

The background of the entire cover is a dark, industrial setting, possibly a warehouse or a workshop, with warm, orange-toned lighting. Two men are prominently featured in the foreground. The man on the left has short, light brown hair and is wearing a dark grey t-shirt. He has his arms crossed and is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The man on the right has longer, dark brown hair and is wearing a plaid button-down shirt. He is also looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and intense.

# SUPERNATURAL

ROLE PLAYING GAME

WRITTEN BY  
**JAMIE CHAMBERS**

BASED ON THE TELEVISION SERIES CREATED BY  
**ERIC KRIPKE**

COREBOOK



# SUPERNATURAL™

## ROLE PLAYING GAME

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dedication — This work is based on the story of brothers who must continue the fight without their  
father, though his memories and teachings remain with them. I dedicate this book  
to the memory of my teacher, my hero, and my best friend—my Dad, Jimmie Chambers.

The *Supernatural* Role Playing Game would not be possible without the inspiring  
performances by series stars Jensen Ackles and Jared Padalecki, and the incredible work of  
the writing team: Eric Kripke, Robert Singer, Ben Edlund, Sera Gamble, Raelle Tucker,  
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In the spirit of *Supernatural*, this book is filled with pop-culture references, that are  
intended solely to capture the feel of the television series. No violation of copyright or  
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# FOREWORD

## Foreword

You know you wanna be Dean Winchester.

Admit it. You want to hit the road. Crank the tunes. Eat snack cakes for dinner. Flirt with a confidence so epic it should be weaponized. Then—oops—lose their number. Con the con men. Outsmart the Trickster. Field strip a rifle in under a minute on a motel bed, without looking, while the Magic Fingers is running. Gank a demon before breakfast. Go to Hell and live to tell about it.

Who wouldn't wanna be Dean?

Or, okay, Sam. Look, we're friends, I'm just gonna level with you—Dean's awesome, but I'd want be the one with the special mojo. Hello? Psychic visions? The power to exorcise demons with your mind? I mean, yeah, a heavy suitcase of angst comes with the turbo powers—there's the looming threat of Going Darkside. But I gotta confess, I can relate to the angst. As metaphors go, Sam's works for me. I've got a little Darkside in there. You?

Now, on the unequivocal plus side of being Sam: street smart and book smart and tall. If you were Sam, you could walk into any room, beeline for the most suspicious person, and get them to trust you in under a minute. Never mind you're only pretending to be a cop, or a reporter, or a hospital orderly ... or even drunk and incompetent with a pool cue. If you were Sam, you'd be one hell of a pool shark.

Plus, if you're Sam, you've got Dean. If you're Dean, you've got Sam. Have you ever seen a team like the two of them? Me neither.

So.

On the one hand, you kind of can't go wrong here. Our show is full of bad-asses. Take your pick. Even the demons drive classic cars. Even the angels throw a wicked right hook.



On the other hand, you're doomed. I can't be the first person to point out to you that as a fan of *Supernatural*, you've embraced what just might be the most nihilistic show on TV. Dude, everybody dies. They die bloody. Some of them repeatedly. Including both of our lead characters. *Supernatural* is a show about the creepy evil lurking in every corner. It's about the hunters who just barely manage to keep beating that evil back. The teeny little candle flames in the pitch black. They're outnumbered, outgunned ...

I'm sorry, am I depressing you? Don't get me wrong—it's fun to watch the creatures go ballistic. Blood spatter hits the wall—or a Winchester's face—innocent people scream, our heroes dive for the Impala trunk and select from a cache of groovy weapons ...

No, I trust we're all on the same page here. You didn't tune into our little show because you wanted to watch *The Nutcracker*. You're after some hardcore Bad Thing Hunting. Maybe you had a rough childhood. Maybe you just have really excellent taste. Whatever. I'm just glad you found us.

When I was 12, my folks shipped me off to spend the summer in Canada with my cousins. We were bored, unsupervised, and had access to the video store. We watched the entire horror section. I won't waste your valuable role-playing time getting into a deep analysis of why I was so drawn to monsters. I'll just say that there's something about experiencing scary stuff that's more satisfying when you're with other people, all freaking out together.

So I'm glad this game has come into being. You can gather in a like-minded group, turn down the lights, and egg each other on. Don't forget the pie. For extra veracity, someone should probably wear a trucker hat. If you're of age, by all means have a beer. Lucifer could rise at any time. Might as well party.

And seriously: thanks for watching. We make the show for you.

—Sera Gamble



# Be Afraid of the Dark

191. DURANT WISC.  
FEMALE SPIRIT OF WOMAN AFTER  
MURDER-SUICIDE. (HER OWN KIDS)

CHEATING HUSBAND?

WAILING WOMAN LIKE BEANSIPHE  
IN OLD IRISH STORIES.

✓SALTED + BURNED.

Composer/performer Sherri Richae displays her recently released Christian contemporary folk music called 'Basking in Freedom.' Richae lives in Bay with her husband, Bob, and her children, Derek and Erika.

## Drowned Woman's Ghost Appeared to Passersby near Garland Area

By Scarlett French

DALLAS — A couple driving by White Rock Lake, near Garland, Texas, Friday reported seeing a ghost of a young woman who drowned in the lake two weeks prior, dressed in all white and soaking wet.

Francis Young and Elizabeth Jones were driving by the lake late Friday night when a figure appeared in front of them begging them to stop. The couple stopped to offer aid and the young woman asked them to take her to an address in Oak Cliff. Upon arriving at the address, the young woman disappeared.

Young and Jones approached the owner of the house to inquire about his daughter. According to the couple, the homeowner, Charles McNley, reported that his daughter had drowned two weeks earlier in a tragic accident, falling off the pier, hitting her head and drowning.

The Dallas Times reported on Victoria McNley's unfortunate accident on Friday, March 29, in the article headlined "Oak Cliff Woman Dies in Pier Accident."

This latest report of a ghostly sighting comes only days after the Dallas Times received a similar incident.

Georgia from Neir luxury street, Mrs. of young white neg- purchased.

The young woman was soaked wet, but had slightly decomposed she had been underwater for several days.

"It was so scary," Mrs. Walker said. "At first I thought she needed help, but then she looked almost told Ryan just to drive away."

Young and Jones said the girl seemed docile and happy, just content from being wet. They did not notice anything abnormal until she disappeared.

There have been two other reports of sightings of a similar ghost called the Dallas County Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Ritter told the Dallas Times that he himself had not personally seen a ghost, but if he does, plans to shoot that thing back into oblivion.

The two other reports tell similar tales of a young woman in all white asking for help, but either disappeared shortly after or leaving the scene before aid could be rendered. Neither of the other two incidents sites decomposition of the woman's body.

To be clear, the ghost has not been tried to cause harm to anyone who has seen it. Mr. McNley hopes that his daughter can soon find rest and apologizes for any concern she might have raised.

The Dallas Times does not represent or believe that the supernatural exists, but felt that after several reports of a similar incident, it was in the public's best interest to keep it informed of all of the news, including the supernatural.

Landscane





**I**t's damn dark out there—the sort of dark that swallows light and bring up bile. You're alone, crouched in a corner. The wind howls—or is that a scream? Scratching sounds at the window, creaking in the floorboards, hinges groan as a door slides open. The arrhythmic thump of footsteps moves steadily across the floor. Something is headed your way.

Whatever it is, it can't be good. More than likely, it's gonna be a real bitch.

They say the night's alive, but you know whatever's coming ain't animals, insects, or some insomniac. Other things are out there—seriously bad stuff that lives in the darkness. This ugly, relentless evil is *hungry*. Hungry for flesh and blood, sure, but also fear, terror, and life. The worst of it starves for your soul.

Surviving such a world ain't easy. In fact, it's hard as hell. At times, it is Hell.

No one lasts long if they aren't prepared. To do that, you gotta know just what sort of world you're living in. You also gotta learn the kind of nasties that can rear up and take a bite out of you and your buddies. No tellin' when something might come for you out of the shadows. If you aren't ready, you're as good as dead.

## The World You Know

Check it out—the real world, modern-day. It's the world you see every morning when you wake up. People tool around in cars, listen to iPods, heat up coffee in microwaves, curse the ATM for their own pathetic bank account, and surf the Internet when work gets old (say, five minutes in). It's the same dreary world you've always known, with all the same boring people. You're born, you learn to walk and talk, you go to school, you graduate, you get a job, you retire, and you die. End of story.

At least, that's how it is for most folks.

What most people don't know is ... there's a lot more crap going on. Some people ain't most folks—they ain't as lucky, or as ignorant. They've had their eyes opened, usually by force. They've witnessed firsthand what haunts the shadows. They know a nice, neat life is a lie. Beyond it—and not nearly far enough beyond—is something much worse.

## The Supernatural

Nature and human effort don't explain everything. If anything, that stuff just covers over a badness that, thankfully, most people never experience. That horror has a name: the supernatural. This deeper world is filled with ghosts and spirits and demons and all manner of monsters. These creatures piss on the normal rules. Most are stronger, faster, tougher and way more vicious than humans. Some only need to eat once a decade, but feed much more often ... 'cause they like it. Some are made of

stone, or breathe fire, or turn into bugs, or paralyze with a touch, or transform into smoke, or do something really mind-blowing. The ugly stuff can't die by normal means. The really ugly stuff lives forever.

Now we're talking about the real world. The big, bad, scary, rip-out-your-organs world. The one where those who battle the supernatural—the hunters—strive every hour of every day to buy normal folks what safety they can.

On the upside, it's a thousand times more exciting than classes or carpooling to your CPA job. It's also an important job. Somebody's gotta do it. That's about it for the positives. On the flipside, it's also stupidly dangerous. A few supernatural creatures just want to be left alone, but don't count on it. Most are hip-deep in messing with normal humans. Some want people for entertainment, but more often they're just lookin' for a food source. That might be blood and guts, but others suck out emotions, memories, or life energy.

Since most folks can't even accept the idea that such creatures exist, their nasty habits usually go unpunished, written off as the deranged crimes of "unknown assailants." Hell, half the time no one even looks into the thing. What used to be a living, loving human becomes just another missing person, bizarre accident, or elaborate suicide.

Hunters know better. Like we said, someone's gotta fight back, protect the innocents, blah, blah, blah. Hunters take on a job few know about, and even fewer want anything to do with. One monster at a time, they risk everything. The lucky ones that don't have their hearts ripped out more often than not go insane. Most just hope they can take down the sons of bitches before they cash it in.

So what sort of beasties inhabit the darkness beyond the light? The unfortunate truth is it's anything you can imagine, and a whole mess of stuff you can't, or don't want to. Every myth, legend, and ghost story began as some kind of true account. Later generations—folks that didn't want to believe—discounted them as empty tales. Partially that's 'cause most supernatural creatures don't die away, they simply adapt to whatever life and society humans create. That helps them hide better and keep on killing.

If you've ever been spooked by a story or a hunch, that son of a bitch is probably out there somewhere. Here's the nickel tour. Stay sharp, some of this information could save your sorry ass.

## Ghosts

You live, you die, you move on. If you're lucky, you avoid goin' someplace nasty, but no one really knows exactly where you go. At least, that's the case with most folks. Then there're those who don't, or can't, move on. Some men, women—hell, even children or animals—linger after death. They don't pass through the veil to whatever comes next. They stick around and become ghosts.

Spooks seem to turn up in the majority of our scary jobs. That's 'cause they're the single most common supernatural creature in our world. You can find ghosts almost anywhere: in the city, in the country, in a house, in an apartment, along a road, attached to an object, attached to a person, hovering over your shoulder right now. If you know where to look, they're all around. Whenever something supernatural occurs, it's usually a safe bet that a spook is involved.

Of course, not all specters are the same. Some can't be seen; others get their kicks by gettin' in your face. Some are uglier than your fat aunt Mildred, sporting open wounds or horrid signs of what caused them to stop livin'. Some appear so normal that most people seeing them don't notice anything out of the ordinary. Some spooks are sad, pining for their living, breathing days, or trying to change something that happened so long ago no one remembers. Some are protective, watching over loved ones. More than you'd like, however, ghosts are just plain angry, seeking payback for whatever happened to them while they were still alive.

Ghosts run the gambit in power and ability. The one thing all spooks share is intangibility. They are shadows of their former, living selves, and spend most of their time with no real physical substance. Some are permanently immaterial, but many can get tangible when riled up. Solid or not, many ghosts can make stuff move with nothing but a stare, flinging items and even people around. Most ghosts can turn invisible, and tend to stay hidden when not gettin' medieval on someone. A few of the more powerful spooks may be able to read minds, to alter weather, to cause heart attacks, or even to bend time and space. Now that's downright frightenin'.

No one knows what causes one person's spirit to linger while another faced with similar bad stuff moves on. Maybe it's willpower, or faith, or intensity, or some combination. The good news is that ghosts were once human, and tend to think just like when they were alive. They can be tricked, manipulated, or outmaneuvered by using their own memories, interests, and emotions against them.

## Creatures

Some of these things were never human. Not even close. Lots of these creeps aren't even flesh and blood. They could be made of stone, wood, plants, or stuff you don't want to get near, much less on the bottom of your shoes. Many could never be mistaken for us, while others are close enough to pass among regular people when necessary. Ultimately all of them are inhuman, with inhuman needs and desires.

Usually, these creatures live apart from humanity, preying on us when the mood strikes them. Some are like wild beasts, only more cunning. Some relish the chase, hunting people with the patience

of a big game cat, or the relentlessness of a pack of wolves. Others are more twisted, shunning meat and blood in favor of emotions, thoughts, or some other esoteric feedbag. They are as subtle as they are cruel, and they are always, always hungry.

The upside is that creatures have substance—living beings with physical bodies. That means you can kick them in the head, blow holes in them, or run them over with a car. The trick is figuring out what type of ugly it is and what its weaknesses are. Most flesh-and-blood creatures can be damaged by fire. Many can be hurt by knives, bats, and guns. Best count on them being a lot tougher than any regular animal though. For creatures made of weird substances, like rock or thousands of bugs, whatever damages that stuff can probably hurt it. Chisel the rock thing, spray down the bugs with poison—you get the drift.

The other good thing about creatures is that they are limited by their bodies. A ghost can pass through walls, vanish from sight, and reappear anywhere—makes it damn tough to ambush or trap. Creatures can usually only sense what's around them at any given time, and can be hemmed in with walls or nets or powerful enough tranqs. That means hunting a creature is much the same as hunting any wild beast. The biggest difference is that most creatures are smarter than animals, and have unusual strength and endurance. Even worse are those sons of bitches that move like lightning, or fly, or shape-shift, or shoot venom from places you don't want to know. Just gotta out-tough those bastards.

## Demons

Ghosts were human at one point. Creatures are physical and, in the end, mortal. Both are part of this world, even if it's a screwed-up part. Really vicious horrors come from beyond. And the worst of those are demons.

Hate to say it, but Father Christopher was right. There really *is* a Hell. That's something every hunter—every one who lives more than a couple weeks—learns for absolute certain. No one knows if Heaven exists, but sure...hell...there's a Hell. We know that 'cause sadistic, pitiless things keep crawling out of it. These beings are powerful and utterly ruthless. They're known to those in the trade as demons.

Demons have no physical form of their own—not in our world, anyway. Some hunters—those who can string together more than two sentences at a time—debate whether demons have bodies in Hell. Most don't bother, or try not to think too much about the place down below. In the real world, demons possess regular people and use their bodies—their “meat suits” as the hellions like to call their rides. They can access the host body's memories, pulling off a nearly perfect imitation, right down to knowing the meat's work routine, loved ones, financial arrangements, and even kinky pleasures. Demons are abnormally strong in their host bodies, fueled by their infernal power.



Whacking or shooting the meat doesn't do a damn thing to the demon, 'cept maybe tickle them. A demon can simply vacate a damaged ride and go find another one. When outside a host, a demon looks like a cloud of black smoke, roiling and moving with overwhelming force and focus.

Fighting a demon ain't much different than suicide—maybe a bit slower and more painful. The better approach is to bind it. Wards work to contain or block them, and holy water burns them something fierce. Salt can turn them away too. The more powerful demons ignore the simple stuff, but a proper ward, like a Devil's Trap, should stop even the strongest from entering a room.

Then again, stopping a demon physically doesn't always keep you safe. Hellions can move things with their minds, cause fires by willpower alone, and get weak-willed humans to do their dirty work. The older, more powerful demons are very good at manipulating normal people, promising them gotta-have-it things in exchange for their help. Once a demon has its hooks in you, free will is little more than an illusion that helps you sleep at night.

## Others

Ghosts, creatures, and demons—that's not all that's out there. Some horrors have their own gig. Usually, they don't play nice with others. That's good when the others are different nasties. That's bad, very bad, when the others are humans.

Take vampires, for example. They might have been mortal folk once upon a time, but after they change, they no longer age, sleep, or breathe. They possess phenomenal strength and speed. You might be able to slow them down, but you can't really hurt them with most weapons. They survive by drinking blood, which makes them bad neighbors unless you too want to be undead. Good thing they can't cross running water, are burned by sunlight, and can be killed by a wooden stake through the heart or decapitation. At least, that's the case with most of them.

Other evils exist in legend but seem so farfetched even hunters have a hard time believing they're real. The *djinn*, or genies, are like that. These bad boys can alter reality, messing with your head and changing the world at a whim. They can vanish, turn immaterial, change their appearance, and have an annoying habit of being immortal. Fortunately djinn are few and far between, and seem more interested in amusing themselves and whiling away the long centuries than in actively hurting humans. Would be nice if the other supernaturals were so indifferent.

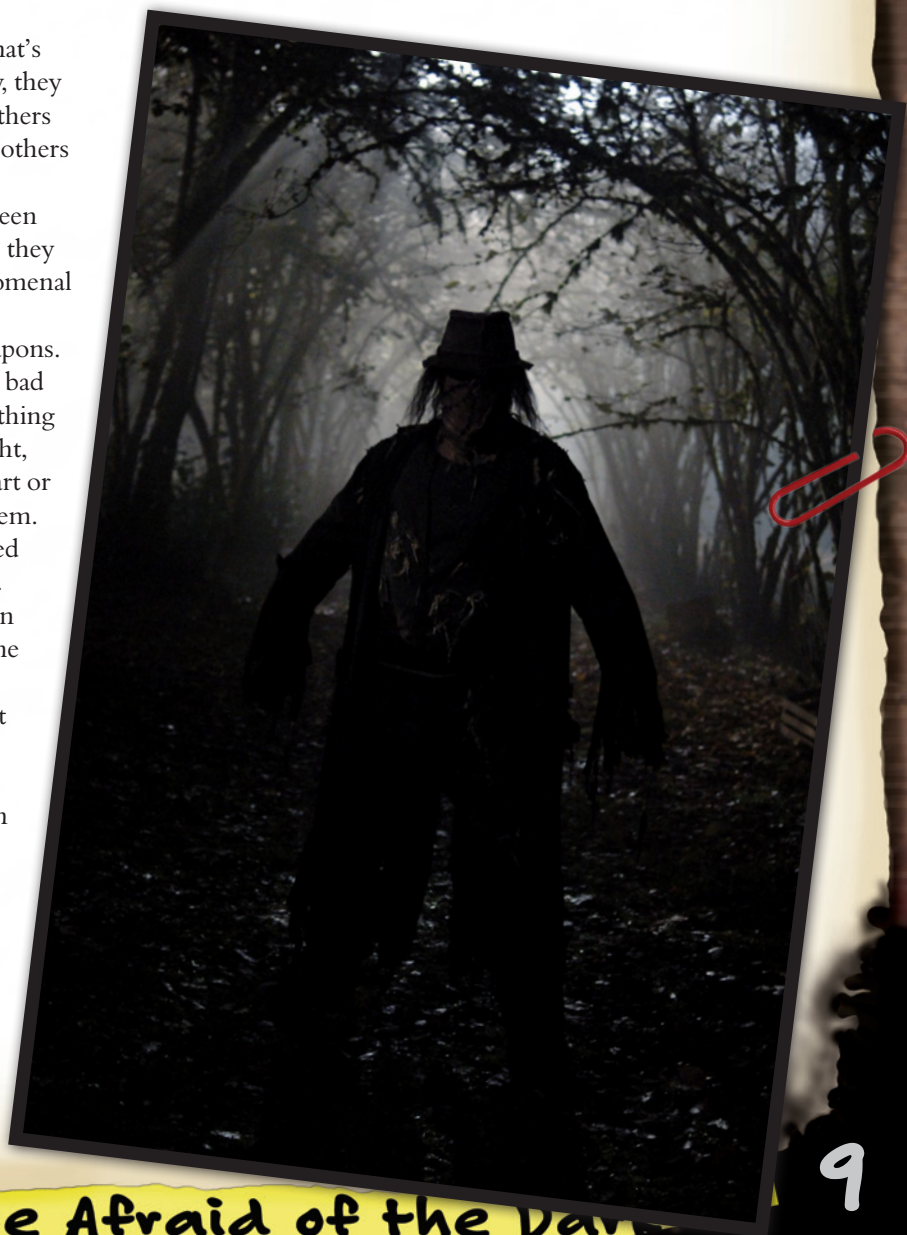
The most dangerous of the others are the unique ones. Each one is hard to identify 'cause it's the only one of its kind. Some don't even have a name, 'cause the few people who might have survived its attacks can't write or talk about it in detail. Evidence about its existence and habits is sketchy, amounting to, at most, vague rumors

and folk tales. That means a hunter is stuck fighting a mostly unknown evil. Makes it damn difficult to figure out its capabilities and weaknesses. A werewolf or vampire is powerful, but at least a hunter—a hunter with any decent amount of training or experience—knows enough to prepare for those threats. When a creature is unknown its potential danger is limitless. Will fire affect it? Will salt? Will guns? Can it only come out at night, or can it hunt during the day? Does it need to breathe? Can it hear heartbeats, or thoughts? The less a hunter knows about a given threat, the bigger the risk of judging it wrong. When that happens people die—usually messily.

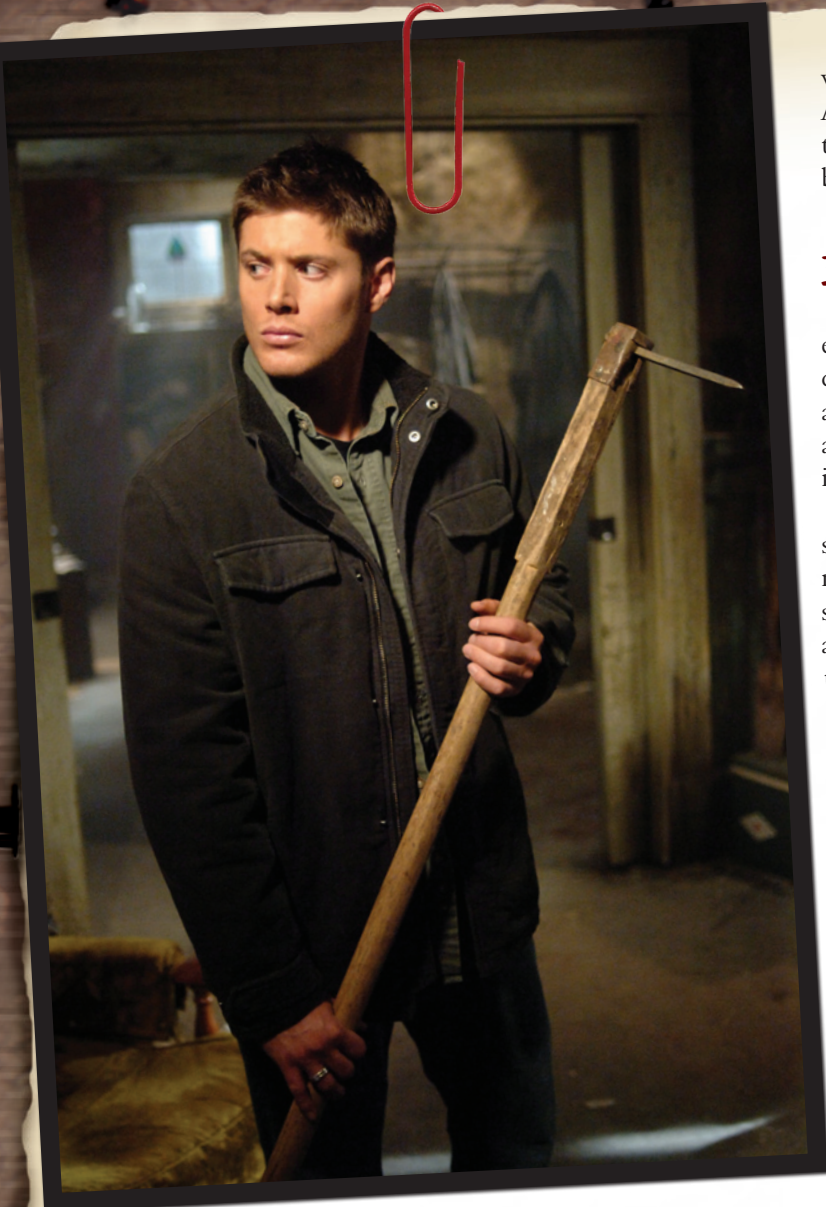
## Hunting

Here's where the rubber meets the road. Hunters are all about the hunt. Find whatever creeps are hurtin' people and put an end to them, once and for all.

Some folks are born hunters—their parents were hunters and taught them the trade, or they've simply got it in their blood. Others discover, or more likely are







forced into hunting at an early age, having run face first into nasty as youths. Others join the hunt after they're full-grown. They might've had mundane careers and even families before Hell came a'callin'.

For most, the kick-start's the same—a supernatural run-in. Happens all the time, all over the country. People encounter ghosts, demons, spirits, vampires, whatever. Most don't survive that first encounter. Those who do probably weren't the bastard's target, or got damn lucky. They write off the experience as stress or hallucination or an overactive imagination, or some sort of vicious prank. A few allow themselves to really see what's happening around them. They realize that whatever it was, it can't be explained away. Something mean and dark and butt ugly tried to do them a world of hurt. They accept that it wasn't natural or remotely human. It was real and it was real scary.

Of these folks, most try and hide from the new world they've discovered. Some have the balls to study it,

willing to give the urban legends and old tales a fresh look. A few—a precious few—get enough of a mad on to arm themselves and go out and face the bad guys. Those poor bastards are the hunters.

## Dangerous Work

Not surprisingly, hunters don't have much life-expectancy. Hell, the point is to find and battle supernatural creatures. Nearly all of those suckers are stronger, faster, and tougher than any human. And they don't much appreciate folks who try to blast, burn, or ritualize them into little pieces.

Those who live more than a few days do their best to stack the odds. Weapons are key, but so is protection, both mundane and supernatural. Some hunters learn rites and spells and rituals, fighting brimstone with brimstone. Some augment vehicles, creating warded armored cars and trucks that can literally crush ghosts and other spirits beneath their wheels. A few have tattoos and other marks, amulets and pendants, wards and charms—all designed to protect them from dismemberment, possession, and damnation.

No matter what, there's no way to get it right 100 percent of the time. Nature of the job is risk. Gotta accept that. Most of the risk comes from uncertainty. Every so often a hunter busts down the door knowing exactly what he's dealing with. Most times it's just a guess, based on news reports about recent victims, lore dragged out of obtuse texts, or raw gut instinct. The hunter prepares as best he can, but if he makes the wrong call, he may not have the right tool or mumbo-jumbo for the job. That can get downright ugly—most of the nasties out there aren't much for giving a guy a second shot.

Taking on the critter isn't the only risk. Lots of creatures have lairs—dark, skanky, pits that are just as unforgiving as their inhabitants. Some boltholes are trapped against intruders; others are just way off the OSHA charts. Fighting a doppelganger in an old abandoned mine is tough enough, but afterward you still have to make your way back out through closed-down tunnels and collapsed shafts. After tangling with a shapechanger and comin' out alive, it would suck hard to be taken out by a cave-in. Some monsters live on cliffs or mountain peaks, or in dank underground cellars, or in sewers, or in derelict complexes. None of these are garden spots at the best of times—with a vengeful spirit or slavering beast on the loose they're out-and-out unpleasant. Oh, did I mention that most fiends abhor bright light? If I was that ugly, I'd stay out of any spotlights too. Anyway, hunters get awful good at moving around, and fighting in less than ideal lighting. Still, bad light increases the chance of falling through rotten floorboards or running into rusted nails or head-butting something a hell of a lot harder than your noggin.

None of this keeps a good hunter down though. If you want a nice, safe, long life, stay home and let the pros handle it.



## No Pay

Hunters do damned important work. The most successful hunters are responsible for saving dozens, maybe even hundreds of lives. Entire communities are in their debt. Not that most of those folks know it, or appreciate it, however. Hunters are unsung heroes. They take their lumps in the shadows.

Worse, hunters are *unpaid* heroes. They work at a job most people don't believe exists, and no one is willing to pay for. Even if some sucker was willing to put up cash for kills, most of the time, hunters can't hand over the dead monsters. That's 'cause most supernatural bastards disintegrate or crumble or melt away when they're aced. That's alright though—makes covering your tracks a hell of a lot easier.

