSE RULES

Every gaming group tends to develop its own set of "house rules" over time. These are modifications (or clarifications) of the game's rules or specific rules about conduct at the gaming table. House rules should make the game a more pleasant and enjoyable experience for everyone, and the players and the Game Master should agree upon them in advance.

Let the players know if you have changed any of the game's rules during your campaign. If the players have any concerns about these rules changes, discuss them and come to a compromise, if necessary. Record any rule changes and make a handout for the players, so everyone knows the rules; this will minimise disputes.

Rules of conduct, or "table rules" as they are sometimes known, vary from group to group. Some groups prefer to limit side conversations, inappropriate movie and television quotes, or jokes while the game is in progress. Others have no such rules. One example is the "you said it" rule: if a player says something while at the table while the game is in play, then their character says it, too. This naturally limits the out-of-character conversation during the game, but some players may find it too restrained or frustrating.

Other table rules may cover:

» Making die rolls in clear view or not rolling until it is your turn. Alternatively, your group may prefer to make rolls for their actions in advance so they can have the results ready when the GM calls for them. Both methods can work well.

» Appropriate language and discussion content at the gaming table. This may be particularly important for groups that include younger players.

» Secret communication between players and the GM, whether its passing notes, side conversations in the next room, or something similar.

» Any other rules about how the game is conducted, such as: "we always start at 6 o'clock sharp" or "new players have to run an NPC 'guest star' character for at least two games before creating a character of their own".

CHANGING THE RULES

On occasion, gaming groups may want to change the BESM rules to better suit their own games and style of play. If you find that a particular rule does not work for you then change it! Of course, you may want to consider carefully how any changes will affect point balance and other rules in the game. Test a rules change for a game or two and see how it works, since you can always change it back or modify it further as necessary.

A particular opening in the rules does not necessarily require a rules change, but rather discussion and agreement among the players. BESM characters can have tremendous powers, and those powers can be unintentionally abused by inexperienced players. Rather than changing the rules to restrict the characters, consider talking to the players and asking them to voluntarily modify their characters' behaviour to eliminate the abuse.

Never change the rules arbitrarily or without informing the players in advance of the change, and your reasons for it. This ensures there will be fewer rules disputes and confusion during the game.

▶ CHEATING: JUST DO IT!

If you want your players to think you are the best Game Master in the world, you only have one option: cheat, and cheat often. Never make a single dice roll without thinking to yourself, "Hmmm … if I cheat and change the result of this roll, will I make it a better game?" In Game Mastering, there are no rules about "being fair", "sticking to the dice roll", or "being honest with the players". There is only one primary rule: make your game the best it can be. Dice are only a tool to suggest how you should make up your mind. You make the decisions, not the dice.

Whether you ask your players to also follow this advice is up to you, of course.

DAMAGE CONTROL

Even the best gaming groups and Game Masters encounter difficult situations. When problems arise, you must resolve them. The following are some of the more common troubleshooting techniques you can use to help keep your anime adventures running smoothly.

▶ MAKING MISTAKES

Sometimes you may make a mistake, whether it is misinterpreting a rule or not recalling an important fact about an NPC. If the mistake occurs during the game, own up to it, do what you can to correct it, and move on. It is much better to tell your players, "oops, I made a mistake," than to try and cover it up or, even worse, refuse to admit it and allow the game to suffer because of it.

Most mistakes are not likely to make much difference in the game. If a mistake does result in serious consequences (such as the death of a player character), you can either choose to reverse the problem – changing history and saying it never happened – or you can redress it in a future adventure. Perhaps the characters get an opportunity to fix the mistake, or even to travel back in time and change history themselves, in order to "right the cosmic balance" by preventing an event that should not have happened.



CONFLICT BETWEEN PLAYERS

Although BESM is a game about teamwork and co-operation, conflict may arise between players in your group. Note this is not conflict between characters, which can be interesting and fun, but a conflict between the players that threatens to spoil everyone's enjoyment of the game.

If a conflict develops between two or more of your players, discover what it is and settle it through some mutually agreeable compromise. Make it clear to the players that they should keep their personal disputes out of the game. If they are incapable of doing so, or settling matters, then consider asking one or more of the difficult players to leave the game. Most problems can be solved long before that becomes necessary, however.

In the case of conflicts over events happening in the game, remind the players that it is just a game and the goal is for everyone to have fun. If an in-game conflict is not enjoyable for a player, try modifying or eliminating it. If there is conflict in the group about the game, find out what it is and settle it by changing the campaign's plot or adding some house rules that address the issue.

POWER ABUSE

Characters in BESM can have tremendous powers. Oftentimes, they can literally move mountains and change the course of history. In many anime and manga series, heroes almost always act with the utmost responsibility and restraint, but there is no guarantee that players will do the same. Sooner or later, someone may decide to see just how far they can go with their character's abilities.

While you should encourage player creativity, there are some uses of powers that are either inappropriate to the genre, style, and tone of game you are running, or likely to ruin everyone's enjoyment of the game if permitted. In those cases, you need to step in and politely, but firmly, refuse to allow them. A gentle reminder is usually enough to dissuade most players, especially if it is for the good of the story as a whole.

In cases where players create abusive powers or characters – intentional or accidental, with or without the use of benchmarks (page 24) – you can simply ask them to drop or redesign them to fit the campaign. There is nothing wrong with saying, "your interpretation of that Attribute is simply too powerful for this game" and setting limits on what the characters are capable of accomplishing. Alternatively, when an abuse of power happens in the game, you can confront the players with the consequences of their actions. How do the background NPCs in the game react to a character who uses their powers for personal gain, or who murder villainous opponents in cold blood? The open hostility of respected NPCs may encourage players to alter the way they portray their characters.

GETTING BACK ON TRACK

No adventure plan survives unchanged after contact with the players, who can do the most unexpected things and derail a planned adventure. Sometimes all you can do is go with the flow and follow where the players lead you. If you have a good grasp of the setting and characters for your game, you should be able to improvise and deal with most digressions from your plot. The players may even provide you with some ideas and opportunities you had not originally considered.

Other times, when an adventure is diverting wildly from the story, you may need to nudge things towards the best direction. The trick is to do this without the players realising, since the ideal adventure leads the players as little as possible. Fortunately, there are a number of ways to guide wayward players back in the right direction:

GIVE THEM A CLUE

Anime villains are notorious for taunting heroes with clues about their fiendish master plans. If the characters wander away from the plot, have the villain drop them a hint like a riddle, a sudden attack, or a threatening message. A decent clue can put the heroes hot on their enemy's trail again.

SUDDEN INSIGHT

Provide a more direct clue using the characters' abilities. A psionicist or magician might have a vision or flash of insight, or a skilled detective might piece together certain clues. Characters with enhanced senses may pick up on clues others failed to notice, while a telepath might sense critical stray thoughts or "psychic impression" of nearby bystanders.

NPC LEADS

If all else fails, you can have an NPC guide the characters in the right direction. The best way to enact this is to have the characters come to the NPC's rescue, rather than the supporting character solving the problem. For example, one of the group's digital reporter friends follows up on some leads and stumbles across a vital part of the villain's plan. They have just enough time to send a panicked text to the group before being captured by the villain's minions. Suddenly, the heroes are off to the rescue and the adventure is running smoothly again.


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SHOJO ROLE-PLAYING

The word "shojo" translates to "young, unmarried female" or, more commonly, "girl." As one might expect of a genre (or perhaps more accurately, "thematic style") defined by this word, shojo anime and manga are created with a mostly female audience in mind, although plenty of male readers and viewers enjoy them too.

Shojo as a genre of anime and manga grew from shojo literature that began to emerge in the 1920s, particularly the work of Nobuko Yoshiya, author of numerous short stories for girls and young women. Her works, published in the 1920s and 1930s, featured many of the symbols that have come to be recognised as the most central elements of shojo stories: flowers, school girls, and love. The illustrations that accompanied them also anticipated the art style of shojo manga and anime, with emphasis on schoolgirls in uniform, bountiful flowers, and graceful, attenuated figures that were clearly influenced by 1920s American and European fashion and magazine art.

Around the same period of time, the Takarazuka Revue opened and presented lush visual productions that integrated Western musical theatre with Japanese story elements (particularly those similar to Yoshiya's) to the Japanese public. Originally envisioned as the complement to Kabuki (in which men play all the roles, male and female), Takarazuka featured women in all roles. The actresses were required to go through a two-year academy that not only taught them to act, sing, and dance, but also divided them into those who would play male roles and those who would play female roles. Each set of actresses were taught a group of stylised movements and vocal mannerisms (kata) that signified the gender each would play. Shojo anime and manga often use Takarazuka elements, and frequently use aspects of the kata to depict basic information about characters who are intended to be particularly masculine or feminine. Takarazuka continues to be extremely popular today, and has become tied to shojo manga and anime by adapting some of the best-loved stories of shojo into immensely successful musicals.

While manga became popular in Japan after World War II, manga written for a female audience did not emerge until the 1950s. The first shojo manga were written and drawn by men, but women first broke into the industry during the mid-1960s – right about the time the first "magical girl" series burst onto television screens. The manga became wildly successful, not just with young girls, but also with the growing numbers of working women and college students. Shojo manga and anime expanded their territory through the 1970s and 1980s, but it was in the 1990s that the genre's success really exploded. Today, there are manga targetted at all ages of women, including a genre called josei, or lady's manga, which deals with more explicit themes than shojo. Many shojo anime shows – often based on the more beloved manga – have became extremely popular with both boys as well as girls, proving that shojo isn't necessarily just for girls anymore.

ELEMENTS OF SHOJO

While symbols and themes are important, the essential core of shojo is the interpersonal relationship – the powerful emotional entanglements between characters. The plot is advanced by character development and growth. Plot twists introduce relationship complications that must be overcome. Saving the world or becoming a sports champion may be the apparent point of the story, but it is entirely secondary to the fact that the characters have achieved a major landmark in their relationship with each other in order to do so.

Of all emotional entanglements in shojo, love is the most complex and intense motivation. Romance is a major theme of nearly every plot. Friendship and family relationships are common secondary plot hooks. And sometimes, all of these are intricately knotted together – the more complicated the knot, the better.

The cast of characters is typically focussed on one or a few female protagonists, with supporting characters of mixed genders. It is not unusual to have an all-female cast, or even an all-male cast. There is something about the emotional focus of shojo that encourages some manga and anime creators to experiment with the ways they explore their characters. Shojo stories can take place in nearly any setting (fantasy and pseudo-historical European settings are common) or time period, although the classic settings is the modern-day Japanese school. Shojo also has a long history of plot elements that may have at one time seemed startling or unorthodox, such as cross-dressing characters, same-sex relationships, and gender-switching. This experimental mindset has lead to the exploration of more taboo subjects as well.

Shojo stories also share settings, plots, and other ingredients with other genres, but certain character roles, plot complications, and techniques for story resolution are common to most shojo stories. The key that sets shojo apart is the focus on relationships and emotional character development. Take a story focussed around a ronin samurai, for example.

In a shonen (boy's manga) universe, the story conflicts might focus on:

» his attempts to perfect his practice of bushido.

» hunting down the traitorous scum he once called friends who murdered their lord.

» his regret over killing the many worthy samurai who challenge his prowess.

» his encounters with people who seek to use his martial prowess for their own ends (either as a killer, a protector, or a teacher), which he may accept in order to make ends meet while on his quest.

The battles would be shown in detail, possibly with depictions of his style of kenjutsu and trademark attacks. An ongoing villain – the leader of the traitors – who loathes the ronin for reasons of cowardice (for not committing suicide) and, possibly, shares some complicated past history with him, might continue to send his henchmen after him. This draws the ronin closer for the final confrontation between the two.

In a shojo story, however, the story conflicts might focus on:

» his study of bushido as part of his denial that he has actually found his true love in the person of the daughter of his murdered lord, who is now engaged to another samurai – very improper, after all.

» his emotional turmoil (possibly with covert romantic tension) over hunting down the man who used to be his best friend, but who betrayed his most sacred trust to murder their lord (for a good reason). There would be plenty of flashbacks to their days as children or young adults.

» his attempts to not kill the many samurai who come to challenge him, and his growing regret and pain about these deaths.

The battles would start out detailed, but they would eventually be glossed over; it is clear and obvious the ronin is the best there is. The ongoing villain – the former best friend, of course – might send minions to attack the ronin, but this would be a distraction to keep his loyal, stupid, old friend out of the way while he dismantled the cruel slavery ring that their old lord had organised, now run by their lord's daughter. The ronin might eventually turn one of the minions to his side with his nobility and generosity, and the former minion revealed the true identity of the villain. The ronin cuts his way across the country to confront his former best friend, who reveals all during the course of their fight. Together now, they sweep aside the slavery ring, do away with the structure running it, and the lord's daughter is shamed forever. At the end, the two might choose to leave Japan and travel to China rather than commit seppuku together (although this is an option too in very dramatic stories), revealing at the last their love for each other. Either (or both) of the samurai might or might not be revealed as a woman in disguise.

The focus on emotional intensity is the key to transforming a story into a story typical of shojo anime and manga.

CHARACTER ROLES IN SHOJO

The core of shojo is relationships. Each main character has to have someone with whom to have those relationships. Who are those people?

FRIENDS

Every shojo heroine (or hero) has friends. These people may be her classmates, teammates, or co-workers, or the people who shop or travel or play sports with her. They may not admit to being her friends at all, while being the only people who can understand her situation. Often there is a single best friend, who may be the heroine's sole means of emotional support. Friends are usually the focus of themes of trust and betrayal, and often have secrets of their own.

LOVERS

Into every shojo heroine's life, romance must fall, often in a manner so abundant and convoluted that she needs a score card to keep track of it all. Having multiple romantic interests appear in the course of the story is natural. Having to choose between them is a major conflict that shows up again and again. Inevitably, only one is the One True Love.

ENEMIES

As if betraying one's friends or having to choose between multiple lovers isn't enough conflict, the shojo heroine usually has at least one enemy, and possibly a whole cabal of enemies. Whatever the enemy's apparent main goal – taking over an empire, winning the tennis championship by fair means or foul, winning away the heroine's one true love, or revolutionising the world – the real goal of the enemy is to poke the heroine's emotions with a metaphorical cattle prod and keep pushing that "zap" button, occasionally ramping up the voltage just to see her squirm a little more.

These may look like discrete groups of people, but are simply roles that characters can take, and a single character can fit all or some of these roles, sometimes simultaneously. A dear old childhood friend, not seen for years, could appear and begin winning the heroine's heart, all the while secretly working against her out of jealous rivalry. The heroine's best friend could have a terrific crush on the heroine, and mayhem ensues when the heroine finds this out; does she requite her friend's love, or must she reject it?

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CONFLICT

Much of the emotional conflict between the heroine and her friends and lovers involves issues of communication and trust.

If some kind of communication can go wrong, it inevitably will. For example, an exchange diary (a journal traded back and forth by two people writing their thoughts to each other) will fall into the wrong hands, a friend (or secret enemy) charged with carrying a message will fail to deliver or mangle the message, or someone will take it into their head to explain the situation (whatever it is) in the worst possible light. The misunderstandings generated thus can have immediate fallout, or could drag out over a long period of time.

Over and over, the characters in shojo discover that other people are a mystery: just because someone is your friend does not mean that your friend will react exactly the same way you do. Part of coming of age is the need to create emotional bridges to friends and lovers that reveal bits and pieces of how they think and behave. Characters are forced to consider other people's feelings and situations by facing emotional pain – either the pain of being hurt, or the pain of knowing that another, important person has been hurt. Likewise, even enemies may have emotional weaknesses. A pool of shojo villains may swirl with jealous rivalries, obsessive love affairs, and secret betrayals of their own, which reduce their effectiveness, and may prove their undoing.

Trust is the linchpin of love. Trust is often a tool to make someone realise their own worth or how wrong they were about something and a source of self-discovery. The shojo heroine frequently faces the test of figuring out exactly how much she trusts her friends and lovers. How much trust is too much? Is she trusting the right people? Trust is fraught with choices, and choices often go awry.

The heroine's passionate battle cry in many anime and manga series is, "I believe in you!" Betrayal of such belief can be the foundation of entire stories, or story



arcs within a larger tale. Mix it up with communication problems and misunderstandings, and that is the beginning of a beautifully baroque shojo plot.