So how do hunters survive? Some have other work, like running an auto salvage yard or a bookstore or being a traveling salesman. Some had a regular job before hunting got all-consuming, and saved up enough to keep them going for years afterward. A few real lucky ones are independently wealthy. The rest make ends meet any way they can. That usually means doing things that aren't exactly on the up-and-up.

Pawning loot, for example. Usually a monster that drags people back to its lair and devours them has little use for their money, credit cards, clothes, jewelry, or gold fillings. That crap just lays around the place collecting dust. So a hunter comes along and takes out the beast. Suppose he could spend a bunch of time trying to track down the victim's next of kin—fat chance that's gonna happen. To the victor go the spoils—many hunters collect any valuable remains, pawn them, and use that money to cover expenses. It's only fair—the hunter killed the creature that killed those people, preventing more from dying in the future.

Some hunters sideline as they go. They roll into a town and look for odd jobs, working and learning the area at the same time. Hunters best keep themselves in shape. A little manual labor'll help with that, and it gives them a chance to observe the locals unnoticed. Most folks don't pay much attention to a workin' man.

The majority of hunters make money the old fashioned way—crime. Credit card scams are common—apply under a fake name, using a forged ID, rack up a few thousand, then ditch the plastic and move on. Hustling pool, flipping card tricks, palming wallets or jewelry—whatever it takes. Hell, it ain't easy being a hunter and most folks got more than they really need anyway. Beside, hunters protect everyone from far worse stuff. What's a little con, identity theft, or fraud, compared to dying in the clutches of something that liquefies your bones?

## Living Outside the Law

Most hunters aren't much for obeying laws. That doesn't mean they rob and steal at the drop of a hat, but when you're fighting a ghoul or a demon or an ancient

curse you don't have time to worry about the sanctity of private property or the freakin' speed limit. The local law man takes a dim view of all this, but that doesn't cause many hunters a lot of lost sleep. Cops are part of the clueless masses. They handle mundane crimes. Hunters take on the supernatural ones, which in their minds puts them higher on the pecking order. FBI agents don't worry much about stepping on toes or laws, so why should hunters? The things they stalk and kill are far worse than any terrorist.

The laws hunters break often involve trespassing and trashing private property. The most common, and the most disgusting, though, is desecrating a grave. Ghosts are usually banished by salting the remains and then burning them. Gettin to the remains means digging them up first. Among normal folks, that's a definite no-no. Not that hunters care much. Sure it's safer to wait 'til after dark, just to avoid complications, but if the situation is dire enough a hunter'll dig up a coffin, break it open, salt it, and ignite it in broad daylight.

Most of the other wreckage hunters cause is incidental. Assuming it would work, you don't plan to take out a monster by droppin a house on it. Still, when you're fighting something strong enough to smash through walls and the battle takes place inside the house it's been using as a lair, there's a good chance somebody's gonna tear through a support beam or two. Is it really the hunter's fault that the house collapses afterward? With the monster, who the neighbors all knew as nice Mr. Melman, still apparently inside? Maybe, but he ain't the only one to blame. Try tellin' that to the authorities.

Planned or not, hunters get blamed for destructive acts and other situations that aren't their doing, or at least not entirely. When the true culprit was supernatural, and left no clear remains after the hunter killed it, who else are the normals gonna blame? Sure as hell the hunter can't prove his innocence. No one but another hunter or anyone who faced the creature with them would believe such a wild story anyway.

Worse still is when an ugly looks like Joe Average human to everyone else. The hunter knows better, and sees the creature's true face, but no one else does. Naturally, when the hunter takes the bastard down, everyone else call it murder. A charge like that can haunt a hunter for the rest of his life, and make doing his job a damned sight more difficult. That's the pride of being a hunter: no good deed goes unpunished.

## Hunting Grounds

Supernatural stuff exists in other countries and on other continents, but America seems to be home to lots of vile. More than one hunter lives, works, and has been forced into a dirt nap in the good ol' U.S. of A. You got miles of mostly empty land, and nearly as much filled with clueless humanity. You got



farmland, badland, deserts, big-ass lakes, mountains, mines, and everything in between. Cultures, and their horror stories, mix it up, bringing their traditions, their history, and their demons along for the ride. Creatures of any origin could wind up in the United States, and there's usually some group of people who tell tales about them in the area.

## Big Cities

America's got some seriously big cities. Millions of two-legged monster snacks gather in places like Chicago, New York, and Atlanta. They all teem together in massed rat warrens, blurring together into a single monstrous entity.

For nasties that prey on humans, a big city is little more than a smorgasbord. Damn spread is so big, no one's gonna notice if an apple or two goes missing.

For those who can look human, even if only in seriously dim light, or who can move around on the down-low, cities offer handy concealment.

So many people, all rushing around, all focusing on their own goals and their own activities—most folks never even glance around. They don't look too hard at those around them—that's just asking for a faceful of angry. With so many different types all mashed together—so many looks and garb and disguises—who's gonna notice a weirdo. The bad stuff and those that do it get lost in all the smoke and noise and bother.

As if all that weren't cause enough for supernatural celebrating, cities gather up big ol' groups of homeless. The larger the burg, the more folks fall through the cracks. They lose jobs or homes or both, and wind up on the street, begging and stealing and scavenging to survive. Many huddle under bridges or in subway stations, straggling from shelter to shelter in search of food and warmth. No one misses those bastards. Hell, most folks are just as happy to have them disappear. Any badness that cares to think about it could see themselves as public servants—they take out the garbage and recycle the trash.

'Course, having a home is no guarantee of safety. That's 'cause most big-city dwellers like their privacy. They expect to be left alone, and they don't get involved if they don't have to. Most folks have no idea who their neighbors are, and don't much care. If someone down the hall or in the house next door disappears, it's not their problem. People come and go all the time in the big towns. Sure a landlord notices when his tenants up and vanish, but that doesn't cause any alarm. No doubt they skipped out 'cause they couldn't pay the rent—the deadbeats even left nasty stains in the bedroom and who's stuck cleanin' up that crap? Good riddance to bad rubbish.

## Small Towns

America isn't all big cities, not by a long shot. It's filled with small towns—a whole other world from the big cities. A small town might have only a few thousand or a few tens of thousands of people, max. The residents know each other and call each other by name. Often they know everything about everyone else—gossip is king in a small town and news travels fast. Small towns can't offer what a big city can—there might be three or four restaurants, only one movie theater, one dentist, one doctor and one school. That keeps the place close-knit—they all go to the same places to do the same things with the same people. That drives some folks batshit—more than one small-town kid dreams of growing up and running away to the big city some day.

Strangers are noticed right away in a small town, and it doesn't take long for the entire community to hear about it. That can be good and it can be bad. Makes a hunter's investigation easier—he can go to the local diner, ask a few people if they've seen anything strange, and hear all about the recent deaths in gruesome detail. Makes the hunt harder though. The local sheriff hears about the hunter



damn quick, and knows everyone they've spoken to and everything they've asked about. Given what hunters usually ask about, that's gonna get the lawman damned curious, if not outright hostile.

Wandering uglies pass through small towns quick enough. As mentioned, it's hard to hide there. Those that set up shop in a place, posing as humans and doing their business over time, can be particularly stubborn though. These monsters often become established members of the community. Taking them down forces the hunter to go up against the entire town. Some hickvilles are even responsible for their monsters, summoning spirits and other entities to protect their town and sacrificing strangers and passersby in exchange. The good news—it's not hard to notice when an entire town is acting peculiar. The bad news—a hunter's gotta take on the whole place and the creature. Might be better to let it go and leave the folks to their just deserts.

## Midwest

If you divy up the U.S. into regions, the largest is probably the Midwest. This vast stretch has a handful of large cities, dozens of small towns, and vast farmland in between. Most of the nation's grain, produce and meat come from this Bread Basket.

The Midwest poses serious problems for hunters. First of all, it's damn big. Getting from one town to the next can take an entire day. Hell, sometimes farmhouses are eight or more hours apart. That means canvassing an area looking for a monster can take weeks instead of hours. Meantime, the nasty is going on its merry killing way.

Even when you narrow it down, hunting in open expanses ain't easy. A field of grain or corn or a pasture can literally stretch for miles. Sure there's miles and miles of road, but that doesn't cover anywhere near all there is. Monsters have a buttload of ground to hide in. If the hunter doesn't happen have a four-wheeler, all that area's gotta be searched on foot. Portions of the Midwest are flat, of course, but other areas are rocky or mountainous or hilly or forested. The Mississippi River cuts right through the country, forming a natural barrier and a beacon to water-based creatures. Countless small lakes and ponds dot the land, as do copses and orchards. If a monster gets the chance to go to ground, it could take literally years of searching to find it.

Large swathes of the Midwest are conservative, in thought and tradition and politics. Superstitions are alive and well in many farming communities; the locals may still speak German or Irish or Dutch as well as English. The good news—a hunter might be taken seriously when he asks about people vanishing into thin air or changing appearance or leaping up into the trees. The bad news—those holding to the old ways are more likely to summon monsters themselves, leaving the hunter with both a supernatural adversary and a mortal one.

The Midwest is the perfect place for ghosts. Farmhouses might stay in the family for generations, but if the last owner dies the house can sit vacant and untouched for decades, the land around it going fallow or reverting to untamed prairie. After the kids run off to better, or at least more interesting lives, some old farmers die alone, bitter and twisted by the hard, unrewarding, solitary lives they led. That makes for vengeful ghosts that prey on anyone foolish enough to enter their territory. And that territory has stretched pretty far afield.

## New England

America happened first in New England. It was the center of commerce and politics for many years. That means lots of history is tied up in those old places. The area was famous for its whaling towns, ports and factories. All those areas are full up with legends about wronged men and women, about greedy plots and violent ends. All are ideal spawning grounds for ghosts. Worse still are the old cemeteries. Hidden, out of the way, long overgrown—who knows what's been bubbling up from down there.

In the Midwest, many old traditions are kept alive. In New England, they tend to be buried just beneath the surface. Most people don't believe the old stories, but that doesn't affect the gravestones that still stand or the stone buildings and wooden piers that are still in use. Angry spirits had long-standing anchor points or frames of reference—and plenty of fresh victims.

New Englanders might still believe deep in their hearts, but they'll never admit it. Mysterious deaths are explained away as bizarre accidents or crimes of passion and added to the long history of weird stuff that's already happened. Investigations are quick and cursory—the police really don't want to find anything out of the ordinary. That attitude just gives monsters more freedom to indulge their bloodlust hatred and hunger freely. It can also be frustrating for hunters trying to discover the truth, especially when the local law gets defensive.

Investigations in the northeast are a pain. It's not that records don't exist; it's that they are more often than not a mess. In the Midwest, a family might stay in one place for six generations. Lots of immigrants arrived in New England but moved on, following new industries or just their fame and fortune. Towns merged together, or were abandoned. Companies shifted two towns over, taking their workers with them but losing half their old records in the move. Tracking down genealogies and old events can be a bitch, especially for anything before the twentieth century. Buildings are reconfigured, repurposed, or rebuilt on top of the burned out remains of old ones. A hunter might be looking for a seminary and not realize the place is now a bar, a movie theater, or a bookstore.

The best thing about New England is all those old churches. Many hunters are religious, and even those who aren't, appreciate the benefits of



holy water and blessed weapons. With so many churches around, a priest or a baptismal font is usually not far from the action. The unfortunate thing is how often that's crucial to a hunter's survival.

## Pacific Northwest

One of the last areas explored and colonized, the Pacific Northwest still has traces of primordial America—stretches of forest, completely untouched by humanity, thick with animals and birds and insects.

And monsters.

As folks from the east staked claims and built houses and started towns, the wildlife was pushed out. That's one thing when it's wolves. Migration wasn't limited to the natural order, though. Lots of monsters moved too, especially those with feeding patterns that didn't sit well with civilization. These uglies stayed just ahead of the wave, finally coming to rest in the forests of the Pacific Northwest. The area might have fewer ghosts than almost anywhere else, but it more than makes up for that with the variety of creatures, particularly those attuned to woodlands. The deep forest provides them with sanctuary, and enough prey in the form of hikers and tour groups and road-trippers. The monsters can feed and still avoid the local towns and cities.

People in this region are a strange bunch. They're friendly enough but slow to accept new residents. They keep themselves aloof, tolerating visitors only because they'll be leaving soon enough. They're close-knit and closemouthed, perfectly happy to take strangers' money, but unwilling to share stories with them. The locals might know all the old tales and histories, but they don't believe them any more than those of other areas. Hunters who know the region find it relatively easy to hunt creatures 'cause they know who to ask for stories and legends and old maps. Those from other areas find the locals as hostile as the monsters, and the strange landscape bewildering.

All in all, the Pacific Northwest ain't a good place to be lost, particularly at night when the fog rolls in and the temperature drops and sounds seem to come from everywhere at once.

## Southeast

The Southeast is all the land below the Mason-Dixon Line. More than any other, that area's been marked by the American Civil War. That bloodbath pitted the northerners against the southerners, brother against brother—damn near tore the country apart. The South, which seceded to form the Confederate States of America, lost the war, and paid hard for it. Even now, more than a century later, wounds linger, both in the land and in the people.

Until a few years ago, some state capitals still flew the Confederate flag over their courthouses.

Northerners are still called "Yanks," and outsiders of any kind are distrusted on general principle. The Southeast has several large, modern cities, but in lots of ways it still clings to the old ways.

Not surprisingly, the Southeast is chock full of Civil War ghosts. The violence, hardship and bloodshed spawned an incredible number of spirits. Many old plantations and townhouses are haunted by former Southern officers soldiers and civilians. Sherman's march through the heartland made sure that lots of areas away from the front lines shared in the misery. Some spirits keep their ire for northerners, but many have grown less picky over the years.

Unfortunately, southerners are proud of their ghosts—maybe not of the deaths they cause, but certainly of their history and of their grisly stories. The locals delight in telling visitors about the great-uncle who carved open his twin brother with a cleaver, or the distant cousin who butchered his slaves rather than free them after the war ended. Most southerners don't actually believe in the tales—they're no different from other folks that way. But they claim to, and actively mess with anyone who tries to disprove or dispel those old spirits.

The other problem for hunters is the southern smile. Southerners move at a slower pace than the rest of the country, maddeningly so at times. They're all nice and polite to everyone—then shred them in private. Makes it difficult to get information from a southerner, and almost impossible to gauge their sincerity. Many a hunter has died 'cause he believed a southerner that a ghost was long gone or no real threat or confined to only one room of the old family estates.

## Southwest

Unlike those usually called southerners, the folks of the Southwest were never very concerned with the Civil War. That's 'cause there wasn't much America out there at that time. It was pretty much just the Wild West then—great prairies and deserts where horses roamed free and cattle were driven from one town to the next. Robber barons grabbed up the power in these largely lawless regions, growing rich on oil, cattle, or horses. The area saw more than its share of cruel men who owned whole towns where their word was law. Violence was a way of life. Young men may have gone west to seek their fortune, but most wound up dead in a ditch somewhere.

All this badness created some ghosts, but most spirits and monsters here came from a different source. The Southwest was a long way from uninhabited when the first American settlers arrived. Native tribes had long roamed the land, hunting buffalo and pheasant, taming horses and following the herds. They knew the land—they were closer to nature than the Europeans, and recognized the presence of spirits and other supernatural entities. Didn't help them much though. The tribes were pushed out, many



of them forced onto reservations. More than one was simply slaughtered. As they were driven out, some natives deliberately released spirits upon the settlers, cursing them for their greed and their heartlessness. Others simply chose not to warn the new inhabitants of the dangers—dangers that, in many cases, the natives had kept at bay for years.

In some places, the menaces devastated the isolated towns, killing or scaring off the settlers and taking over. In others, the newcomers wrote off the bizarre deaths as accidents, purposely ignoring how regularly they occurred. A hunter could easily spend a long (but more likely a short) career in the Southwest, tracing down old stories, tall tales, and ancient legends.

## West Coast

The West Coast is a different kind of place—more open, more temperate, more relaxed, more whacked-out. Folks here are downright odd. Vampire stories might strike them as silly (unless they were turning them into screenplays), but meditation and chakras and communing with spirits are all par for the course. The area might be big, but it's also full of people—and more arrive all the time. Most of the cities and towns bear traces of the tiny Spanish villages they once were, and that country's superstitions are still a part of every day life for many people. Grandmothers scold naughty children and warn them to behave or else demons may get them. Newcomers and oldtimers alike hang protective charms in their windows alongside their plants.

Hunting the West Coast is strange 'cause people are almost too helpful in those old communities. They don't blink an eye if asked about ghosts and spirits. They just take it in stride, prattling on about unseen presences and shifting pictures, rearranged furniture and burnt food. If warned that something bad is about, they're likely to take the danger seriously, to the point of panicking. Stores openly sell supernatural protection—some of it junk but more often than you'd think, there's something useful offered. As in New England, churches are everywhere. No one ever accused the original Spanish settlers of slacking on the religion front.

That attitude stays in the older areas, though. The newer neighborhoods and cities are a very different story, particularly places like Hollywood. Everyone there is slick and young and aggressive, totally consumed by image and the good life. To them, "real" can be touched, and the things that matter are power, money and fame. They thumb their noses at the supernatural, then turn around and pitch it as a concept for a television show or a video game or a line of plush toys. The new West Coast moves at



a blinding pace, all deals and lunches and parties, everyone double-deals and most betray without a second's hesitation. It is a difficult place to hunt—even "normals" are pretty damn artificial. It's also a magnet for vengeful spirits and greedy monsters. The air itself is full of lust and greed and hate and selfishness. More than one hunter has half-joked that maybe new West Coast is one place that the monsters should be allowed to feed freely.

## Everywhere Else

The bounty of badness in the United States don't mean that it's got a monopoly on the supernatural. Many now-American legends originated in other countries, and so presumably did many of its monsters. Some of those critters migrated to the New World, following the men and women from the Old World. But many others stayed behind, ensconced in lairs and communities where they've lived for centuries. Some of these monsters are so old and powerful they control entire regions, and so imbedded in the local culture they are considered national treasures—or at least the stories about them are. Taking them out is more than a passing job by an itinerant do-gooder. Hunters in Europe and Asia and the rest of the world have different techniques, weapons and organizations to deal with such menaces. They are no less effective than their New World counterparts (and some are much, much more practiced). Still, they are as alien to Americans as the monsters they battle are.

## The Big Picture

If you haven't caught on by now, let's go over it again. The world's a dangerous place. That's not news to most folks. It's something you



can't help but learn as you get older. Horrible things can happen to people: illnesses and accidents, random violence, pettiness, envy, and simple rotten luck. Lots of times, life's a struggle for survival.

Now add the supernatural to the mix.

Ghosts, creatures and demons—that's just not fair. Most folks don't even believe in that badness, much less know how to survive it.

That's where hunters come in—and that's why they hunt. Deep down, every hunter knows some of the truth and fears the rest. Nature is bad enough. The supernatural is something else, something outside the norm. Something beyond the pale.

Something most of the teeming masses simply can't handle.

Hunters can. And they do. They do so that normal people can go on with their everyday struggle for health and happiness and prosperity without the extra burden.

That's the nature of true evil—something that attacks and destroys for no reason. Not because it's part of the natural order, not because it has to, but simply because it *can*. It wants to, and it enjoys human suffering,

Every hunter, consciously or subconsciously, has pledged himself to fighting evil. Even though some people are horrible individuals, there *is* good in the world and it shouldn't have to face the threats alone.

## A Coming Storm

That's all fine and good, and it helps hunters get what little sleep they can. But proud words and brave deeds only go so far. Those in the know are only just beginning to talk about it. What they are saying is—evil's getting worse.

More monsters are appearing. More spirits are rising up. And more of them are angry, bitter, and dangerous.

More possessions are being reported. More violent deaths are occurring, and many of them are bizarre or unexplained or both.

Jobs for hunters, never rare enough in the past, are piling up now. The world was never an entirely wholesome place, but it's turning damn ugly now.

Those hunters who chart such activities have noticed a marked increase in the past few years, and even more so within the past year. Supernatural activity has always had an ebb and flow, but even those highs and lows kept to a level. Now it's spiking dramatically.

Something is coming. A storm is brewing. There's nothing natural about this tempest.

The coming cataclysm has the most sensitive on edge. Even normals are more than a bit worried. As for the hunters, they feel it in their bones. It's time to gird for war, close ranks, and make contingency plans. That's not easy, though. No one's quiet sure where it's coming from, or why. What's causing the change? Is some ancient, awesome entity about to step into our world, or is this the supernatural equivalent of global warming or an ice age? Without knowing where, when and why, all hunters can do is increase their vigilance. That means the most dangerous of humanity's protectors are stretched thin, jumping at shadows. They are less patient, and less efficient. That's bad. If there was a time when all hunters needed to be at the top of their game, it's now.

Whatever's gonna happen, is gonna happen soon. And when it does, *everything* we know is gonna change.

## Where to Next?

Next stop is **Chapter Two: The Basics**. That's got a short version of the rules and should set you up for the rest of the book. You could then jump ahead to **Chapter Six: The Rules** and get hard core on mechanics. If you're looking to get your hunter-face on instead, **Chapter Three: The Hunters** is the way to go. Don't bug out about the nasties—we'll get to demons and scary monsters soon enough.



# CHAPTER TWO

## The Basics

Daniel might also host a fundraising event consisting of an evening of cocktails, beverages, music and hors d'oeuvres from 5-8 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 27, at the Richard Driehaus estate on the north shore of Geneva Lake. The event will benefit the high school's band, orchestra and choral programs.

The Driehaus estate consists of a beautifully restored Georgian home and

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Several locals attacked in Elkhorn, WI.  
Old werewolf legend called "The Beast  
of Bray Road." Attacks don't match up  
with full moon on calendar, and desc.  
doesn't seem to fit. Dean's thinking  
Skinwalker. Silver bullets either way.

### Tracking down 'The Beast of'

By Linda Godfrey

"Clap for the Wolfman," was a song some people might remember from the '70s. It was sort of a self-promotion for the famous bearded deejay, "Wolfman Jack." But people around parts of rural Elkhorn are clapping for what they say looks like a real wolfman—one that doesn't play records.

The rumors floated around town for two years or so before I heard them. A wolfish-looking creature that ran on two legs and had been seen around the Bray Road area, stealing chickens, eating road-kills and scaring the daylights out of locals who (sometimes literally) ran into it.

Although the stories seemed like grist for the National Enquirer's mill, they were consistent enough to be intriguing. A certain number of people, good honest working folk, had seen something—something unusual. Something scary. Something hairy that relished pavement patty dinners!

The logical place to start was the county humane officer, Jon Fredrickson. It turned out Fredrickson has a manila folder in his files marked "Werewolf," filled with note cards detailing six or seven such "sightings." One referred to unusual tracks, another to a hairy pointy-eared creature seen chasing down a deer on two

note cards detail  
"sightings." One  
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creature seen cha  
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The Week 12-29-91



**S**o, now you know how crappy hunting can be, and you're still game. Hey, it's your funeral—assuming they find enough pieces of you at the end to justify a funeral. Time to talk about getting the game on.

Game rules should be easy to learn, and they should stay out of the way of telling a good story. If you're busy figuring modifiers instead of thinking about doing or saying cool stuff, something is wrong. And if you're playing the game (not running it), you don't even need to know all the rules. Just run through the basics in this chapter and you're good to go.

## Role Playing What?

The *Supernatural Role Playing Game* runs on the **Cortex System**. Sounds pretty high and mighty, eh? Don't let the egghead speak fool you. The "system" is just a trunk full of gear; you grab what you need when you need it and start blasting away. Okay, maybe not blasting; you start making stories.

So, first step: get a group of friends together, either face-to-face or online, and pick one to be the **Game Master**. The rest are **players**; they're the hunters. Once the Game Master has come up with something approximating an adventure (lots of advice about that later in this book), and the rest of the gang has created hunters (we'll get to that next chapter), you're ready for action, suspense, and maybe, just maybe, survival long enough to do less harm than good.

## What You Need

To play the *Supernatural Role Playing Game*, you'll need:

- At least one copy of this book (could this get any simpler?)
- Pencils and character sheets
- Polyhedral dice of different kinds: two-sided (d2), four-sided (d4), six-sided (d6), eight-sided (d8), ten-sided (d10), and twelve-sided (d12). These babies can be bought at hobby shops or game stores, or through online vendors. If need be, you can visit [www.margaretweis.com](http://www.margaretweis.com) and we'll get you going.
- A group of friends—four to six are recommended, but any number can play.
- A safehouse to relax and play comfortably.

## The Players

Watch any movie or television show, read a comic or a novel, and you'll find protagonists. That's fancy Sam-talk for the main dudes or gals who drive the story. Role playing games have their own version. This game calls the central characters **hunters**; they are the folks under the players' control. As hunters, the players make decisions, take actions, flap their gums, and suck it up when things go bad (and they always do in this game). Players also get to roll dice. That can be good or bad; that depends on Lady Luck.

As a player, your job is to keep it real for your hunter, while working with the other players and the Game Master to keep things moving. Don't sweat it if you don't have it all worked out about your hunter even after creating him. Hell, most folks don't know themselves very well. That's one of the things that happens during adventures: your hunter learns a bit more about himself. That's a good thing. It keeps things fresh.

## The Game Master

Part referee, part casting director, part storyteller, part badass, the Game Master makes everything that isn't a hunter come alive. He doesn't have a buttload of special effects techs or a room full of character actors, but he's not limited by those things either. Anything the Game Master can imagine works. Just got to make it believable for the players.



Now, the Game Master is a big cheese and he's got lots of control. But he doesn't control the hunters, the players do. The drama comes from setting up situations and staging challenges so that the hunters can do their thing. The Game Master has some idea what's gonna happen, but the final story is a group effort. No one really knows how it's all going to turn out. That's what makes roleplaying games all that.

The Game Master needs to know the rules better than the players. He's got to make judgment calls on the outcome of the hunters' actions. Being fair is key—the Game Master isn't the opposition, he just rolls the dice for them. The world of *Supernatural* is enough of a bitch for a hunter. The Game Master should make sure the hunters have a fighting chance.

## The Dice

The dice in the *Supernatural Role Playing Game* vary in sides—the more sides, the better the die. Each die type, from two-sided (d2) up through twelve-sided (d12), represents a **step** on a scale. A d6 is better than a d4, and a d8 is better than a d6. Once you hit d12, the scale continues by adding a second die. So, the first eight steps are:

**d2, d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d12+d2, d12+d4**

There's no upper limit, but it's rare for anything to have a rating much higher than d12.

Many things a hunter can do are described in terms of dice (see **Chapter Three: The Hunters**). When the hunter tries to do something chancy, it's time to start rolling bones. Most actions call for two or more dice to be rolled and the results added together. You want to roll as high as you can.

Sometimes things are good. You get more dice added to the roll, or you get to push the die step up. Say the Game Master gives you a +2 step. That turns a d6 into a d10. That doesn't guarantee you'll roll higher, just makes it more likely. More often, circumstances conspire against your hunter. In that case, the die step drops. For example, a -2 step turns a d6 into a d2. That sucks. Worse still, dice can be reduced below d2. At that point, they are negated (you are left with a lousy d0) and any further penalty is ignored.

## The Rules & the Story

First off, the game is supposed to be fun. You're telling a story—one that's full of drama, suspense, humor, and action. The rules should make this easier, but sometimes, they get in the way. Sometimes, they just don't cover some crazy ass idea that the players come up with. In that case, the Game Master should keep in mind that the story is key, not the rules. Wing it using the basic game mechanics, and when in doubt, give the players the edge.

# The Character Sheet

A character sheet gathers all the game information players need about their hunters. Some folks copy the sheet from the back of the book; others print out a PDF from [www.margaretweis.com](http://www.margaretweis.com). Some jokers just scrawl the stuff on a piece of scratch paper and blow off printed sheets altogether. What's important is that you have your hunter's stats ready at hand so you don't have to spend time flipping through the rulebook or shrugging your shoulders at the Game Master when he asks what your Initiative is or whether you have any Complications that might come into play.

So, let's go over the character sheet so you know what's what. The numbers help you follow along.

## Attributes (1)

Your hunter has six primary **Attributes**. These are broad areas of ability, rated by the type of die you roll when your hunter tries to pull off something using that Attribute. As mentioned, higher die steps are better.

A hunter could have an Attribute of d2 or higher. A d2 is a crippling deficiency. You don't want that if you plan to survive for long as a hunter. A d12 is extremely high—about as good as it gets for a human. Most folks have average Attributes (d6). *Supernatural* creatures may have Attributes much, much higher than this. Part of the reason—that and their winning personalities—they are so freaking dangerous.

Most of the time, when your hunter tries something risky, you roll one of your hunter's Attributes and another die (either another Attribute or a Skill). Which Attribute or Skill to roll is determined by the Game Master and the situation. If you got an opinion, speak up, but don't be disrespectful. The Game Master's call is final.

**Agility (2)** is grace, quickness, kinesthetic sense, and hand-eye coordination. A high Agility gives a hunter an edge with skills that involve movement, fine control, aiming, and so on.

**Strength (3)** is physical brawn. High Strength lets your hunter deal more damage with hand weapons, carry more, run harder, and the like.

**Vitality (4)** is health and fitness. A higher Vitality keeps a hunter from catching colds, helps him avoid getting tired, and purges poisons faster.

**Alertness (5)** shows how clueless a hunter is, whether it's about body language, the environment, or something hidden under the bed. A high Alertness lets him know when someone is lying, acting strangely, or sneaking up on him.

**Intelligence (6)** is smarts. A high Intelligence lets a hunter figure out the answer to difficult riddles, win chess games, and crack codes.



NAME Ed Zedmore

CONCEPT Ghost Facer™

DESCRIPTION Ed has curly frizzy hair, a chiseled sexy bod, and piercing eyes that make the ladies swoon.

## 1 Attributes

2 AGILITY: d6 5 ALERTNESS: d8

3 STRENGTH: d6 6 INTELLIGENCE: d10

4 VITALITY: d6 7 WILLPOWER: d6

## 8 Derived Attributes

9 INITIATIVE: d6 + d8

10 ENDURANCE: d6 + d6

11 LIFE POINTS: 12

12 RESISTANCE: d6 + d6

## Action Difficulty

Action	Diff/Extraordinary
Easy	3 / 10
Average	7 / 14
Hard	11 / 18
Formidable	15 / 22
Heroic	19 / 26
Incredible	23 / 30
Ridiculous	27 / 34
Impossible	31 / 38

## Advancement Points

Point Type	AP Cost
1 Attribute Point	8
1 Trait Point	7
1 Skill Point	3

## Weapons

TYPE: —	DAMAGE: —
RANGE: —	AMMO: —
TYPE: —	DAMAGE: —
RANGE: —	AMMO: —

## Armor

TYPE: —	COVERS: —
RATING: —	PENALTY: —

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# SUPERNATURAL

Role Playing Game™

## 13 General and Specialty Skills

ANIMALS —	16 INFLUENCE Persuasion d6 d8	RANGED WEAPONS —
ARTISTRY —	KNOWLEDGE Pop Culture d6 d8	SCIENCE* —
14 ATHLETICS —	LORE Hauntings d6 d4	SURVIVAL —
COVERT d2	MECHANIC* —	TECH* Computers d6 Electronics d8
CRAFT —	MEDICINE* —	UNARMED COMBAT —
DISCIPLINE Morale d6 d10	MELEE WEAPONS —	
DRIVE d2	PERCEPTION Investigation d6 Search d8	
15 GUNS —	PERFORMANCE —	
HEAVY WEAPONS —	PILOT* —	

## Assets 17

NAME: Lucky d4  
DESCRIPTION: Once per session, i can re roll any non botched roll and keep the better of the two.

NAME: Higher Education d2  
DESCRIPTION: I have the benefit of the prestigious institution of South East Tech.

NAME:   
DESCRIPTION:

NAME:   
DESCRIPTION:

NAME:   
DESCRIPTION:

## Gear

Night Vision goggles, EMF detector, digital audio recorder, dice bag, beef jerky,

## Complications 17

NAME: Glory Hound d2  
DESCRIPTION: I like to be in the spotlight. This sometimes gets me in trouble, but its not too bad.

NAME: Overconfident d4  
DESCRIPTION: I am awesome. Some people don't think so. And they would be wrong.

NAME:   
DESCRIPTION:

NAME:   
DESCRIPTION:

NAME:   
DESCRIPTION:

## History

After the run-in with the evil ghost Murdock, and my failed attempt at a reality TV show, i am on a mission to banish all the ghosts from the land!!

## 18

## Plot Points and Die Steps

## SPENT

## DICE USED

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

d2

d4

d6

d8

d10

d12

d12+d2

d12+d4

d12+d6

d12+d8

d12+d10

d12+d12

**Willpower (7)** is strength of psyche—a hunter’s personal drive, inner fire, and determination. A high Willpower lets your hunter live when he should die, persuade others through sheer force of personality, and resist intimidation or fear.

## Derived Attributes (8)

Four secondary values are derived from the primary Attributes.

**Initiative (9)** is Agility + Alertness. Roll this during combat scenes to determine when your hunter acts.

**Endurance (10)** is Vitality + Willpower. This roll is used, among other things, when your hunter is fighting for his life and near death.

**Life Points (11)** are Vitality + Willpower, taking the maximum results of both dice. Life Points track how much of a world of hurt your hunter is in.

**Resistance (12)** is Vitality + Vitality. This roll comes into play when your hunter is fighting something off, from the toxic breath of an alien monster to a bad case of the flu.

## Skills (13)

**Skills** determine how well trained or experienced your hunter is. When trying something that involves a skill, you roll your hunter’s Skill (rated the same way as Attributes, except Skills have no minimum level) in addition to an Attribute. Like Attributes, a d2 Skill is pretty pathetic, a d6 is competent, and a d12 is damn good.

Some Skills can be used without training. Any one who can move and breath can try jumping a fence or talk up a bartender. Other Skills require special training, and can’t be tried without a rating of at least d2. These Skills are hard to come about or dangerous. You might want to build a thermonuclear device or perform surgery, but if you ain’t trained, you got no chance of success.

The character sheet includes the list of **General Skills**, but lots of **Specialty Skills** exist. More information can be found in **Chapter Four: Traits & Skills**. Here’re three General Skills that your hunter might possess:

**Athletics (14)** is trained body control. Use it for any action involving active movement, physical fitness, or endurance. Swimming, jumping, running, and dodging are all part of Athletics.

**Guns (15)** covers most of a hunter’s get-out-of-trouble tools: pistols, rifles, submachine guns, and shotguns. It ain’t going to get you far with heavier stuff though, like rocket launchers (that uses the Heavy Weapons Skill instead). Guns is rolled when shooting, maintaining, or identifying personal firearms.

**Influence (16)** is your hunter’s ability to persuade others, whether through fast-talking, clever public speaking, or seduction. It would helps him spin a good lie, write a good speech, or scare someone shitless.

## Traits (17)

Attributes and Skill cover a bunch of ground in defining a hunter, but they ain’t everything. A hunter has less definable qualities that must be accounted for. Is he cautious and paranoid? Does he assume he’s so badass he can’t lose? Was he born pissed off at the world, or did that come later when death claimed somebody close to him? These things are called **Traits**.

Two types of Traits exist: **Assets**, good stuff that helps, and **Complications**, baggage that doesn’t. Some Traits have die types like Attributes and Skills, but the range of possible steps is much more limited. Some Traits don’t involve dice at all.

Traits have a variety of effects. Some provide a bonus or penalty to actions by adding a die to the roll. Others allow rerolls for failed results or change the basic rules in some other way. There’s a big old list in **Chapter Four: Traits & Skills**, but feel free to come up with others if you can get your Game Master on board.

## Plot Points (18)

Sam might call **Plot Points** the “currency of drama” in the *Supernatural Role Playing Game*. Okay, maybe even he’s not that metrosexual. Still, these babies are your ace in the hole, your Get Out of Jail card, your Holy Crap! shout-outs. They’re used mostly to keep your butt intact and get things done. They’re big time game changers.

Plot Points can be spent *before* a roll to **add an extra die**. The more points spent, the bigger the die—a single Plot Point adds a d2, two Plot Points add a d4, and so on. You can also spend points *after* a roll, but they don’t work as well. Each post-roll Plot Point spent adds 1 to the total result. You blow 3 Plot Points after the roll, your result goes up by 3.

You can spend Plot Points to **reduce damage**, turning a fatal or incapacitating injury into a flesh wound. When damage is rolled, you spend Plot Points to buy an extra die, but this time the result is subtracted from the damage.

Finally, Plot Points give a player some control over the game world. This is called **story manipulation**, or “scene editing.” Depending on the number of Plot Points spent, a player can muck with the current scene—add a relationship between a supporting character and a hunter (just now revealed) that eases getting some inside information, place a tank of gasoline near the villain’s car that a skillful shot with a 9 mm might cause to explode, drop a study log along a river to keep your hunter from launching over the coming falls. The payoff of this use of Plot Points are up to you and your Game Master.

The only downside on Plot Points is how few of them you have. You can’t have more than 12 Plot Points at a time, but fat chance of having that many. You’ll be spending them in bunches. Playing up your Complications is a good way to restock.



## Actions

When you want your hunter to shoot a spook, hot wire a getaway car, or get a ritual right while a creature busts down the door, things could go wrong and that'd suck big time. That's when **actions** come in. Actions are resolved by rolling dice. The dice rolled and the result depends on your hunter's abilities (mostly Attributes and Skills) and exactly what kind of mess he's gotten into at the time.

## Simple Actions

Most of the time you are going to be dealing with **simple actions**. The Game Master decides which Attribute and Skill combination (or, in some cases, an Attribute and another Attribute) fits best. He also makes a call on the **Difficulty** of the attempt depending on the situation. Roll the dice and add the results together. If the total is higher than the Difficulty, your hunter pulls it off.

Some things take up very little time or concentration, such as shouting a command or flipping a switch; these don't require a dice roll or a simple action. Most of the time—shooting a gun, running across a room, salting a doorway—the action fills up a game turn. That's all your hunter does. When it gets bad, you might need to do more than one action in a turn. That's hard and you wind up with step penalties.

Simple actions are short and sweet, and they cover a heap of ground. The rules don't force the pairing of one Attribute with one Skill. It's up to the Game Master to think about what's happening, and choose an Attribute and Skill pairing. For example, the Game Master could call for Agility + Athletics to see how quickly your hunter runs through a patch of dense woods (gotta watch out for roots or getting tangled up in the brush). Then again, when your hunter runs across an open field, sheer muscle power is more important than grace and precision. Roll Strength + Athletics in that case. And if that open field turns out to be an old minefield, your hunter is in a mess of trouble. You need to roll Alertness + Athletics as he runs to keep him from being blown up.

TABLE 1.2: DIFFICULTIES

ACTION	DIFFICULTY	EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS
Easy	3	10
Average	7	14
Hard	11	18
Formidable	15	22
Heroic	19	26
Incredible	23	30
Ridiculous	27	34
Impossible	31	38

## Complex Actions

Some actions require more time to complete, which means rolls happen over successive turns. The results are added together to reach a much higher number called a **Threshold**. In these situations, the issue isn't so much whether you'll complete the task, but when. The increased chance of failure undoes all your hunter's good work and makes him start again. If your objective was defusing a bomb before it explodes, delay is not good. Complex actions are detailed more fully in **Chapter Six: The Rules**.

## Unskilled Rolls

When your hunter doesn't have the right Skill, you just roll his Attribute. General Skills are very broad, but they don't cover everything. The Game Master might give you a break and let you use a related Skill instead of the most appropriate one, especially if you can come up with a good reason, but no Skill should become a replacement for all the others. Also, as mentioned, some actions require actual training. Surgery, computer programming, and other highly specialized fields are examples of these "trained only" Skills.

## Opposed Actions

Sometimes you go up against an opponent when your hunter tries something. When this happens, it's called an **opposed action**. Success or failure for an individual opponent doesn't really matter. The key is how one does compared to the other. Each character makes rolls the appropriate dice, and the one with the highest total wins. A tie means nobody wins and the contest goes another turn, unless the circumstances change.

In some cases, both characters roll the same Attribute and Skill. In others, different combinations are used. For example, somebody being sneaky uses Agility + Covert. His opponent keeps watch with Alertness + Perception. As in all actions, the Game Master considers the situation and decides what each character should roll.

Some events might look like an opposed action, but really ain't. If the action directly pits one character against another, use opposed rolls. If a minimum level of success exists though, it's just two people making unopposed rolls and seeing who does better. An example is playing darts. Each character is rolling to hit the dartboard. They each make separate, unopposed rolls against a Difficulty. After all, they might both hit the bull's-eye!

## Botches & Extraordinary Successes

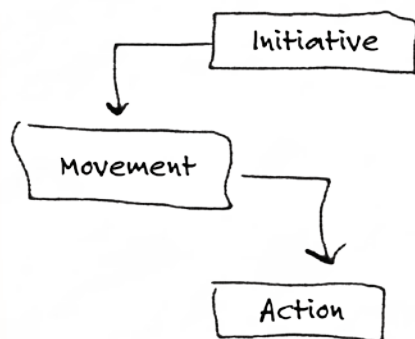
A **botch** is a roll where all the die results come up 1. Your hunter has royally screwed the pooch; the Game Master provides the gory details. An **extraordinary success**, on the

other hand, is when you not only beat the Difficulty, but your total is 7 or more points higher. In this case, you've scored a near-perfect result and the Game Master should throw some fringe benefits your way.

## Combat

Most actions are handled using the basic rules. A combat scene, where the bullets start flying and the claws come out, needs a bit more. Here's the rundown.

### Typical Combat Turn



To make sure everybody knows what's going on, combat is broken down into **combat turns** (or simply **turns**).

Turns run about three seconds—long enough to get in real trouble, not so long that it gets confusing. During a turn, each character gets a chance to act. This repeats until the combat is over, which is usually when one side surrenders or is trashed.

Characters act in **Initiative order**. The character with the highest Initiative roll result goes first. The player (or the Game Master, if it's a supporting character) says what the character is doing and the action is resolved. Then the character with the next highest Initiative roll takes his turn. In the case of ties, hunters go before supporting characters. Tied hunters roll their Agility dice until an order is established.

When it's your hunter's Initiative, he can both move and act in any order. If your hunter wants to do both (he doesn't have to), he can travel only about 15 feet at a fast walk. Moving any further uses up the hunter's action for that turn, and doing anything else is harder or impossible.

A non-movement action could be an attack, dodging to avoid an attack, attempting to kick down a door, or doing something else. Most simple actions can be performed in one combat turn. Unless a complex action only takes one turn per roll (which is unusual), that's right out.

## Life Points & Damage

When a character gets hurt, **Life Points** come into play. Damage comes in three types: **Basic**, **Stun**, or **Wound** damage. Stun is a concussion, fatigue, physical stress, and having the wind knocked out of you. Wound is more painful bodily harm, cuts, broken bones, and internal bleeding. Basic damage combines the two and is divided equally into Stun and

## To Roll or Not to Roll...

Rolling dice is part of the fun, but if there's too much rolling, the story disappears. One of the first things you need to learn is when to roll—that's ultimately the Game Master's call, but it helps for the players to understand too.

Walking down the corridor, pouring a cup of coffee, packing a suitcase—none of these actions can be messed up easily. They should happen in the normal course of the game and be done with quickly; the story moves along. There's no need to worry about success there.

Some actions have a chance of failure, but aren't meaningful to the storyline. This applies when failing a die roll would only serve to derail the plot. For example, think about a long cross-country drive. Things can and do go wrong in even the most routine trips, and the longer the drive, the more likely some hiccup occurs. It's the same with basic maintenance on dangerous weapons and firearms, or injecting someone with an antidote, or negotiating with your creditors. Sure, there's a chance of failure, but pausing to determine success, or the

consequences of blowing it, doesn't get you anywhere in the context of the story. In that case, don't roll. Just let it happen and move on.

Even if there's a good chance of failure, your Game Master may not ask for a roll. Noticing a crucial clue in the ruins of a temple is not easy, but if the plot requires it, it's going to happen. The drama isn't about players making hunters that can roll high on certain checks, it's about the story they tell by making choices. Of course, the same applies when the plot requires that the hunters fail. No need to roll; things just go bad. That happens a lot in a Supernatural game. Just remember, trust your Game Master. The story comes first.

So, keep in mind that two things should exist before any roll is made. First, the chance of success must be meaningful. Second, failure should not delay the game or mess with the story.

Wound, favoring Stun. Basic damage is the usual downside of getting in the way of an attack, but some special attacks cause only Stun or only Wound damage. Once the Basic damage is properly divided, you record how much Stun or Wound your hunter has taken and compare this to his Life Point total. Take too much Stun damage, and he's knocked out. Take too much Wound damage, and he's dead.

## Attacking & Defending

An attack roll is a simple action with a Difficulty set by the target's defense. If the attack roll is equal to or higher than the defense, it hits and does damage.



**Attacks:** There're lots of ways to attack, from the usual guns and rocks to the weirdass crap that djinn do. To keep it simple, the *Supernatural Role Playing Game* breaks it all down to a handful of combat Skills: Guns, Melee, Unarmed, and so forth. When attacking, a character rolls one of these Skills (if he has it) and an Attribute. The Attribute is generally Strength for up-close-and-personal, and Agility for stay-back-and-fire, that's not set in stone.

Making an attack uses the character's action for that combat turn. An attack ain't just a single swing or thrust or shot—it could be a string of quick movements, foot shuffles, and a jab or two.

**Defenses:** Defense can keep your hunter from getting hurt, but how that plays out depends a lot on the situation and your decisions.

If your hunter is surprised, asleep, restrained, or otherwise completely unmoving for some reason, he's an Easy target—defense is automatically set to 3. That's pretty pathetic, but that's what you get if you let your guard down.

If your hunter is awake and knows there's danger around (even if he ain't aware of the attack coming his way), and isn't using his action to defend, he gets to use his innate defense. You roll your hunter's Agility, with no Skill. That's the attackers Difficulty. Hell, the roll result could be lower than 3. In that case, you blundered into the attack. Nice going.

If your hunter hasn't used his action for the turn, and he's aware that the attack is coming, he could spend his action to defend. That gets him an Attribute and Skill roll. That usually much higher roll makes him harder to hit. Against melee weapons or unarmed attacks (not guns), your hunter could use Melee or Unarmed Skill to block, along with either Agility or Strength. Dodging is good against most things, including guns; use Agility + Athletics.

**Damage:** When an attack roll is equal to or greater than the defense, somebody got punked. The difference between the roll and the defense Difficulty is the amount of damage. Depending on the weapon, the attacker might also roll another die and add that to the final damage. Basic damage is divided in two, with half applied as Stun and the other half as Wound (rounded in favor of Stun). Most unarmed combat deals only Stun damage. If the defender has any armor or protection, the **Armor Rating** is subtracted from the damage before it is marked against Life Points.

## Advancement (19)

If he survives, your hunter gets better at what he does, and that includes surviving. For instance, the Winchesters are a whole hell of a lot better at what they do than the Ghostfacers. Surviving and beating back the darkness earns **Advancement Points**, and those babies are spent to improve your hunter. **Chapter Three: The Hunters** has more about Advancement Points.

## Earning Advancement Points

Your Game Master hands out Advancement Points at the end of each session if you played your hunter well, contributed to the game, or helped move the story along. If your hunter spent the bulk of the session sitting in the background and moping, not much changes—unless he's got Traits that require such aloof or noncommittal behavior.

## Spending Advancement Points

Once you've got enough Advancement Points, you can buy up Attributes, Skills, or Traits. You can pick up new Skills and Assets, or reduce or eliminate Complications. For the most part, you need to come up with a good reason for major changes to your hunter. Suddenly becoming Attuned to Technology when your hunter's never used electronics in his life doesn't make much sense. On the other hand, if your hunter spent a bunch of time fixing up the team's SUV and studying car repair manuals, adding that Asset makes sense.

## That's It

**Chapter Six: Rules** has plenty more to say about the game. If you're the Game Master, you'll probably want to give that a quick read through. Knowing more about this stuff keeps you from having to guess so much or flip pages looking for details. On the flip side, if you're a player, you know about as much as you need to for the time being. Time to grab one of the hunters from the show (see page 57), or get started making one of your own (see **Chapter Three: The Hunters**).

## Where to Next?

The Chuckie-sized spin on the rules in this chapter'll keep you rolling along in your *Supernatural Role Playing Game*, but there's more to them. Check out **Chapter Six: The Rules** if you're curious. Otherwise, move on to **Chapter Three: The Hunters**, and create your very own demon-killing, vampire-slaying, hard-rock-listening dude. Or dudette, if you're so inclined. Monster trashers come in all shapes and sizes, right? If you're itching to channel your inner Hitchcock, a whole chapter's devoted to that job—**Chapter Seven: The Game Master**.



# The Hunters

The new...  
Zoran,, Vesna, Nikola, (front) Naja, Todor and neverna Anija.

## Series of Child Influenza Deaths Worries Health Officials

By Sue Johnson

**FORT DOUGLAS, Wisc — July 21, 1988** Fort Douglas City Hospital bagged small bodies on Wednesday, as 5 more children died from a strain of influenza for which no successful treatment has been found. These recent deaths bring the total to 34 in the past three months.

This strange epidemic began three months ago when Shirley Campos brought in her six-month-old son with flu-like symptoms that had lasted over month, even while on medication. The son, Joseph, died three days after being admitted to the hospital.

Over 50 similar cases have been admitted to Fort Douglas City Hospital since then, with only three cases being released as "recovered" and 12 still remaining in critical condition on constant watch from pediatric nurses.

"I have never seen anything like this," said Dr. Aaron Heidecker, the pediatric specialist for the hospital. "I had in the Center for Disease Control even have an

Disease Control in comment specific...  
leaving a general st...

"The CDC is working clock to gain control and hope to have a victory near future. Our prayers families who have lost No one should have to

Campos has two other 12, and John, 10. Neither affected by this plague as

Doctors across the nation erred in Fort Douglas something to quell the monstrous disease with Nurses have volunteered hours and coroners have been ing around the clock to get bodies as to reduce further the influenza.

Note to the Reader are experiencing symptoms, do not delay.

Saban finally called back.  
Says AIDS is pure BS.  
Albanians believe it's a roaming shtriga.



[www.cultureofalbania.al/legends/shtriga.html](http://www.cultureofalbania.al/legends/shtriga.html)

## Prekshmeri e Shtriga

Here are the ways to defeat a shtriga. Not all of these are careful!

- Take a kryq [[cross???]] of kockë [[bone???]] and place on the cross. English.]] Only can work Pashkë e diel/[[EASTER SUNDAY!!!]] inside, kockë kryq destroy with power of God.
- Find when shtriga is feed from foshnje... [[baby???]] TIME OF WEAKNESS use hekuros armë [[weapon of iron]] blessed by priest into heart of shtriga. i kujdesshëm... other time no effect!!
- Take monedhë of silver [[coin???]] blessed by Patriarch, wear monedhë on your body to protect. Some time monedhë must be soaked in gjaku [[blood???]] that shtriga took from foshnje. Follow shtriga into woods and when shtriga vjellë e gjaku [[... maybe vomits up blood? Requ... ate???]] take gjaku and wash [[coin]] in it.

106 4:37



**I**'m gonna give it to you straight. You don't choose this life—it chooses you. Normal people aren't exactly known for running around in the dark, diggin' up graves with rock salt and gasoline handy. If you're even close to "normal" when you start messing around with the supernatural, you won't be for long.

This chapter gives you the low-down on how to create a character. We'll assume for the moment that you're crazy enough to be a hunter, though these rules could be used to create Eugene the Accountant if that's what floats your boat. Character could be loosely based on you in real-life or it could be something totally off-the-wall. You can even play the opposite sex if you're into that—just don't get all weird about it.

Don't shriek like Jamie Lee Curtis if you get a little stuck. Just skim the rest of the chapter, look ahead at **Chapter Four: Traits & Skills**, or check out the sample hunters in other parts of the book. You're bound to think of something.

## Getting Character

There's some business and a bit of number-crunching in making up a character, but don't let it scare ya. It's not too hard, and it's laid out step-by-step in this chapter. Start with a basic idea. Doesn't take much; just ask yourself a few questions. White or blue collar? Spiritual type or atheist? Compassionate or hardass? Then start thinking about the life this person led up until the crazy hit and he started hunting. Once you have a handle on that, the rest comes pretty easy.

In a perfect world, your hunter would be the ultimate badass fully loaded down with all the tools for the job, and the keys for a sweet ride to boot. Then again, in a perfect world, you wouldn't need to be a hunter. So, the Game Master is gonna set some limits and provide some guidelines. Trust us, it'll make the game more fun in the long run, so don't go bitchin' about it. Cowboy up and listen to what he says, and make a character that fits the story.

## Starting Level

First thing, the Game Master sets your character's starting level.

Some hunters are still a bit green—new to the life, probably only faced the odd ghost or creature. Others have more mileage, a few scars, and enough experience that a walk in the dark is not so dangerous. Finally, legendary dudes have been around the block more than twice, and have burned their way through an army of nasties. Once the Game Master figures out your starting level, you know where your character falls on the food chain—plus how many points you get to spend.

● **Rookie:** At this level, your hunter is just starting out—everything's still pretty new. He's either good at a few things, competent at several, or sucks at a whole bunch. Age doesn't matter here, just experience in a life filled with danger. A Rookie hunter starts with **42 Attribute Points**, **62 Skill Points**, and **0 Trait Points**.

● **Veteran:** This gent's got enough miles of asphalt behind him that his first instinct is to go for your gun when a snarling monster jumps out of the fog, not wet himself and pass out. Though it comes with a few more scars, he's ready for most of what's out there. A Veteran hunter starts with **48 Attribute Points**, **68 Skill Points**, and **4 Trait Points**.

● **Seasoned:** Hunters at this level have faced just about everything, and are on Hell's ten-most-wanted list. They're tougher and better than just about anybody else out there. A Seasoned hunter starts with **54 Attribute Points**, **74 Skill Points**, and **8 Trait Points**.



## Concept

Time to lock down the basics and turn them into a solid idea for your character. Maybe you slap together a couple of words and go from there. "Nerdy Bookworm" or "Biker Brawler" may be enough. For those who want more, take some time to work up a few details. That means you draw a pretty clear mental picture before getting to the nitty-gritty.

One thing you'll wanna figure out is just why your character is hunting in the first place. The Game Master may have that idea worked into his story, or he may. Best ask before going nuts on the background stuff.

## Attributes

Once you got your concept down, move onto Attributes. This'll tell you if your hunter's strong or wimpy, smart or a dumbass, alert or clueless. Attributes are used for just about every damn thing in the game, so it's good to get a real handle on them. The physical Attributes are **Agility**, **Strength**, and **Vitality**. The mental ones are **Alertness**, **Intelligence**, and **Willpower**.

Attributes are all rated in terms of dice, and, in this case, bigger does mean better. Average is d6. That means if your Willpower is d4 you might have trouble not snatching up that last dinner roll even though you already ate three. If you have an Alertness d10, your in good shape for noticing the ninja werewolf stalking around.

The amount of Attribute points you have to spend depends on your starting level. The cost's dead easy to figure out—it matches the die you're buying. So a d6 is 6 points. And don't be cute, there are no odd numbers.

You can't go lower than d4 (because someone that messed up isn't gonna survive five minutes on the job) and Rookies can't go higher than d12. (Veteran characters can have Attributes as high as d12+d2; Seasoned hunters can start with as much as d12+d4.) No matter where you start, you get a chance to improve things during play.

Best advice is to pick the stuff you want to be particularly good at. If you're concept is brainy, set aside points for Intelligence. If you want to be a nimble gunslinger, go high Agility. And if you're gonna be really great in one, plan on coming up short in another. There's just never enough to go around.

For those of you who were awake in class, we ran down the various Attributes in **Chapter Two: Game Basics**. Just in case, here's some more detail.

**Agility** covers things like quickness, balance, and hand-eye work. A high Agility lets you shoot first and ask questions later. A low score means you might not be able to get that gun out of your holster in time to worry much about shooting.

## Create as a Group

Nothing's stopping you from sitting in a quiet corner and making your character all by your lonesome. Just don't be surprised when someone else goes to the prom wearing the same dress (creates a character a lot like yours). Even if that isn't the case, you could wind up with a group of hunters that don't fit together well. That can be awkward, and it's hell on teamwork.

Probably better if you sit down with the gang and create as a group.

Make character creation the first "session" of game play. Get together with the Game Master and start talking about how it's all gonna work, then hash out characters keeping in mind what other players are planning. Doesn't mean you can't have some secrets. (You can, just not from the Game Master.) But it's usually worth it to make sure you've got a good mix of skills in the group, and to work through some character relationships and shared backgrounds that make the gang pull together quicker. You may not have the luxury of starting "fresh" with each character. In a hunter's life, "fresh" is immediately suspicious. If your characters already know each other, watching each other's back comes a whole lot more natural.

**Strength** is brawn, and how toned it might be.

A high Strength lets you kick down doors, throw solid punches, or bench press Smart Cars. A low Strength makes carrying a suitcase up a flight of stairs trouble.

**Vitality** measures toughness and health. A character with high Vitality is hard to take down, and even harder to keep down; he can drink all night, work all day, and take hits that would lay flat an ordinary guy. Low Vitality types wanna take plenty of Vitamin-C and best not enter any drinking contests.