RESOLUTION

Throughout the course of a larger story, the heroine and her friends travel a path that consists of multiple small steps of resolution that lead them to becoming better, more mature people. Each resolution involves two steps: epiphany and sacrifice.

The epiphany is the character's sudden realisation that they have participated in a miscommunication or betrayal, or has simply made the wrong choice. Epiphanies very often come from talking to another person who is older, wiser, or more knowledgeable about the situation, but they can stem from some traumatic event.

The character's dawning understanding of the situation leads them to decide a course of action that might, in the best of possible worlds, repair the problem or, in the worst of possible worlds, render payment for the injury. In most cases, the method they choose to cope with the damage involves some form of sacrifice. An appropriate sacrifice ranges from pride – admitting and apologising for the fault – to actual death, depending on the story.

The depth of pain integral to the sacrifice reflects the purity of the heart, and the amount of work the character puts into discovering that purity. The noble heart is the source of all power, love, and forgiveness in most shojo stories, and attainment of this nobility is the true victory.

In an ongoing story, significant cycles of epiphany and resolution may be repeated several times, depending on the magnitude. In a TV series, a major one will come at the climax of the season. In a campaign, it may occur after a build up of several game sessions.

Arguably, the overarching theme of the shojo story is the achievement of enlightenment about the self.



ACTION

Where action and combat in shonen stories often focus on individual prowess, the accumulation of new and greater power (martial techniques, mecha, pet monsters, and so on), and the details of the actual fight, shojo integrates the power of emotions, love, and purity into combat. The combat itself may be stylised, brutal, or glossed over, and death may occur, but blood rarely flies (visibly). A character's power stems from love, nobility, and an intense imperative to protect others.

Action in shojo need not involve swords, guns, or magical blasts at all. The most intense and dangerous action is sometimes almost entirely on an emotional level. Also, school sports – such as tennis, basketball, baseball, or skating – are often substituted for combat in terms of providing direct action.

RUNNING SHOJO GAMES

The complexity of the plot, thematic, and character elements of shojo manga and anime can make it appear challenging to run a shojo-style game. The task of the GM is actually much simpler than it might seem, as long as they keep a few points in mind.

▶ CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS

All player characters should be created with backgrounds rich in plot hooks. Whether there is a single, giant plot hook on which to turn the plot, or many little ones, the GM needs something to use to drag that character kicking and screaming into intrigue, embarrassment, or action. If the player does not generate enough plot hooks, the GM may have to set up some secrets in the character's background to both surprise the player and tie the character to another player character or important NPC.

Hoshiko is a perfectly normal, uniform-wearing, underachieving school girl who is spending too little time studying for her exams and too much time on her acting club and the many wonderful and attractive people in it. She either works on club activities or shops with her best friend, Rie. Unknown to Hoshiko – or her player – she is actually the only survivor of a noble family from another universe. Her guardians arranged for her to be adopted on Earth by parents who knew nothing of her background, to hide her from her family's enemies. She also doesn't know that there is an arranged marriage and great political responsibilities awaiting her on that other world.

▶ DETAILS COUNT

Shojo anime and manga are intensely detailed and richly symbolic. The GM should try to do the same. With careful use of imagery, perceptive characters (or players) can tell a great deal about the environment and people in the game by subtle cues in the GM's description, such as the clothes that a person wears, the way their hair is styled or coloured, or the type and colour of flower tucked behind an ear. The GM may wish to consider picking a few persistent motifs for significant characters and locations. Reference works that show how flowers, gems, elements, animals, astrological signs, plants have traditional associations, or which provide the meaning of baby names are helpful here.

Hoshiko is beautiful and unusually graceful, and has a quite regal presence when she gets angry. This can be incredibly intimidating, especially coupled with her strange, unusually pale eyes. Rie, on the other hand, seems incredibly plain next to her remarkable friend, and hides behind enormous glasses, playing the role of the quiet, studious one. Only her close friends and parents know that she is actually a world-class fencer, as well as a brilliant scientist in training.

▶ RELATIONSHIPS ARE KEY

When the game starts, it is often easier if each character has a pre-existing relationship with at least one other player character or key NPC. These relationships provide jumping-off points for other interactions with player characters and NPCs.

Rie and Jun have been friends since elementary school, and the long bond that the two share keeps them friendly, though Rie is now Hoshiko's best friend. Jun is the immensely popular captain of the soccer team, and much of Rie's time is tied up by Hoshiko, fencing, and the secret physics project she's working on at her father's aerospace company. They don't have much time together, but Jun and Rie have history, and they can count on each other for help.

▶ THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A COINCIDENCE

Fate and destiny play an enormous role in many shojo stories. If something seems like a coincidence, it is most certainly not.

Jun has had strange recurring dreams for a long time, since before she met Rie. They involve people screaming, and bright flashes of light, and a great deal of intense pain. For years, she has also wondered about the scar on her left arm, which looks less like a random injury and more like a strange sort of symbol.

During one recent lunch with Rie and Hoshiko, she noticed an almost-identical symbol on the cover of Hoshiko's notebook. When asked, Hoshiko did not remember drawing it, nor did she know what it was.

A STABLE OF NPCS

People are the structure of the world in shojo stories, and while the player characters can interact with each other, there need to be NPCs to flesh out the world. Depending on the GM and the story, there may be an enormous stable of NPCs or only a few, but a solid core of well-rounded, named NPCs provides necessary information, wisdom, and interest. Even nameless NPCs (sometimes created on the spot by the GM) can trigger important character development.

Jun has only ever confessed to one person about her memories: the crazy old lady who lives next-door to her family. Mrs. Ishida not only listened to her, but apparently believed her and took an active interest in the details of the dreams. It was Mrs. Ishida who first suggested they might be memories, although Jun's parents always told her that they were certainly just simple nightmares. As time goes on, there are hints that Mrs. Ishida might know more about the dreams than she lets on, and Jun's parents are none too happy about that.

Hoshiko encounters a little old man at the store where she buys her manga and snacks. In a moment of kindness, she helps him carry his heavy bag from the store to the bus. He tells her briefly about his daughter, who ran off long ago and left him without any family. The story makes Hoshiko realise that she never wants to let her parents down and she resolves to do what she needs to avoid this, including working harder on her schoolwork.

COMPLEX ENEMIES

Enemies are far more interesting if they start out clearly evil, then evolve into more conflicted, ambiguous people. An enemy's motivations for their apparent evil might be entirely humanitarian – possibly in a very twisted way – or patriotic. The enemy might be under duress from another, greater villain, or may just be horribly misguided.

Mari has been Hoshiko's nemesis for years, and has just been as mean as she could be. Rie and Hoshiko believe that Mari is simply a nasty person. Actually, Mari's uncle, her sole living relative, is a close friend of Hoshiko's father, and seemed utterly obsessed with Hoshiko ever since Mari can remember, sending little gifts or rhapsodising about Hoshiko's beauty, grace, and achievements. Mari's life is cold, lonely, and loveless, and it seems to her that Hoshiko has all the best things without even deserving them. So when Mari discovers the secret of Hoshiko's origins in her uncle's journal, she reveals it in the most hurtful manner possible, leading Hoshiko to believe that her beloved parents had lied to her all these years.



THE SHOJO LAW OF COMMUNICATION

Remember that much of the conflict in shojo stories caused by miscommunication of some sort, so make sure that any attempt at communication that can go wrong, will, in the worst possible way.

Hoshiko goes to Rie for a shoulder to cry on after Mari's revelation, but Rie is in the midst of an important experiment she cannot leave. She turns Hoshiko away, not understanding the real depth of the problem. Hoshiko tries talking to her parents, who profess to know nothing, but now she cannot bring herself to trust them, and it all goes badly. Meanwhile, she feels betrayed by Rie as well, and so goes to wander broodingly in the night.

TURN ENEMIES INTO FRIENDS

One of the great talents of the main character in a shojo story is turning enemies into friends by impressing them with greatness, nobility, and generosity. Enemies may even become intense romantic interests and/or rivals of the main romantic interest, on the premise that hate and love are two sides of the same coin.

Mari has some regrets about how upset Hoshiko had been. She grudgingly corners Hoshiko the next day and offers the key pages of her uncle's journal as a sort of apology. Hoshiko startles her with sad forgiveness, as well as refusing the pages out of respect for the uncle's privacy, choosing to trust Mari's retelling of the information. No one ever believes Mari any more, and this trust breaks down the last of her defences. While she does not confess all her pain in a tearful gust to Hoshiko, she does resolve to help her in any way she can, especially by spying on her uncle, who certainly seems to be up to no good.

TURN FRIENDS INTO ENEMIES

The disruption (and sometimes destruction) of friendships is central to the exploration of trust and betrayal in shojo stories. Testing the limits of friendship between the player characters, and between the player characters and their most trusted NPCs, is always an option in the course of a story. Temptation to betrayal can come in many forms: something the character has always wanted, perhaps, or a way to protect a loved one. Miscommunication can lead to a mistaken sense of betrayal that can snowball out of control. Most simply, trickery and outright lies can lead one character to believe something of another character.

Jun happens to be there when Hoshiko tells Rie about what has been going on, and some of the things she says evokes memories. Jun goes home to confront her parents, and her parents tell her that Hoshiko is apparently the child of evil usurpers of the throne to which Jun herself is heir. A few hours later, Jun entirely believes that Hoshiko is evil – who knew that Jun was secretly jealous of Hoshiko's close friendship with Rie? – and agrees to return to the other world with her parents in pursuit of her throne. Of course, her parents would be her close advisors, and could take care of things for her while she learned more about her kingdom.

AGENCY

Main characters in shojo manga and anime often have very little say in what they end up doing. Some kind of destiny or other force propels them through their adventures. Magical girls, for instance, usually receive their powers without their consent, and often spend a very long time striving to be normal kids. Characters who take an active hand in their own adventures may end up being told that their own activity and self-motivation has actually caused the calamity at hand. To repair this flaw, they must become entirely passive and merely believe in their friends, or else it will never end. This lack of agency may work out all right in a story one is reading, but in a story one is playing, it can become boring and frustrating. GMs should opt for interest over authenticity in this case.

When Rie goes to Jun's house to try to talk to her about her strange reaction to Hoshiko's story, she finds the house empty. Mrs. Ishida reveals that Jun's parents have taken her back to her real home – the same universe from which Hoshiko hails. Mrs. Ishida is an extremely perceptive and useful nosy neighbour, and has realised over the years that Jun's parents are not really her parents, and now thinks that they mean Jun harm. Rie, armed with this information, fetches Hoshiko. Together, they decide to go rescue Jun. They break into the physics laboratory where Rie works and use the dimensional portal that is Rie's project. They may have to gather and lead armies, go into battle, and change the world, but they are prepared to do all these things to save Jun.

AND DON'T FORGET THE RELATIONSHIPS

In helping the character relationships develop, GMs should not be afraid to do whatever seems right and fun. Kidnap and brainwash the romantic interest, throw in red herrings during the investigation of a mystery,

brutally kill a favourite NPC – in other words, reach for heights of drama and plumb the depths of tragedy. To relieve the tension, there is really no comedy too low (or full of innuendo) to toss in as a complete, unbalancing non sequitur. At all times, the GM must provide avenues for the characters to explore their relationships with each other and the NPCs.

Rie and Hoshiko track down Jun after a couple short adventures. Rie uses her long history with Jun and a dose of emotional blackmail to talk her into coming along with them to discover the truth. As they attempt to escape from Jun's "parents," the trio is captured. When Rie and Hoshiko goad them, the villains gloat over how they killed Jun's protectors and took their places. They waited for the right moment to return with Jun so that they could usurp the kingdom from the usurper. They also reveal that Jun was originally the crown prince; his protectors turned him into a girl to better hide him from the usurper's army.

▶ ROMANCE CANNOT BE FORCED

The most obvious element of shojo stories is romance. This can be the most difficult part of shojo anime and manga to emulate in a game setting, as romance between characters must develop organically in the course of role-playing. Romantic complications can be thrown in to stir the pot, though.

After the three escape the villains and track down the surviving royal family, they find themselves in the midst of a massive party. Jun's cousin proposes a toast to Jun's return and her/his impending union with his destined bride: Hoshiko. This not only shocks everyone, but complicates the budding romance between Hoshiko and one of the people that joined them a few adventures ago.

EXAMPLE CAMPAIGNS

Consider the following shojo campaign settings and how their ideas and concepts may be used in your game.

BACKSTAGE ANGELS

Genre: Supernatural

Period: Near Future

Category: Comedy-Action-Romance

Theme: "Love will win through all"

A group of newborn angels are sent forth to earn themselves a place in heaven's hierarchy by helping hapless mortals. Each has been assigned as a guardian angel to a member of an up-and-coming girl band. Not only do they have to keep the girls safe, but they need to keep them out of trouble and help them become the next VidNet idols. The girls have rival bands against whom they are pitted by VidNet executives in contests consisting of not only musical skill, but intelligence and beauty as well. The girls have to win the contests without becoming entwined in corrupt corporate shenanigans that may come from Hell itself. The angels have been forced to take material form as the band's roadies. But what happens if romance crops up in the most inappropriate places?

THE ACADEMY

Genre: School Days

Period: Modern

Category: Drama-Romance

Theme: "Overcome adversity with the power of love"

For more than a century, the Academy has been a very exclusive boarding school frequented by the children of the wealthy. It also has a secret: the government uses it as a safe harbour for children in its custody. Some of these kids are in a witness protection program, some are the children of government agents who have powerful enemies, and some may be government agents of a sort themselves. The characters are the latest group of hapless teens with shady backgrounds to descend upon (that is, transfer into) the Academy.

The Academy requires strict secrecy on the part of the students – after all, it certainly wants to keep its exclusive and wealthy student population while it does its duty for its country – and in a particularly complicated case, may provide a student with a false history to give out as their own to nosy fellow students. So, player characters must attend classes, adjust to a new school, make friends, deal with new enemies and hazing, participate in clubs and athletics, keep up their grades, and possibly remember an entirely false history and/or new name all at the same time. And, of course, romantic opportunities abound, as someone is always going to fall for the new students. But what if Mr. or Ms. Right is the child of an organised crime boss jailed by the character's mother, the undercover detective? Or are they really a spy sent by another country to learn all about the newest war machine from the character who spent last summer interning in the inventor's laboratory? Meanwhile, the calculus teacher has been watching the characters from the shadows – could that be an assassin or just a bodyguard? And then, of course, there's the fact that someone is trying to crack the school's secret wide open, which would reveal the true identities of all the kids hiding there. When the player characters discover evidence that some of their closest friends are part of this conspiracy, they have to decide a way to save the secret, as well as their own lives.



CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Characters grow and develop over the course of their "lives." This theme is central to the story line of many anime: children, shy teenagers, and callow youths come of age.

The magical girl learns to fight for love and justice, discovering new powers at the crucial moment to defeat foes and heal friends. The young pilot learns to face battle without running away, and perhaps graduates to more powerful mecha. The martial artist is defeated, but they train hard to learn new techniques before returning stronger than before for the rematch.

In some storylines, character advancement is more about personal growth than gaining power. Characters struggle to overcome flaws in their personalities and improve their self confidence. Such gains can be part and parcel of the role-playing experience, but can be reflected in mechanical terms as well. The shy boy or girl gains the confidence to approach their love interest … and the character's Soul Stat is also increased. Other improvements in personality can be reflected by removing Defects like Blind Fury, Easily Distracted, or aspects of Shortcoming.

Character advancement is unnecessary in a short adventure, but during a lengthy campaign, players may wish to improve their characters' Stats and Attributes. Though not a requirement, advancement can reflect the characters' learned knowledge through conflicts with the environment, with other characters or NPCs, or even with themselves.

▶ SPEED OF ADVANCEMENT

The speed of advancement is up to the GM. It can be highly variable to suit the tone of the campaign. Campaigns patterned on "duellist"-type anime such as pet monster or super martial artist series will often feature extremely rapid advancement, in which noticeable "power-ups" occur during each adventure. Stories of a more soap-operatic nature often have slow advancement, in which it might take a dozen adventures for the hero to pass their university or occupational exams and gain a Skill Group Level ... or perhaps buy off their Cursed Defect enough to actually keep a planned date! The default for BESM is somewhere in the middle: typical of mecha and magical girl anime, it allows significant improvement after a dozen or so adventures, roughly comparable to a TV season.

STANDARD SPEED

The GM is encouraged to award all characters anywhere from 1-5 Advancement Character Points every role-playing session.

» 1 Point per session is most appropriate for long-running narrative games where it can take many sessions to buy off a significant Defect. Be aware that many traditional gamers may become frustrated with advancement at this speed. It is most appropriate if the players are hard-core role-players who are happy with their character concepts and do not want to change them substantially.

» 2 Points per session is appropriate for average games where much of the progression will be in terms of inexpensive gadget-type Items or Skill Groups.

» 3 Points per session is appropriate for high-powered games where characters are more likely to be gaining new Attributes or powerful Items.

» 4 or 5 Points (or more) per session is appropriate for games where characters are expected to gain new powerful abilities every session or two. GMs who award this many Points should be aware that characters will rapidly grow in power, and will need ever-more-potent antagonists to challenge them. Only award this many Character Points if this rapid escalation is the goal of the game.

USING ADVANCEMENT POINTS

Each player can assign these Character Points to Stats or Attributes immediately (GM's discretion) or accumulate them for future use.

Spending them immediately allows acquisition of relatively inexpensive Attributes such as new Items or improvement in Skill Groups. Saving them allows more significant improvements.

The Point cost for increasing a Stat or Attribute or for acquiring a new Template is identical to the cost during character creation.

Players are encouraged to assign Advancement Points to Stats or Attributes that their characters use often. Alternatively, players can rationalise their decision to the GM should their characters acquire a new Attribute or Template. The GM may optionally require a character to perform certain activities to achieve the acquisition of a new Attribute as well. The GM should not allow characters to acquire any Attributes that would disrupt the balance of the game, of course.

Players can also use Advancement Points to remove or reduce in severity Defects that their characters possess. This should usually be allowed only if supported by actions taken during the game. Some of these are obvious: defeat or befriend a Nemesis, win a pardon or clear one's name to remove Wanted, etc. Others

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can be more subtle: a harsh warrior who befriends a young child might, after a few sessions of game play, be justified in using Advancement Points to get rid of their Shortcoming (Empathy) Defect, since the child's gentle heart has taught the hard-boiled soldier to care about people again.

REWARDS FOR GOOD PLAY

GMs are also encouraged to reward exceptionally talented or active players with an extra Advancement Point or two. These rewards are always at the discretion of the GM. They can be given for superior role-playing, inspired play, or as an extra bonus at the climax of a particular adventure that the characters successfully confronted and completed.

ATTRIBUTE AWARDS

The GM may choose to award a larger chunk of Character Points in the form of granting all the Advancement Points needed to gain or improve a specific Attribute or remove a specific Defect, if it seems dramatically appropriate. This can replace the standard award for a session. This should be done in situations where a character has (in the GM's eyes) done everything they deserve to earn it, and when it makes logical sense – usually as the conclusion of a series of adventures. If our hero wins the battle or saves the king's son and is awarded with a promotion or a knighthood, the GM may, for example, grant the appropriate Connected Attribute for free. Similarly, if a character slays their Nemesis at the conclusion of a series of exciting adventures, the GM can choose to provide all the Advancement Points to remove the Defect, rather than requiring that the character do so. Advancement Points gained in this fashion must go to toward the Attribute or Defect the GM specifies.

GMs are also free to add a few "strings" to any such rewards. For example, a character may steal the magic ring of power from the dragon. The player has earned the Item, but to balance things (since it was very powerful) the GM may also assign the character a new Defect: a powerful Nemesis (the dragon or other villains who want the ring for themselves). Similarly, if a character is knighted by the king, they have not only gained Connected, and possibly Wealth, but have also acquired the Obligated Defect (from swearing fealty).

▶ CHARACTER CHANGE

Characters may also change Point distribution without actually earning Advancement Points.

GAINING DEFECTS BY MISADVENTURE

Occasionally bad things will happen to a character which are of their own making. For example, the character is recognised while committing a crime, and is now a fugitive from justice, or suffers an injury and loses an eye. These are obviously the Wanted and Physical Impairment Defects. Add them to the character, but since these Defects were gained as a result of their own mistakes, they simply reduce their Point Total. A 125-Point character whose own actions lead to gaining the Wanted Defect at -6 Points simply becomes a 119-Point Character.

By the same token, any Defect that was inadvertently gained is "fair game" for the character to remove by their own actions. If this happens, the GM can just remove the Defect, and raise the Character Point total by the exact same amount.

REPLACEMENT DEFECTS

Sometimes characters will improve themselves without having done anything to deserve it. Such situations may occur when it is logical that a character should gain an Attribute or lose a Defect, but the character has no Advancement Points handy – and consequently, it would be unbalancing to grant any Point change at that time. What if their Nemesis is killed by someone else, or they simply moved away?

In such a situation, the GM should not require the character to come up with the Advancement Points. Instead, simply add the Attribute or remove the Defect, but have events over the next few sessions conspire to give the character some new Defects to balance the Points. Develop a compelling story reason to justify it. There may be an obvious connection (someone frames the character for killing the Nemesis: now they are Wanted) or none at all (the character bumps into a beautiful girl who falls instantly in love: the character has suddenly acquired Magnet).

SWAPPING ITEMS

Since equipment can be taken from defeated opponents, bought in stores, stolen, built, or salvaged, situations often occur when a character may have a good story reason for having an Item, but not have the Advancement Points to justify it. As mentioned previously, the GM may reward characters with extra dedicated Advancement Points (sometimes with Defects or Limitations attached) if they are especially deserving. But what about other situations?

The GM may allow characters with the Item Attribute to swap existing Items for other Items of identical Character Point value during or between sessions if a good story rationale exists. For example, a warrior might simply throw away their long sword and pick up an axe from a defeated foe. On the other hand, if a character wants to completely rebuild their mecha (and doesn't have the Skill Groups or Attributes to accomplish this), it should require more effort. Swapping lots of Points requires the expenditure of

in-game resources (favours, money, time, captured enemy gear, etc.). Making modifications may require the appropriate Skill roll before this can be completed. Additionally, this exchange is a time consuming process that can take several days or weeks of work, depending on the extent of the change attempted. This might leave the character without the use of the Item for one (or more) game sessions.

Finally, the GM can ensure that if a character gains a new Item and wants to keep it, an old one of equivalent value will be lost or destroyed. This is best done with the player's co-operation.

MODIFYING ATTRIBUTES AND DEFECTS

GMs may allow characters to swap points amongst other Attributes. This should only be done between sessions, and only if there is very good justification. Characters who want to regularly swap Attributes around should assign Dynamic Powers or Power Flux instead. Nevertheless, if a player is utterly dissatisfied with how their character has turned out, allowing some adjustment can be preferable to having an unhappy player. Anime set in science fiction, fantasy, or horror genres allows numerous explanations for thorough remodelling: cybernetic surgery, mutagenic viruses, weird curses, possession, vampire bites – all can explain radical changes.

ADVICE FOR THE GM

The following 20 suggestions are a collection of ideas for consideration as you embark on the role of BESM Game Master, though they are universally application for any RPG. This advice is certainly not exhaustive – that level of detail could be a complete book unto itself! – and is intended to provide a starting framework for your games.

NAMES ARE IMPORTANT

Giving your NPCs memorable names will make them more interesting to the players. Every background character, no matter how minor, is an opportunity to enrich your world and story. Towns, regions, rivers, and other key terrain feature also deserve rich and fun names. In your game notes, have a list of five or six extra names for NPCs and places you may need to create on the fly. Keep track of them once you use them for future adventure reference.

PLAYERS LOVE FAMILIARITY

Reuse previous settings from earlier storylines to building a larger world. Revisiting the inn or space station from the first adventure in the seventh adventure, for example, will create a sense of nostalgia for the players and provide a larger context to your game setting. The NPCs they briefly encountered before are now part of their history and can create a new layer of intrigue to a standard scene. Players will love seeing the character they rescued in the dungeon or woods reappear later as a merchant, mayor, or skulking thief in the town. Don't overdo the references, though, because it will make your world feel too coincidental and staged. Rather, sprinkle these moments into your campaign and watch the joy unfold at your gaming table.

CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Everyone needs to feel respected and safe while role-playing, free from judgment and triggers. Establish game boundaries well before play begins, including which lines shouldn't be crossed and which world elements should not be explored in detail. Ensure players know that they each have an absolute veto at any time to end the content of a scene if they don't feel comfortable in that situation. The needs of your players always take priority over everything else.

DICE ROLLING IS BORING

Dice rolling seemingly provides great fun during a game. When one player is rolling the dice, though, everyone else is waiting … and waiting is not fun. Keep dice rolling to the minimum to keep the narrative moving along. If a dice roll is not necessary or does not constructively add to the game, do not ask players to toss the dice. Start encounters quickly and end them quickly; don't make the players chase down every last critter to finish the scene. Save big combat scenes for achieving plot goals. In role-playing games, rolling dice is the work part, not the fun part.

OFFER PLAYERS OPTIONS

Your game world is filled with endless possibilities which can lead to lots of time spent deciding what to do. You need to help define paths that the players can take while making it clear they can come up with their own as well. Be clear on the type of actions the players can take and the general consequences of taking those actions to avoid unpleasant surprises.

REWARD PLAYER CLEVERNESS

Game Masters often feel they are playing against the PCs because they are developing obstacles during the adventure. This dynamic sometimes translates into the GM being overly loyal to the story challenges and trying to be more clever than the players. If the players have discovered a loophole in your carefully constructed encounter or obstacle, don't try to fix the scenario in spite of the players. Give them the creative win when they deserve it.

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DON'T ADD CRAZY FOR CRAZY'S SAKE

Make sure there is a reason for crazy characters and not just an excuse for an NPC or player to act irrationally. No doubt, zany behaviour has a place in good anime and manga stories, but not every unhinged character is going to come across as authentic. Such characters mostly add excitement to an interesting encounter, but should the players have to rely on this crazy character, you've added a component to the game beyond the rules. Add such elements purposefully.

BE CONSISTENT

Randomness in dice is expected, of course. Randomness in rule interpretations can be frustrating for players, since you are their game compass. When you make a dynamic game ruling during a scenario, write it down. Unless you discover a reason not to, stick with it for the future as well. If you need to alter your decision later, make a point to explain why it is being altered to the players to avoid confusion and mistrust. If a dinner knife was able to reflect the laser detection grid during one session, for example, but not able to reflect a similar laser system in another, you need to convey solid reasoning.

ADMIT MISTAKES AS SOON AS YOU CAN

All Game Masters make errors. An NPC may say something or do something that sends the players into a whirlwind of tangential speculation. If your intended actions were not as the players have interpreted – and as a result it sends the players down an unproductive path – own the misdirection by letting them know your phrasing wasn't actually a clue or anything more than a casual comment or device to move the story to a different point. That is, unless of course the player speculation has given you an idea for a future plot line, which you can develop more fully as part of a divergent story. Make sure player time isn't wasted going down unintended dead-ends.

PLAN SIGNIFICANCE

Develop and execute one significant character moment several times in each adventure session. Players are in the game to be entertained and rewarding them with the spotlight creates a memorable experience. Rewards can come from character development or interesting story events and milestones. For their time, players expect to earn these small rewards frequently. Should these highlights not appear regularly, players can grow frustrated and bored and possibly disruptive.

MAKE EACH CHARACTER A HERO

It is critical to give each character their chance to shine. The players must seize opportunities presented to make something great for their characters, but you need to provide the hook for the players to grasp. Make the moment meaningful, make it shorten the path to victory, or make it epic enough that player will talk about the moment for months, years, or even decades later. Even if their characters fails spectacularly, spotlight moments are always a memorable event.

MUNDANE BELONGS BEHIND THE SCENES

Let the mundane events that are a necessary part of every story take place 'off stage'. For example, unless there will be an enhancement to the story by having the players role-play purchasing equipment from the shopkeeper, don't spend valuable table time doing it. There are numerous moments like this in every game, where the players are trying to assemble the plot fundamentals (equipment, information, etc.) to get to the fun parts.

THE GM SETS THE GAME TONE

You must take the game as seriously as you want the players to take it. If you are frequently distracted by digital devices, or break the in-game adventure time by going off on personal tangents, then you have given implied consent for the players to do the same. As the GM, you set the standard of behaviour at the table.

LET CHARACTER STRENGTH SHINE

Not everyone knows how to survive in the wilderness or extract information from a hostage, and so you shouldn't expect the players to describe precisely how their capable characters will accomplish such tasks. Feed players the information they need to make their characters look good in appropriate situations. Gamers usually immerse themselves in role-playing games to engage the imagination and escape the confines of regular life. Even intellectual challenges, such as riddles and puzzles should have a mechanism that allows the amazingly smart character to solve it even if the player can't figured it out. Clues, different configurations, or extra attempts can all be used to let the characters' strengths compensate for the players' weaknesses.

CHARACTER WEAKNESSES AS STRENGTHS

Use character Defects to the benefit of the game. Though they penalise the characters, Defects should not penalise the players by hindering their role-playing efforts. Be sure to map out how you plan to implement all Defects before the adventures begin to avoid forgetting about them during play. Using them effectively will add excitement and a touch of paranoia to your game.

KEEP PLAYER CHARACTER SHEETS

Inevitably, players will forget to bring their character sheets to a session and may attempt to recreate it with bad results and a lot of lost time. Although each players should keep a copy of their own character sheet, having

a GM duplicate is handy for such instances. With the current digital technology, of course, it is nearly effortless to keep a backup within easy reach.

TIME IS A PRECIOUS ELEMENT

Everyone's time is valuable and everyone wants to spend their time in different ways. Unfortunately, some players don't perceive wasting other people's time as a problem. As Game Master, you are not only the arbiter of the game but also of time because you control the narrative flow. If you halt the game to read rules or your adventure notes too frequently, the players can devolve into personal conversations which can then impede game play.

HAVE FUN, OR THE PLAYERS WON'T

Don't force yourself to run a game plot, genre, or style you don't like. Players will sometimes want to play specific types of characters that reflect their favourite characters from anime or manga … and such characters may lead to some types of stories that you don't enjoy telling. You may perform adequately running these types of games, but you probably won't have much fun and may start dreading each session instead of looking forward to it. If you will spend less time planning, plotting, and developing your adventures, players will notice and everyone's enjoyment will be reduced. Having honest conversations with the players during the initial conceptions for the game will help ensure maximum gratification for all.

YOU CAN'T MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY

Don't even try to be everything for everyone because your effort to appease one player may alienate the others. When you accept that, despite your best efforts, the unfolding action may not be equally enjoyable to all players during each game session, you can improve the game for those players who are fully engaged with the adventures. Of course, you should always try to advance the game from session to session in a way that addresses the needs of every player. If the same player continues struggling with game satisfaction, a conversation between sessions about what the player needs to have fun once again is clearly needed.

GO OUTSIDE THE RULES

If you dislike a rule presented in BESM, you are encouraged to modify it to suit your needs or simply discard it completely. Do not let your vision of how anime and manga adventures should unfold be suppressed by anything you read in this book. These pages are filled with guidelines and suggestions, but they certainly do not reflect the One True Way to role-playing success. Use what you like, discard what you do not, and fill in the blanks with your own ideas.

THE PROGRESSION OF BESM

As mentioned in Chapter 1, BESM Fourth Edition is not directly compatible with any previous edition of BESM. Your First, Second, and Third Edition characters and mecha will most certainly convert to this new edition with some effort, but they will need to be reworked and rebalanced to reflect the new system. Below are considerations to keep in mind when converting to BESM 4.

FROM BESM THIRD EDITION

Most of the Attributes and Defects from Third Edition have migrated to Fourth Edition, though some new ones were added (Capacity, Cognition, Immunity, Merge, etc.) and others were renamed (Enhanced [Stat] is now Augmented, Resistance is now Immutable, Organisational Ties is now Connected, etc.). Point costs were changed dramatically to strike a new balance: Stats cost are one-fifth vs. BESM 3 (2 Points/Level instead of 10 Points/Level); Attributes costs one-half to one-quarter vs. BESM 3 in most instances; and Defects typically remain at the same values. The Point totals to create characters is roughly one-third to one-quarter in BESM 4 vs. BESM 3. For example, a human-level character is now built from 25-49 Points instead of 100-149 Points.