**Alertness** lets you observe and understand what's going on around you. A high Alertness catches the faint EVP on a tape recording, knows when someone's lying to your face, or spots the flash of a shapeshifter's eyes. The flip side means you don't see the ghost before it shoves its hand into your chest, or you trip over a tree root while trying to dodge the wendigo.

**Intelligence** is thinking, reasoning, and remembering. A high Intelligence makes you bright, inventive, and capable of sorting out complex information. Otherwise, jigsaw puzzles are stumpers and forget working the ritual circuit.

**Willpower** combines grit and force of personality. If you've got a high score in Willpower, resisting intimidation, torture, and hardship might actually happen. You also might convince someone to do what you want through sheer charisma. A low Willpower makes you more susceptible to demonic possession and suggestions from attractive co-eds.



# Interpret the Numbers

Yeah, you got the high Strength and the low Alertness. But numbers by themselves mean precisely jack. It's up to you to make them talk. You could be a muscle-bound dolt, or you could be a wiry daydreamer. It's up to you whether a d4 Intelligence means you didn't get high marks in school or whether you answer to the name Gump. Is your high Willpower because you got nerves of steel or because you're good at getting your way with people?

For skills, a d6 is what the average Joe who's decent (but not amazing) at his job might have. That average Joe's probably also got one or two specialties for the stuff he works on everyday (a d8 or even d10). When you get above that, you're talking about someone with mad skills—expert training or a ton of experience.

Traits don't really have an "average" or any sort of baseline. Just read the descriptions to see what's what. A lower-level trait (d2) means it's not too big a deal—good or bad. When you get higher (d6 or more), it's gonna be among the first things someone notices about you.

Don't be afraid to rule in some ways and blow chunks in others. It's all part of the ride.

## Derived Attributes

This part's easy. You already picked your main Attributes. Now you string a couple together, or do a teeny bit of addition.

**Initiative** is rolled at the start of combat or anytime the fit hits the shan. When that happens, grab your Agility + Alertness dice and total the roll results. Higher is better. Record your character's Agility + Alertness dice, along with any modifications from Traits, as his Initiative.

**Life Points** show how much damage you can take before cashing in your chips. When your hunter gets punched, clawed, ripped open, drained by unholy magic, or suffers any other kind of bad touching, mark off points of Stun (nonlethal damage and exhaustion) and Wound (serious or lethal injury). When these total your character's Life Points, he drops and shows off the universe's ultra-realistic rag-doll physics engine. Figure Life Points by adding the maximum value of the hunter's Vitality and Willpower dice. So if your character has a d8 Vitality and a Willpower d10, he's got 16 Life Points.

**Endurance** keeps you from going down when you probably should—for example, when you've been whacked upside the head or when you've done six back-to-back shots of purple nurple. Record Willpower + Vitality dice for your Endurance, modified by any Traits. Higher is always better.

**Resistance** is like Endurance, but applies to fighting off infections, a cold, or a demonic virus (yeah, that happened). Write down your character's Vitality dice twice, separated by a plus sign and modified by any Traits, for your Resistance. So if the dude has Vitality d6, the notation is  $d6 + d6$ .

## Traits

Attributes are great for seeing if your character is smart enough for Algebra or quick enough for dodgeball, but they don't say much else. If you want stand-out qualities, you're looking at Traits. Could be good, could be bad, could just be different. Usually, they're a bit of all three. The Hilton sisters may not offer stimulating conversation, but they sure can stimulate. Okay, better example. Attributes tell you that a high school football player is strong, tough, and almost as smart as a box of hammers. Traits tell you that he's addicted to painkillers after blowing out his knee last season, and that he can't keep it in his pants when it comes to the cheerleaders. They also say he's loyal to his friends and teammates, and something of a Good Samaritan. Get it? Now, he's much less a caricature and more a personality.

Traits cover all kinds of ground. Friends, enemies, secrets, character flaws, bad habits—it's there. They also deal with some things that ain't exactly normal, like psychic powers, a penchant for dark magic, or deals with high-ranking demons. The kind of crap that turns a sorority girl's hair white.

Traits come in two flavors. **Assets** give your character an edge. That means bonus dice or some other kind of advantage. **Complications** make things a bit tougher. They make successes harder, saddle you with baggage, or highlight your less than sterling disposition. Don't skimp on the Complications. They make life more interesting and the game more fun.

Traits are listed by—yep, you guessed it—dice. An Asset or Complication at d2–d4 is kinda minor. It helps color the character but doesn't go very far in defining him. Higher dice jack up the profile to the truly good, bad, or ugly. Each Trait tells what range you can "buy" it. Jump ahead to **Chapter Four: Traits & Skills** to see what the hell we're talking about, or just take our word for it.

You use Trait points to buy Assets (unless your guy's a Rookie), but count on not having enough to get the real good stuff. That's where Complications come in. For each Complication you nail onto your character, you add Trait points equal to the dice taken on. So, if you pick Hooked d4 you'll get four more points to spend on Assets. Also, Complications give you a way to earn Plot Points during the game (see **Chapter Six: The Rules**).

Don't go nuts here. Each Complication you add makes life harder for your hunter, and, as we've probably mentioned, life ain't a picnic for those guys. Be careful and remember your character concept as you do your picking and choosing.

Every character has to take at least one Asset and one Complication, and no character can start with a Trait higher than d12. You're not allowed to get more than 30 points from Complications, so show some frickin' restraint.

## Skills

By now, you've got a pretty fair idea about what your character is capable of trying—but not so much about what he knows how to do. Can he shoot the fleas off a hellhound's back or is he gonna miss the broad side of a barn? Can he hack his way into a password protected website or does he use the CD tray as a drink holder? Skills tell you what your character knows and just how well he knows it.

Skills come from book-learning or the school of hard knocks. Sometimes it's just natural talent plus trial-and-error. In the game, we're talking dice again. Someone with all kinds of natural ability (high Attribute) is still gonna get his ass handed to him by an average schmuck with a heap of training. Pick your skills wisely and they'll keep your character alive for a while.

Skills start at d2 and move up with no upper limit—except for one little hitch. Skills are divided into two types.

**General Skills** cover broad ground. Athletics is running, jumping, dodging, swimming, climbing, and other stuff that hunters have to do too damn often. Guns covers everything from a police special up to assault rifles. You can only get so good at such a broad range of skills—up to d6. You wanna get better, you got to specialize.

**Specialty Skills** are much more focused. You know Guns at d6, but if you're a crack shot with a Model-70 rifle (hey, it's a Winchester) you're gonna need to take Rifle as a specialty. If you want to take on Beckham, you'll need to pick up the Soccer specialty in Athletics—just face up to the fact that unless you're using grenades, that black dog ain't gonna be impressed by your goal kick.

The good news is that Specialties pick up where the General Skills leave off. So the lowest Specialty you can buy is a d8 and they just get better from there. The downside is that you have to have the General Skill at d6 before you can start on Specialties at all. You can't start with a Specialty higher than d12, but you can move past that through game play. You can have more than one Specialty, and probably do. Running gets you away from trouble and Climbing helps you over those chain link fences. Just sayin'.

Spend your character's starting Skill Points like you did his Attribute and Trait Points. Just remember: you only need to pay for the General Skill once, but the Specialties under it each need to be bought separately. So, a Guns d6 costs 6 Skill Points and that's as high as you can go with that General Skill. The Shotgun Specialty d10 only costs an additional four Skill Points, since you've already paid for the first d6. Adding Pistol d8 costs another two Skill Points, and a Rifle d12 runs you six. (Kinda gun-crazy, but a guy can't be too careful these days.) The recap: General Skill (Guns) d6 (6 Points) + Specialty (Shotgun) d10 (4 Points) + Specialty (Pistol) d8 (2 Points) + Specialty (Rifle) d12 (6 Points) = 18 Skill Points spent.

Rookies can't start with any Skills higher than d12. They just ain't been around enough. Veterans can start as high as d12 + d2, and Seasoned hunters can start with Skills at the d12 + d4 level.

## Gear

It's better to be prepared. A stash of silver bullets, cold iron, goofer dust, rock salt, guns, knives, DVDs of classic porn—all pretty good ideas. Ditto for a fast car and a six-pack of beer waiting in the fridge. What your character actually has at his disposal depends on a bunch of things. For what the Game Master has in mind, your character could be all *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* or he could just as easily be *Down and Out in Beverly Hills*.

Talk with your Game Master about what your character has based on his background and the story that's coming down the pike. Don't sweat it too much—





even if you don't have a lot of cash there are ways to get what you need on the road. "Identity theft" and "credit card fraud" are such ugly phrases; we prefer "creative debt displacement."

Look over **Chapter Five: Hunting Gear** for more on how to stock up for the hunt. Remember that your character's starting level (Rookie, Veteran, or Seasoned) doesn't dictate wealth or gear. Some people start out with all the toys; some just never get their hands on 'em no matter how long they've been working at it.

## Plot Points

You're probably sick of hearing this, but hunting is dangerous business. You're just as likely to end up salted and burned in an unmarked grave. The deck's stacked against you, so game over—right? Not so much. You got **Plot Points**.

You start with six Plot Points and can save up more to 12, and you can hold them for later—even in between game sessions.

## Character Development

If he lives long enough, your Rookie won't be such a newbie anymore. With experience, some new knowledge, and luck, he'll get better. That makes him a bit more ready for the next hunt. As game sessions pass, you can improve existing Skills and learn new ones, gain additional Traits, and bump up Attributes. Your character changes as the story goes on.

Advancement is a slow-but-steady kinda thing. You earn Advancement Points, then spend them on Attribute, Trait, and Skill upgrades. This all works a lot like character creation, but now you're adding to what's already there instead of starting from scratch.

Between sessions you can increase one of your dice (a single Attribute, Trait, or Skill) by one step. The Game Master may decide there's enough downtime between sessions (or during a session, if time passes in the middle of the story) for you to buy more than one increase, but there usually isn't time for that except during hardcore training. So, if you have an Agility d6, you could bump it up to d8, but not d10. Not at least right away. You can't increase your Guns Skill from d4 to d6 at the same time. Choose one, and do the other next time.

For Attributes and Skills, you pay the difference in points between your current step and the step you're buying. During character creation, buying an Agility of d8 would cost eight Attribute Points. When advancing the character, it costs two Attribute Points to increase an Agility d6 to d8. Basically, any increase of +1 step costs two of the appropriate type of points.

Traits are trickier. The Game Master needs to chime in any time you mess with them. For Assets, you can buy 'em at any level the Game Master

agrees is appropriate, even if that means skipping a step or two (or three). Some Traits are only available at high die types, so this is absolutely necessary when buying those. Once you know it's kosher, just pay the cost in Trait Points and mark it down.

## Dealing with Trait Changes

You can get stuck with Complications during play—sometimes by choice, but not usually. In that case, you *do not* get any Trait Points. You *do* gain new ways to earn Plot Points during play, and otherwise the new downer works just like the Complications you chose during character creation.

A Complication can be dropped by spending its die type in Trait Points. A d6 Complication would cost six Trait Points to get rid of.

Whenever Traits are added or taken away, you need an actual story reason for the change. If your character plans to quit smoking, he's gotta deal with some cranky days and maybe sneaking a smoke now and then. And you don't just wake up with some freaky psychic powers. That crap usually only follows from some pretty nasty business. Your Game Master should be cool with most of your choices as long as he has enough time to make 'em work with the story. You gotta remember though, he's got the final word.

## Gaining Advancement Points

You make it to the end of the game session and your character lives to fight another day. Miller Time, right? Well, yeah. But you also get some Advancement Points—usually about 1–4 but sometimes even more if you've kicked some major ass. Everyone gets the same amount each session based on these guidelines.

**Evolution (1 Advancement Point):** This is the default award for showin' up. Nothing stays the same forever, and so characters always earn at least one Advancement Point as long as their characters aren't pushing up daisies.

**Role Playing (+1–2 Advancement Points):** If the group played their characters well in a way that made things fun for everyone, it's worth a point or two extra. Doesn't mean everyone was holding hands and singing "Kumbaya." Just that it made for a better story. Characters at each other's throats can be fun, too—in limited doses. A storyline might be zombie-heavy like *Night of the Living Dead*, but that don't mean the characters have to go postal on each other until there's only a few left.

**Plot Interaction (+1 Advancement Point):** Plot Points are one way for the players to really throw their ideas into the story, whether they offer creative suggestions or earn their kudos through well-played Complications. If most of the group did a good job with this, everyone gets a bonus Advancement Point.

**The Story (+1 Advancement Point):** If the players managed move the story along—whether they followed the expected storyline or jumped in the driver’s seat and found a completely different way to deal with the situation—they deserve a point for it. That doesn’t necessarily mean “success.” It just means that the story progressed through their efforts.

**The End (+3–6 Advancement Points):** Here’s a biggie. You took down the creature, sent the evil spirit to rest, or made it through whatever hellacious story the Game Master has spun for you. When a major plotline has come to a close and the characters continue on, it’s major pay dirt. If this was a television show, this is the reward for surviving the season finale.

## Spending Advancement Points

Spending Advancement Points is easy. Between sessions, Advancement Points can be spent to buy Attribute Points, Trait Points, and Skill Points according to the Advancement Cost Table. If you don’t spend points, just save ‘em up until you want to use ‘em.

**TABLE 3.1: ADVANCEMENT**

ADVANCEMENT	AP COST
1 Attribute Step	16
1 Trait Step	14
1 Skill Step	6

## Where to Next?

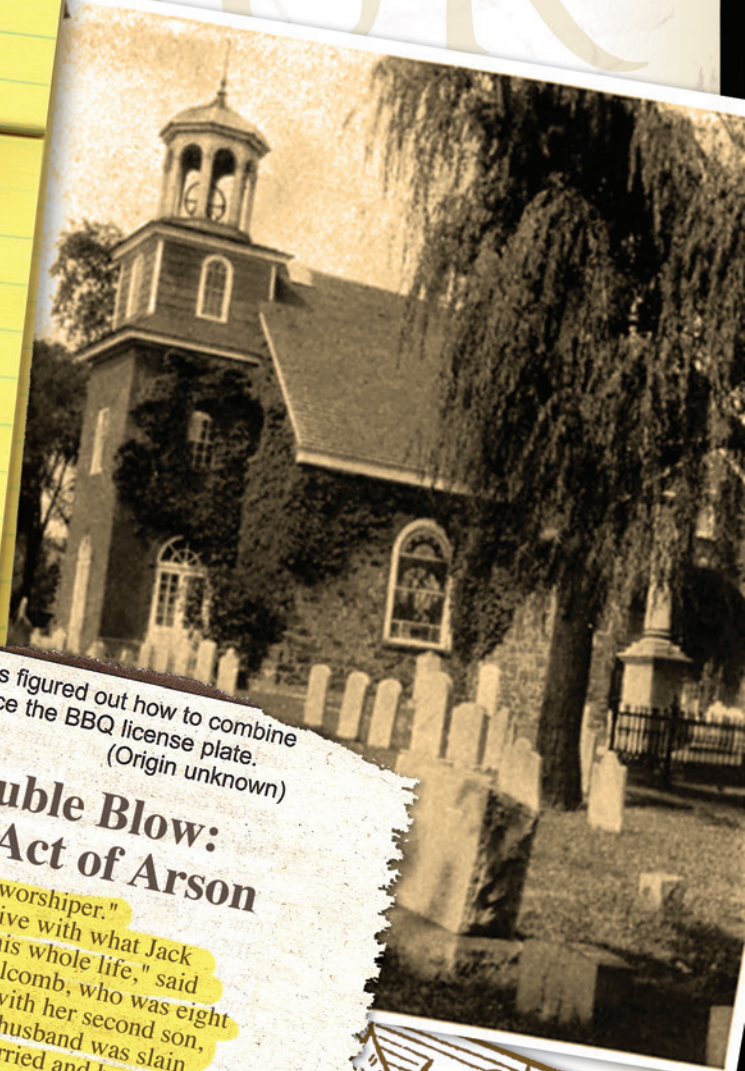
Halfway through this chapter, you might’ve started asking yourself what the hell Traits and Skills actually do. Buck up, we ain’t gonna leave you hanging. All that is spelled out next, in the cleverly titled **Chapter Four: Traits and Skills**. You might want to flip through **Chapter Five: The Gear**—you’re definitely gonna need it. If you haven’t taken the plunge before, **Chapter Six: The Rules** tells how your brand-new hunter interacts with the world.



# CHAPTER

## Traits and Skills

- New Hightower Baptist Church = Hell's church?
- Rumors of Satan worship/ritual magic
  - Freshly fresh mounds on 60yo graves
  - Cameras/flashlights/electronics all screw up in the graveyard
  - "Hanging tree" rumored for KKK lynchings in the 50's



### '75 Tragedy Deals Family Double Blow: Dad's Killer Blamed in Son's Act of Arson

By Bill Montgomery  
with background on the 1975 case of the Priest family. The role of killer Jack Howard in the mind of Michael

kidnapped and killed his son in the 1975 case "is like Mr. Priest. "Maybe he is

who was 2 1/2 when his father died and is 18 now, has grown with two juvenile arrests for arson in the nighttime hours. 20 of a 104-year-old cemetery church. Mr. Priest is

school senior said Tuesday friends believed they were at a reputed site of Satan. He also believed he was doing his father's killer, who he saw the first time when he and his brother attended the death row inmate's trial earlier this year.

"In a way, ... a devil worshiper killed my father," said Mr. Priest. "I felt

garage in style has figured out how to combine his Autobahn cruiser. Notice the BBQ license plate. (Origin unknown)

"he was a devil worshiper."

"He's had to live with what Jack Potts did nearly his whole life," said Delores Priest Holcomb, who was eight months pregnant with her second son, now 15, when her husband was slain. She has since remarried and has a third son.

Cherokee County authorities, however, are not convinced of Mr. Priest's motive.

Though Mr. Priest said he told authorities about the "Satanic temple" motivation, Sheriff's Department Capt. Dick Zimmerman said the youths told investigators they "they were in the area and just did it on a whim."

Fire would 'pay back Potts' Mrs. Holcomb is enduring a second round of tragedy as she struggles with the fact that her eldest son is in trouble with the law for the first time in his life. Fifteen years ago, a stranger with slurred speech and a whiskey bottle hanging from his pocket called her husband from his in-laws' supper table with a plea for help - his car had broken





**S**o you're agile and perceptive and got the will to resist that second piece of pie. Big deal. Lots of people can brag about that stuff. Your history, your personality, your quirks—along with what you know how to do—that tells a hell of a lot more about who you are. It's your make-up that'll carry you through the world of hurt that's heading your way.

Traits, both good and bad, do most of the legwork in defining your hunter's concept. Skills let you at least pretend the hunter knows his ass from his elbow. Knowing when and where to use them—well, one step at a time. We ain't expecting the world ... yet.

## Traits

Are you ugly? Strapped for cash? A natural when it comes to sports? All of this stuff is covered by Traits. Good Traits are called Assets—they help your hunter out. The sure-are-screwed Traits are called Complications—they make life a little more difficult. Every hunter must have at least one of each so things tend to balance out. Usually.

Traits can't directly contradict each other. It makes no sense to be Wealthy and Dead Broke, for instance. Although this book has a bunch of Assets and Complications that are perfect for *Supernatural*, that don't mean your Game Master has to include them all in the game he's running. He also might want to import Traits from another Cortex System game, so be sure to check with him and get a list before you go picking your poison.

As mentioned in **Chapter Three: The Hunters** (you were paying attention, right?), you "buy" Assets with points you get for taking Complications. That means the number of points you spend on each is roughly the same. You could take four little Complications and use the points you get to grab hold of a single honking big Asset. All in all though, you can't pick up more than 30 points from Complications. You might start with more than 30 points in Assets if you're playing a Veteran or Seasoned hunter because they get bonus Trait points based on experience. Still, it's better to make good choices that fit your hunter than to gorge on a buffet of Assets that you ain't never gonna use.

You know your hunter's background, or at least you got some idea. Think about that when you start running down the list of Traits. A slick city guy used to the nightlife is a lot more likely to have Allure than a nervous gas station attendant. Hey, maybe that jittery guy who pumps gas could take Allure—you just got more work explaining why he's so smooth with the ladies.

Traits are supposed to nail down your image of who your hunter is and what he's like. If you just pick them at random or without thinking, your hunter's gonna be a mess.

## The Deal with Assets

Assets give your hunter some kind of advantage or benefit. Your hunter always starts the game with at least one. Later on, as he gets more experienced tagging and bagging, he might pick up more.

An Asset's rated with a die type just like Attributes are. Sometimes, the Trait die is rolled as a bonus to actions related to the Asset. Other times, the Trait die is just a measure of how powerful the Asset is compared to others. In those cases, you don't add a die roll to anything. The Asset just gives you some benefit or changes the game in some way. Some Assets can be bought at any level from d2 upward, like Attributes, but others are only available at certain values. Each Asset's description spells it out for you. An Asset available at any level is noted as d2+; an Asset available in a range like d2 to d6 is noted as d2–d6; an Asset only available as levels d2, d6, or d12 is noted as d2/d6/d12.

Sometimes an action can benefit from more than one Asset. Pretty much depends on the situation. If you're thinking you've got a couple of Assets that play, bring it up with the Game Master. Don't overdo it though. The GM's got the final call. He isn't gonna let you apply your Higher Education to everything, even if you whine about how many electives your hunter took in college. There is one exception—when two Assets arguably could apply to give a step bonus to Plot Point dice, only the higher one is gained.

Even though Assets make your hunter who he is, they can be reduced or even eliminated as the game goes on. A hunter with the Wealthy Asset might get his bank account frozen if he's on the run from the authorities. In that case, the Game Master should give the player at least a chance to retrieve whatever it is he wants before making a permanent change in the hunter's Assets. Perhaps the hunter could persuade a fellow Wealthy friend to float him a loan. Remember, the player spent points on these Traits—that indicates an investment in that area for his character.

## The Skinny on Complications

Complications bring another side of your hunter to the game—usually a weakness, character flaw, or other kind of drawback. If it's something that messes with your hunter's life, it's a Complication. No one's perfect, and that goes in spades for hunters. Nature of the business really. So if they're such a bitch, why would anyone take more than the one mandatory character creation Complication? Good question.

First off, Complications give points to pick up Assets. They also perform double duty as role playing hooks and Plot Point earners. Complications push your hunter to act a certain way and that makes the story more



**TABLE 4.1: ASSETS**

ASSET	VALUE	☆
Allure	d2-d6	
Alternate Identity	d2-d6	
Ambidextrous	d2	
Born Behind the Wheel	d2-d6	
Brawler	d2-d6	
Carries a Badge	d2-d6	
Clairvoyant	d4-d8	/
Contacts	d2-d6	
Cool Under Fire	d2-d6	
Danger Sense	d4/d8	/
Destiny	d6-d12	/
Devoted	d6	
ESP	d4/d8	/
Faith	d2-d6	
Fast on Your Feet	d2/d6	
Focused Hunter	d2-d6	
Formidable Presence	d2-d6	
Gear Head	d2-d6	
Good-Natured	d2-d6	
Hardy Constitution	d2-d6	
Higher Education	d2-d6	
In Plain Sight	d2-d6	
Intuitive Leaps	d4/d8	
Light Sleeper	d4	

ASSET	VALUE	☆
Low Profile	d2/d6	
Lucky	d4/d8/d12	
Medium	d4/d8	/
Mystic Protection	d4/d8	/
Natural Athlete	d2-d6	
Natural Linguist	d2-d6	
Ordained	d2-d6	
Photographic Memory	d4/d8	
Premonitions	d4/d8	/
Reputation	d2-d6	
Safe House	d4/d8	
Sensitive	d2-d6	
Sharp Sense	d2-d6	
Signature Possession	d2/d8/d12	
Split Second Timing	d2-d6	
Spirit Guide	d4/d8	/
Sure Footed	d2-d6	
Talented	d2-d6	
Tech Expert	d2-d6	
Tough	d4/d8	
Two-Handed Fighting	d4	
Unbreakable Will	d2-d6	
Uncommon Knowledge	d2-d6	
Wealthy	d4/d8	

interesting—harder on the hunter, better for the group. Because the player is taking it on the chin in these cases, the Game Master awards Plot Points for him agreeing to put up with it.

It's your job to role play the hunter's faults. You can count on getting Plot Points when you stick to your guns and play your hunter to type, but it's better if you bring the Complication to life a bit. Nobody wants the game to crash and burn, and having a couple of Complications is no excuse for being a dick. Still, as long as your Complications ramp up the enjoyment, it's all good.

Events in the story—annoying someone important, picking up a rival, or getting caught on the evening news doing something stupid—might suggest ways for the Game Master to add Complications to your hunter. These Complications don't come with gift-wrapped points for more Assets, but you do get to earn Plot Points for them.

Complications work something like Assets. Some are rated from d2 upwards; others are only available at specific die ratings. Unlike Assets, Complications almost never get rolled as bonus dice to actions.

They either penalize the hunter directly, or the Game Master rolls the Trait die and adds the result to the Difficulty you're rolling against. That's how they make things harder.

Complications can be bought off during the game, but don't count on being able to get rid of them without a lot of serious role playing and the permission of your Game Master. Details are found in the Advancement section of **Chapter Three: The Hunters**.

## Trait Levels and Scaling

When a Trait's die roll is added to an action, it's easy to see how much benefit you're getting out of it. Some Traits affect a hunter's performance without adding dice. In that case, the Trait die just reflects how much it cost your hunter to pick it up relative to other Traits.

For the most part, the Traits in this chapter are scaled according to how much they add to the stories that make *Supernatural* what it is. But maybe you wanna pick up a Complication or Asset at a higher level than listed, or maybe you're looking for a version that's less meaty. Talk to your Game Master about modifying Traits. He might

go for it, or come up with some way to achieve the same effect by choosing a different Trait at a lower or higher level. If you're willing to take the extra hit for having a Complication that's even worse than listed, seems fair that he reward you with more Plot Points. On the other hand, no point in taking something you're never gonna step up to. If you don't put out Trait-wise, your Game Master's got every right to knock it down a notch.

## Assets

When "your Trait die is added" to an action or roll, that means you add a die of that type to whatever roll is involved. For example, if you got Allure, charming someone could use a Willpower + Influence + Allure action.

★ This symbol means the Traits brings in some kind of psychic power or other supernatural effect. Gotta get your Game Master approval before you chose those babies. Better get used to the idea of playing the good and the bad side of being so "blessed." You might be able to do something extraordinary, but that don't make you any less of a freak to most folks.

⌘ This note sets apart the higher levels of the Trait. When you take this Trait at d6 (or higher), Plot Points count for more. When you perform an action that involves the Trait, you get a +2 step to the die you get by spending Plot Points before the roll (the Trait don't affect Plot Points spent after the roll).

### Allure (d2-d6) ⌘

You're hot. You either got good looks or sex appeal that defies explanation. Your Trait die is added to any Influence actions involving someone who might find you appealing. Only works in person though; phone calls don't count unless the Game Master says so.

### Alternate Identity (d2-d6)

People keep thinking you're someone else. You look enough like him that you can actually pretend to be the guy or benefit from his fame, reputation, or success. The higher this Asset, the better the fringe benefits, and the more famous or well known the guy is. If you're lucky, you're never gonna be seen in the same place as him, or he's in a coma, or he's dead. You'll need to talk with your Game Master to work up just who it is and why this is going on. While the impersonation is holding up, your Trait die is added to any actions you take using the other guy's identity.



This Asset could also mean that you've got a series of lesser identities that you can use in a pinch. The downside is that those "people" aren't real. If you start failing actions that use this Trait's bonus die, the authorities are gonna start getting suspicious. Again, make sure you and the Game Master have a good handle on what this entails.

Finally, this is the Asset to use if you've got a fairly complete—yet completely fictitious—alternate identity, such as that put together by undercover cops, Witness Protection Programs, and so on. The Trait die probably won't be added to any rolls other than as a means of keeping up the ruse (Covert/Disguise, or Performance/Acting), but the rating determines just how established the identity is. You might wanna take the Dark Secret Complication instead if this alternate identity is less help and more pain in the ass.

### Ambidextrous (d2)

You're a switch-hitter—not that kind, pervert. You're one of those people who's just as good with his left hand as with his right. No real benefit here on gross motor skills, so it won't help you in a fight—you're looking at the Two-Handed Fighting Asset for that. This Trait's useful when one of your hands is hurt and you wanna use the other one in its place without loss of skill. It don't negate the penalty for multiple actions, but if you're doing something with both hands at the same time (like writing something on two pieces of paper simultaneously) or you're trying to impress somebody, your Trait die is added to your action.

### Born Behind the Wheel (d2-d6) ⌘

You learned to drive before you could walk—or so you tell people. You can make vehicles perform beyond their usual specs. Pick a single category—cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, whatever. Your Trait die is added to any action when operating one of those puppies.



## Brawler (d2-d6)

Even unarmed, you're still a bad-ass. You could beat someone to death with your bare hands. Your unarmed damage is treated as Basic damage, rather than Stun damage, and your Trait die is added as additional damage to any unarmed attack. You can also make called shots to vital areas to deliver Wound damage, rather than Basic damage (see Called Shots, page 86).

## Carries a Badge (d2-d6)

Although hunting keeps you up nights, you've got a day job involving police work. You're a legitimate law enforcement authority of some kind, whether it's local, state, or federal. How much influence you have over others in law enforcement and how much sway you have with civilians depends on your Trait die. A d2 sets you up as a beat cop or minor government official. A d4 is somebody with more clout—a city detective, FBI special agent, or sheriff's deputy. At d6, you've got a good deal more power and authority, although even a police captain or NSA agent's got some explaining to do if he's caught hunting demons and ghosts on the job.

Work with your Game Master to determine your status and make sure it fits with his game. He might decide to limit your choice of this Trait to a d4 or even d2.

## Clairvoyant (d4/d8) ☆

Creepy psychic powers let you "see" more than most people. You've got the ability to call up information about an event, an object, or a person through remote viewing or visions. You might rely on Tarot cards or a crystal ball or some other focus, but not all clairvoyants need props. This Trait differs from Premonitions because you rarely get any insight into what's coming in the future or happened in the past. Instead, you catch glimpses of where somebody might be hidden, where an object you've lost is located, or who's about to walk in your front door.

**d4:** At this level, you get flashes of insight and some degree of understanding from the use of Tarot cards, numerology, a crystal ball, or touching a familiar object. It's more passive than active. You can't choose what information you pick up, and you might not even get something at all. Your Game Master could call for a Hard Alertness + Perception + Clairvoyant roll. If it's successful, he might describe something related to the object, location, or person in question.

Clairvoyant flashes are usually visual, though occasionally some other sense comes in (such as smell or hearing).

**d8:** At this level, you're a regular Stephen King character. You can touch an object and get an impression of somebody or something connected to it. You can use remote viewing to see somebody you know or look briefly at a place far away from you. Effects like these are possible through the use of Alertness + Perception + Clairvoyant checks. The Difficulty starts at Average and goes up from there based on how much information you want, how far off the person or location is, and how quickly you wanna get the information.

## Contacts (d2-d6)

You've got friends in places high, low, or in-between—the kind of buddy that helps you out in a tight spot, or at least answers the phone and gives advice when you need it. Once a game session, you can put out the call for help. Basically, your contacts help you alter the story just as if you'd spent Plot Points to do it. You can't spend more than your maximum Trait die value and you can't add real Plot Points to the mix. If the Game Master has a problem with the story edit you're angling for, you can suggest something else or save the Trait use for later in the session.

When you pick up this Trait, talk to your Game Master. Is your contact a single person with a lot of influence, talent, or availability? Or is your hunter part of a larger group that can lend aid from time to time? Could be other hunters who you know and trust, for instance, or it could be an old friend of the family who asks no questions. The level of the Trait should reflect how much of a footprint this contact has on the overall game.



## Cool Under Fire (d2-d6) ☼☼☼

Takes a lot to rattle you. Even in the worst fight of your life, you suck it up and keep it together. Your Trait die is added to an attempt to resist being frightened, intimidated, or otherwise mentally unbalanced. This Trait even helps you keep your mouth shut if you're being tortured, which may be small comfort.

## Danger Sense (d4/d8) ☆

Just like Peter Parker, you seem to always know when danger is coming. You're very difficult to surprise, and your hunches are usually right.

**d4:** The Game Master makes a secret Hard Alertness + Perception/Intuition + Danger Sense roll for you when danger threatens, usually a turn or two before it strikes. If it's a success, you get a bad feeling about the situation that gives you the chance to prepare. Sometimes this happens further ahead of time. For example, if an unknown enemy is preparing to launch a major offensive later in the day, you might wake up feeling uneasy and tense.

**d8:** As above, but additionally you can't be completely surprised. You can even be woken from sleep by your sense of impending doom. You are always alert to danger, if only just a moment before the attack. Even a sniper can't be sure you won't suddenly duck out of the way. You can only be deprived of your innate defense if physically restrained or unconscious.

## Destiny (d6-d12) ☆

The universe has big plans for you. You might not be happy, but you aren't gonna die until the time is right or you fulfill whatever purpose you were put here for. If you're ever on the brink of death, roll your Trait die. If the result is 3 or higher, something happens to keep you alive—the killing blow isn't as deadly as it looked, the mob decides to spare you, you find hidden reserves of toughness—something like that. Unfortunately, Destiny don't protect the people you care about, and it won't necessarily keep you healthy. There's also a limit to your charmed life. Destiny can't save you more than once per day, and it can't protect you from anybody else with this Trait. Work with your Game Master when you choose this Trait. Something this significant has to work with the story, not derail it.

## Devoted (d6)

There's something that speaks to your point of view, something worth fighting for. It don't matter if it's something you were raised to believe or if you took it up recently. You don't add this Trait die to any actions, but if you can justify your actions as directly supporting your cause (and it's gotta be *directly*), you can make your Plot Points count for more. You gain a +2 step bonus to any die you get from spending Plot Points on this action. This only works on Plot Points spent before the roll (not those spent after).

This Trait can also be applied to a person or group of people, such as your immediate family, your children, the guys in your Army unit, and so on. Just make sure it's being used on actions that directly help or support them (pulling them out of the way of an attack, rescuing them from the side of a cliff), rather than indirectly or trivially (baking a cake, getting them to work on time).

## ESP (d4/d8) ☆

You can read the auras of people, which gives you some idea of their emotions, their thoughts, and who they are. This hocus-pokus is a little like Clairvoyant—most of what you get comes as images or flashes—but it's limited to somebody in your immediate area.

**d4:** At this level, you pick up fleeting glimpses, snatches of information, or sometimes stray thoughts from the people around you. If you really concentrate, you can zero in on the source of these readings or tune in a little more, but that sort of control is limited to empathic stuff—moods, strong feelings, or if the person's acting out of the ordinary. The Game Master rolls a secret Hard Alertness + Perception/Intuition + ESP check when he thinks you might catch something interesting. Active attempts use Alertness + Discipline/Concentration + ESP.

**d8:** At this level, you're a talented reader. You can see auras around people, telling them apart by the color or sensations that attach to them. You can pick out thoughts if you put your mind to it, and even send impressions (but not "speech") back to people who have at least the d4 level of this Trait. If you know somebody with the d8 level like you, you can even practice telepathy, though it has to be willing. Use Alertness + Discipline/Concentration + ESP (opposed by the subject's Willpower + Discipline/Resistance) to focus on thoughts or feelings, and Alertness + Perception/Intuition + ESP to scan an aura for emotions. The Difficulty should depend on how intense the subject's mood is. Laid-back folks don't radiate emotion the same as strung-out or angry people.

## Faith (d2-d6)

You believe in a greater power. This faith carries you through dark places, and it may even help others too. Whenever you're dealing with people who share or respect your faith, your Trait die is added to any actions to influence them. This ain't a magic bullet though. If you've personally offended them or given them reason to distrust your sincerity, all bets are off.

**d6:** If you got this Trait at the d6 level, your faith stand outs in the force of your personality. Once per session, your Faith die is added to any roll involving your Willpower.

## Fast on Your Feet (d2/d6)

Run like the wind, Forrest! Your base movement speed increases depending on the level of your Trait.

**d2:** Base speed plus 5 feet.



**d6:** Base speed plus 10 feet.

### Focused Hunter (d2-d6)

You're good at killing something in particular. You've spent a fair amount of time and attention hunting one kind of something. Pick a type of animal or creature (approved by the Game Master), from wolves to werewolves. Your Trait die is added to any rolls to remember unusual facts about your target prey (most of which you're assumed to know anyway), identify signs of them or notice them, or to attack them (directly or indirectly). There're definitely limits to this Trait; your Game Master should feel free to bar certain types of creatures for this Trait.

### Good-Natured (d2-d6) ☼☼

You're cheerful and easy-going, and it tends to put folks at ease. Whenever dealing with people in a casual manner—outside of any intimidating or threatening situation—your sparkling personality helps win them over. Your Trait die is added to any rolls that you make where your good nature might help smooth things over. Good-Natured don't help you when a situation is stressful and everyone's already on edge, or if somebody already distrusts you—nobody's gonna let their guard down in that case.

### Hardy Constitution (d2-d6)

You've got the tolerance of a hard-core drinker. You can eat and drink almost anything and nothing more serious than a slight headache or indigestion results. Your Trait die is added to any rolls to resist the effects of alcohol, drugs, poisons, radiation, toxins, and stuff like that.

### Higher Education (d2-d6) ☼☼

School was good to you. Unlike most hunters, you actually remember most of it. Your Trait die is added to rolls when recalling information that you may have studied. It has to relate to the education you had, of course—you gotta run that by your Game Master. Chances are it's also fairly academic—funny, that—so this Trait should be restricted to fields you'd ordinarily need a textbook to understand.

### In Plain Sight (d2-d6) ☼☼

You're like one of those extras in a big movie, the guy nobody remembers even when you're standing right there. It could be that you're so normal-looking that nobody pays attention. Your Trait die is added to attempts to avoid notice when hiding in plain sight, to maintain a disguise as a generic member of an organization, and so on.

### Formidable Presence (d2-d6) ☼☼

You're a scary sonofabitch. It's possible that you can switch this on and off, but you might also just be downright frightening. Your Trait die is added to actions where being intimidating or impressive would benefit you. Most supernatural creatures aren't gonna give a crap about how scary you are, but you never know. Stories tell of hunters who've stared down a vampire or demon and come away with a dry pair of pants.

### Gear Head (d2-d6) ☼☼

You've got a way with machines. Whether it's a car engine or some kind of household appliance, you know how to fix it when it's busted and why it works when it ain't. Your Trait die is added to actions that involve machines, including operating them. This Trait don't cover electronics or computers—for that, you want Tech Expert.

### Intuitive Leaps (d4/d8)

You make a habit of coming up with half-assed but useful connections between widely different things. You don't always know how you do it, but it works. This is the kind of trick all the best detectives know—if you're smart, you'll save it for when you actually need it.

**d4:** Once a game session, you can ask the Game Master a yes or no question about something related to the story, and the Game Master's obliged to give you an answer. He isn't obliged to give you any details, though.

**d8:** As above, but you can ask twice per session.

## Light Sleeper (d4)

In the hunting business, it helps to be the kind of guy who don't sleep through a partner's mangling. Your Trait die is added to any roll that would let you wake up when you need to, including the d4 level of the Danger Sense Trait. You can also just spend a Plot Point and wake up automatically—unless something's preventing it and the Game Master says no.

## Low Profile (d2/d6)

You're off the radar. It's near impossible to find any dirt on you, and if you're careful, it'll stay that way. How invisible you are depends on your investment in this Trait.

**d2:** You keep a clean record. A background check uncovers the basics: birth date, full legal name, and so on. No suspicious or illegal activity can be traced to you through official records, and you've left little to no information on stuff like purchases, jobs, awards, and education.

**d6:** Although it's possible to dig up your birth certificate and location of birth, it requires a lot of searching and some insider help. There's nothing in official records to tell people where you're currently living, or even to confirm that you're still alive.

The Game Master may suspend or even eliminate this Trait if you do something stupid, like get arrested or charged, or if you try to use the system yourself to get information based on your own personal details.

## Lucky (d4/d8/d12)

Lady Luck's got a crush on you, and that helps out in hairy situations. This Trait lets you reroll all the dice if you don't like a result. You can't reroll a botch, but this Trait allows you to treat it as a simple failure instead. The number of times you can use this Trait in a single session depends on its level.

**d4:** You can reroll your dice or turn a botch into a failure once a session.

**d8:** You can reroll your dice or turn a botch into a failure twice a session.

**d12:** You can reroll your dice or turn a botch into a failure three times a session.

## Medium (d4/d8) ☆

You see dead people. You're receptive to spirits, and can communicate with them or even channel them into your body so that others can talk to them. A medium's talents are psychic, much like somebody who's got ESP or gets Premonitions. Like other psychic Traits, this comes in two levels of power.

**d4:** At this level, you occasionally see, hear, or otherwise sense the presence of spirits when they wanna make themselves known. You can tell when a room has an active spirit within it, especially one that's angry or strong. If you set up a séance or ritual, you can attempt a Hard Willpower + Influence/Persuasion + Medium to attract a

spirit to the table that speaks through you. If you do this, you don't have any control over your body for the duration, though you can force the spirit out by opposing its Willpower + Spirit roll with your Willpower + Medium roll.

**d8:** At this level, you sense spirits as lesser mediums do, but don't need to conduct a special ritual or séance, and ain't gotta be possessed by a spirit in order to talk to it. If you call a ghost or the Game Master informs you that a spirit is trying to communicate, you can engage in a normal social encounter with the spirit and use your Skills as you would with any other individual, adding your Trait die to your actions. You can attempt to force a possessing spirit out of somebody else with a Willpower + Influence/Intimidation + Medium action opposed by the spirit's Willpower + Discipline + Spirit roll, but if you botch the spirit gets to jump into you, instead. You can also force a spirit to manifest using the same opposed test.

## Mystic Protection (d4/d8) ☆

You performed some ritual or acquired some talisman that protects you from certain mystical or supernatural threats. Keep in mind that talismans are tricky things. Don't trust anybody who tells you they've got one that works on everything.

**d4:** You own a talisman that protects you against spirits, demons, or creatures. Usually, it's a creature central to the talisman's magic tradition. So if you've got a demon on your tail and you're sporting a hoodoo mojo bag, you're probably SOL. Your Trait die is added to rolls to oppose the right creature's supernatural action taken against you. For example, let's say your mystic protection works against spirits. You roll your Willpower + Discipline/Resistance + Mystic Protection to resist being pinned against a wall by a ghost's telekinesis. On the other hand, your tricked-out bauble ain't gonna help if the ghost hurls a knife at you. At the Game Master's discretion, you might get some kind of immunity to something very specific (such as demonic possession), but don't count on it.

**d8:** A talisman of this level works like a lesser one. In addition, you can make temporary talismans to share with others. Spend two Plot Points and you've fashioned a crude talisman with the effectiveness of the d4 level of this Asset. These lesser amulets only work for the duration of one scene—usually the scene right after you hand the thing to somebody else.

## Natural Athlete (d2-d6) ::

You're a regular Lance Armstrong—ready to go the distance. Your Trait die is added to actions involving endurance, physical training, or fitness. This Trait don't help with combat directly, but if you spend a lot of your fights leaping over tables or running from demons, it can come in handy.



## Natural Leader (d2-d6) ☐☐

Whether you like it or not, you're good at bossing people around and getting them to jump. Your Trait die is added to actions you make to persuade or intimidate subordinates, or those who look to you for direction.

## Natural Linguist (d2-d6)

You've got an ear for languages. You pick up dialects or accents without trouble—that helps you blend in with the locals. When you meet somebody, just by listening to them talk, you get a pretty good idea of where they're from. Your Trait die is added to actions involving an unusual language or to fake being a native speaker. You also gain fluency in additional languages (modern or classic) depending on your investment in this Trait:

**d2:** Fluent in your native language and one other.

**d4:** Fluent in your native language and two others.

**d6:** Fluent in your native language and three others.

## Ordained (d2-d6)

You're a part of a religious organization that's recognized as having some authority over spiritual matters. You could be a priest, a pastor, a rabbi, or any other frock-wearing church type. When you're trying to influence, inspire, or even command the faithful, your Trait die is added to the roll. Talk this Trait over with your Game Master and make sure that you've got the details straightened out before play starts. If you sign on during the course of the game (adding the Trait after character creation), the details should already be on the table. As is clear from the history of organized religion, you can be Ordained without having Faith, and vice versa.

## Photographic Memory (d4/d8)

Study something for 30 seconds or more, and you don't forget it. This talent's also called eidetic memory, but only an egghead's gonna go around blabbing that.

**d4:** Your memory has limits. You can't keep more than four magazine articles' worth of information perfectly memorized in your head at any time, although lots of smaller things hang around for longer.

**d8:** You've got almost perfect recall of anything you've seen, read, or studied. If it's something obscure, your Game Master may call for a Hard Intelligence + Alertness + Photographic Memory roll, or require a Plot Point to be spent in extreme circumstances.

## Premonitions (d4/d8) ★

You get visions about the future. They come as a result of dreams, or from touching objects or people. They even show up as cryptic statements in newspaper and magazine articles that only you can figure out. Talk with your Game Master when you pick this Trait, just as with any other psychic Trait, to determine the details of how this Trait works.

**d4:** At this level, you got no control over your premonitions. They can come at any time, appearing to you when you least expect it. The visions might be of events years in advance, or as soon as an hour or two. The exact details are up to the Game Master, but your special insight and advance knowledge lets you add the Trait die to actions that this insight might help with. If you succeed at the action, you don't get any more benefit until your next vision; if the action fails, the bonus die carries over to the next related action.

**d8:** If you have Premonitions at this level, you can try to pick up a reading or a flash of a future event by concentrating. Make a Hard Willpower + Perception/Intuition + Premonitions roll to get a premonition about something specific. The Game Master can drop any hints or warnings into this image that he likes, and it ain't set in stone. You may still have a chance to change it. Like the d4 version of this ability, you gain a bonus die to a later Skill roll or action equal to your Trait die.

## Reputation (d2-d6)

You're popular with some people. Those suckers trust you, believe in you, and look out for you—depending on how you came by this rep. Figure out this Trait's background with your Game Master and lock down a group of people it applies to. When you deal with these people, your Trait die is added to all Influence actions unless the folks you're dealing with got some reason to doubt your reputation.

## Safe House (d4/d8)

You've got a hiding spot, a safe place that no one knows about. Unless you lead people there, let them know it exists, or bring a state-wide manhunt down on your ass, no one's gonna find you there. A group of hunters could take this Asset and combine their Safe Houses together, coming up with either a bigger place or one that's more comfortable.

**d4:** Your safe house is just big enough to accommodate you and a couple others, giving you a place to live, but not comfortably. It's stocked with enough food to eat sparingly, blankets and basic furniture, small sources of warmth and water, and the equivalent of a first aid kit.

**d8:** Your safe house is capable of supporting up to a dozen people in the same accommodations as above.

## Sensitive (d2-d6) ☐☐

You're the kind of guy who understands when people are going through tough times. You're a good listener, and the things you say make the other person feel as if you know what they're going through. When you're in a social situation that your empathic nature would help in, your Trait die is added to social actions. The Trait don't usually

apply when everyone is all smiles and laughter, or the other person's feeling just dandy. You need to get a bead on something traumatic, upsetting, or awkward in order for you to get the bonus.

### Sharp Sense (d2-d6) ☼☼

Choose one of your five senses: sight, smell, hearing, taste, or touch. That sense is much keener than the others. Whenever you're taking an action that could be directly affected by that sense (sniffing a bottle for poison, searching a room for a tiny detail, overhearing something in a whispered conversation from across the room), your Trait die is added to the roll. It's up to the Game Master to confirm that the Trait's applicable, of course.

### Signature Possession (d2/d8/d12)

Something you own has become a part of you, inseparable. It's something that people think of when they think of you, and it you can't be deprived of it for long. Your Signature Item eventually comes back to you if lost, stolen, or badly damaged. If the story keeps you and your item apart for some reason, the Game Master might reward you with some Plot Points. The nature of the item depends on the level of this Trait.

**d2:** Your item's something relatively minor and don't serve much useful function. Still, it identifies you—a hat, pair of sunglasses, or a distinctive coin.

**d8:** Your item's something that can be carried or worn but it has a significant use—a snub-nosed pistol, a Swiss Army knife, or an ancestral sword.

**d12:** Your item's something large or powerful, and could be of use to more than just you—a Peterbilt truck, a classic car, or a cutting edge laptop that never crashes.

### Split-Second Timing (d2-d6)

You're scary fast. Your Trait die is added to all initiative rolls and any action that depends on reacting quickly to danger, like getting out of the way of a grenade. This Trait applies to other rolls at the Game Master's discretion, but only if the roll's a measure of speed, not just one that benefits from speed.

### Spirit Guide (d4/d8) ☆

You got a personal ghost, a spirit, or entity watching over your shoulder and helping you out. It could be a family member, or somebody you tried to save but couldn't. It could be something else entirely, like an animal totem or elemental fetch. Whatever it is, the Game Master has its statistics (see **Chapter Eight: The Supernatural**). Your investment in this Trait tells you how powerful or useful the spirit is.

**d4:** This is a ghost with Spirit d2. It's usually invisible, can't do a whole lot more than move a glass on a table or mess with the drapes, but it may know some supernatural lore.

**d8:** This entity has Spirit d6. It can manifest, showing up as it did in life. If it ain't a ghost, it appears as it thinks it ought to. Unless it's specifically an angry ghost or a raging spirit, it ain't gonna fight for you, but it can help out in other ways. It's under the control of the Game Master, and he's free to yank the spirit out of the scene if something keeps it from being there. If this happens, he might toss a couple of Plot Points your way to make up for it.

### Sure Footed (d2-d6) ☼☼

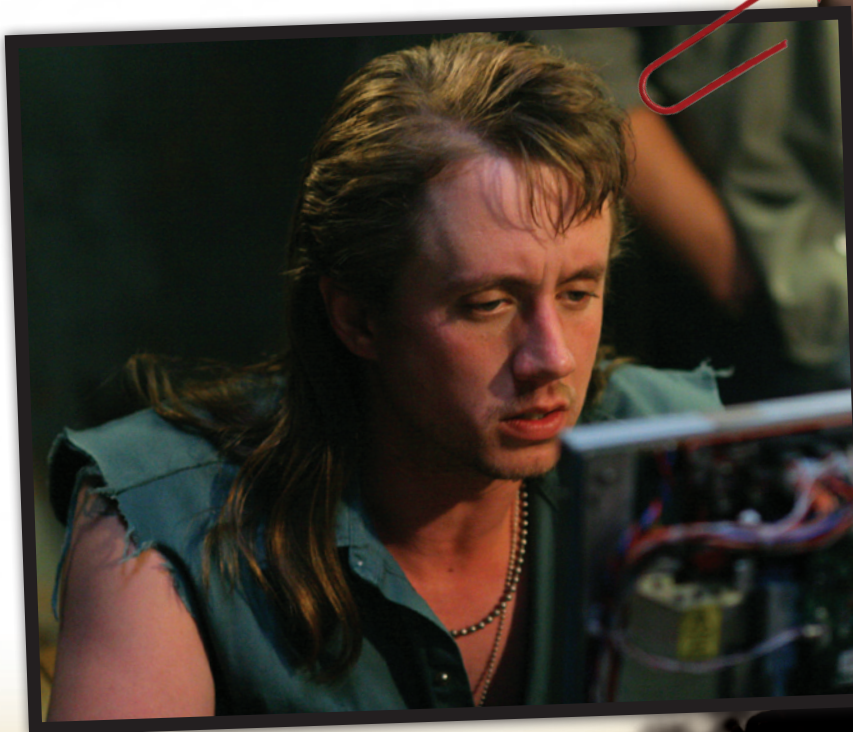
Maybe you played on the monkey bars a lot when you were a kid, or walked across logs or stepping-stones in the creek. Maybe your mom made you take ballet classes. Whatever—your sense of balance is legendary. Your Trait die is added to rolls that require balance or keep you from falling over—that don't mean every feat of acrobatics you attempt, only situations where balance is the most important factor.

### Talented (d2-d6)

Everyone's got a hobby, but you're a Babe Ruth or Kirk Hammett. Pick two Specialty Skills (not General Skills) that have some kind of theme connecting them to each other; the Game Master must approve your choices. Whenever you use either of these Skills, add your Trait die. If your Skill die is reduced below d0 by step penalties, you can't add the Trait die.

### Tech Expert (d2-d6) ☼☼

You get computers and electronics. Your Trait die is added when you roll to design, build, program, operate, or acquire technological gadgets. Using just your basic understanding of electronics, you can figure out the





purpose of a device, or puzzle out a way to improve its performance. Given a set of tools and a little time, you could assemble a functional replacement if something gives out or shorts in the gadget.

### Tough (d4/d8)

You take a beating and just keep getting up. Maybe you're really big, or maybe you've just got a high pain threshold. Add half of the maximum value of your Trait die to your Life Points. So, Tough d4 gives your hunter two additional Life Points, while Tough d8 gets you four additional Life Points. In addition, your Trait die is added to any rolls to remain conscious, keep from dying, or shrug off the harmful effects of being wounded or stunned. It don't help you against being poisoned or drugged—that's what Hardy Constitution is for.

### Two-Handed Fighting (d4)

You've trained to fight or shoot with either your left or your right, so you don't suffer the normal -2 Skill step for using your off-hand. You'll still pick up penalties for multiple actions, but you can perform a special maneuver combining both weapons in a single strike, getting a +1 Skill step in the process. You don't get this bonus if you make two attacks against different targets.

You gotta pick up this Trait separately for each Skill—Guns, Unarmed Combat, Melee Weapons, etc. This Trait don't make you ambidextrous. That's a different Trait altogether.

### Unbreakable Will (d2-d6)

You're hard to break, and definitely not the type who freaks out. Maybe you've had years of mental training, or maybe you're too stupid to know how deep you stepped in it. Your Trait die is added to rolls to resist unnatural compulsions—torture, supernatural fear, mind control, demonic possession, and so forth. The Game Master may also roll secretly to see if your unshakeable brain can see through illusions.

**d6:** If you got this Trait at the d6 level, you can spend a Plot Point to shake off *any* compulsion, no matter how powerful, for at least a short time. Roll your Trait die, and return to your senses for that number of turns.

### Uncommon Knowledge (d2-d6)

You've studied some topic or field that almost no one else has. It might be secret, or just damn obscure. Discuss with the Game Master the specifics of the knowledge, if this Trait works based on that knowledge, and what level it needs to be to cover that knowledge. This Trait is highly subjective, so be sure it covers something that actually aids your hunter! The Trait die may be used together with an Attribute in place of a Skill roll, especially if your rating is greater than any dice in such General Skills as Knowledge or Science.

### Wealthy (d4/d8)

You may not have high-tech gadgets or psychic powers, but you got plenty of good, old-fashioned cash. That gives you a pretty comfortable lifestyle. Your Trait die is added to any negotiation or haggling action where sweetening the deal with a wad of bills could help—either directly, or by buying drinks, giving gifts, and so on. See **Chapter Five: The Gear** for more information on Lifestyle.

**d4:** You start out with a Lifestyle 3. You don't sweat expenses the way a working stiff does. You can afford a number of expensive things with only a little additional investment.

**d8:** You start out with a Lifestyle 4. You've got it made, pal. Truly outrageous purchases still cause you to tighten the purse strings for a couple of months, but at this level of wealth you're rolling in the dough.

## Complications

In all Complications where "your Trait die is added to the Difficulty," the Game Master rolls your Trait die and adds the result to the Difficulty of certain actions or rolls.

### Absent Minded (d2-d6)

It don't matter whether you're a genius or a dumbass ... you forget stuff all the time. It's hard for you to remember appointments or what you had for breakfast. Most of the time you'll just role play this, but when attempting to remember things or concentrate while distractions are present, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty.

### Addiction (d4-d10)

There's something you need, something physical—could be cigarettes, alcohol, painkillers (psychological dependencies are part of the Hooked Trait). When you can't get it, you're gonna feel pretty crappy. You need your fix or you go into withdrawal. The level of this Complication depends on the nature of the addiction. Something legal, with few immediate risks and nonfatal withdrawal symptoms (being a smoker or a functioning alcoholic) would be rated d4 or d6. Being addicted to stuff that causes more problems, has worse withdrawal symptoms, or is illegal deserves a higher die rating.

Depending on the addiction, the time between required fixes could vary from eight hours to a week. Minor symptoms include headaches (-1 Attribute step because you can't concentrate), the shakes (you can't perform delicate actions), throwing up a lot, or being spaced out or confused all the time. The really bad symptoms include randomly blacking out, breaking into a rage, bleeding from your nose or internally, or heart attacks. Good chance the addiction is messing with your social life—your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of social actions, or the GM can just have supporting characters take an instant dislike to you. Without treatment, you're gonna

TABLE 4.2: COMPLICATIONS

COMPLICATION	VALUE	★
Absent Minded	d2-d6	
Addiction	d4-d10	
Allergy	d2/d8	
Amnesia	d2/d8	
Amorous	d4-d8	
Anger Issues	d2-d4	
Blind	d6/d12	
Combat Paralysis	d4/d8	
Compulsive Liar	d4	
Coward	d4-d8	
Crude	d4-d8	
Curse	d4/d8	/
Dark Secret	d4/d8	
Dead Broke	d4/d8	
Deaf	d10	
Dull Sense	d2-d4	
Duty	d4/d8/d12	
Fragile	d4/d8	
Fugly	d2-d6	
Glory Hound	d2-d4	
Greedy	d4-d8	
Gullible	d2-d6	
Honest to a Fault	d2-d6	
Hooked	d4/d8	
Hunted	d4/d8/d12	
Idealist	d2-d6	
Illiterate	d6	
Illness	d4/d8/d12	
Infamy	d2-d6	
Insatiable Curiosity	d4	
Kleptomaniac	d2/d6	
Klutz	d4/d8	
Lazy	d4	
Lightweight	d2-d8	
Low Pain Threshold	d6	
Memorable	d2-d8	
Mute	d6	
Obsessed	d2/d6	
Out for Blood	d4/d8	
Overconfident	d2-d6	
Overweight	d2-d6	
Pacifist	d6/d12	
Paranoid	d4	
Personal Haunting	d4/d8	/
Phobia	d2-d6	
Practical Joker	d4	
Prejudice	d4	

COMPLICATION	VALUE	★
Rebellious	d4	
Rotten Luck	d4/d8/d12	
Shy	d4	
Slave to Tridition	d4	
Smartass	d4	
Socially Awkward	d2-d6	
Stingy	d4	
Straight and Narrow	d4	
Superstitious	d2/d6	
Traumatic Flashes	d4/d8	
Unstable	d4/d8	
Weak Stomach	d4	
Wrong Side of the Law	d4/d8	

end up in real bad shape. Even if you get treated, you'll probably fall off the wagon again later.