FROM BESM SECOND EDITION

Substantial system changes were made between BESM 2 and BESM 4, most notable of which is the switch from a roll-under system to a more intuitive and scalable roll-over system. Many of the Attribute and Defect names in Fourth Edition may seem familiar to BESM 2 gamers, though the effects often use different game mechanics with modified scopes. Furthermore, the mecha-only Attributes have been fully integrated into the main character creation system and are now designed using the Item Attribute. Finally, the Attribute and Defect costs can be quite different for similar abilities, with the cost roughly doubling between editions (Stat costs are doubled to 2 Points for each Stat Rank as well).

FROM BESM FIRST EDITION

With so many changes to the system since 1997, there is no feasible conversion path between BESM 1 and BESM 4. The core concepts remain similar, but the details are wildly different.

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CHAPTER 14
ANIME MULTIVERSE

14: ANIME MULTIVERSE

THE OFFICIAL BESM SETTING

To help introduce new players to the game and provide a conduit by which we can provide examples, BESM presents a multi-genre, multi-dimensional setting called the Anime Multiverse. The primary worlds in the setting feature the most popular anime genres (Earth, post-apocalyptic, fantasy, space opera, reality punk, horror, angelic), but any genre and any world can fit into this core campaign setting. The Multiverse is an incredibly powerful tool used whole-cloth, or as pieces.

This chapter touches upon the cosmology of the Multiverse and then highlights some of the more notable aspects of the archetypical worlds to provide some context to the setting should you plan to set your adventures here. The political and social landscapes of various worlds will be explored in greater detail in a separate BESM Multiverse expansion book to establish the foundation upon which future source books will be created.

THE ANIME MULTIVERSE

There are a nearly infinite number of worlds existing within an ever-shifting sphere of reality. All one has to do is find them....

Some of these worlds are linked together, making travel between them possible. A series of linked worlds are directly connected to Earth. This set of tied realms is the Cosmic Web, also known as the Multiverse.

WAYLINES AND THE COSMIC WEB

Waylines are the interdimensional connections between worlds – lines of energy that cross space, time, and even dimensions.

These connections can be visualised as a "Cosmic Web" whose strands connect these worlds. The formation of the Cosmic Web appears to have been deliberate. Sometime in the past, a being or organisation, usually personified as "the Weaver", connected all the strands of the Cosmic Web.

Some races believe the Weaver to have been a god, while others believe he, she, it, or they were powerful archmages or other beings of less-than-divine stature. The completion of the Cosmic Web as it is known today probably dates back at least 10,000 Earth years. Some "Weaver relics" – artefacts of power that exert control over the Cosmic Web – still exist. The most common of these relics are the world gates.

Worlds in the Cosmic Web usually have between one and six waylines. The more waylines a world has, the more important it is from an interdimensional perspective.

WORLD GATES

World gates, or simply "gates", are places where a wayline can be entered. Each wayline connecting two worlds usually has several gates that open to it. If the wayline is an extradimensional highway, gates are their exit and entrance ramps.

Each gate is associated with a specific wayline, and has a matching gate on the "other side" of that wayline. Gates can take many forms, including such more common designs as: a ring of toadstools in a forest grove; an actual door; an ancient stone circle; an enchanted mirror; a painting of a mysterious place; a clear mountain pool; a deep well; a tomb; the mouth of a giant idol; a mysterious "stargate" machine; etc. Typically, anyone who touches a gate and expresses a wish to be elsewhere will be transported by it. Thus, if a gate existed within a closet of an old house, a child playing in that closet would not be transported. But if the child ran into the closet to hide from someone, and wished they were elsewhere, the child could actually activate the gate!

Earth, for example, has seven waylines, each leading to a different world: Aradia, Bazaroth, Enid, Cathedral, Ikaris, Imago, and the sacred Omphalos chamber. Each of these waylines has a dozen or more gates that actually open onto them.

▶ KEYS

Most gates have a Key. A Key is someone whose soul is especially attuned to that gate or to the world on the other side. According to one theory, a Key is someone who lived on the world of the other side of the gate in a past life; their soul "crossed over" during a reincarnation or rebirth. Individuals who do not believe in reincarnation sometimes say that a Key is simply someone who has a strange psychic attachment to the other world, perhaps because they were born in the vicinity of the gate and became attuned to it very early.

Most gates are normally "open," but a Key can take control of the gate if they discover its unique power. A Key can "lock" the gate shut or if the gate is already

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locked, can "open" it. In addition, if a Key is ever ritually killed while in contact with their specific gate, the gate will be destroyed. If all the gates linking to a specific wayline are eliminated, that wayline will "come lose" and might possibly attach itself elsewhere to another world. If a Key dies in other circumstances, the power will pass to another – usually a newly born child.

SKELETON KEYS

A rare few Keys known as Skeleton Keys have a special bond with all doorways and locks, though, and can operate any world gate on any dimension. Additionally, these Skeleton Keys are indeed, metaphorically, the "key" to locks in general – including physical locks (for example, the locks on buildings and vehicles), password locks (such as those on computer files and bank cards), etc. To complement their gate-opening abilities, Skeleton Keys can also permanently destroy any world gate when they pass through it (if desired) and can detect nearby world gates.

Few understand the true power of a Skeleton Key, but those that do will go to great lengths to meet or capture one. Consequently, most Skeleton Keys rarely stay in one place for too long and instead use their extraordinary abilities to travel the Cosmic Web.

THE WAY-BOUND

Certain individuals are "Way-Bound" – their souls are linked to the Cosmic Web. This means that they can be summoned by anyone performing an appropriate ritual at a gate that leads to the Way-Bound's home world. If a Way-Bound is already on the summoner's world, the ritual has no effect.

The only way to summon a Way-Bound individual is with that entity's true name. In most cases, the individual will simply hear a call and will have the ability to decide whether or not to come. In some cases the Way-Bound may be compelled, although this usually requires some other link (such as a feather from an angel's wing, a talisman of a demon, etc.).

Powerful demons and asrai (angels) are Way-Bound, as are the gatekeepers of each world (explained later).

PRIME WORLDS

In addition to the Earth, there are six Prime Worlds. Each possess seven waylines and several dozen gates. One wayline leads to Earth, one to four of the five other Prime Worlds (there is no wayline to one Prime World), and two to Inner Worlds.

The six Prime Worlds all have waylines that connect to Earth:

» **Aradia**, a paradise inhabited by the angelic Asrai and the fairy.

» **Bazaroth**, a hell inhabited by demons and damned souls.

» **Cathedral**, a mysterious pirate haven in the heart of a globular cluster inhabited by strange hyperspatial "plasma birds."

» **Enid**, a world devastated by "heavy weather," where two opposing alliances are engaged in a global war fought with giant robots and psychic weapons.

» **Ikaris**, a medieval world dominated by powerful sorcerers and warring clans.

» **Imago**, a high-tech reality-punk world controlled by powerful megacorps, whose inhabitants spend much of their time absorbing the "bread and circuses" of high-tech sports, competitions, and virtual reality.

THE INNER WORLDS

These are the 12 worlds that are connected by a wayline to one of the Prime Worlds, but not to Earth. They are occasionally under the protection or domination of the particular Prime World to which they are directly linked. Inner Worlds typically have anywhere from two to six waylines.

Sometimes the gatekeepers on these worlds wish to improve their status by displacing one of the Prime Worlds (see the Keys entry for one such method).

THE OUTER WORLDS

An Outer World is a world that is linked by wayline to one of the Inner Worlds, but not to any of the Prime Worlds. The Outer Worlds tend to more alien than the Inner Worlds and some of them are not inhabited by humans or even humanoid beings.

Many Outer Worlds only have one wayline and only a few gates, connected to a single Inner World. A few Outer Worlds have two waylines, connected to a second Outer World ... which can lead farther and farther away from the centre of the Cosmic Web.

42 Outer Worlds are known to exist, many of them barely explored by denizens of the other worlds.

THE BEYONDERS

These are the many worlds – perhaps an infinite number of them – that are known to exist, but which are not connected by any gates. Reaching them can be very difficult. Sometimes the only way to reach them is to travel physically across space; that is, they exist in the same universe as a gate-connected world, but in a distant location. Others are reachable only through unique items of power that can transport individuals to them. A few of the Beyonders are pocket universes linked to particular individuals.

EARTH

This is modern-day, 21st century Earth with a few variations. The biggest difference, of course, is that beings from other worlds and dimensions sometimes visit.

Earth is the only world known to possess eight resident waylines: six that connect to the Prime Worlds, one unusable wayline that long ago became detached at the other end and now floats freely amongst the Cosmic Web, and one secret wayline that leads to the Omphalos chamber (see right). These waylines make Earth the "hub" of the known Multiverse. While it is outwardly a normal planet, it is in fact a nexus for sorcerers, demons, angels, beast folk, mecha, and other visitors.

Earth has no known gatekeepers. According to legend, the last gatekeeper of Earth was a powerful entity, perhaps a mage of near-divine power, known as Ozymandius. They have been missing for thousands of years, though, and today the world has no known ruler. In fact, the vast majority of the people living on Earth are completely ignorant of the existence of the Multiverse. Thus, while individuals, government agencies, corporations, criminals, and cults may encounter interdimensional visitors, they will often fail to realise who they work for, and are sometimes used as mere puppets in the struggles between the rulers of rival worlds.

Aradia and Bazaroth are particularly active in this fashion, with both sending many emissaries to Earth. The chaotic conditions on Bazaroth mean that many demons visit Earth in the hopes of draining the energy and stealing the souls of mortals, both for their own pleasure and to enhance their power. Emissaries of Aradia are active in countering these plots, for unlike most of the worlds, Aradia believes Earth's humans should not be exploited. Aradia often works through human agents, such as recruiting "magical girls," rather than directly. Other Prime Worlds have their own agendas that are political and economic in nature, from making covert deals with Earth corporations to criminal enterprises aimed at enriching themselves.

In addition to agents of the various council members, many others visit Earth. Since it is a neutral ground it is also a haven for many criminals and exiles in hiding. A street person could be a burned-out angel from Aradia, or a hunted arch-mage from Ikaris, for example. Others attempt to use their otherworldly abilities to obtain positions of power and it is these individuals that often cause trouble.

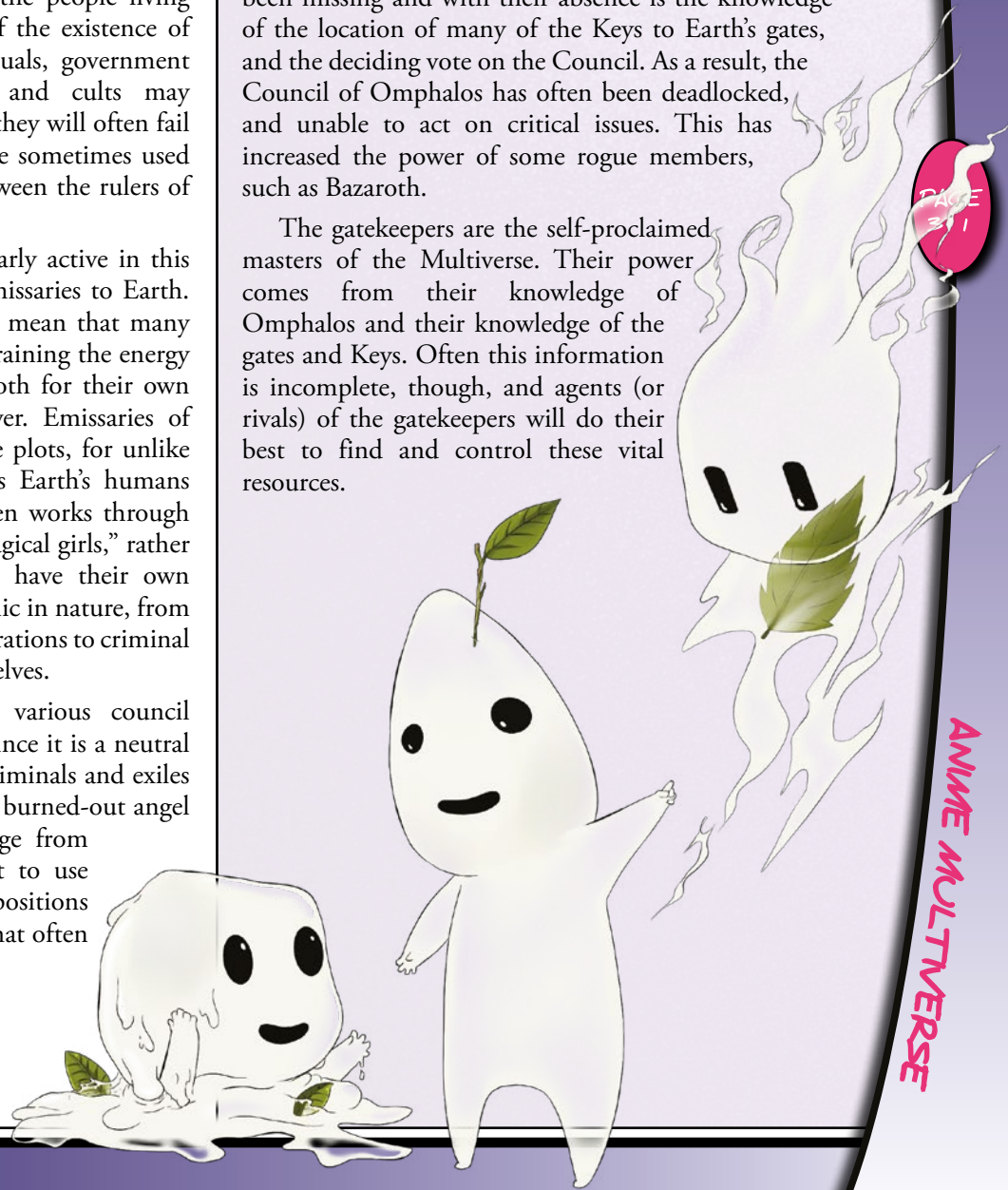
▶ OMPHALOS

Omphalos is the true name of Earth, and also the name of the secret chamber where the Prime Council meets. This is the centre of the Multiverse, connected by its own hidden wayline to Earth, the location of whose gates are known only to the gatekeepers who make up the council. Consequently, Prime Council members must first travel to Earth before meeting in Omphalos.

Somewhere on Earth – or perhaps in a pocket dimension next to it – is a small, dark chamber with seven doorways. Inside the chamber are seven thrones, one for each of the six Prime Worlds and for Earth. Each of these thrones is unique in shape, design, and aesthetics. Omphalos is the centre of all things, and is where the seven gatekeepers of the Prime Worlds meet, make policy, and settle their differences.

Or at least, they used to. Now there are only six gatekeepers. For centuries, the gatekeeper of Earth, the traditional leader of the Council of Omphalos, has been missing and with their absence is the knowledge of the location of many of the Keys to Earth's gates, and the deciding vote on the Council. As a result, the Council of Omphalos has often been deadlocked, and unable to act on critical issues. This has increased the power of some rogue members, such as Bazaroth.

The gatekeepers are the self-proclaimed masters of the Multiverse. Their power comes from their knowledge of Omphalos and their knowledge of the gates and Keys. Often this information is incomplete, though, and agents (or rivals) of the gatekeepers will do their best to find and control these vital resources.







ARADIA

Aradia is sometimes called the "Living Heaven." It is an Earth-like world, with two-thirds of it ocean and six continents, most of which are covered with dense sylvan forests. The land is unspoiled by sprawling cities or mines, and breathtaking in its natural beauty. The air is clear, and a billion stars glitter in the night sky. Surrounding the planet is a ring, which is visible as a great arch from much of the surface (except in high winter, where it is a dark band that partially eclipses the sun, leading to a long twilight), or as a shimmering halo from space. This is the Tiara of Aradia, a shattered moon of ice and rock. Four tiny "shepherd moons" also orbit the planet, and are visible from the surface as moving sparks of light.

The flora and fauna resemble those of Earth, but Aradia is also home to many exalted mythical creatures. There are unicorns, winged horses, gryphons, and sea serpents, for example. Some are fierce beasts that will think little of snacking on an unwary native or traveller, but none are innately evil.