### Allergy (d2/d8)

Sucks, but you're allergic to something fairly common.

**d2:** Your allergy won't kill you, but it does make you sneeze, gets you dizzy or feeling sick, or something like that. Whenever you encounter the thing you're allergic to, you take two points of Stun damage on initial contact. You can't get rid of this damage until you either get away from the thing or you get medical help, at which point you recover normally. Your symptoms don't go away until the Stun damage does—you'll sneeze and cough, and your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all actions you take.

**d8:** Your allergy could kill you. Whenever you make contact with the thing you're allergic to, make a Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll; the Difficulty starts at Average, but your Trait die is added to the Difficulty. If you succeed, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all your actions until the Stun damage heals. If you fail the Resistance roll, you go into shock and begin convulsing. Unless properly medicated, you take d8 Basic damage every two minutes until you die, whether or not you're taken away from the thing you're allergic to. That's some ugly there.

### Amnesia (d4/d8)

Maybe you got a knock to the head or had some nasty trauma you're suppressing. Either way, you're missing a chunk of memory. At the d4 level, you don't remember anything about a period of time—months, maybe years—but you still know who you are and remember the rest of your life. At d8, you've got Jason Bourne's problem—total amnesia, no clue about your real name, can't remember anything other than occasional flashes or emotional triggers. You have all the training and Skills from your past, even if you can't remember how you got it.

Taking this Trait is just asking for the Game Master to screw with you. Even if you settle on a reason for your amnesia, that's only what



your hunter believes happened. The Game Master could weave your problem into the story however he sees fit and your whining don't make a bit of difference. You've been warned!

### Amorous (d4-d8)

Life's short. No reason not to enjoy it to the fullest—you flirt and try to hook up pretty much any chance you can get. You get it that most people you try to score with ain't interested, or that it ain't always a good time or place, but your hormones are in the driver's seat. You'll take care of this mostly with role playing, but your behavior's likely to give you a bad name. When trying to Influence those you've turned your "charms" on or otherwise offended, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty. Your Trait die is also added to the Difficulty when you're trying to resist the efforts of somebody using sex to get you to do what they want.

### Anger Issues (d2-d4)

You've got a chip on your shoulder. It ain't like you yell at people and act pissed off all the time, it's that most people and events annoy the crap out of you. You'll handle this mostly with role playing, but anybody who knows about your temper might be less likely to trust you. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of convincing those in the know to rely on you to do the right thing or keep your cool.

### Blind (d6/d12)

You can't see outta one or both of your eyes. Could have been lost in a fight with a demon. Could be that you were just born that way.

**d6:** You've only got one eye, so depth perception's an issue for you. your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action that relies on eyesight, including close and ranged combat.

**d12:** You can't see at all. You're always in pitch-black lighting conditions (see page 88). That sucks.

### Combat Paralysis (d4/d8)

Whenever things get heated and everybody's about to throw down, you freeze up. Now, this don't mean you're yellow (that's the Coward Trait). It's entirely possible you just think too hard about what to do next when things go south.

**d4:** Roll your Trait die when combat starts. For that many turns, you can't take any offensive actions. You can still act defensively—you ain't an idiot.

**d8:** Roll your Trait die when combat starts. For that many turns, you can't take any offensive actions. In fact, for the first half of that time (round down), you can't take defensive actions other than rolling innate defense.

### Compulsive Liar (d4)

You can't help it—everything that comes out of your mouth is B.S., and people've started to realize it. Lying at the wrong time or being known as a liar has serious consequences. Once somebody's caught on, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all actions to convince that person you're telling the truth. Also, the Trait may make you lie, but it don't make you good at it.

### Coward (d4-d8)

Maybe you're brave from the waist up, but when danger rears its head your legs are carrying you the other way. You really don't wanna get hurt, and you really, really don't wanna die. This Trait affects your ability to withstand interrogation, intimidation, torture, and the like—and it sure does a number on your rep. In these situations, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of the appropriate rolls.

### Crude (d4-d8)

Somebody might've tried to teach you good manners once, but it sure didn't stick. You chew food with your mouth open, you swear like a sailor, and you're an inconsiderate slob. This is something you'll take care of with role playing, but being so crass is gonna leave its mark eventually. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all social interactions in situations where not being Crude matters.



## Curse (d4/d8) ☆

Somebody or something put bad mojo on you. There're all kinds of curses, as many as there are mystical traditions or cultures in the world. The bottom line, though, is that you're messed up in some way and magic's involved. This Trait requires your Game Master to determine how the curse works and what caused it.

**d4:** This is a minor curse, something that bugs you senseless but ain't actually dangerous or harmful. Depending on the kind of curse, it gets in the way of a specific kind of action or Skill. If you're cursed to be clumsy, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action you take that requires grace. If your curse makes others suspicious of you, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action you take to convince somebody that you're trustworthy. You get the drift.

**d8:** This is a pretty major curse—could actually be life-threatening. Like the minor version, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of certain actions, but in most cases the penalized actions are the kind where failure would be bad news. A major curse might mean you fall from a ledge, or can't dodge a lethal blow. They won't kick in all the time—if you're lucky. The Game Master might hand out some Plot Points to make you feel better as he engineers your dismal failure.

## Dark Secret (d4/d8)

There's a secret in your past that's pretty bad, the kind that could change your life or cause all hell to break loose. Maybe literally. Work this out privately with your Game Master. If you sink a lot of points into this trait, the secret's probably worth somebody's life, maybe yours. If you take the d4 version, it's more of a humiliating or short-term consequence. Either way, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of trying to explain yourself if the secret gets out. Normally, however, the Trait's probably just an ongoing reason for your hunter to get nervous. Role play it out, and the Game Master might slide Plot Points your way once in a while.

## Dead Broke (d4/d8)

You are always strapped for cash. When some falls your way, it just seems to run like water. Your lifestyle is constantly threatened by the fact that you can't hold onto money. See **Chapter Five: The Gear** for more information on Lifestyle.

**d4:** You got a Lifestyle 2, just like any other starting hunter, but it's much harder for you to maintain it. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all of rolls to maintain your lifestyle each period or trying to make purchases above your Lifestyle.



**d8:** As above, but your Lifestyle starts at 1. You're basically homeless and don't have access to very many reliable (or even unreliable) money sources.

## Deaf (d10)

Like, "as a post." You've lost your sense of hearing, either from an injury or accident or from birth. You can get around it by learning how to Read Lips (a Perception Specialty) but there're many cases where you won't get to make rolls based on hearing or sound. If you're just hard of hearing, that's covered by the Dull Sense Trait.

## Dull Sense (d2-d4)

Could be that you shouldn't have stuck that rock in your ear when you were three, or maybe that bout of scarlet fever did a number on you. Now that you're an adult, you got the short end of the stick when it comes to one of your senses. Choose from sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action you take that depends on that sense. You might be able to get some kind of medical assistance that corrects the problem (such as eyeglasses or a hearing aid), but that don't make the lack of ability go away.

## Duty (d4/d8/d12)

There's something you gotta do, whether you like it or not. If you don't, the consequences could be pretty bad ... then again, sticking to it might be dangerous, too. Talk this Trait over with your Game Master. It can stand in for all kinds of things—job requirements, a code of honor, a family or clan responsibility, some kind of supernatural charm you can't lift.

**d4:** At this level, your Duty's relatively safe most of the time ("always help old ladies cross the street," "never miss a day at work") or it's self-imposed with no down side for breaking it. This includes things like committing to a really strict diet.



**d8:** At this level, your Duty puts you in danger sometimes (“never leave a man behind,” “defend your country,” “always obey your superiors”), carries some important but nonlethal consequences for breaking it, or is pretty much completely unavoidable even if it ain’t too dangerous.

**d12:** At this level, your Duty’s likely to be extremely dangerous, carries life-threatening consequences for breaking it, or you can’t escape it and it’s risky. Basically, you’re screwed.

### Fragile (d4/d8)

You can’t take a lot of punishment before dropping. If you got this Complication at d4, subtract two Life Points from your total. If it’s d8, subtract four. If you’re trying to keep yourself from slipping unconscious due to pain, or avoid the effects of fatigue and injury, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty.

### Fugly (d2-d6)

You ran face-first into the ugly tree. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action where being about as far from pretty as you can get would make life hard.

### Glory Hound (d2-d4)

There’s not much you won’t do to be the center of attention. You want everyone to know what a big man you are, and you’ll do stupid stuff to make sure they do. In doing so, you got no problem pissing people off or overlooking the consequences of your actions. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of actions where this Trait might make things worse.

### Greedy (d4-d8)

You want more—cash, jewelry, lobster, candy—of the finer things in life. You always need a little more money, and might even sell out your friends to get it. You’ll take care of this mostly with role playing, but others might find your desperate, money-grubbing behavior more than a little off-putting—your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of social rolls when this comes into play—or you make such stupid decisions that you wind up getting yourself in trouble.

### Gullible (d2-d6)

You’re more than ready to buy that special elevator key that takes people to the swimming pool on the roof of the school. In other words, you’re fairly naive, and tend to take people at their word. This gets you into trouble, but being careful ain’t your strong suit. Depending on the scene, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any attempt to determine if you are being lied to.

### Honest to a Fault (d2-d6)

You can’t lie to save your life. Maybe it’s how you were raised, perhaps you’re just too simple to come up with something clever. Regardless, you don’t have a poker face and have hard time lying even when you wanna tell a good whopper. When there’s a call for using the dice, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action attempting to conceal the truth or pull one over on somebody.

### Hooked (d4/d8)

It ain’t a chemical addiction—but it’s something you need just as bad. You are psychologically dependent on something that turns you on or distracts you from the harsh realities of life (physical dependency is covered by the Addiction Trait). It could be sex, gambling, playing video games, eating, whatever. You simply can’t get enough of it.

This is primarily a role playing Trait, but when presented with a temptation related to your problem, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of actions until you’ve satisfied your urges or the temptation goes away. You should really seek professional help.

**d4:** At this level, being hooked just complicates your life. You might be chubby because you’re constantly scarfing down toaster waffles or your online research is thrown off because you keep surfing for porn.

**d8:** At this level, your problem’s ruining your life. You’ve gambled away your inheritance or you owe a lot of money to a bookie. You got fired because you’re up too late every night cruising for chicks. Really dangerous chicks.

### Hunted (d4/d8/d12)

Something bad’s after you, and it’s got your number. It could be fairly mundane, but in this line of work, that’s probably wishful thinking. Your pursuer shows up frequently, earning you Plot Points for getting in the way, but not every adventure features them.

**d4:** This is some bush-league character who wants to ruin your life. If it’s a supernatural threat, it’s pretty pathetic one—maybe a cultist with a book of spells that sometimes work, or a minor psychic who thinks you’re part of some great demon conspiracy, or even a Rookie hunter. It’s somebody who don’t have special powers but shows up from time to time to mess with you.

**d8:** This highly-trained mundane opponent or dangerous supernatural creature has it out for you—a vampire with a grudge, a Veteran hunter, something like that. Alternately, it’s an organization or group that includes a lot of tough dudes out for your blood.

**d12:** This powerful demon, Seasoned hunter, or coven of witches could literally kill you if it laid its hands on you. Chances are that it won’t, because it has minions and agents and other people to take care of minor problems like you. With Hunted at this level, you’ll almost always run into somebody or something connected to the individual or group that’s hunting you.

## Idealist (d2-d6)

People are basically good and honest, everything happens for a reason, and it'll all work out in the end—right? Truth is, you got an unrealistically optimistic outlook. In some scenes, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty when your optimism clouds your judgment or intuition.

## Illiterate (d6)

You need the picture menu at the local burger joint to order. Good thing bathrooms are marked with symbols ... most of the time. It ain't like nobody taught you to read, it's that you don't get how those words and letters come together to tell you stuff. A lot of people can get through life without needing to read, but it does make things really difficult. When being unable to read would hinder you, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty. The Game Master may even decide that you can't take certain actions, especially if reading is the only way to succeed.

## Illness (d4/d8/d12)

Something's wrong with you, something that ain't likely to go away on its own. You may have some condition or syndrome, or you're stuck with something that'll eventually kill you. You could be high on painkillers all the time, or indebted to the health insurance system to keep yourself active. For any of the levels of illness, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any actions when your symptoms are an issue.

**d4:** You got something minor, like eczema or asthma, that only bothers you infrequently.

**d8:** You got something serious, such as diabetes or early-stage multiple sclerosis. You're taking medication and special precautions to function normally, though it still affects you.

**d12:** Kiss your ass goodbye, dude, because you've got a fatal illness. It may be cancer, or a severe case of lupus. With proper medical treatment you might be able to function most of the day (and possibly even hide your condition) but over time your symptoms will worsen. Discuss this Trait with your Game Master to determine the nature, treatment, and timeline of your illness.

## Infamy (d2-d6)

People think you've done something pretty terrible—maybe you did and maybe you didn't. Whatever, you got a negative reputation that makes dealing with people problematic. Discuss the nature of this infamy with the Game Master. Who feels this way about you? When dealing with people who would feel this way about you, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any social action. Your Infamy don't make you fearsome—just hated.

It's possible to have both Infamy and a Reputation, if they represent the attitudes of different groups of people toward you.

## Insatiable Curiosity (d4)

You're either an obsessive puzzle-solver or the neighborhood busybody. It drives you crazy when something's going on and you don't know everything about it. You seek out mysteries and attempt to solve them even if it means breaking the law or upsetting others. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of social actions (because you're annoying) or mental actions (you're distracted) when you're in the middle of puzzling out a mystery.

## Kleptomaniac (d2/d6)

If it's there, you're gonna take it. You steal, and this can annoy people, get you in trouble, or make you the first suspect when something goes missing. Because it's a compulsion, you got no logical reason to explain it. The die rating of the Trait represents the level of theft you are compelled to commit.

**d2:** You shoplift candy from drug stores, grab the change from jacket pockets, and take the silverware from restaurants. Not likely to get you shot, but you never know.

**d6:** You like to live dangerously—you might break into cars, rob a house just to see if you can, or try to pick the pocket of a rich-looking guy because he might have a big chunk of dough on him.

## Klutz (d4/d8)

You got the grace of a one-legged cow. No sense of balance, no moves, no snaz. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action that involves moving, catching something, throwing something, or doing anything else that requires coordination. This don't apply to defensive rolls because you move so unpredictably and erratically that folks can't get any better bead on you than normal. At the d8 level, you'll also botch these sorts of actions if all your dice come up showing 1s or 2s.

## Lazy (d4)

Work sounds like ... well, work. If you spent as much time doing work as you do trying to get out of it, you'd be done already. When your slacker attitude causes problems, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of actions.

## Lightweight (d2-d8)

Your grandma could drink you under the table. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all attempts to resist alcohol, drugs, disease, poisons, radiation, and environmental conditions.

## Low Pain Threshold (d6)

You're a wuss, plain and simple. Papercuts are a real bitch to you, and it don't take much pain to knock you out. Whenever you take damage, add one additional Stun point. In addition, if you need to fight back the pain, resist torture, or keep from falling unconscious, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty.



### Memorable (d2-d8)

Maybe it's your chiseled good looks or godawful fashion sense, but you stick out in a crowd and stick in peoples' memory for days or weeks. You might have a huge nose, a rotten attitude, or talk louder than anybody around you. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action to avoid being identified; other folks get to roll your Trait die and add the result to any attempt to notice or remember you. Alternately, the Game Master may just decide that you've been made without a roll—you should at least get some Plot Points in that case.

### Mute (d6)

It's hard to scream for help when you got no voice. You can usually get by without being able to talk, but it gets old fast. You can't use the phone properly, can't shout a warning, and don't get to seduce anybody outside of a wink and a smile. Whenever this Complication would make your social interactions harder, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty.

### Obsessed (d2/d6)

Maybe you've got a hobby that's constantly on your mind, or unfinished business that won't let you sleep at night. Choose something that you absolutely gotta do, whether it's showing your pooch off at the dog show (d2), or a major desire to hunt down and kill every vampire in the world (d6). While you're usually just role playing this Complication, it can make life difficult for you. If the obsession would keep you from doing something successfully or otherwise hinder you, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty.

### Out for Blood (d4/d8)

You don't get pissed, you get even—with interest. This is real bloodlust, unlike the more common Anger Issues Trait (which should almost never be taken in conjunction with this Trait).

**d4:** Your rage rises only in cases of serious offenses. In combat or other extremely heated situations, the frenzy takes over. You may be howling and foaming, or cold and silent, but either way you try to beat someone to a pulp and don't give too much thought to tactics. If things are getting to the edge of violence, you make a Willpower + Discipline/Concentration roll to restrain yourself; the Difficulty starts at Average and then your Trait die is added.

**d8:** You go crazy even at the slightest offense, even if it wasn't intended. You can roll as above to restrain yourself, but if you fail, the fur starts flying. If the situation is particularly dangerous or suicidal, don't add your Trait die to the Difficulty.

### Overconfident (d2-d6)

You're full of yourself. It ain't just a desire to show off—you actually believe you can handle almost anything. Whenever it seems appropriate, your Trait die is added to *any* Difficulty or opposing roll—this represents a possibly fatal hesitation at that moment when you realize you just bit off more than you can chew.

### Overweight (d2-d6)

Go ahead and tell yourself that you're just big-boned. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all athletic actions where your extra lard impedes you.

### Pacifist (d6/d12)

Can't we all just get along? You really, really don't wanna fight.

**d6:** You won't fight. You firmly believe that violence is wrong, although you will defend yourself as a last resort. If you wind up in a fight you don't believe is



absolutely necessary, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all offensive actions.

**d12:** You can't fight or engage in violence. It might be a mental compulsion, mystical curse, or part of your programming, but you simply can't fight, no matter how badly you need to. This is a huge problem when playing a hunter in *Supernatural*, so the Game Master must approve this carefully.

### Paranoid (d4)

You're convinced they're after you. Demons, the IRS, your mother in law—it's a conspiracy! You don't trust anybody, and you always cover your tracks so the Hidden Masters can't find you. You'll take care of this mostly with role playing, but your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of certain rolls where your paranoia reveals the truth that others wish to hide!

### Personal Haunting (d4/d8) ☆

You've managed to piss off a spirit and it's haunting you. You might be the last surviving descendant of the ghost's rival, or maybe you bought the deceased's car and he's mad you're driving it around. Whatever, discuss this Trait with the Game Master, who will work up the statistics of the ghost depending on the level of the Complication.

**d4:** At this level, the ghost haunting you has Spirit d2. It's more of an annoyance than anything else, but it can move small objects around, keep you from sleeping properly, and interfere with the electronics in your house.

**d8:** At this level, the ghost has a Spirit d6, and is more of a menace. You might be able to keep it at bay with talismans and protective items such as rock salt and holy water, but it's wily and always ready to bring harm or humiliation to you.

### Phobia (d2-d6)

Some common thing scares the hell outta you—ants, water, heights, confined spaces. The investment you make in this Trait determines how much it messes with your life. The higher the Trait die, the more intense the fear. Whenever the object of your phobia is present, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all actions other than getting as far away as possible from it.

### Practical Joker (d4)

You're hilarious—even if you're the only one who thinks so. You spend your free time thinking of pranks to play on your friends, co-workers, family, even complete strangers. Worse, you try to execute these gags. This is the kind of Trait you role play, but if it looks like it's gonna interfere with your ability to get along with your associates and allies, or if you need to keep focused on something else instead of laying a trap, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of such an action.

### Prejudice (d4)

You frickin' hate those slimy bastards. It's a certain group of people, whether based on ideological, religious, political, or ethnic differences. You may not have any rational explanation for it, but it affects how you get along with that group or with people who are allied with or influenced by that group. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of social actions where appropriate. (Because prejudices of many kinds can make people uncomfortable in real life, discuss this Trait with your Game Master and the other players before taking it.)

### Rebellious (d4)

You got a problem with authority. You look for ways to avoid following orders without getting shot, or making those in charge look bad or incompetent. Sometimes this gets you yelled at, sometimes it gets you locked up, or even sentenced to death for mutiny. Being this kind of person has repercussions within your command structure, and your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of certain actions, particularly when interacting with your superiors.

### Rotten Luck (d4/d8/d12)

Things just don't go your way. Just when everything's looking up, it always comes crashing down around your ears. The Game Master can compel you to reroll all the dice from an action and use the lower of the two results. Instead of a reroll, though, the Game Master might just decide some unfortunate event befalls you and then throw in a few Plot Points to ease your pain.

**d4:** You can be compelled to reroll once a session.

**d8:** You can be compelled to reroll twice a session.

**d12:** You can be compelled to reroll three times a session.

### Shy (d4)

You're the quiet type, the one who sips punch in the corner during the slow dance. You're uncomfortable being the center of attention. You may even get so worked up that your Trait die is added to the Difficulties of all your actions.

### Slave to Tradition (d4)

Most people can change the way they do things or think outside the box. You got such a stick up your ass that changing your way of thinking's almost impossible. You've got your traditions, your processes, or your schedule, and when somebody suggests you do something different, it freaks you out. If a situation requires you to change and you don't wanna, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any appropriate actions.

### Smartass (d4)

You just can't help yourself ... if the opportunity's there to crack wise, especially at someone else's expense, you're gonna make a play—even if it earns



you a kick in the nuts. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action to deal with people you've offended. In tense situations, it's best to have plenty of friends to cover your mouth when you start to talk.

### Socially Awkward (d2-d6)

For whatever reason, you don't know how to act socially other than with a specific group or organization. Although that group (hunters, religious people, geeks) don't give you any trouble, whenever you're outside your safety zone all of your social skills go out the window. Your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any social action when you're trying to behave normally in these situations.

### Stingy (d4)

You're cheap. No matter how much you got already, you hate opening your wallet. This may cause you to be hard to deal with, make people angry, or cause you to avoid paying what you owe. In situations where this attitude causes problems, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of your actions. This includes making a one-time roll to purchase something outside your Lifestyle (see **Chapter Five: The Gear**) since your heart is really not in it.

### Straight and Narrow (d4)

You're a by-the-book kinda guy or gal who stays out of trouble. That's a rough kind of attitude in the hunting business, and there'll be times when your refusal to break the law or stretch the truth's gonna be a problem. You'll take care of this mostly with role playing, but if the Game Master thinks it's applicable to a situation, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of actions.

### Superstitious (d2/d6)

Hunters are the last ones to make fun of people who believe in things other people don't, like ghosts and monsters and all that. But do you really believe that B.S. about getting seven years bad luck for breaking a mirror? Come on, dude.

**d2:** You behave oddly—avoid stepping on cracks, throw spilled salt over one shoulder, and so on. It don't interfere with your life most of the time, but it can keep folks from taking you seriously or wanting to hang out with you.

**d6:** You're so sure that your superstitions are real that it rules your life. If you think you've seen a bad omen, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all your actions for the remainder of the scene, or until you do whatever you gotta do in response to the omen. There could be other consequences, too, especially if the folklore says you should react in some crazy way to the superstition.

### Traumatic Flashes (d4/d8)

You're seriously mental. Something terrible happened that left you mentally scarred. Now, certain triggers set you off. You have recurring

nightmares, but that ain't the half of it. Some things reduce you to a hysterical, sobbing mess for at least five minutes. As a d4 Trait, the trigger is somewhat specific; as a d8 Trait, there are more triggers and they cover a fairly broad range. The specific details of how this Trait manifests and what happened to your hunter are up to you and the Game Master, but you can probably count on it being worked into the story more often if you pick the d8 level.

### Unstable (d4/d8)

You're this side of the looney bin. You could be certifiably insane, or it could be a result of stress, drugs, or the phases of the moon. This Trait comes in all kinds of flavors and affects each person differently, so talk over the details with your Game Master. Some possibilities include hallucinations, the blurring of reality and a fantasy life, being unable to see the world in the way everyone else does. Most of the time, however it comes out, it's off-putting to most people. Being a regular part of society ain't easy when everybody thinks you're nuts.

### Weak Stomach (d4)

You get grossed out by just about anything. You become ill, feel nauseous, or faint. When in the presence of blood, gore, or injury more serious than a paper-cut, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of all physical actions.

### Wrong Side of the Law (d4/d8)

You're a renegade. The law's got your name and picture and they're looking for you. Which law, and why, is between you and the Game Master. You might not actually be guilty, but that don't mean someone ain't looking for you, whether there's a publicly known manhunt, or a more secret official vendetta.

**d4:** The consequences of being caught include jail time, fines, confiscation of goods, or loss of status. All in all, you aren't likely to be injured.

**d8:** If they catch you, you might be locked up for life, beaten black and blue by the mob, lose everything you own, or worse. If you're really unlucky, you could be sentenced to death—better hope your buddies can break you out!

## Skills

Okay, so now you're agile and perceptive, and a smooth-talking ex-con who loves animals and reacts poorly to danger. Looking good, but not yet complete. What can you do? Can you shoot a pistol worth a damn? Can you track a werewolf through the woods? Can you search obits while ordering pizza online? You got what it takes?

Attributes provide a means of rating your character's basic capabilities, and Traits make you different, unusual, or unexpected. Your learning, practice, and training, however,

are all represented by your Skills. A hunter's Skills reveal a lot—profession, hobbies, background, or upbringing. Paired with Attributes, and potentially modified by Traits, they do the heavy lifting when resolving actions.

## General Skills

Skills are grouped into two related types. General Skills represent broad areas of knowledge or training. Athletics, a General Skill, can be used for anything from running to swimming to dodging an attack. General Skills can only be improved to a maximum of d6, however. After that, Specialties kick in.

## Specialties

Once a General Skill rises to d6, you get to purchase one or more Specialties. Specialties focus on a particular part of a General Skill; they get you to a die greater than d6—but only within that field. For example, a hunter with Athletics d6 might have a Specialty in Running. If he spends enough points, he might use a d10 for actions when hoofing it.

Specialties start at d8 and are improved normally during character generation or with advancement points, just like Attributes. There's no limit to the number of Specialties you can have under a given General Skill, other than your character creation budget or available advancement points.

If a roll calls for a Specialty that you don't have, roll the General Skill die instead. If you got no General Skill either, roll the Attribute by itself. Even that won't work in certain cases—some Skilled actions, marked [Skilled Use Only] can't be attempted unless you have at least a d2 in them. Your Game Master always has the option of allowing you to spend a Plot Point to attempt it, but you're gotta work hard to justify that.

Specialties may fall under more than one General Skill. For example, a dancer could train the Dancing Specialty under Athletics if he competes professionally, or under Performance if he is practicing for a street performance. Once you choose to train a Specialty under a certain General Skill, it can't be moved to another, and you can't take the same specialty more than once. If you got a Specialty under one General Skill but no die rating in another General Skill that also offers that Specialty, you can't use your Specialty to default to the other General Skill.

## New Specialties

Because Specialties have such a narrow focus, it would be impossible to list all that are possible. Those covered in this chapter are suggestions, but shouldn't be considered a complete listing. It's even possible that your Game Master may wish to remove some, making them unavailable under a certain General Skill, or simply nonexistent. If you want a Specialty not listed, or wanna place it under a different General Skill, clear it with your Game Master first.

## Benchmarks of Proficiency

To give you an idea of how well trained your hunter is, and what he might be capable of in general, see the Skill Level Table. It lists each die type, and gives an appraisal of Skills rated at that level.

## Skill Descriptions

Each description lists the General Skill name (along with a note if it can't be used untrained), sample Specialties, and several examples of Average actions using that Skill.