Aradia is not just a beautiful planet, though – it is a living being. The natives of Aradia believe it is a manifestation of the Weaver and call it the Womb of Life. In turn, the planet communicates its desires and wishes – the Wisdom of Aradia – through the movement of clouds and storms upon its surface. These patterns form a unique language of symbols that its priests, the Oracles of the Wind, interpret.

The dominant species on Aradia are the Asrai. They resemble humans, except for their small feathered wings that can expand out to full size as necessary. The Asrai are highly magical, but some are more talented than others. They are born "from the dreams of Aradia." When two Asrai mate, the female does not become pregnant; instead, their passion triggers a lightning storms in the clouds, and eventually an egg forms in the sky. The egg will fall into the ocean, wash ashore, and eventually hatch.

Asrai civilisation is largely pastoral. Guided by the Oracles of the Wind, the Asrai farm, build, herd, hunt, and so on, but do not do much mining. Most Asrai live in small villages or isolated houses scattered across the world. There is no economy as such, just exchanges of goods for mutual benefit.

Other sentient beings also live on Aradia. The Elarad is a collective term for animals that can speak (Elarad means "wild companions"). About one in 10,000 animals on Aradia are Elarad. They protect their own interests, but some go to live with the Asrai, and study in their schools or even work as emissaries.

Fairies are not native to Aradia, but there are now as many living there as there are Asrai. Fairies are tiny 10-15 cm tall insect-winged pixies. They were rescued from Arcadia, an Outer World which was being transformed and corrupted by the Bane, a demonic power that sucked away its life. The surviving fairy are now allied with the Asrai. There are about half a million fairies on Aradia, most of them living in the woods. They are typically good folk, though somewhat mischievous, but a few of these were tainted by the Bane and turned to evil. The Asrai and the fairy's own Bane Hunters deal with these problems as they occur.

Directing the Asrai are two powerful institutions. The Council of Aeons is the ruling body. It meets in the Chamber of Aeons in the Vale of Thorns. Its 101 members are elected at the Festival of the Arch, which is held on the first day of spring each year. The College of Emissaries is another major body. Part of the Wisdom of Aradia is the knowledge that there are many worlds, some of them not "awakened' like Aradia is. This, according to their belief, is because the world-spirits are frightened by the evil that exists in those worlds, and are sleeping, trapped in nightmares, and afraid to awaken. In order to fix this, it is the responsibility of the Asrai to help overcome evil in those worlds. Here, specially selected Asrai go to school, where they are carefully trained in the role of Emissary. There they will be sent to other worlds to further the cause of good. Often an Emissary will be sent to act as a mentor, partner, or guardian to a particularly promising individual on Earth or Ikaris.

The Sabaoth was constituted recently, about 600 years ago, after the world of Aradia was faced by a demonic incursion known as the Bane. It is the armed Host of the Asrai, a fighting order of "warrior angels" that have undergone extensive military training. They report directly to the Council of Aeons, but also instruct other Emissaries in fighting. Asrai of the Sabaoth are also Emissaries, and are trusted with difficult and dangerous missions such as fighting demons.

The unique "living planet" nature of Aradia means there are dozens of unusual places on the world. Here are two examples:

The Whirl is a natural dimensional gate that leads to Earth. It is a whirlpool that sometimes appears in the ocean. Every so often an Asrai egg will fall into the Whirl instead of landing in open sea. When this occurs, the egg will be carried through the gate and reappear somewhere on Earth, washing ashore. Often the egg will drift for some time before being found. Once touched, it usually dissolves into nothing, leaving a baby who can easily be mistaken for a human, since away from Aradia it takes the wings a long time to form (usually not manifesting until adolescence). One of the jobs of

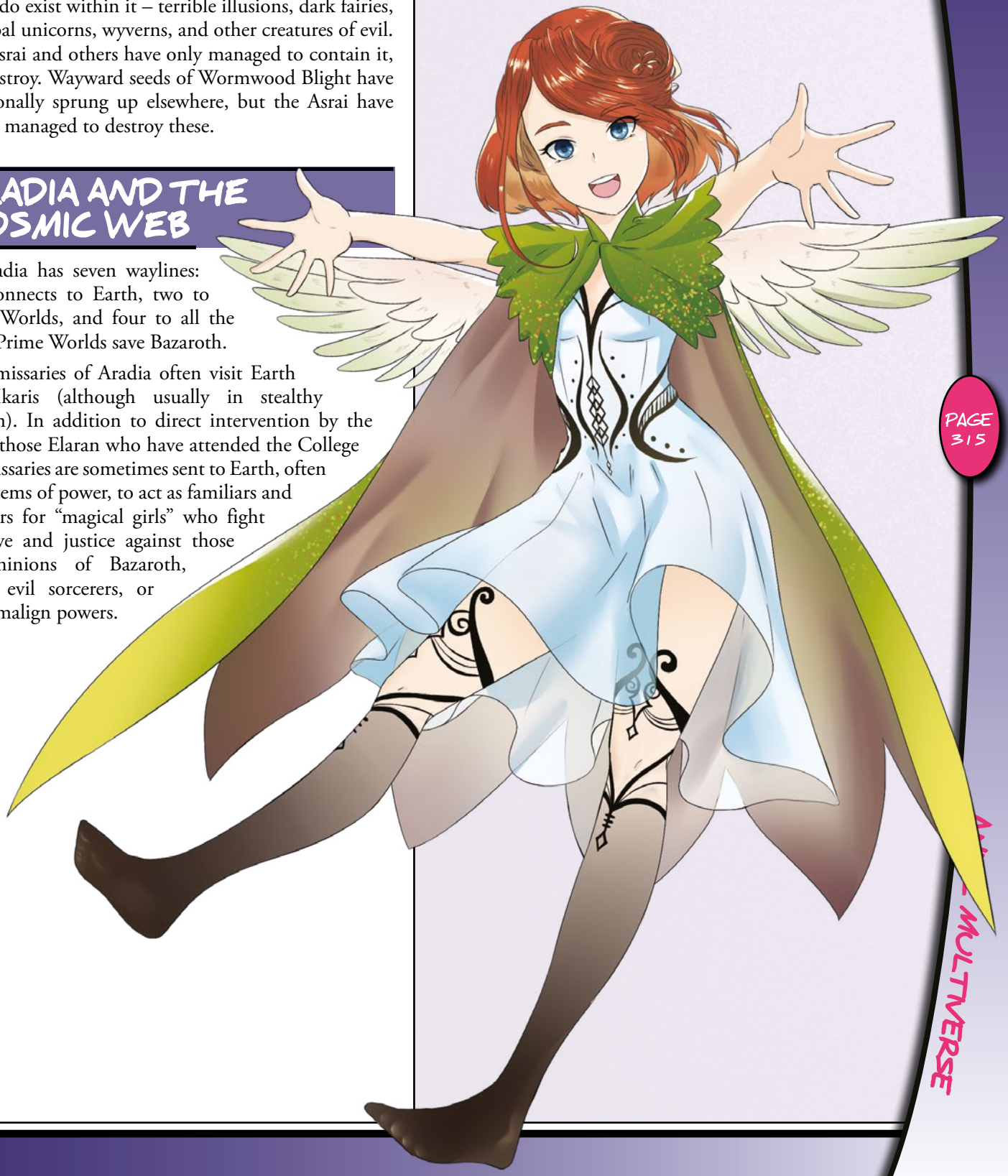
Emissaries visiting Earth is to search for the occasional "lost angel" but often they do not find them until years or even decades later.

Wormwood Blight is part of the price that Aradia paid to rescue the fairies. It is a cosmic cancer that inadvertently "crossed over", an entire forested mountain valley that has become infected and corrupted by the evil Bane. The area is small, and the energies of Aradia have been able to contain it. Evil forces do exist within it – terrible illusions, dark fairies, cannibal unicorns, wyverns, and other creatures of evil. The Asrai and others have only managed to contain it, not destroy. Wayward seeds of Wormwood Blight have occasionally sprung up elsewhere, but the Asrai have always managed to destroy these.

ARADIA AND THE COSMIC WEB

Aradia has seven waylines: one connects to Earth, two to Inner Worlds, and four to all the other Prime Worlds save Bazaroth.

Emissaries of Aradia often visit Earth and Ikaris (although usually in stealthy fashion). In addition to direct intervention by the Asrai, those Elaran who have attended the College of Emissaries are sometimes sent to Earth, often with items of power, to act as familiars and mentors for "magical girls" who fight for love and justice against those the minions of Bazaroth, exiled evil sorcerers, or other malign powers.



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BAZAROTH

Bazaroth is a dying world in a close orbit around a dim red dwarf star – the Demon Sun. It is a planet like the other Prime Worlds, but it does not rotate. Instead, one side is in perpetual daylight called the bloodlight by its denizens. The other is locked in eternal darkness and cold. The proximity to its star also causes tidal effects that shake the world: the land ripples with massive quakes, chasms regularly open with geysers of hot steam or molten lava, and chains of volcanoes spew molten lava that runs in rivers and stream across the land. On the Darkside, the fitful glow of the volcanoes and lava pools are all that supports life.

The denizens of this hellish land are the hellspawn, often called demons by those who encounter them. Hellspawn come in many tribes, which, thanks to the hellish environment of Bazaroth, have diverged greatly. Most are humanoid or centauroid or serpentine, and of monstrous appearance, although many more powerful demons can also change their shape or size. All are predators, and most are psychic vampires to one degree or another, gaining nourishment not merely from eating things, but also from the extinguishing of life force itself. The more sophisticated demons can feed on other negative emotions as well, and some powerful entities among them have learned to create artefacts (or places) that can tap energy from large groups, even transferring it across the dimensional waylines. Many hellspawn also possess the ability to transform and interbreed with other species, and this has led to many hybrids. Over the last thousand years, such breeding programs have been deliberately sustained by the demon lords. Some of these programs are aimed at creating and nurturing especially powerful entities ("dark lords" or "harbingers of the apocalypse") on other worlds, and nourishing them with evil. One such entity was the Bane that destroyed the fairy world of Arcadia.

The Dark Side of Bazaroth forever hides its face from the sun. In the centre of the Dark Side is Moloch, an icy, half-frozen continent that thrusts itself out of the ice … a wasteland of fire and ice with endless plains of ice and rock, and enormous volcanoes belching clouds of soot and rivers of lava. Only the most hardy hellspawn dwell on the surface, but the continent is riddled with ancient lava tubes, great subterranean vaults, and tunnel complexes heated by pools of lava and geysers of steam. All manner of strange fungi, slimes, and oozes grow there – some naturally, others cultivated by slaves in bubbling vats.

Much of the Dark Side is an ocean called the Sea of Tears, whose surface is largely frozen, and whose depths conceal great leviathans (island-sized horrors of teeth and writhing tentacles), their smaller spawn, beautiful flesh-eating mermaids, and similar terrors. Some of these monsters are amphibious and crawl ashore or break through the ice to hunt, or seek mates on the surface. The frozen sea is thawed in places by occasional volcanic islands that erupt from the ocean, both active and extinct. The larger islands are often shrouded by steam as rivers of lava flow into the icy waters. The islands, warmed by the fires of the deep, are also home to demonic citadels, built of black obsidian or from the shells and bones of the creatures of the deep.

The majority of hellspawn live on the Dark Side, in citadels in the Sea of Tears and in the Underworld of Moloch. The ruler of the Dark Side is known as the Infernal King, and rules from the Citadel of Fire – a black glass city carved from obsidian that resembles a hellish Venice with canals of molten lava and bridges of red hot iron. In the chilly centre of Moloch is the Palace of Frozen Screams, where dwells the medusa-like Faceless Queen of the tribe of snow-demons. She is one of the 12 demon princes or princesses who owe fealty to the Infernal King, along with countless lesser demon lords, each of whom rules their own slice of hell (usually an island or a subterranean vault). All of the infernal aristocracy will usually visit the Citadel of Fire to pay court or bring tribute. The Infernal King's subjects constantly scheme and backstab to sabotage one another in the hopes of winning the favour of their overlord. Each of the demon lords has their own legion composed of powerful aristocratic warriors. Hellspawn vie for positions in the most powerful and notorious legions as warriors, sergeants, knights, or centurions, captains, etc. Promotions are earned by blood; when a leader dies, is executed or exiled for failure, or assassinated for perceived weaknesses by their underlings, duels are fought between all those who feel strong enough to rise in ranks. The winner is promoted.

The Shadowlands lie on the borders between the Day and the Night Sides, or as the hellspawn say, between Blood and Ice. They are a narrow (a few hundred kilometres) band of perpetual cool twilight. These lands are feared, for they are filled with wraiths – energy draining ghosts, banshees, and cannibal spirits. Some of the demon lords know rituals that can bind these creatures and bring them back as servants.

Dayside lies across the Shadowlands. The blood-red sun hangs overhead, and the sky is purple and orange. The omnipresent volcanoes are still there, the smoke rising. Most of Dayside is also ocean; the Sea of Tears breaks up into drifting icebergs, which melt as they cross the Shadowland and drift to Dayside. There are

many large and small islands in the vast ocean, some volcanic and others barren rock. In the centre of dayside is the continent of Antaris, directly facing the eye of the sun. Here the temperature sits at a stifling 50 degrees Celsius throughout the day.

It is here that vegetation grows on the surface, although their leaves are not the bright green of Earthly plants but rather black, crimson, or the sickly purple of a fresh bruise. The islands of Dayside and the continent of Antaris are dominated by the Bloom – endless jungles and swamp, teeming with life and death. The unstable, flaring radiation from the red star causes rapid mutations, and species are constantly changing, evolving, and becoming more deadly. The Bloom is alive with monstrous and occasionally gargantuan hellbeasts. There are enormous three-headed worms the size of subway trains, carnivorous trees, herds of armoured and spiked behemoths, and floating air-jellyfish. Thanks to the radiation of the Demon Sun and the active geology, evolution is out of control and beasts are locked into a constant cycle of mutation. Even the most comely hellbeasts can be deadly, including swarms of flesh-eating butterflies, clouds of tiny vampire pixies … or the cute floppy-eared and horned hell-bunny whose mouth may suddenly open wide to reveal flesh-rending tentacles or needle-sharp fangs! Even the demons fear the Bloom, but some desperate exiles, escaped slaves, and rebels against the Infernal King dwell here.

Toward the centre of Antaris, the temperature increases. There lies a massive ring of volcanic mountains called the Knives of the Sun, and beyond them looms the Plain of Despair. This red desert stretches hundreds of leagues across the land, and is said to be a place where the hellspawn of Bazaroth defeated an army of invaders from Beyond. Scattered about the Plain of Despair are the remains of these entities: the dismembered corpses of weirdly beautiful giants, some a hundred metres or more tall, decaying with preternatural slowness. The half-insectoid barbaric maggot-brood of Antaris dwell within the corpses; these hellspawn are said to practice strange magics, feared even by the darksiders. In the centre of the Plain is the Cauldron of Bazaroth, the hottest place on the world – a sea of bubbling blood that feeds the rivers that run through the Pain Forest. Rising from the sea are the Trees of Death, 13 gigantic trees, hundreds of metres high, whose roots drink the blood and upon whose thorns are traditionally impaled the worst enemies of the demon lords (captured Asrai, for example). Death Tree fruit is said to have powerful necromantic and alchemical properties. Nesting in the tree branches are hell drakes – fearsome hybrids of insect, vampire, and dragon, who often take wing to hunt the maggot-brood (and anyone else) venturing across the Cauldron or upon the Plain of Despair.

In some Darkside tribes, it is the custom to send young hellspawn into the Day Side to perform a quest, such as retrieving one of the Fruits of the Trees of Death, or the skulls of 13 other demons. This is the Pilgrimage of Bloods, and a is a common right of passage and required to enter one of the greater Legions.

BAZAROTH AND THE COSMIC WEB

Bazaroth has seven waylines: one connects to Earth, two to Inner Worlds, and four to all the other Prime Worlds save Aradia. One of the gates on the wayline to Earth is in the Citadel of Fire. The Infernal King sits on the Council of Omphalos, although he sometimes sends a trusted demon lord as an ambassador in his stead

Unlike the residents of most worlds, the hellspawn of Bazaroth are perfectly aware of the existence of other dimensions. They also claim that it is their destiny to strive to conquer them. Long ago, they say, before the Weaver vanished, a great threat came from the Beyond – an army of invaders, creatures neither man nor demon nor angel, that terrified all who came against them. The other Prime Worlds were weak, afraid to face them, and sealed their gates. But the demons of Bazaroth were not afraid. The hellspawn lured the Invaders to their world, and there they trapped and destroyed them, albeit at fearful cost. The Weaver was grateful for their sacrifice and he rewarded the faithful spawn of Bazaroth by granting them the right to hunt freely upon all the worlds of the Cosmic Web, that they might through terror keep the other worlds from ever falling into complacency again.