**TABLE 4.3: SKILL LEVEL**

DIE TYPE	PROFICIENCY	COMMENT (BASED ON LORE)
None (d0)	Untrained	Your knowledge of ghosts comes from old episodes of Scooby Doo.
d2	Incompetent	Ghosts are real and you know that some are wimpy chain-rattlers and others are pissed-off and dangerous.
d4	Novice	You know that spirits are either tied to a place, a person, or a purpose ... and figuring that out is the first step in getting rid of one.
d6	Competent	You've got the angry spirit basics down: Salt and cold iron for protection, burn the bones to get rid of most of 'em.
d8	Professional	With some digging and info, you can probably figure out who the ghost was and what it may be after.
d10	Expert	A few newspaper clippings and you can identify a ghost by type—woman in white, poltergeist, banshee...
d12	Master	You know your stuff when it comes to spirits. Smart hunters will come to you when they're stumped.



TABLE 4.4: SKILL LIST

SKILL	SPECIALTIES	*
Animals	Animal Care, Animal Training, Riding, Veterinary Medicine, Zoology	
Artistry	Appraisal, Cuisine, Composition, Forgery, Painting, Photography, Poetry, Sculpture, Writing	
Athletics	Climbing, Contortion, Dodge, Juggling, Jumping, Gymnastics, Parachuting, Riding, Running, Sports, Swimming, Weight Lifting.	
Covert	Camouflage, Disguise, Forgery, Pickpocketing, Sabotage, Safecracking, Stealth, Streetwise	
Craft	Architecture, Brewing, Carpentry, Cooking, Leatherworking, Metalworking, Pottery, Sewing	
Discipline	Concentration, Interrogation, Intimidation, Leadership, Morale, Resistance	
Drive	Bus, Car, Forklift, Motorcycle, Tractor, Truck	
Guns	Assault Rifles, Flamethrowers, Grenade Launchers, Machine Guns, Pistols, Repair, Rifles, Shotguns, Sniper Rifles	
Heavy Weapons	Bombards, Demolitions, Forward Observation, Mortars, Repair, Rocket Launchers, Siege Engines	✓
Influence	Administration, Barter, Bureaucracy, Conversation, Haggling, Interrogation, Intimidation, Leadership, Persuasion, Politics, Seduction	
Knowledge	Appraisal, Business, Culture, History, Law, Linguistics, Literature, Philosophy, Politics, Religion, Sports	
Lore	Cryptozoology, Cults, Demons, Ghosts, Mythology, Shapeshifters, Superstitions, Symbols, Vampires	
Mechanic	Automobile Repairs, Construction, Customization, Jury-Rigging, Mechanical Repairs, Plumbing.	✓
Medicine	Dentistry, First Aid, Forensics, General Practice, Genetics, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Pharmaceuticals, Physiology, Psychiatry, Rehabilitation, Surgery, Toxicology, Veterinary Medicine	✓
Melee Weapons	Chains, Clubs, Intimidation, Knives, Pole Arms, Repair, Shields, Swords, Whips	
Perception	Deduction, Empathy, Gambling, Hearing, Intuition, Investigation, Read Lips, Search, Sight, Smell/Taste, Tactics, Tracking, Video Games.	
Performance	Acting, Dancing, Costuming, Impersonation, Instrument (pick one), Oratory, Singing, Sleight of Hand, Stage Magic.	
Pilot	Commercial Airliner, Gunship, Gyrocopter, Helicopter, Hovercraft, Jet Fighter, Single-Prop Airplane, Zeppelin	✓
Ranged Weapons	Blowguns, Bolos, Bows, Crossbows, Darts, Grenades, Javelin, Repair, Slings, Throwing Knives.	
Science	Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Social Sciences, Space Sciences, Life Sciences, Math, Physical Sciences.	✓
Survival	Camouflage, Find Shelter, First Aid, Foraging, Outdoor Life, Specific Environment, Tracking, Trapping, Woodcraft.	
Tech	Communications Systems, Computer Programming, Create Technical Devices, Electronics, Hacking, Jury-Rigging, Repair Electrical Systems.	✓
Unarmed Combat	Boxing, Brawling, Clawing, Judo, Tae Kwan Do, Wrestling.	

A ✓ in the \* column designates skilled use only

## Animals

You can go all Marc Singer with critters. You know how to train, care for, breed, and raise animals of all kinds.

**Specialties:** Animal Care, Animal Training, Riding, Veterinary Medicine, Zoology

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Teach domesticated animals to perform moderately difficult tricks; herd cattle; ride through a forest during the day; identify a basilisk lair by the distinctive, lifelike statuary garden surrounding it.

## Artistry

You can express yourself with physical forms of art, whether it's writing fiction or carving marble statues. The Skill don't cover singing, dancing, or acting, which are all grouped under Performance, though it does include composing music and choreographing a dance recital.

**Specialties:** Appraisal, Cuisine, Composition, Forgery, Painting, Photography, Poetry, Sculpture, Writing

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Cook an impressive dinner for a VIP; write a polite thank-you note; draw a fairly accurate pencil sketch of a subject.

## Athletics

Working out, staying in shape, and moving out of harm's way usually all involve Athletics. You can use this Skill to run after—or run away from—demons and monsters.

**Specialties:** Climbing, Contortion, Dodging, Juggling, Jumping, Gymnastics, Parachuting, Riding, Running, Sports (choose one), Swimming, Weight Lifting.

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Run a mile for a fitness test; play a pick-up game of basketball with some friends; throw yourself to the ground when being shot at; climb a tree with handy low branches; swim across a still, small pond.

## Covert

You're familiar with both physical and mental forms of deception and trickery. This includes a lot of very shady activity.

**Specialties:** Camouflage, Disguise, Forgery, Lockpicking, Pickpocketing, Sabotage, Safecracking, Stealth, Streetwise

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Open the lock on a suitcase or piece of luggage; pickpocket a drunk; sneak past a campus safety officer; cut the brake line on a parked car when no one's around.

## Craft

You can make useful things. If the result is all about looking good or being inspirational, it's probably Artistry. If it's about utility or making something to fill a function, it's Craft.

**Specialties:** Architecture, Brewing, Carpentry, Cooking, Leatherworking, Metalworking, Pottery, Sewing

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Sew a new pair of pants; feed a family of six with food you've got around the house; repair the broken leg on a chair; sculpt a crude bowl out of clay; build a child's tree house.

## Discipline

This Skill is all about focus. You use it to shake off fear or coercion, and to inspire others and get them focused on something. It differs from Influence because it's less about manipulating others than it is about blocking out distractions and noise.

**Specialties:** Concentration, Interrogation, Intimidation, Leadership, Morale, Resistance

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Keep the rookies in line during a briefing; memorize jargon for a test tomorrow; resist spilling the beans when confronted with the good cop/bad cop routine.

## Drive

With this Skill, you can operate and handle most kinds of ground-based vehicle, from cars and trucks to motorcycles and construction equipment. Casual driving is an unskilled action, and might not even require a roll. Most uses of Drive involve dramatic moments where crashing's a possible outcome. There ain't much point in calling for a roll if you're off to the diner.

**Specialties:** Bus, Car, Forklift, Motorcycle, Tractor, Truck

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Maneuver at moderately high speeds; navigate difficult terrain; examine a vehicle for combat damage.

## Guns

Sure, you can point a rod and pull a trigger, but this skill also covers gun maintenance, knowledge of different kinds of guns, and understanding how firearms work. This Skill don't include using large, vehicle-mounted weapons or indirect fire weapons. For that, you want Heavy Weapons.

**Specialties:** Assault Rifles, Flamethrowers, Grenade Launchers, Machine Guns, Pistols, Repair, Rifles, Shotguns, Sniper Rifles

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Clear a jammed weapon; hit a small, stationary target at point blank range; hit a man-sized target on the practice field at close range; identify the basic type of a weapon; determine the right ammunition from among several similar varieties.

## Heavy Weapons (Skilled Use Only)

This Skill covers large-scale weaponry from mortars and field artillery such as cannon to vehicle-mounted railguns and rocket launchers. If you've got this Skill, you also know how to conduct indirect fire, engage in forward observer actions—all that military stuff. Most weapons covered by this Skill are at least Large Scale if not larger.

**Specialties:** Cannons, Bombards, Demolitions, Forward Observation, Mortars, Repair, Rocket Launchers, Siege Engines

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Hit a slow-moving transport; properly demolish a building; relay the targeting data for hitting a very large building with an artillery shell on a day with no wind.





# Language Options

We're guessing your hunters are driving around the US of A, so everybody's assumed to speak English. Bringing different languages into the game can be interesting, especially if there's a story hook involved or it helps the hunters solve the mystery of the week. But it can also be a pain in the ass to deal with if it isn't an issue on a hunt.

This game don't concern itself with detailed rules for languages. A hunter can use Knowledge/Linguistics to figure out what he needs to know about a foreign or ancient language in a book, for instance. The Natural Linguist Trait also helps out, adding one or more fluent languages. If you wanna go deeper into languages, symbology, cryptography, and stuff like that, be our guest. Let your inner Dr. Robert Langdon roar!

## Influence

Influence is all about getting people to act—or react—the way you want them to. That's especially important in politics or a standoff, where the right words can change the outcome in a heartbeat. This Skill also helps when your opponent has all the guns, or when you need to deal with red tape and glass ceilings.

**Specialties:** Administration, Barter, Bureaucracy, Conversation, Hagglng, Interrogation, Intimidation, Leadership, Persuasion, Politics, Seduction

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Deal with daily paperwork; negotiate an exchange of goods with a willing merchant; seduce someone who already finds you attractive; mingle well at a fancy party.

## Knowledge

This Skill is broad, and covers a wide base of general knowledge. Almost entirely academic in nature, you know only the theory behind many other Skills—you can't simply default to this Skill when actually trying to do something with it. It's different from Lore, which includes folk history, occult, local legends, mythology, and so on. It's also different from Science, which includes both theory and experimentation.

**Specialties:** Appraisal, Business, Culture, History, Law, Linguistics, Literature, Philosophy, Politics, Religion, Sports

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Remember the names of all the players on a champion football team; name the major exports of the USA and Great Britain; recite the top five most influential Supreme Court rulings.

## Lore

This is what you default to when common sense don't work. Lore is made up of the collective stories, myths, and accounts shared by various cultures. If you're an expert in Lore, you can rattle off all kinds of things relating to local legends, ghost stories, famous people who did crazy things, weird religious practices, and ancient pagan gods. Exposition anyone?

**Specialties:** Cryptozoology, Cults, Demons, Ghosts, Mythology, Shapeshifters, Superstitions, Symbols, Vampires

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Name the founder of a nationwide heretical religious movement; know the commonly held method of warding off ghosts in Ireland; perform common rituals of African tribal groups; list the pantheon of Mesopotamian gods.

## Mechanic (Skilled Use Only)

You can build an engine from scratch, redesign a machine, or perform other feats involving mechanical devices. Mechanic differs from Tech in that it don't concern itself with electronics, computers, and related devices.

**Specialties:** Automobile Repairs, Construction, Customization, Jury-Rigging, Mechanical Repairs, Plumbing

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Repair damaged plumbing; operate complex machinery and equipment; disable or repair relatively simple gadgets and devices; change the oil and check the tires.

## Medicine (Skilled Use Only)

You got the training required to patch people back together, treat disease, or work in a medical lab. You might not be a doctor, officially, but you're quite capable of stepping in to help others. With a d6 level in this Skill, you are most likely licensed to practice medicine. Specialties make you ... well ... a specialist.



First Aid is a Specialty of Survival, which is not Skilled Use Only. That's the Boy Scouts version, though, the kind you also get taught when you're in school or at one of those first aid seminars at work. Anything more hard-core than that, though, and you need Medicine training.

**Specialties:** Dentistry, First Aid, Forensics, General Practice, Genetics, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Pharmaceuticals, Physiology, Psychiatry, Rehabilitation, Surgery, Toxicology, Veterinary Medicine

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Diagnose a cold or disease properly; prescribe the correct dosage of common medicines; administer first aid for a common poison.

## Melee Weapons

This Skill covers the use of knives, clubs, swords, and anything else you can swing, poke, or bash with in a fight. If you're really good, you can impress or intimidate the other guy before the fight starts.

**Specialties:** Chains, Clubs, Intimidation, Knives, Pole Arms, Repair, Shields, Swords, Whips

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Twirl a knife impressively; deflect a slow thrust; make a simple club; sharpen a blade. Deflecting an attack is an opposed roll, but a "slow attack" might be an Average Difficulty, especially in a training exercise where it ain't really an attack at all.

## Perception

You notice someone sneaking around, find a hidden clue, or spot the "tell" when your opponent is bluffing. While everybody has Alertness, this Skill means you've devoted time to sharpening your senses. Most kinds of game are included in Perception, too, although the more intellectual ones (like chess) would be paired up with Intelligence.

**Specialties:** Deduction, Empathy, Gambling, Hearing, Intuition, Investigation, Read Lips, Search, Sight, Smell/Taste, Tactics, Tracking, Video Games

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Gather basic forensic evidence; spot movement in light undergrowth; determine that the three men in gray suits and shades standing by the door are a potential threat.

## Performance

Dancing, singing, acting, playing an instrument, and other forms of physical expression are covered by this Skill. It's also what you use to tell a convincing lie, which might go a long way toward getting you out of a tight spot. Performance don't cover the composition or planning of performances, which is part of Artistry, although there is some degree of overlap (improvisation, for instance, is all Performance.)

**Specialties:** Acting, Dancing, Costuming, Impersonation, Instrument (pick one), Oratory, Singing, Sleight of Hand, Stage Magic

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Act in amateur productions; play lead guitar in a local band; mask surface emotions; place among the finalists in a minor dance competition.

## Pilot (Skilled Use Only)

You can fly a plane, helicopter, or something like it under challenging conditions and deal with small problems in-flight or on the ground. Serious mechanical trouble requires Mechanic, and using the weapons mounted on an aircraft requires Heavy Weapons.

**Specialties:** Commercial Airliner, Gunship, Gyrocopter, Helicopter, Hovercraft, Jet Fighter, Single-Prop Airplane, Zeppelin

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Fly through mild turbulence; land or takeoff quickly; refuel a large craft.

## Ranged Weapons

This Skill covers the use of hurled or physically propelled weapons such as throwing axes, slings, spears, and bows. It don't include guns—that's Guns (duh!), but if you're into archery or tossing the javelin, this is the Skill for you.

**Specialties:** Blowguns, Bolos, Bows, Crossbows, Darts, Grenades, Javelins, Repair, Slings, Throwing Knives

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Hit a man-sized, stationary target across the room; replace a bow string; locate a good-sized throwing rock in the field.





## Science (Skilled Use Only)

Button up your lab coat. You understand the theories, applications, and history of science. Chemists, physicists, and botanists, among many others, use this Skill. Specialties are usually groups of scientific fields that are related to one another, like Life Sciences (which includes biology and botany) or Physical Sciences (which is chemistry and physics). It differs from Knowledge, which covers more liberal arts and general knowledge than applied sciences, and Lore, which is folklore, legends, and superstition.

**Specialties:** Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Social Sciences, Space Sciences, Life Sciences, Math, Physical Sciences

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Operate most laboratory equipment; translate scientific jargon into everyday prose; remember Newton's Laws.

## Survival

With this Skill, you can find food, water, shelter, and your way when civilization isn't near. You can even stay alive in the face of extremes of weather or when hindered by minor injuries. This Skill includes a First Aid Specialty, which is how the average unskilled guy can patch somebody up (Medicine is Skilled Use Only).

**Specialties:** Camouflage, Find Shelter, First Aid, Foraging, Outdoor Life, Specific Environment, Tracking, Trapping, Woodcraft

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Hunt or trap small game; identify the signs of habitation, animals, or events; perform first aid on cuts or broken bones.

## Tech (Skilled Use Only)

This Skill covers electronics, gadgets, computer programming, and everything related to that. You're able to hack through a database, rewire a security system, create a computer network, or steal cable from your neighbor. This Skill don't cover automobile repair or fixing household appliances, which is all Mechanic, unless there's actual electronics involved.

**Specialties:** Communications Systems, Computer Programming, Create Technical Devices, Electronics, Hacking, Jury-Rigging, Repair Electrical Systems

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Operate most advanced computer equipment; override standard directive protocols and basic computer security; write a simple program; repair moderate system damage; disable a cheap home security alarm.

## Unarmed Combat

Whether you know a number of fancy moves or just slug it out, this Skill reflects training in physical combat. Specialties represent different styles of combat. They're used the same way most of the time, but your Game Master may wish to differentiate between them, and whether the attack uses Strength or Agility. This Skill don't cover the use of hand-held weapons such as swords or clubs—for those, use Melee Weapons. Unarmed combat always does Stun damage unless you got the Brawler Trait, although you can use a called shot to a vital area to change it to Basic (see page 86).

**Specialties:** Boxing, Brawling, Clawing, Judo, Tae Kwan Do, Wrestling

**Average Difficulty Tasks:** Identify a specific style of martial arts; secure prize money in a small-time contest that isn't played out in detail; break a board with your hand.

## Where to Next?

By now, you should know the basics (if not, go back to **Chapter Two: The Basics**), you've got a bitchin' Hunter (not so much?—back to Chapter Three: The Hunters with you), and you're clued in about Traits and Skills. Now, you're looking at a visit to the weapons locker in Chapter Five: The Gear. Don't want to go much further without a trunk-load of firepower. After that, it's a straight shot to **Chapter Six: The Rules**. The Game Master (who gets his own **Chapter Seven: The Game Master**) get to play with a few more Traits—those available to bad guys and ghouls. They're found in Chapter Eight: The Supernatural. No fair, you girly whine? Suck it up, most hunters are ever gonna be able to set fires with their mind. Can't say the same for the other side, though. If you're really bent out of shape, put demonic powers on your Christmas list. Santa might just have a surprise for you under the tree this year. And be careful what you wish for...



John Winchester

DOB: 4/22/54

Gender: Male

Hair: Dark Brown

Eyes: Brown

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 215

AGI 28

STR 28

VIT d10

**ALE 28**

INT 28

WIL 210

Life Points 24

Initiative  $d8+d8$

Endurance  $d10 + d10$   
 $110 + 110$

Resistance  $\frac{10+10}{2}$



stun →

[illegible]

## SKILLS

## Athletics d6

## Covert d6

Discipline d6 / Leadership d8

## Drive d2

Guns d6 / Pistols d8 / Rifles d10

## Influence d2

## Knowledge d6

Love d6 / Demons d10 / Ghosts d8

Mechanic d6 / Repair d8

## Medicine d2

## Melee Weapons d6

Perception d6 / Deduction d8

## Performance d2

## Tech d2

Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10

## TRAITS

Brawler d4, Cool Under Fire d4, Duty d8

(Family), Infamy d6, Obsessed (Yellow-Eyed

Demon) d6, Tough d8, Unbreakable Will d4

## DESCRIPTION

John fought in the war and was ready to leave it all behind. He and Mary Campbell got married and lived a modest but happy life, rewarded with two sons, Dean and Sam. But one day something evil came into their lives and left Mary dead and their home in flames.

From that moment on John returned to war, but this time with the supernatural. He raised his sons on the road, training and preparing them until they were ready to assist him. He was tough and uncompromising, but he wanted his sons to be ready for whatever terrifying thing would encounter on the road.

John doesn't much resemble the friendly young man he once was. His entire life is about the mission and his family—though he knows he is guilty of sometimes putting the mission first. He is thorough and tenacious, but his blunt manners and skewed priorities has made him as many enemies as friends.

## GEAR

John drives a 1981 GMC Sierra Grande pickup truck with a false bottom in the bed that holds an impressive stash of weapons (including pistols, rifles, shotguns, blades, stakes, and more) and other hunting gear. For years he kept a journal that held a full record of his hunting career—though he has since left it to his son, Dean.





# Dean Winchester

DOB: 1/24/79	AGI <b>d8</b>	ALE <b>d6</b>
Gender: Male	STR <b>d8</b>	INT <b>d6</b>
Hair: Brown	VIT <b>d10</b>	WIL <b>d6</b>
Eyes: Green	Life Points <b>18</b>	
Height: 6'1"	Initiative <b>d8+d6</b>	
Weight: 175	Endurance <b>d10+d6</b>	
	Resistance <b>d10+d10</b>	

stun →

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← wound

## DESCRIPTION

Dean has never really known a normal life. At the age of four he held his baby brother in his arms and rushed out of a burning house after something terrible—and supernatural—killed their mother. From then on, Dean was raised as a hunter. His Dad raised him to hunt and kill every evil son of a bitch they could find. The life on the road is the only one he's ever known, and he still drives the old man's '67 Chevy Impala that roars like an angry beast when he steps on the gas.

The older Winchester brother always has a smile and a joke, keeping pain and darkness hidden and rarely lets it surface. More than anything, he wants to protect what's left of his family and tries to live up to his dad's expectations.

**Note:** Dean is an example of a customized-character who started as a Rookie and advanced through play.

## GEAR

Gear Dean drives a 1967 Chevrolet Impala filled with weapons in a secret trunk compartment. He wears an amulet on a necklace, though there's no telling if it has any special powers. When on a hunt, he usually packs a Colt M1911A1 pistol (d6 w). He keeps a cellphone crammed in his pocket and a hunting knife (d4 w) tucked in his boot.

## SKILLS

Athletics **d6**,  
 Covert **d6** / Open Locks **d8** / Stealth **d8**  
 Discipline **d4**  
 Drive **d6**  
 Guns **d6**  
 Influence **d6** / Persuasion **d8**  
 Knowledge **d2**  
 Love—**d6** / Spirits **d8**  
 Mechanic **d4**  
 Medicine **d2**  
 Melee Weapons **d6**  
 Perception **d4**  
 Performance **d6**  
 Tech **d2**  
 Unarmed Combat **d6** / Brawling **d8**

## TRAITS

Allure **d4**, Amorous **d4**, Brawler **d6**, Contacts **d2**, Devoted (family) **d6**, Phobia (flying) **d2**, Signature Possession (Impala) **d10**, Smartass **d4**, Tough **d4**, Wrong Side of the Law **d8**



# Sam Winchester

DOB: 5/2/83

Gender: Male

Hair: Dark Brown

Eyes: Brown

Height: 6'4"

Weight: 185

AGI d8

STR d8

VIT d8

ALE d8

INT d10

WIL d6

Life Points 14

Initiative d8+d8

Endurance d8+d6

Resistance d8+d8

stun →



← wound



## SKILLS

Athletics d6

Covert d4

Discipline d2

Guns d6

Influence d4

Knowledge d6 / Law d8

Love—d6 / Urban Legends d8

Medicine d2,

Melee Weapons d2

Perception d6 / Investigation d8

Performance d4

Tech d6 / Online Research d8

Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d8

## TRAITS

Allure d4, Destiny d6, Faith d2,

Higher Education d2

Obsessed d6, Out for blood d4

Phobia (clowns) d2, Premonitions d4

Sensitive d2,

Wrong Side of the Law d6

## DESCRIPTION

Sam grew up as a hunter, raised to find and kill the Yellow-Eyed Demon that murdered his mother, and wanted nothing more than to get away. College was chance to live a safe and normal life, but the Demon would not leave him alone—taking away Jessica, the love of his life. He's ready to go to war with his brother Dean by his side, and kill every evil supernatural thing in his way until he gets his revenge.

Though determined and stubborn, Sam knows what it's like to lose someone and he uses his empathy to talk to victims and dig for answers. His knowledge of the law helps when he and Dean impersonate cops or federal agents. His focus (some would call it obsession) is uncomfortably close to that of his father, but Sam doesn't like to think about that.

## GEAR

Sam keeps his laptop close and often uses it for research. He's also got plenty of computing power in his smartphone, which can take pictures and video, send and receive e-mail, and organize lots of information in addition to sending and receiving calls. When Sam's expecting trouble, he keeps a Beretta M92F pistol (d6 w) handy.



# Bobby Singer

DOB: 8/12/52

Gender: Male

Hair: Light Brown

Eyes: Brown

Height: 6'0"

Weight: 215

AGI d8

STR d8

VIT d10

ALE d6

INT d6

WIL d6

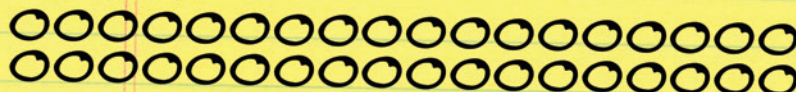
Life Points 18

Initiative d8+d6

Endurance d10+d6

Resistance d10+d10

stun →



← wound

## DESCRIPTION

Bobby runs a salvage yard, but that just pays the bills and serves as cover. He's really a hunter, an expert in supernatural lore—with demons and symbols a specialty. He began his career as a hunter after having to kill his own demon-possessed wife. He spends a lot of time on research and has a huge library full of books running from the mainstream to the occult. Bobby used to be great friends with John Winchester, but something happened between the two of them that make him more likely to shoot his old buddy.

In his fifties, Bobby doesn't spend as much time out on the road as he did in the old days. He looks a bit like a truck driver, always wearing a peaked baseball cap and a flannel shirt. He's loyal to his friends but a bit paranoid about shape-shifters and demons—so he's known to test people who show up at his door unannounced.

## GEAR

Bobby is always ready for trouble. He has a silver knife (d4 W), a flask of holy water, one of numerous handguns (d6 W), and various amulets or talismans on his person just in case. He drives a blue Ford pickup but also owns a 71 Chevelle and a minivan. As the owner of a salvage yard, Bobby has access to engine and body parts. He also owns a dog named Rumsfeld.

## SKILLS

Athletics d4

Covert d4

Craft d6

Discipline d6

Drive d4

Guns d6

Knowledge d6 / Culture d8

Lore d6 / Demons d10 / Ghosts d8 /

Mythology d8 / Symbols d8

Mechanic d4

Melee Weapons d4

Perception d6 / Intuition d10

## TRAITS

Contacts d4, Focused Hunter (Demons) d4,

Good Natured d2, Memorable d2, Paranoid d4



## The Gear

# Zombies

~~set on fire~~

- Silver?

~~Feed heart to wild dog~~

Stake it back in original grave





**A**s badass as you think you are, hand-to-hand isn't gonna cut it on most hunts. You need a ride to get you from place to place, some rock salt rounds in a shotgun to buy you some time with ghosts, a silver knife to deal with werewolves and shapeshifters, chalk to sketch up a Devil's Trap ... getting the idea? That doesn't even cover handy stuff like laptops for research, cell phones for staying in touch, and coffee and pie to keep you going.

This chapter goes into the lifestyle of a hunter—how it can be maintained, improved, or reduced to jack squat—plus the actual description of the tools of the trade. You'll be decked out and ready to go before you know it.

## Lifestyle

Before we get into the gear, there's the little subject of how you afford those goodies. By afford, think "get your hands on." Hunters don't typically keep a spreadsheet open on their laptop and balance their checkbooks. They don't collect receipts and prepare tax returns. Doesn't mean you can't—or shouldn't—but chances are your lifestyle makes that sort of thing a waste of time.

## Lifestyle Levels

Lifestyle is how economics works in the game. Every hunter maintains a lifestyle, which includes keeping fed, keeping up on repairs, having somewhere to stay every night, and getting around. Lifestyle's measured in die types, just like Traits and Attributes and Skills.

**Lifestyle d2—Hurting:** You don't own much, and you have a hard time getting any real work. Maybe you went bankrupt; maybe you never had any money. This lifestyle means you struggle to live anywhere but the most basic of motels, you can go days without having any decent food—and forget about buying anything new. This is your level if you have the d8 Dead Broke Complication.

**Lifestyle d4—Working Stiff:** You're living paycheck to paycheck, and most of your income goes to bills, food, and a roof over your head. The roof could be a series of motels and hotels, the food could be diner food, and the bills could be gas money, but it's a hell of a lot better than the Hurting lifestyle. You get a shower and a cup of coffee every day if you need it. At this level, you might have a car from the mid 90s that still runs well. This level is the default for most hunters.

**Lifestyle d6—Middle-Class:** We're talking stereotypical Mom and Pop America here. You've got a house, probably with a mortgage you'll never pay off in a typical hunter's lifespan. You've got one car, maybe two. You've got food in the pantry and the freezer, bought in bulk to stretch the dollars. You've got plenty of entertainment and gadgets, mostly paid for with credit cards and loans. This lifestyle comes with a helping

of debt and stress, but it's the underbelly of the American dream. If you're a hunter and can pull this off every month, you're way ahead. This is the starting Lifestyle level for those with the d4 Wealthy Asset.

**Lifestyle d8—Well-Off:** You have a large multi-level suburban house or city brownstone, free and clear (or at the very least, you're not worried about the mortgage payment). Your income is enough that you don't have to think too hard about flashing the credit card or the thick wallet. You're affluent, and this lifestyle brings with it social as well as financial status. If you have the d8 Wealthy Asset, this is the lifestyle you maintain every month.

**Lifestyle d10—Filthy Rich:** We're talking lifestyle of the rich and famous. Most hunters'd have a hard even imagining this kind of money. You own several properties, keep a large staff of people around (for cleaning, cooking, money management, other stuff you can't be bothered with), and the CEO of your bank golfs with you regularly. If you're living this kind of lifestyle, you don't worry about costs or emergency funds or the stock market. Wall Street's woes aren't really your problem—you have enough money to tide you over. In fact, bad financial times creates bargains. When things pick up again, you'll be that much better off—as usual.