This tradition is somewhat disputed by other members of the Council. For example, the Asrai of Aradia agree that there was an invasion in the past, but say that the spawn of Bazaroth were those who had opened the Cosmic Web to the invaders in the first place, and only discovered their folly when the Beyonders were upon their world. The present policy of the Infernal King is not to openly challenge those worlds that are strong (including most of the Prime Worlds) but to probe at any weakness. Individual demon lords have their own ideas and their own schemes, though … and some of them have their own gates.



CATHEDRAL

In this universe, humans are a starfaring species that have spread across thousands of systems. Faster-than-light travel is possible using two types of FTL drive – the slower subspace drive and the swifter hyperspace engine. The centre of human expansion is the Interstellar Diaspora, some 12,000 human-settled worlds and many smaller outposts. There are two great human interstellar powers:

The Galactic Trade Authority (GTA) oversees thousands of worlds and their relationships. Most worlds in the GTA are semi-independent, supporting democracies, dictatorships, and even monarchies. All recognise the primacy of the GTA in certain areas that cross interstellar boundaries, such as trade, defence, and law. The GTA do not have much of a space navy, but there is a large space militia of armed trading ships that can act in time of need. They do have an elite top secret covert ops division, known as the Galactic Sanitation Department, whose "cleaners" are trained troubleshooters. There are even some alien worlds who have joined the GTA, although they are very much in the minority.

The Fusion is a very different power from the GTA. It is an attempt to create a galactic superstate with a homogeneous government, culture, and religion. The Fusion's leaders believe that only by creating a single monolithic culture with one set of values can peace and harmony be preserved through the galaxy. The fusion covers almost as many worlds as the GTA, but its authority is much greater, and it has a powerful space military, the Star Force, to enforce the government's dictates.

Conflicts between the GTA, the Fusion, and various alien races have continued for centuries, but open war has so far been avoided. Instead, struggles have occurred through proxies, mercenaries, client states, and corporations in neutral space. Each side fears that war may be inevitable but neither is ready for it.

One of the recent flashpoints is the Orb Radiant, a globular cluster located between GTA and Fusion space. A dense sphere of 100,000 stars packed into a region only 50 light years across, the Orb Radiant had at first been largely ignored by humans. The lack of heavy elements in the ancient Population II stars that form it combined with gravitational interactions of so many stars in such a small region mean Earth-size or larger planets don't usually form in globular clusters. The only non-stars are a few thousand mostly airless Moon-sized "rogue planets" in eccentric orbits around individual stars or even floating free in space.

The lack of habitable planets does not mean that there is no life in the Orb Radiant, though. Some 30 years ago, Fusion explorers discovered it was a "nesting ground" of the mysterious plasma birds, hyperspatial energy beings that occasionally enter realspace to mate and spawn. The plasma bird adults had laid tens of thousands of "singularity eggs" in and around the central suns of the globular cluster. Over the next hundred years, they would be hatching, with hundreds born each and every year. This would have been a simple scientific curiosity but since they are natural hyperspace engines, plasma birds are usable as catalysts for the new Chariot-class hypercore reactors ... if they can be captured alive.

Humans were not the first to discover the plasma birds. An alien race called the Xyd had long followed their migration paths, which are occasionally disrupted by major events such as supernova. The Xyd did not harvest plasma birds for commercial purposes but rather worshipped them as sacred beings and only trapped a few for ritual purposes. Xyd pilgrims regularly journeyed to the Orb Radiant to witness the hatchings and matings. In the process, the Xyd discovered something unique: the one Earth-like planet out of a 100,000 suns that had managed to form within the globular cluster. They named it "Xyd Vastaru", the sacred planet, which humans translate as "Cathedral".

Then the Fusion harvest ships arrived, seeking the plasma birds for their own purposes. The Fusion established harvest outposts on the small, airless worlds they named Black Rose and Jessamime. The Xyd initially welcomed the Fusion as fellow pilgrims, but soon regarded the harvesters as desecrators. As word of the plasma bird spawning ground spread, freelance adventures from the more distant GTA systems also began to arrive. Competition between the small, sleek starhunter ships from the GTA and the larger Fusion combines sometimes turned violent, as each strove to control bases near the best spawning grounds. Both sides ignored the protests of the Xyd .

Then everything changed. The Xyd pilgrims sent word back to the Taj Kehal, their mother church, that sacred sites were being defiled. The Taj Kehal broke with tradition and sent its small number of armed "solar templar" vessels to the Orb Radiant to protect both their pilgrims and the hatching grounds. Xyd vessels began to escort plasma birds from their hatching grounds into deep space, where they could enter hyperspace and leave. Naturally some Fusion and GTA hunters attacked the Xyd ships. Fighting broke out, at first a three-way struggle between Xyd templars, GTA hunterships, and Fusion megacorps. The Fusion's own government also sent a few cruisers but with orders to only take defensive action. The Fusion's government did not want to directly confront the GTA (and vice versa),

so these vessels mainly protected the Fusion bases and escorted those Fusion ships leaving and entering the Orb Radiant.

Even so, the arrival of the Star Force cruisers triggered a change of heart in the GTA, whose central government officially took notice of the struggle. Worrying that direct conflict between GTA vessels and the Fusion would provoke a diplomatic incident, they decided to reign in their own citizenry. The GTA signed a treaty with the Taj Kehal, agreeing to outlaw plasma bird harvesting in exchange for trade concessions elsewhere in the galaxy. With no hunting permitted, the GTA believed that its own people would pull out, or risk losing their licenses. They were wrong.

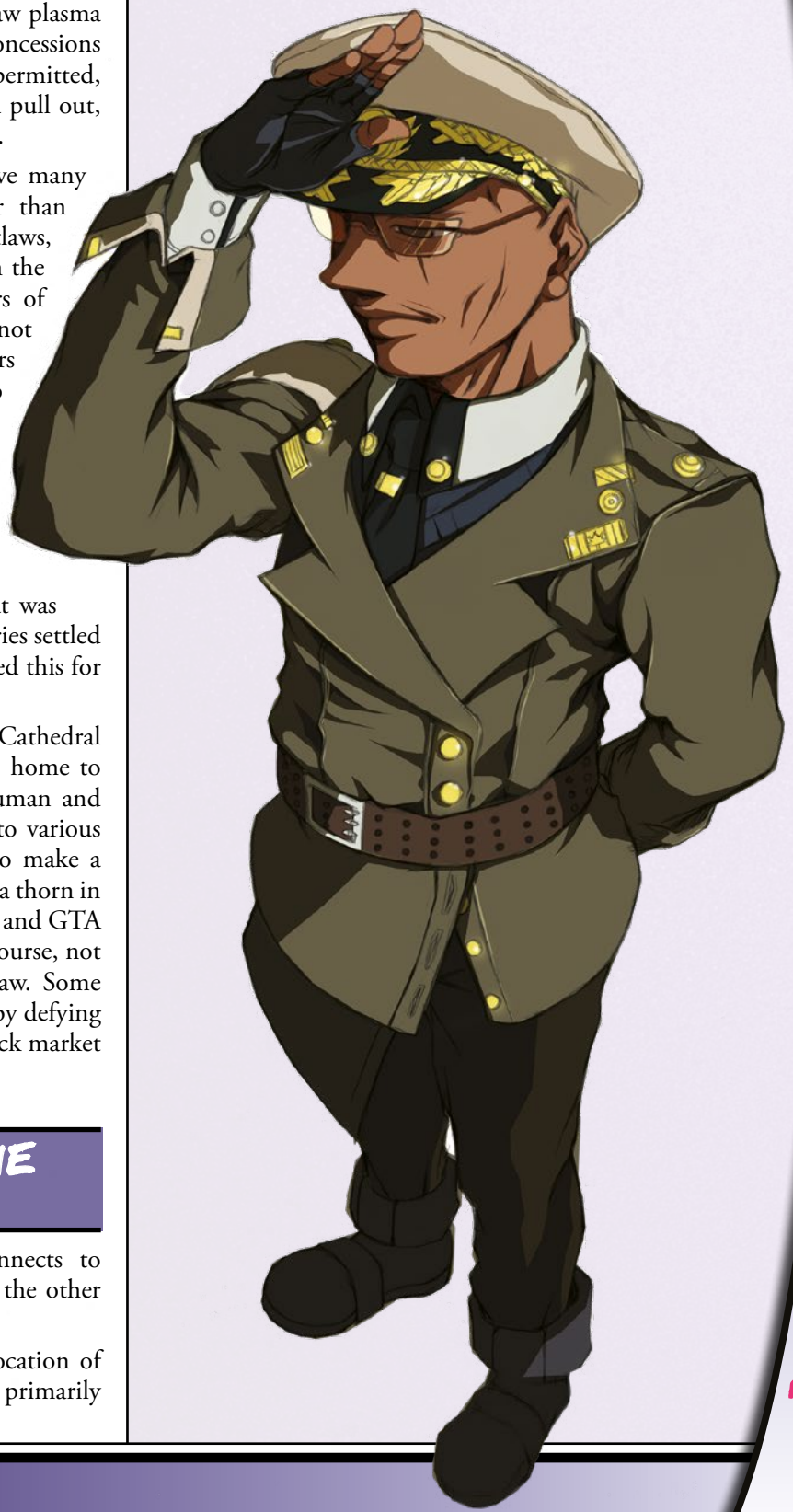
This Treaty of Cathedral did indeed leave many GTA starhunters out of work, but rather than leave or break the new law and become outlaws, many chose to stay and accept an offer from the Xyd. Thus began the saga of the Privateers of the Orb Radiant. Although the GTA did not officially send military forces, GTA ex-hunters found legitimate work as mercenaries to help the outnumbered Xyd escort plasma bird fledglings on their flights out of the cluster. Others became privateers, preying upon the Fusion's own huntership and harvest stations, for the Xyd Templars paid a lucrative bounty for every harvest ship or station destroyed and every plasma bird that was liberated. Some GTA privateers and mercenaries settled on the world of Cathedral. The Xyd welcomed this for it helped protect the planet.

Consequently, more or less by accident, Cathedral became a wild and wooly open port planet, home to Xyd pilgrims and Solar Templars, to the human and alien GTA mercenaries and privateers, and to various GTA merchants who saw an opportunity to make a buck by servicing their needs. The planet was a thorn in the side to the Fusion, but the combined Xyd and GTA forces made it too difficult to eliminate. Of course, not all GTA starhunters agreed with the new law. Some chose to simply turn star poacher and pirate by defying the laws of the GTA, for there was a large black market for captured plasma birds.

CATHEDRAL AND THE COSMIC WEB

Cathedral has seven waylines: one connects to Earth, two to Inner Worlds, and four to all the other Prime Worlds save Imago.

The enigmatic planet Cathedral is the location of the wayline to Earth, with a number of gates primarily hidden in Xyd temples. The Xyd priests are aware of the gates, as are a few human mystics and pirates on the planet who have discovered other gates by accident. Very few in this universe understands the true significance of the Cosmic Web, though. Another gate to Earth is located in low orbit around the planet itself inside a "haunted" space station. Some Xyd ships and plasma birds accidentally visit Earth on occasion and are usually mistaken for UFOs!







ENID

Enid was once a vibrant, industrialised planet, much like Earth at the start of the 21st century. There was one major difference, though. An organisation calling itself Neo-Logos developed a reliable test for psychic powers, and began researching their application. Soon it had established a psychic academy, which discovered and trained several powerful psychics, with abilities ranging from ESP to telekinesis. Some of them also had limited precognitive powers, and they uniformly predicted a major environmental disaster was coming that would arrive much more rapidly and be of a magnitude far greater than anyone had expected. Attempts to get the world to do something about it met with scepticism, so the leaders of Neo-Logos and those who believed them decided to prepare for the disaster by constructing the underground city, Noa Enid.

The disaster that was foretold came to pass. Pollution-induced global warming created a category seven "hyper storm." Its raging fury laid waste to entire cities, leaving millions homeless. It was only the first of hundreds of hurricanes of similar power. Under the assault of relentless "heavy weather" the planetary environment began to collapse. As the storms grew in strength, millions fled from the worse-hit regions. Crops failed, and famine and disease stalked the planet. When it became apparent that no place was safe, Noa Enid's own example was followed by surviving governments. Arcology cities were constructed underground, behind great domes, or on the ocean floor. Even so, resources grew scarce, and the nations of the world blamed one another for the catastrophe, and war broke out across the globe.

Today, it is 70 years AES - After the Eternal Storm. There are two great powers left on Enid.

The League of Arcologies (LOA) is led by Noa Enid, the arcology first founded by the organisation Neo-Logos. The councils of Noa Enid and its allies in LOA are dominated by psychics and the scientists that studied them in the secretive Neo Logos organisation. It has developed "psychotronic" cyber-machines that enhance psychic powers, including the "psycho-frame" mecha. In addition to developing psychotronic technology, LOA is actively working to find, recruit, and increase the numbers of psychics. In this world, psychic gifts are not genetic, but Neo-Logos believe they can be stimulated through early exposure of infants (even in the womb) to telepathic contact. LOA believes that a sufficient mass of psychics – a hyper-psychic gestalt – will be able to exert power to calm the storms and restore the planet.

Many ordinary people on Enid fear the growing power of LOA and their psychics, however. Some believe that Noa Enid's psychics were themselves responsible for the Eternal Storm. This belief is strongest in the citizens of the other super power, the Global Alliance. The Alliance is a military pact that was formed from the remnants of nations whose governments survived intact. Led by the Chairman General, the Global Alliance nations – whose strongest power is the Republic of Akronia – claim to stand for the rights of normal humans and against the sinister psiocracy of LOA. Some demagogues in the Global Alliance have striven to blame the Eternal Storm on experiments performed by Neo-Logos, and have fanned the flames of anti-psychic prejudice, accusing them of reading minds and sapping wills.

The Global Alliance is not just built around prejudice and nationalism. It also has its own plan to fix Enid's catastrophe. Its leaders reject the idea of creating a hyper-psychic gestalt as too dangerous, for who knows what monstrous power would evolve? Instead, they wish to build and launch huge fusion-powered weather control satellites into orbit. These are intended to use laser beams to heat and move air masses to repair the ecosystem. This plan is codenamed Project Butterfly, the name coming from the analogy that major global weather effects are so chaotic that a tiny cause – such as the flapping of a single butterfly's wings – could create a hurricane. Global Alliance scientists believe that incredibly precise use of very powerful orbital laser beams on certain storms can calm the global weather system. This effort requires both a massive concentration of resources (to build the launchers and satellites) and an almost supernatural ability to predict the nature of the storms (through understanding of chaos theory). Computers in the Global Alliance have not proven up to the task yet, so some of their researchers are exploring a secret alternative project: the use of cybernetically enhanced psychics to use precognition to guide the lasers. There are not enough psychics in the Alliance, thus necessitating their creation … or their capture.

There are several other nations or arcology city-states around the world that are not part of LOA or the Global Alliance. Some are determined to stay neutral while others are shifting one way or the other. These nations have proven flashpoints for conflict. Two years ago, a war broke out between the Global Alliance and LOA over control of the unaligned nation of Tavarre, which was in a geographic position ideally suited to perform satellite launches, but which also had a large population of psychics.

LOA and the Global Alliance both courted Tavarre's politicians, and the decision became the pivotal issue in Tavarre's last presidential election. When the pro-LOA party won by a slim margin, the opposition claimed Neo-Logos agents had used psychic powers to influence voters. This led to street riots and an attempted coup that fractured the country. When LOA refused to recognise the legitimacy of the coup and sent its own forces to restore democracy the Global Alliance also sent troops to support its own side. Within a few months, Global Alliance and LOA forces were fighting directly for control of Tavarre, and the war soon spread to other parts of Enid. It is a conflict that has lasted for over three years now, despite sporadic ceasefires, and been fought with increasingly terrible weapons.

The appalling weather conditions of the Eternal Storm make any military campaigning difficult on Enid. Helicopters and aircraft are almost useless. Infantry forces must travel in heavy armoured vehicles, and are only really useful in the few periods of calm or when a city is actually being attacked. The primary weapon during the early stages of the war were conventional armoured fighting vehicles: tanks and heavy APCs, for example. The larger Global Alliance had an advantage here, with greater numbers and more modern designs. LOA's armoured forces are older and smaller in number.

However, countering the Global Alliance's advantage in battle tanks is LOA's pioneering of the humanoid psycho-frames – giant robots that were deployed in the second year of the war. The basic armoured exoskeletal technology was developed using spin-off technology from the construction machines that built the first underground arcologies. They are much more than that, though. The psycho-frames use built-in psychotronic generators to amplify the psychic aura of their pilots increasing it up to 10-fold in size and power. This aura is still human-shaped, so the psycho-frame is housed in a humanoid machine some 15 to 30 metres tall. Even a moderately talented psychic can use the amplifier to create a force field that produces various effects. For example, it can neutralise gravity (allowing limited flight) or generate a powerful protective "psycho-dynamic" defence field. Some psychics can also use it to draw energy from the Eternal Storm, creating focussed lightning bolts or wind blasts.

LOA's initial use of psycho-frame weapons came as a shock to the Global Alliance, who had expected their tank superiority and greater numbers would quickly win battlefield supremacy. Instead, the war turned into a bloody stalemate. The Global Alliance had already begun studying psychotronic technology initially to create ways of shielding against telepathic spies. Despite its own fears, the Alliance began to employ it. The Alliance dismantled captured LOA machines and its own psychotronic laboratories duplicated some of them elements. Alliance psychics – most of who were living in hiding or imprisoned – were rounded up and used to power, not pilot, the Alliance's own psycho-frames. The Global Alliance's own version of the psycho-frame is known as the psycho-slave, and has a two-person crew: a non-psionic command pilot, and a "psycho-pod" in which a psi is locked and their power drained by cybernetic link. Some of the Global Alliance psychics are patriotic volunteers … but most are not.

ENID AND THE COSMIC WEB

Enid has seven waylines: one connects to Earth, two to Inner Worlds, and four to all the other Prime Worlds save Ikaris. Some of the old gates are buried in the ruins of cities that were flattened by the storms, but others are "safe" in arcologies or domed cities. One of the permanent hurricanes on Enid is actually a gate. Mecha who have penetrated into its centre during military operations have sometimes disappeared (if their crews accidentally triggered the storm) and found themselves elsewhere on Bazaroth.

The general citizens of Enid are unaware of the existence of the Cosmic Web. One of the chief scientists in LOA's Neo-Logos movement is the hereditary gatekeeper of Enid. They have been working to enhance psychic powers as part of a long-term breeding program. They were unable to avert the Eternal Storm, but has been using some of their knowledge to aid in the development of psychotronic drugs and machines. Occasionally, they uses their influence to direct LOA military policy to capture gates. Thus, a military force might be sent to secure an otherwise unimportant ruin or town. Some trusted psycho-frame and psychic agents have been inducted into the secret, and sent through the gates to other worlds on special missions aimed at securing resources to support their efforts.

The demons of Bazaroth have only a limited presence on Enid, since the world's advanced technology (and now, its psychics) make it less vulnerable to demonic infiltration. The creation of the Eternal Storm has made more and more people desperate, though, and strange cults are popping up, some demonically inspired. A few ambitious demon lords have seen an opportunity to establish a controlling hold here. After all, if demons ravage an entire town, it can be blamed on the chaos of war or psychic combat.





IKARIS

Ikaris is a world of swords and sorcery. The land is dominated by an immense supercontinent, also called Ikaris. This is bisected by an immense mountain range, the Dragon's Spine, that runs roughly east to west. Due to the size of the supercontinent, conditions in the interior are very harsh, with arctic-level winters and blazing hot summers. As a result, most civilisation is along the east, south, and west coasts.

▶ THE SHARDS OF AZAR

On the west coast are the Shards of Azar. These are successor states of the once-great Empire of Azar, which long ago ruled the entire coast … only to break up 300 years ago during a great civil war. The Shards are divided into nine squabbling principalities, each one is ruled by a powerful Legate. Once these were provinces of Imperial Azar, and the Imperial Legates were bound by oath to serve and advise the Emperor. Now they are absolute rulers, equivalent to kings. The empire has never been reunified, although every so often an Archmagi tries to conquer one or more neighbours, leading to war. At various times the Nine Shards have dwindled to seven or eight, although it is more common for a single border province located within one of the shards to be conquered than for an entire Shard to fall.

The Shards of Azar's society mirrors the medieval European feudal system with one big difference. Magic works on Ikaris, and a mage's fireball, not the mounted knight in shining armour, is the ultimate weapon. Thus, each Legate is served by several archmagi, each of them a mighty wizard. In exchange for a grant of land, the archmagi agree to provide the Legate with a force of powerful sorcerers (for up to 40 days) and also "hold, protect, and bless" their lands. Each archmage's province is divided into a few dozen mage-holds, each controlled by a sorcerer who has sworn allegiance, and who also owes 40 days service to the archmage. Typically, the sorcerers and archmagi loyally follow their respective vows, but treachery and rebellions are not uncommon, and are often fomented by rival Legates.

Each sorcerer has a tower or other fastness that protects a village or town, which in turn supports them. In addition, every sorcerer usually has an apprentice adept or two – a mageborn boy or girl who is studying the magical arts, and who will become their heir after death or retirement. Sometimes a Legate or archmage will grant the title of sorcerer to an apprentice adept, usually giving them land of a follower who was killed (or turned traitor), or in other cases, permission to carve new territory from the wilderness or a conquered land and take that as their holding.

Not every mage is part of the feudal aristocracy. "Wizards" and "witches" are terms used for any mage who does not have a grant of land. Some are mercenaries; others never received formal training, or specialised in something other than the battle magic that is the stock-in-trade of the sorcerer, archmage, and Legates. They are usually regarded as dangerous troublemakers by the establishment.

Warlocks ("oath breakers") are ex-sorcerers who have been expelled by their feudal lord, or forsaken their vows. Their staff is broken, and they are reviled as without honour, and often accused of all manner of evil deeds, sometimes wrongly (much like Japanese ronin). Many become leaders of bandit or goblin gangs; others leave the province and travel to another province, or even a different Shard, where they serve as wandering mercenaries, monster-killers, or bounty-hunters. Some archmagi hire warlocks to swell their forces in time of war or rebellion, but this is considered rather sinister. Some sorcerers become warlocks for good reasons (for example, their archmage is evil and their Legate won't listen, and so they forswear their vows) and may lead a band of "good" outlaws, as a kind of magical Robin Hood. Occasionally a situation will arise where a warlock can swear a new allegiance if any archmage or Legate will pardon them, but this is rare and would require a great deed.

Magic in Ikaris is not something anyone can learn; it requires a gift, said to come from the Weaver. Some people are mageborn while others are not. The gift is not heredity and mage parents usually have normal children. The gift of magic can usually be detected in infancy, however, as mageborn children instinctively perform simple spells or otherwise release their powers. For this reason, sorcerers adopt a gifted child, whether born of peasant or noble blood, as their heir-apprentice. Ultimately, the heir-apprentice will "win their staff" and be dubbed a sorcerer. Similarly, the titles of archmage or Legate are also not hereditary. An archmage will have one of their sorcerers chosen as heir-apparent; a Legate will select an archmage. If the archmage dies without specifying one, a vote, acclamation, duel, or force of arms may be used to choose a new lord.

The ancient Vows of Azar are a magical code to which all true sorcerers, archmagi, and Legates are expected to adhere. It forbids use of magic to harm the innocent, and encourages mages to protect the weak and mundane. However, mages are also proud, and they will not brook challenge to their authority and dignity by mere mundanes. A sorcerer holds the power of life and death over all serfs within their holding.

Archmagi and Legates hold regular tournaments for all the sorcerers of the area (and sometimes these are open to warlocks, wizards, and witches, as well). The

prize is usually a valuable artefact in the archmage's possession that is lent to the winner until the next tourney. Most tournament battles are single duels, although in some the sorcerer is aided by the apprentice. There are matches between apprentices alone, and often a grand duel of powers. Tourneys also include games for the wizard's spearmen, monster-baiting contests, summoning competitions, music, etc.

In war, or while policing their domains, sorcerers do not work alone. There are warriors as well as mages. Most sorcerers have some skill with a blade or staff (although they mainly use them for rituals). Sorcerers usually have a personal guard of spearman, archers, or swordsmen. In the Shards of Azar, the arts of the warrior are not highly developed; it's mostly "stick them with the pointy end." True swordsmen, like the blademasters of the Seven Stars, are regarded with almost supernatural awe and their fighting prowess is seen as magical.

The majority of the population are farmers (or fisherfolk on the coasts, and sheep or goat herders in hilly areas) and those craftsfolk that support them, such as carpenters and blacksmiths. Most are bound to the land, though a few Shards in the north have freeholders. Their lives are more prosperous than in Earth's middle ages since the mages are good at curing disease and controlling weather to prevent killing frost or lengthy droughts. Conversely, wars tend to be more devastating, and some sorcerers think nothing of turning an offending peasant into a draft horse or pig. Perhaps worse is the scourge of monsters that plague the border areas: dragons, ogres, trolls, undead, goblins, and other horrors. It is the sorcerer's sworn duty to put their life on the line to ward against them.

There are no large cities in the Shards, although each of them has at least one major town with a population of 5,000-15,000. The towns are also home to several craft guilds and merchant houses. Notable among the many guilds are the Alchemist's Guild and the College of Harpers, who traditionally appoint a learned harper to advise each Legate. The Alchemist's Guild, a relatively young organisation, is the leading "scientific" community on Ikaris, and possess knowledge of arcane potions of many sorts. Alchemical potions are magical but the sorcerers disdain them because they require only skill, not the Gift of Power. Even so, most Legates have a court alchemist at their disposal.

▶ THE ANVIL OF GOD

A vast steppe and desert lies in the centre of Ikaris, known as the Anvil of God. Parts of it are inhabited by tribes of beast nomads who migrate around the edges, and also raid the more settled nations. The Dragon's Spine acts as a barrier to the nomads, limiting their ability to attack into the west (where the passes are guarded). Nomad raids are common against the Land of the Seven Stars, though. The major nomad tribes are the Wyvern, Gryphon, and Manticore.

The Dragon Spine Mountains are a borderland between the North and the South. They get their name, obviously enough, from the winged firedrakes that dwell there. The dragons prey on the various migratory herds that cross the steppes, and also sometimes travel into the Shards or the Seven Stars.

Tophet is a massive underground labyrinth and ruined city near the eastern spur of the Dragonspine Mountains. It is mostly underground as it was designed as shelter to protect the population from dragon raids. It was once the capital of the Magerealm of Tophet, a rival to the Empire of Azar, but is now is a ruin. The Archmage of Tophet had taken control of many monsters. When he was slain during a magical duel the monsters escaped and overran the city. Most of the population were killed or fled.

▶ THE LAND OF SEVEN STARS

Across on the eastern side of the continent from the Shards of Azar is the Land of Seven Stars, also called the Heavenly Coast. The name comes from the legend that the land was blessed by seven celestial angels who founded the seven villages that grew into the seven coastal cities. There is also a legend of parallel shadowy demon clans that counterbalance them, and seven secret "undercities" beneath each city.

The land is temperate, more so than the Shards thanks to a warm ocean current. Fishing is good, and there are hundreds of fishing villages along the coast and the offshore islands. Four of the Seven Stars are port cities on the coast or on islands (three more are located on inland rivers), and they have large fleets of galleys and much sea trade. The culture is somewhat reminiscent of a cross between Ancient Greece and medieval Japan. There are four main castes: the "heaven-born" lords, their warriors, the priests, and commoners (farmers, artisans, and merchants).

Mages are rare in the Seven Stars since the practice of magic is forbidden by the teachings of the great prophet Achmed as corrupting the soul. It is said that those who perform magic will be reincarnated as rats or insects, for they have burned up all their spiritual energy. There are several orders of fighting monks and nuns, who possess exotic powers, however, primarily having to do with spirits, exorcism, and personal perfection. Some also have potent martial arts abilities from focusing spiritual energy. All must swear vows of poverty and obedience to their orders. A few western mages (mostly wandering warlocks) and some nomad witches and wizards do set up shop in the Seven Stars, where they have little competition, but they are often feared and distrusted.

Each of the cities has a tradition that in each generation, the spirit of their founding angel will manifest again with divine powers as that city's protector. Six of the Seven Celestial Angels manifested most recently during the Ghoul Invasions, but they were all killed while preventing the Ghouls from resurrecting the great Kraken of the Deep. It is likely their spirits have been reborn again.

Until recently, all seven cities were independent, occasionally feuding with one another or fighting seasonal wars. They would sometimes combine together to fight off nomads or reavers, but often by the time a combined force could be mustered, the raiders had retreated, carrying off prisoners into slavery and leaving burned and looted villagers. After a particularly strong raid by the Wyvern Riders terrorised the northern borders, three cities joined to form the Northern League. Their strength was enough to force a peace treaty on the Wyvern Riders, and an exchange of hostages. The plans of its founding father, Tezra the Just, to expand the league met with suspicion and jealousy, and he was assassinated. The League collapsed into chaos and successive raids of the Ghoul Pirates and Manticore People ravaged the land. It become obvious that the situation could not endure.

Unification came from Tenrai the Conqueror, the half-blooded son of Tezra the Just and a hostage-princess of the Wyvern Riders. When he came of age – after spending some time fostered with the nomads learning their ways – the combined alliance of his city and his mother's tribe allowed him to dominate the other cities. He reformed and expanded the old Northern League, and with the aid of the Wyvern Riders, won the bloody Battle of Fallingstar Mountain against the combined forces of three holdout cities. He then showed magnanimity in pardoning those who had stood against him, provided they swore allegiance to him, not as head of his city, but as the Celestial Warlord of the Seven Stars.

While the Seven Stars was established under one ruler, it is by no means secure. Not all of the country has been fully unified and there are still provinces that are rebellious. There are also border regions that were lost to the Ghoul Pirates or the Manticore Nomads during the fighting, and there are tensions between the barbarian Wyvern Riders and the more civilised city-folk. A rash of mysterious disappearances in one city is rumoured to be connected to the legendary undercities. One of the biggest disputes is over the succession. Tenrai has yet to marry, and some are advising him to choose a bride from one of the defeated cities (to help reunify them) while the Wyvern Riders expect him to take one of their own as his queen.

Despite the magnanimity of the Celestial Warlord, the fighting has also created a large class of exiles, including one order of fighting monks that refused to support the new regime and several hundred warriors who would not take the Warlord's pardon and instead chose to become outlaws. Some of these have travelled as far as the Shards of Azar, where they are welcomed for their near-magical martial skills, often serving as merchant caravan guards, master-at-arms for an archmage, or bodyguards of a guildmaster.

▶ IKARIS ELVES

Elves are a race of beautiful pointy-eared wanderers with powerful magic. They travel in the wilderness and create temporary dwellings there, or live in abandoned fairs or old ruins. They have their own customs and culture, which tends to be matriarchal. Unlike humans, all elves are mages. In the Shards, elves are said to descend from an ancient arch-mage who married a demon. The elves have their own traditions, which say they are exiles from another world. Regardless, most common people distrust them, but sometimes go to them for cures, curses, etc. because they are an alternative source of magic to the arrogant mage-born sorcerers. They are treated much like the gypsies of Earth's middle ages. Elves consider themselves to all be nobles, though human mageborn sorcerers sometimes call them "hellspawn."

IKARIS AND THE COSMIC WEB

Ikaris has seven waylines: one connects to Earth, two to Inner Worlds, and four to all the other Prime Worlds save Enid.

The Empire of Azar knew of the Cosmic Web, and the Emperor was the gatekeeper of Ikaris. This tradition has faded with the emperor's death. The position of gatekeeper was passed on in secret by the dying emperor to his harpist, and today the gatekeeper of Ikaris is the Master Harper. The College of Harpers are thus also responsible for keeping track of the status of the gates.

Ikaris's gates are scattered about the world. The gatekeeper of Ikaris often struggles to locate the Keys to the gates that lead to Bazaroth to ensure they can be safely sealed, for the demons are often making mischief and sealing diabolical pacts with various evil warlocks. Similarly, Aradia's involvement with Ikaris is also active. It was from Aradia that the legendary angels arrived to join with the founders of the Seven Stars, and there are still gates to Aradia in each of the cities. The Seraphic Knights are emissaries from Aradia that were sent to protect their descendants.




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GRAND PRIX
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IMAGO

Imago is a world much like Earth but somewhat more advanced, where globalisation has led to a unified basic standard of living (though there are still richer or poorer regions). Technology is similar to the early 21st century Earth in some areas, and more advanced in others. Examples of highly advanced technology are breakthroughs in robotics, powered exoskeletons, genetic engineering, and virtual reality.

National divisions have largely been abolished. Major urban mega-cities include Kwalur, Meridian, Newport, Neo Edo, and several others, each with populations of several million. There is a world government, Global Economic Oversight (GEO), that co-ordinates relations between regions and corporations. The World Police, the investigative intelligence and security arm of GEO, deal with international crime and conspiracy, hunt down data pirates, smugglers, and criminals, and investigate corporate wrongdoing such as corruption, espionage, pollution, forbidden technology, etc.

The major powers besides GEO are giant multinational conglomerates such as Typhon and ONE, which possess incomes vaster than any nation. With war abolished and a basic level of prosperity provided across the world – largely driven by a highly successful universal basic income – the big profits are largely geared toward consumer and entertainment sectors. Many of the cities where people live are quite crowded, with all but the wealthy living in small apartments. Fearing crime and unemployment, the megacorps and GEO channel aggressiveness toward competition, as various rival factions and groups challenge one another through energetic (and sometimes violent) sports and games.

Most of the nations on the planet have fallen under the regime of GEO, but there are some trouble spots. There are several nations and regions that GEO calls "fault zones." These are areas where there economic disparities, crime, ecological disasters, major government corruption, etc. GEO assigns "corporate oversight" to particular fault zones to major corporations, offering them clean-up contracts where they take over all major services including law enforcement. In exchange, the corporations get big tax breaks. Corporate Police are security forces operated by corporations. They are often well equipped, but there are legal limits on the classes of weapons they can have. For example, tanks, fighter jets, and heavy vehicles are banned, but the police can operate personal exo-suits, armoured cars and vans, or patrol helicopters. Some examples of the enormous mega-corporations on Imago are outlined herein.

Typhon made its name as the leading provider of genetically modified crops and farm animals, but its breakthrough came when it used fast-growth clone tanks to produce neomorphs – artificially grown mini-monsters produced through genetic engineering and gene reconstruction. Their first neomorph series were pint-sized replicas of long-extinct dinosaurs, but consumer demand guided development of later generations of adorable talking chimera fusions between different animal species. Lately there have been rumours of even stranger rare creatures appearing, such as mythical beasts, demons, and angels. Neomorphs are typically adopted by children and teens, who buy neogenesis eggs and incubate them over the course of several weeks until they hatch and start growing. Many neomorph owners participate in sponsored organised play battles, which Typhon refers to as the Neo-Evolution Grand Prix, at the neighbourhood, city, continental, and world levels. Prizes sometimes include ultra-rare limited edition neomorphs and trips to special training areas.

Monad is a major computer and software company. It pioneered development of the Nexus, a vast computer network, and the virtual reality operation systems that run on it. One of the most popular activities on the Nexus is Ikarion, a massively multiplayer virtual reality fantasy world with over 28 million players. Using Monad's special Brainscape gear, Monad users can interact with the Nexus much as if they were in reality, creating avatar bodies. Some schools, for example, spend much of their time in the Nexus. A recent problem (which GEO and corporate police are investigating) is the sale and manufacture by organised crime of cheap pirate Brainscape gear accessing the Nexus. These items are normally expensive, but everyone wants them, and so some companies and criminal organisations provide illegal knockoffs. Some of these are defective and people using them can become trapped in virtual reality.

Omniversal Nexus Entertainment (ONE) is the world's major "content provider" manufacturing everything from 3-D movies and computer games to pop stars and investigative news programs. ONE's latest creation is near-sapient "virtuoid" entities for use as virtual idols, actors, etc. that will exist in the Nexus, which it is developing in partnership with Monad. In a cut-throat business, ONE is especially ruthless.

Exodynamics is a major manufacturer of robots and powered exoskeletons of all sorts. Exodynamics has long made industrial robots, but is now branching into humanoid androids and gynoids for the domestic market (for example, as maids, companions, etc.). The basic models are not very intelligent, but it's possible that the self-aware virtuoids developed by Monad and ONE could upload into them. Its major line, however is exoskeletons, including form-fitting powered suits (exo-mechs) that are used by GEO Storm police and for various types of heavy labour. The suits are also used in Meteor Ball.

Brainsponge is the major "alternative" news, music, and media source that is a rival to ONE, and which also challenges the other mega-corporations and the GEO party line. Its young go-getter reporters are always seeking to break stories in order to boost ratings among the linking public. Its music division sponsors numerous themed pop-idol groups.

Spectrum Heavy Industries (SHI) is the leading manufacturer of automobiles, aircraft, power plants, engines, and other heavy industrial equipment. It is also a major robotics manufacturer of all shapes and sizes, and has its own exo-mech line that competes with Exodynamics. SHI exo-mechs are usually heavier but somewhat slower.

Many children only attend school through the Nexus, but special "mega-academies" (high school to college) are sponsored by most of the big mega corporations. Examples include the ONE Academy, specialising in music, media, etc., and the Monad School of Technology. Students usually wear distinctive uniforms, and there is rivalry between different mega-academies. Fees are high, but students can transfer into them via scholarships (often won through various competitions and promotions, as well as through merit). There are also places reserved for senior corporate executives and scientists, creating something of an "elite."

The most popular sport on the planet for teens and adults is presently Meteor Ball, a hybrid of tag team pro-wrestling and full-contact basketball performed by four- or five-person teams in form-fitting powered exo-mech suits using an iron cannonball. Both men and women (especially older teens) participate in various divisions, and Meteor has eclipsed most other sports in terms of advertising dollars earned. In some divisions, Meteor stars are so popular that they are expected to engage in various subsidiary marketing schemes such as pop idol albums, beauty pageants, etc. In addition to the big-bucks Professional League there is also a popular Academy League, which sponsored by the various corporate mega-academies. There is an active gambling network that covers nearly all Meteor Ball leagues.

Second-hand exo-mechs are also available for the price of a used car, and some teenagers enjoy training or playing with them in "street leagues," often played in all abandoned housing projects scheduled for demolition. Availability of exo-mechs has also spread to various gangs and violent running tribes, and there are street gangs that use them as well, often upgrading them with them various add-ons that are powered by the suit's power pack, such as power skates or drills for high-speed thrashing and street fighting.

The World Police try its best to stamp out organised crime, but there remain various powerful crime families. Some of these have secretly purchased front corporations, as well as street level and fault zone gangs. One of the activities of the gangs is dealing in high-tech designer drugs. Xyconal is a mutagenic drug that was developed by a small and now bankrupt corporation. It was developed to increase growth rates in neomorphs, making them develop more quickly and cheaply, and become stronger – sort of a super-steroid for genemod pets. It has a bad side effect, though – it can cause their growth rate to go out of control, resulting in sudden mutations and aggressive behaviour. For example, a well-trained kitten-sized neomorph of a tyrannosaurus may transform into a towering monster! Xyconal is sometimes stolen or synthesised illegally and sold on the black market to unscrupulous vendors. Neomorphs that are Xyconal-enhanced may appear stronger for a time, but will eventually "monster out." Xyconal is also quite dangerous if injected into a human, sometimes with steroid-like effects, but often eventually leading to mood swings and mutations. If a father or mother have taken Xyconal before a child is conceived, a neomorph may be born instead. There are also "mutant gangs" in the fault zones that abuse Xyconal.

IMAGO AND THE COSMIC WEB

Imago has seven waylines: one connects to Earth, two to Inner Worlds, and four to all the other Prime Worlds save Cathedral. Some of the senior leaders of GEO are indeed aware of the Cosmic Web, and the World Police have a special team devoted to dealing with intrusions (demons, etc.) from other worlds. Some of the megacorps (and gangs) also have private wayline contacts, which is the source of the genetic material used to clone the dragons, angels, and other mythical figures recently released as "limited edition" neomorphs by Typhon. Some demons from Bazaroth have managed to make their way into the fault zones, and are stirring up trouble there. Finally, one section of the massively popular Ikarion VR game is actually a "virtual gate" to the Prime World of Ikaris. Much to their surprise, players who reach certain levels in the game may be accidentally (or deliberately!) transported to the real world of Ikaris.

BESM

GAMESCREEN

FOURTH EDITION



Explore, learn, and connect
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This handy, four-panel reference screen for Game Masters features a one-stop location for BESM tables, charts, and other resources, wrapped in a stunning full-colour, panoramic, multi-dimensional image on the front. As a bonus, inside you'll find the engaging two-part, multi-genre adventure that serves as a game launching point or it can be dropped into your ongoing campaign. With gorgeous art and an intriguing adventure story, this BESM Game Screen is a great addition to your anime RPG collection.

"You Have Chosen … Wisely" is the included adventure scenario for BESM Fourth Edition. The primary setting is an older-style urban fantasy planet, though players are encouraged to create characters spanning nearly any background and genre from a planet somewhere in the setting's solar system. This scenario is ideal for 4 to 8 players at the Adventurer or Heroic power levels (50-99 Character Points), and serves as a solid introduction to the game mechanics and tropes that can appear within an anime- or manga-themed tabletop RPG. As the GM, you'll need wits to take players through this adventure and guide them towards their final destination.



BESM4.life

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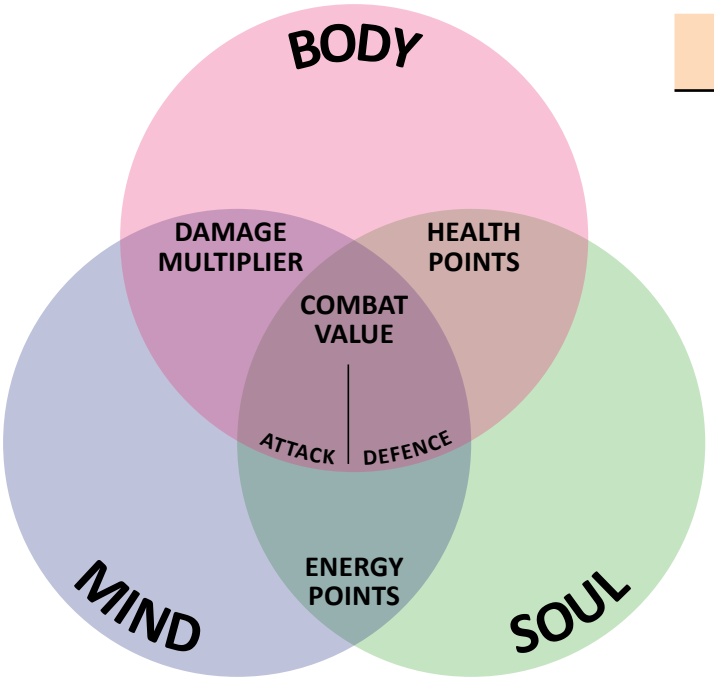
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BESM
ROLE-PLAYING GAME
FOURTH EDITION

Character Name	Player Name
Total Character Points	Game Master Name
Race / Species	Class / Occupation
Home World / Habitat	Size / Height / Weight / Gender



ATTRIBUTES

LEVEL	POINTS	ATTRIBUTE

DEFECTS

RANK	POINTS	DEFECT

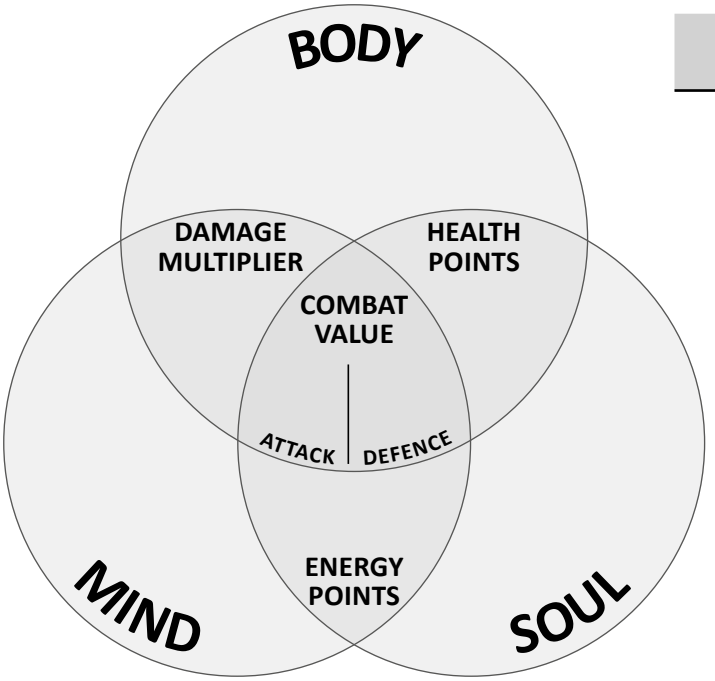
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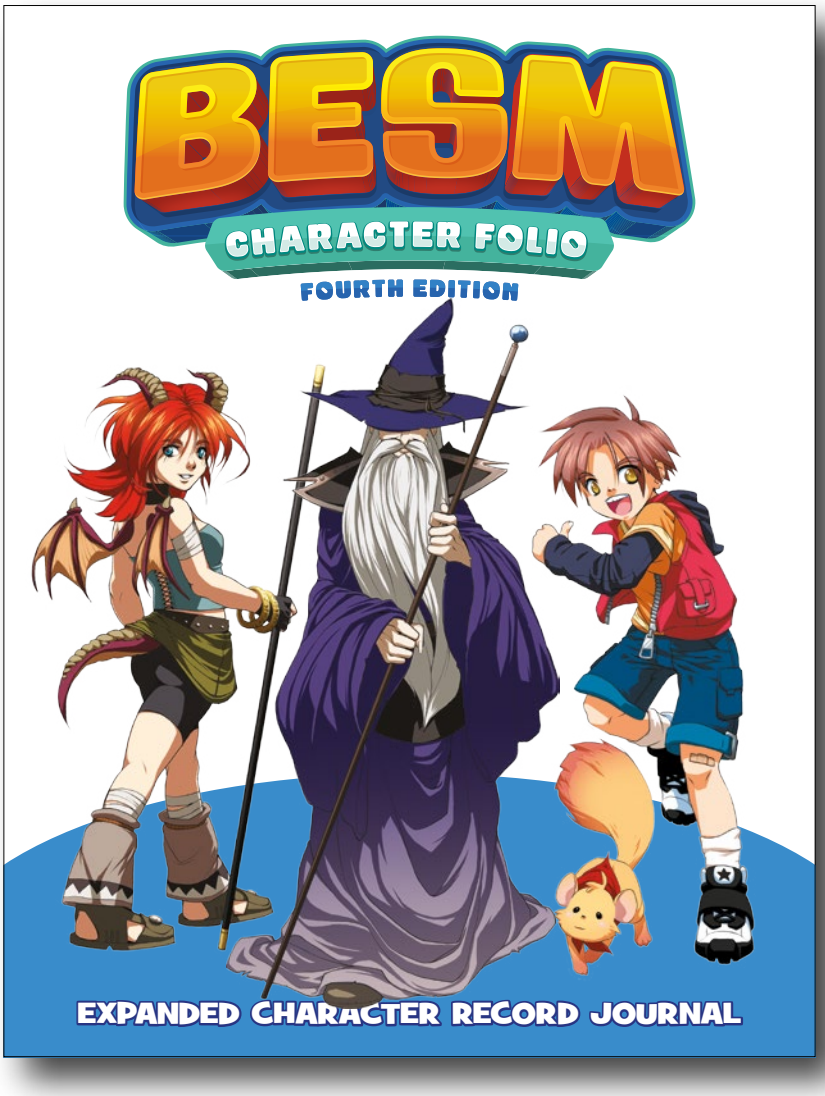
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