**Note:** This lifestyle's mainly here because you might be able to achieve it briefly if you're already Well-Off, but there's just no way most hunters are gonna have this much moolah. That's entirely up to the Game Master.

## Maintaining Lifestyle

For the most part, you're not gonna sweat this. If your hunter's at the default d4 level, just assume he's like most hunters and gets by on odd jobs or ... less honest ways of making money. Maybe he's got a big trust fund he can draw from. No big deal—your hunter has access to the basics of that lifestyle and can get on with the game.

But maybe you want to at least pay lip service to the idea of making ends meet. Your Game Master might put together a storyline playing off the drama of being rich or struggling or plain out-of-cash. That's fine. In that case, here's how hunters can keep up their lifestyle.

Get together with your Game Master and agree on a time period that works best for the campaign. It could be week-by-week, or month-by-month. You could even change it from session to session. Each hunter figures out some means of getting regular money, which is how they pay their bills, get food and gas, and so on. Every week, month, or whatever you've settled on, each hunter makes a roll using a Skill that directly relates to his primary source of income (the applicable Attribute is up to the Game Master, depending on what you're up to). Say your hunter does odd jobs in towns fixing up cars and fridges, you make a Mechanic roll. If he sings in nightclubs, that's Performance. If he's breaking into houses or using fraudulent credit cards, it's Covert. The Difficulty of this



roll starts at Easy but can go up based on how things are going. Your GM might add between two and four to the Difficulty for every obstacle that keeps a hunter from being solvent. Probably don't want to crank the Difficulty up too high, or the hunters are never gonna make ends meet.

If the roll is a success, your hunter maintains his Lifestyle for another week, or month, or whatever. He can keep doing what he's been doing—staying in hotels or filling your gas tank. If the roll fails, the hunter is forced to live as if he were one Lifestyle level lower than normal during that time period. It's back to normal (assuming you make the next period's Skill roll) so long as nothing else bad happens. Alternately, you can say your hunter is covering a failed Skill roll by borrowing/stealing/rustling up some help from friends or contacts. This keeps his lifestyle where it is, but adds four to next period's Difficulty—gotta pay off those debts.

If you botch, your hunter's Lifestyle drops one level and stays there. The following period, he can maintain that new Lifestyle level if you succeed at the Skill roll; he returns to his prior Lifestyle if your roll reaches the Difficulty + 4. If you get an extraordinary success, on the other hand, you may be able to convince the Game Master to keep that new, higher level for even longer than the standard time period, possibly even permanently. Of course, he could always lose it all next time. . . .

If your hunter is Hurting and things get worse, he's effectively on the streets. That's not a happy place for anybody to be. If he's lucky, you'll make the roll the following time period . . . otherwise, it's lighting fires in trashcans and hunting rats for the poor sod.

## Living Beyond Your Means

Your parents and your school guidance counselor may have told you not to do this, but sometimes you have to go crazy and make a big purchase. To fake the next higher level of Lifestyle for an entire time period adds eight to the Lifestyle maintenance Difficulty. Doing it for a one-shot purchase requires a Skill roll against the Difficulty + 4, and you still have to make the normal maintenance roll on top of that. Regardless of what you choose, you're gonna have to either voluntarily drop your hunter's Lifestyle to the next level and live a little cheaper for the next time period, or roll really well. Dropping to the next lower level and living cheap means you roll to maintain Lifestyle as



normal, i.e. Easy Difficulty, but your hunter doesn't get the benefit of his normal Lifestyle. Not dropping means you have to beat the same increased Difficulty it took to live beyond your hunter's means, but he doesn't get that benefit (he live his normal Lifestyle).

Let's say your hunter's a Working Stiff Lifestyle hunter with a monthly Lifestyle maintenance roll. He wants a new car. Your Game Master decides that, even if he decides to steal it from a dealer's lot, it's living beyond his normal larcenous lifestyle. Getting the car requires a Covert check—adding four to the normal Lifestyle maintenance Easy Difficulty increases it to an Average Difficulty. Also, you have to make the regular Easy Covert Skill check to maintain his d4 Lifestyle. You succeed at both. Congrats, but your hunter isn't out of the woods yet. The following month, you need to make another Average Covert check to maintain his Working Stiff Lifestyle. If you're not up for that, he could drop down to Hurting Lifestyle for a week. In that case, maintaining the lower Lifestyle maintenance only requires an Easy Covert roll.

## Breaking the Law

Your hunter could maintain his Lifestyle through old-fashioned grifting and a felony or two. Maybe he's up to his neck in crime. It happens, especially to some of the younger hunters. This is fine for a while, but if the hunter has the Straight Shooter Complication or some kind of Duty, it's possible he can't keep this up. Sooner or later, consequences happen.

If breaking the law is how a hunter makes ends meet, he uses a Skill like Covert (for burglars and pickpockets) or Influence (for grifters and



con-men). If you fail the roll, your hunter gets in trouble. Your Game Master gets to figure out how it plays out, but it could make for a whole session's worth of trouble. Not only will your hunter be unable to live it large, but he's on the lam or locked up somewhere. If you botch the roll, look out. Your hunter could end up as Public Enemy #1.

This risk applies equally to living-beyond-your-means checks. In fact, if you failed one of these rolls in the previous time period (either trying to live the whole period at the next higher level, or grabbing a one-off expense), the next period's maintenance check Difficulty goes up by two to reflect Smokey breathing down your hunter's neck.

## Suggested Lifestyle

Each of the individual gear descriptions includes a Suggested Lifestyle entry. This gives you a good idea as to how likely it is that you'd be able to afford or acquire that piece of gear based on what your Lifestyle is. At the start of the game session, or at any reasonable point in the story, if your hunter's keen to get his hands on something, the Game Master can use the Suggested Lifestyle as a guide to whether it's a case of "sure, you can have one of those" or "how about you make a Lifestyle roll to see if that's an investment you really want to make this month?"

Again, *Supernatural's* not about making a shopping list each session and spending all your dimes. If you've got the Lifestyle for it, and the Game Master doesn't think it's outside the realm of possibility, then it's all good. If not, better start thinking creatively.

## General Gear

This list covers your hunter's basic equipment. Any decent mail-order catalog or online site has this stuff, especially if there's a big section in the back on survival gear and army surplus.

**Backpack:** A good backpack holds 25 to 50 pounds of gear. A modern military backpack (such as the CFP-90 ACU) holds four times that. Get one with all the little zip pockets, so you can stay organized. Nothing says "about to get his ass handed to him by a demon" like a backpack stuffed full of crap. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Binoculars:** A pair of these allows you to see things at a great distance, sometimes even with night vision packaged in. Really good for keeping watch on a sorority house for, you know ... vampire pledge sisters, or something like that. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Briefcases & Satchels:** If you're not into backpacks, try one of these. They're all about the same shape and size, so choice is mostly about material. They can be made of canvas, worked leather, even bullet-resistant metals and polymers, and usually hold up to 10 pounds of stuff. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Camera:** When you want to take a picture of something, you have a choice these days between digital and your classic film-loaded camera. Digital is quick and easy, but you can't get some of the weirder effects in this business—ghosts showing up on the negatives, or Kirlian auras—unless there's film involved. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Canteen:** Canteens hold enough water to keep a single person hydrated for one day and are carried in a pouch on a belt or in a pack. A full canteen also makes a good improvised weapon (d2 Basic damage). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.



## Rugged Outdoor backpack

- Heavy Duty Straps
- Holds up to 40 pounds
- Comfort contour harness.

Reg price: 24.95 Sale Price: **14.99**



# A Hunter's Gear

There's more crap in this chapter than could easily be stuffed floor-to-ceiling in a utility van. What kind of stuff do hunters actually drag around on the road? The answer depends entirely on the style and tastes of the hunters—along with how they acquire their stuff.

Some hunters will carry around a cache of weapons. Gun with various kinds of ammo (silver rounds, rock salt shells, etc.) are mixed with different kinds of blades (iron, silver) along with kits to keep everything in working order and to make new bullets as needed. Throw in a couple of old tomes with exorcism rituals, couple of flashlights, a middle-of-the-road EMF meter, some cell phones, and rock salt and you're good to go.

Methodical hunters (okay, geeky) might have thermal imagers, motion-sensitive cameras, low-frequency microphones, and a suite of high-end software to help analyze the data. These are useful for getting scientific data and may tell you something useful—but that stuff's not very portable and it's very expensive and breakable.

**Climbing Gear:** More a category of equipment than one single item. It includes rope, grappling hooks, harnesses, ascenders, pitons, hammers, ice-picks, spiked footwear, and so on. Climbing gear grants a +1 or +2 Skill step bonus to climbing actions. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Compass:** Magnetic compasses indicate the direction of the magnetic pole, eliminating the need to take a Survival action to do so. Powerful magnets or even large structures can play havoc with the reliability of a compass. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Computer:** Computers are scaled in three sizes: desktop, laptop, and handheld (although lately the latter two are getting closer and closer to being the same). Most laptops and handhelds come equipped with some form of wireless networking, so you can poke around on the Internet in coffee shops and even McBurger joints. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4 (desktop), d6 (laptop), d6 (PDA).

**EMF Meter:** EMF stands for “electromagnetic field”—this gadget can be used to detect active electrical current or fluctuations in magnetic fields. Ghosts, demons, and other types of supernatural presence can register on an EMF meter. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**First Aid Kit:** This plastic or metal box is packed with a few bandages, antiseptic, and pain relievers. Trying to give first aid without one imposes a -2 Skill step to the action. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Flares:** Set a flare alight and you shed intense light and heat without an explosion. Flares are most often used for signals or flooding an area with light. A flare generally lasts for five to 15 minutes and lights up anywhere from a 10- to 50-foot square area. Touching a lit flare to something can set it on fire; if that thing is a person, it causes d2 Basic damage a turn. Some flares are supposed to be loaded into flare-guns, which can then launch them up to 500 feet. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Flashlight:** Anything from a little penlight to one of those enormous, heavy steel-cased flashlights used by security guards. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Flask:** A small container that can hold booze, or maybe holy water. Could range from a cheap plastic job to a fancy engraved beauty. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Gasmask:** Protects you from tear gas, thick smoke, and other toxic conditions. The really big ones from World War II and fire departments cover your features, in case you want to go the Wesley Dodds route and keep people from picking you out in a lineup. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Glow Stick:** Snap a glow stick in half and you get weird yellow, green, or pink light for about a half hour. They're disposable, one-use-only. They're safe to use in the rain and don't need fuel or batteries, which makes them a good thing to keep packed in your bag or glovebox when hunting in the middle of a rainstorm. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Lantern:** Some lanterns are oil-based; others take batteries and work on fluorescent filaments or LEDs. A lantern's not like a flashlight, which sheds a beam of light. Lanterns and other lamps fill an area, making them good for camping and setting up shop in a haunted basement. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Lighters & Matches:** You smoke? Then you know what a lighter is. Hell, you know what a lighter is even if you don't smoke. Same applies to matches. You can get some matches that work even when they're wet, but for the most part you want to keep these somewhere out of the rain. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Lockpicks:** Tools—little metal picks, hence the name—used to open a locked door, container, or storage unit. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Mobile Phone:** One of the best ways to keep in touch with your buddies or call for help is to pick up a mobile phone (or cellphone). Most cellphones need a subscriber service, though you can also buy the prepaid type that lets you put money on the account in return for a set number of minutes. Always-on-the-go Hunters generally go for the latter. Portable phones come with all kinds of extra features—digital cameras, GPS, little video games, music player, that kind of thing. The more of these you have, the more they cost. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4–d6.

**MRE:** MREs—stands for Meal, Ready to Eat—have a reputation for being edible, but not particularly tasty. Most contain an entrée, side dish, dessert, cracker or bread, a spread (cheese, peanut butter, etc.), powdered

# Weapons Locker

Don't fool yourself. Some hunts may end without too much action—say, burning bones, but most of the time you need to shoot, stab, or blow crap up. Good news is that the rules of the game are about getting down to business and not sweating too many details. Weapons are lumped together in basic categories, leaving the specifics to description and imagination. We're not gonna worry about the actual make or manufacturer of a gun, since all guns of that general type perform more or less the same. You can bring that kind of flavor to the party yourself—grab a copy of *Guns & Ammo* or watch some cable TV. I'm sure you'll learn all kinds of things. While you're doing that, though, rest of us'll be moving on to the next job.

beverage, utensils, and couple of other accessories such as chewing gum, matches, or toilet paper. Throw a sack full of MREs in the back seat and you're set for days. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Multi-Tool:** Small enough to be carried in a pocket or clipped to your belt, a multi-tool is always handy. Any multi-purpose, compact, and easily portable device that tackles an assorted amount of tasks is a multi-tool. One of the more popular is the Swiss Army knife—cutting blades, nail files, tweezers, scissors, toothpick, magnifying glass, screwdriver, all hinged and ready to use. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Media Players:** They're the new century's replacement for the Walkman or portable radio. Most of these just play digital songs, but some of them have Internet access or a dozen little games and applications you can waste time with. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Night-Vision Gear:** Anything equipped with night-vision qualities intensifies the light of a given area beyond what would be normal. Some include an infrared spectrum filter, which lets you track heat sources even in pitch-blackness. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Recorder:** The mini-cassette recorders of the '90s have given way to completely digital recorders. A built-in microphone lets you record interviews, make notes to be reviewed later, or attempt to catch EVP on a hunt. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Restraints:** Everything from handcuffs and chains to zip-ties and straitjackets. Restraints are rated with a Difficulty and Life Points, which lets you know how hard it is to break or wriggle out of it, or just smash the heck out of it, in order to get free. Cheap or weak restraints like zip-ties or rope require an Average Strength or Athletics action to escape, and have 2 Life Points (although

they're immune to Stun damage), while the high-quality cuffs and shackles take a Formidable Strength or Athletics action to escape and have 12 Life Points. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Rope:** Rope is for more than just climbing. It can bind objects, help move objects, and aid in exploration and seafaring. Rope is made from natural materials—hemp, silk, hair, wool, linen, cotton, and sisal—or synthetic materials—nylon, polyesters, and the like. Serious ropes are even made out of braided metal. Coils of rope can be secured with a grappling hook on one end to ease climbing. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Salt:** It makes your popcorn taste better, can help de-ice a walkway, and provides useful protection against evil supernatural beings such as ghosts and demons. A salt barrier is a great way to buy some time or protect would-be victims during a hunt. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Sleeping Bag:** D&D geeks call this a “bedroll.” It protects you from the elements when you're crashing in the back seat of your car or sleeping in the woods. The more you spend on a sleeping bag, the more fancy stuff it comes with. Want a sleeping bag with a digital music player? I bet they have one of those now, too, if you're willing to shell out the cash. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2–d4.

**Surveillance Gear:** Use these tools to spy on other people—video cameras and monitors, listening bugs, parabolic microphones, fiberscopes, thermal imagers, telephone taps, cellular interceptors, and more. In general, this stuff grants anywhere from a +1 to +3 Skill step when gathering information with Covert or Perception actions. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Tent:** Any temporary shelter that can be broken down and carried. Simple tents protect one or two people from the weather, while the expensive ones can be the size of a house, even having separate rooms inside. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2 (2-person), d4 (4-person), d6 (8-person).

**Tools:** Basic tools used for construction or to repair and maintain automobiles. Includes hammers, nail guns, saws, crowbars, files, ladders, pliers, razors, shovels, sledgehammers, tongs, wrenches, and so forth. Performing a task without an appropriate tool or tool kit generates a –1 Skill step and a lot of cursing. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Toolkits, Specialty:** Many things get done better when you've got the right tool kit. Some examples follow. A well-designed kit gives a +1 or +2 Skill step to actions, while working without any tools imposes a –1 Skill step or prevents the action from being taken at all.

*Demolition kits* help blow things up. They have the tools needed to figure out an explosive device, disable it, or even put a bomb or charge together if you have the raw explosive materials. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

*Electrician kits* include voltmeters and all the tools you'd need to rewire a light switch, computer terminal, or the starter motor in a '98 Honda. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.



**Gunsmith kits** include the tools needed to clean, maintain, and repair guns from derringers to SAWs (squad automatic weapons). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Mechanical kits** contain the tools needed to maintain and repair complex machines like generators, AC units, and car engines. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Watch:** Always useful when you're keen to know what time it is. Isn't used as much these days because of cell phones, but if there's no reception in the god-forsaken backwoods you're hunting in, you'll be glad you went old-school. If you're going diving, make sure the watch is water-resistant and pressure-resistant. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

## Melee Weapons

Axes, machetes, swords, baseball bats. If it's hand-held, designed for close combat, uses the Melee Weapons Skill, and either cuts or bludgeons the other guy, it's in this section. If you're gonna throw one of these at somebody, use the Ranged Weapons Skill, maybe with a -1 or -2 step penalty depending on whether it's not meant to be used that way or not. You might be a regular Paul Bunyan with a logger's axe, but throwing it at somebody's head is best left to the pros.

**Axe:** This is the long-handled axe you'd associate with lumberjacks and chopping firewood. Also very useful against mindless zombies and anything else you'd like to chop into bloody chunks. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Baseball Bat:** Baseball's a beautiful game, and it gives us a damned useful weapon that won't get the cops in an uproar if they find you toting one around in your trunk. Comes in wood or aluminum. Any club that you'd use with two hands rather than one also uses these stats. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Bayonet:** A bayonet's a knife-blade that attaches to the muzzle of a rifle, turning the gun into something you can stab with when you're outta ammo. When not attached to a gun, this is basically a knife. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Brass Knuckles:** Brass knuckles turn a good left hook into a great left hook. They're pretty much metal bars with loops to slip your fingers through. When you're using brass knuckles to make an attack, the damage is Basic instead of Stun. Some knives, especially the big ones used by SWAT, have brass knuckles built right into them. This item uses Unarmed Combat, not Melee Weapons. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Chain:** A simple length of chain, like the kind you'd secure a fence with or haul up an engine in an auto shop. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**TABLE 5.I: MELEE WEAPONS**

WEAPON	DAMAGE
Axe	d8 W
Baseball Bat	d6 B
Bayonet (Mounted)	d4 W
Brass Knuckles	Special
Chain	d4 B
Chainsaw	d10 W
Hatchet	d6 W
Knife	d2 W
Nightstick	d4 B
Staff	d6 B
Stungun, Contact	d6 S + Special
Sword	d6 W
Sword, Dueling	d4 W
Sword, Really Big	d8 W



**Chainsaw:** Conveniently placed in toolsheds, basements, and out back of a cabin in the woods, your average chainsaw is powered by gasoline and can mess up pretty much anything you swing it at. Also a necessary prop if you're pretending to be a tree surgeon when you're on a hunt. Most chainsaws count as improvised weapons, since they weren't designed for combat. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**TABLE 5.2: RANGED WEAPONS**

WEAPON	DAMAGE	RANGE
Bow	d6 W	100'
Crossbow	d6 W	120'
Hatchet, thrown	d4 W	15'
Knife, thrown	d2 W	10'
Mace/Pepper Spray	Special	3'
Stungun, Ranged	Special	3'

**Hatchet:** Hatchets are mostly used for cutting tree limbs and performing light work in the woods out back, but they're sometimes found in the trunk of an axe-murderer's car. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Knife:** Any single-or-double-edged blade less than 12 inches long counts as a knife. Some even come with badass rock n' roll artwork on the handle, but you're more likely to get good mileage out of a big old butcher's knife. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Nightstick:** The trusted weapon of a nighttime security guard or beat cop. You can use these statistics for other small club-like weapons, too. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Staff:** A staff is a long wooden pole used to trip people up and smack them about the head. Martial artists and Little John use these all the time. If you're skilled with a staff, you can improvise with any long pole-like object, such as a pool cue or a length of PVC pipe. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Stungun, Contact:** This is a handheld device that sends a powerful charge into the target. It's the Melee Weapons version of the ranged stungun. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Sword:** Your basic sword, the kind that knights and RenFaire freaks usually swing about. If you use it with two hands, the damage die goes up by +1 step. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Sword, Dueling:** These are kind of weapons you'd see in the hands of a guy carrying a perfumed hankie, or maybe someone who went to private school and was on the fencing team. Includes rapiers, épées, foils—the kind with a long, thin, flexible blade. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Sword, Really Big:** The two-handed sword, or greatsword, is a big-ass blade, usually seen in the hands of big barbarian-types on the cover of fantasy novels. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

## Ranged Weapons

Stuff you pick up and throw, or use to send something dangerous at your target. Doesn't include guns, because those have their own section. Use the Ranged Weapons Skill for all of these.

**Bow:** Sometimes you want to Oliver Queen some supernatural critter, and when that happens, you'll need a compound bow and a bunch of arrows. Arrows are great because they can be dipped in various poisons, oils, and custom-made elixirs to put an end to whatever nasty thing you're hunting. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Crossbow:** A crossbow covers the same basic ground as a standard bow, except you don't need to be as strong and you can carry it around ready to go for longer. Other plusses? Some supernatural creatures specify a crossbow bolt as their weakness, rather than an arrow from a bow, and it's a bit easier to point and shoot. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Hatchet, Thrown:** A really well balanced hatchet can be hurled into somebody ... or something. It'll do the same damage as the Melee Weapons version. Most of the time, though, you'll have to suck up a -2 Skill step penalty.

**Knife, Thrown:** Many knives are designed for you to throw across a room into a target. They're otherwise identical to the knives described under Melee Weapons. Unbalanced knives, like the ones from your kitchen drawer, apply a -1 Skill step penalty.

**Mace/Pepper Spray:** This stuff usually comes in a can, easy to stow in a backpack, pocket, or purse. Spraying somebody with mace uses Agility + Ranged Weapons; the target takes Stun damage (usually between d4 and d10, depending on the toxicity of the spray) and has to make a Hard Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. Failure means they take a -3 step for about five minutes on any action that depends on sight or concentration. Success drops that to -1 step for about five turns. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Stungun, Ranged:** Stunguns zap the nervous system and leave people twitching on the floor. Some stunguns are hand-held and need to make contact with the target. That kind uses the Melee Weapons Skill (and Agility). The rest look gun-shaped and shoot out electrodes on wire. It's a Ranged Weapon, but you can fake it with a -2 Skill step to your Guns Skill. When nailed by a stungun (either contact or ranged), the target takes Stun damage and makes an Average Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. Success means he only takes a -1 Attribute step for one minute. Failure means he falls immediately unconscious and suffers d6 Shock. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

## Guns

Guns are nearly worthless against some critters, but it's best to keep a few handy anyway. Lots of nasties drop once they're full of holes, and rock-salt shotgun rounds and silver bullets help with the rest. Not that it'll come as a shock, these weapons use the Guns Skill. Some really big guns require a little more effort and training. They require Heavy Weapons Skill—you don't just grab a vehicle-mounted machine gun and pull the trigger.

**Pistol, Antique:** This group of pistols includes flintlocks, matchlocks, wheellocks, and all kinds of old-fashioned antiques. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.



These are all the antique  
pistols I have. I do  
not have a Colt like  
the one you described.



**Pistol, Light:** Handarms with a .22 caliber, .32 ACP or .38 caliber. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Pistol, Heavy:** If it's got a .357, .44, .50 or 5.57 mm caliber, it's a heavy pistol. Expect to see these in the hands of Special Forces ex-military guys. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Pistol, Medium:** The most handgun used by police and folks with a concealed firearms license, this group includes those with a 9mm, 10mm or .45 caliber. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Rifle, Antique:** Muzzle-loaded rifled weapons like a Kentucky rifle or old-fashioned blunderbuss fits the bill. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Rifle, Assault:** An assault rifle is the standard weapon of the world's military forces. They're usually magazine fed, fairly light, and highly accurate, with a high rate of fire. Assault rifles are capable of autofire and burst fire. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Rifle, Hunting:** The most common rifle for sporting or hunting use, these bolt-action weapons don't automatically chamber the next round once a shot is fired. You have to draw back a lever between shots. Although slower than automatic or semi-automatic rifles, some people figure that bolt-action rifles are more accurate. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Rifle, Sniper:** Sniper weapons fire a heavier caliber round and are designed to be used while stationary. They can be automatic or bolt-action; doesn't really matter to a pro. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**TABLE 5.3: GUNS**

WEAPON	DAMAGE	RANGE	AMMO
Pistol, Antique	d6 W	15'	1
Pistol, Light	d4 W	40'	6
Pistol, Medium	d6 W	50'	8
Pistol, Heavy	d8 W	60'	10
Rifle, Antique	d8 W	25'	1
Rifle, Assault	d8 W	200'	30
Rifle, Hunting	d8 W	300'	20
Rifle, Sniper	d10 W	450'	10
Shotgun, Break-Loading	d10 W	30'	1 or 2
Shotgun, Pump Action	d10 W	30'	8
Submachine Gun	d6 W	50'	30

**Shotgun, Break-Loading:** These are the kind of shotguns that you "break" in half and load manually. Many have two barrels, and are called double-barreled shotguns. In that case, you can fire both barrels at once as a single

**TABLE 5.4: HEAVY WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES**

WEAPON	DAMAGE	BLAST RADIUS	RANGE
C-4	3d12	10	—
Dynamite	3d6	5	Str x 3
Flamethrower	2d4 W Fire	—	15
Grenade, Flash-Bang	d4 S	15	Str x 3
Grenade, Fragmentation	5d6 W	30	Str x 3
Grenade, Riot	Special	25	Str x 3
Machine Gun, Light	d2 Large	—	300
Machine Gun, Heavy	d4 Large	—	300
Mortar	5d8 W	30	1/2 mile
Rocket Launcher	1d6 W Large	10	1/4 mile

action. This gives a +1 Skill step to the attack roll. If you load the weapon with shotgun shells, you can target two adjacent targets with one attack roll but range penalties are doubled. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Shotgun, Pump-Action:** Pump-action, or lever-action shotguns need to “pumped” in order to eject the spent cartridge and load the next cartridge. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Shotgun, Sawed-Off:** This shotgun has a cut down barrel—it’s easier to hide under a coat and the shot spreads more widely. The downside is much shorter range. A sawed-off shotgun has the same statistics as a break-loading or pump-action shotgun, but the range increment is only 15 feet. The increased spread means you can make a single attack roll against up to four (instead of two) adjacent targets in the first range increment. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Submachine Gun:** A submachine gun uses the same bullets as a pistol, but has a much higher rate of fire. Submachine guns came of age back in the days of Elliot Ness, and they’re still pretty popular today. The Uzi or MAC-11 best represents them. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

## Heavy Weapons and Explosives

If you need heavy weapons and explosives on a hunt, you’re in a world of trouble. Good chance you can take out the monster, but the authorities are gonna be all over you like paparazzi on Paris Hilton. Heavy weapons require the Heavy Weapons Skill, and some of them operate at Large scale (see page 98). Explosives have their own rules (see page 90).

**C-4:** When it comes to stability, C-4 is the way to go. Of course, getting hold of any amount of plastic explosive is pretty much impossible ... legally. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Dynamite:** Dynamite is much less stable than plastic explosive, but it is cheaper and easier to find. If the stuff you find is old, though, watch out. Even a couple of eight-inch sticks can bring down a mine tunnel, level a tool shed, or blow up a small car. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Flamethrower:** These weapons stream flaming propellant into a given area. If you’re hit by a flamethrower, you catch fire, burning for d6 W each turn until you die or manage to put the flames out. (Okay technically

if you die, you’re still on fire, but it’s not like you care anymore.) A flamethrower’s fuel is kept in a canister and holds about eight doses of propellant. Flamethrowers can be mounted on vehicles, in which case they’re Large scale and take out other vehicles handily. Otherwise they’re a backpack canister connected to a hand-held nozzle and work on Personal scale. Either way, the canister holding the propellant is vulnerable to attack, with an Armor Rating of 2 W and 8 Life Points. If you can deliver eight points of total damage to the canister, it explodes, inflicting d10 W for every remaining dose of propellant left in it. This is treated like a grenade or explosive, affecting surrounding people at range bands of three feet (see the explosive rules on page 90). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Grenades:** Grenades can be thrown or fired from launchers. If they’re thrown, they’ll have a pin or something else that activates the charge. A launcher pulls this pin for you and has the added bonus of getting the grenade the hell away from you. All grenades are Personal scale weapons that use the rules for explosives (see page 90). Grenades come with a number of payloads:

**Flash-Bang:** These grenades use intense light and noise to stun targets. If you’re caught in the blast radius of a flash-bang, you take Stun 2d6 Stun and must make a Formidable Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. If you succeed, you take a –1 Attribute step for d12 turns. If you blow the roll, you’re unable to take any actions for d12 turns. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Fragmentation:** In addition to creating an explosion, these grenades fill the blast radius with red-hot metal fragments. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Riot:** Police use gas grenades for controlling large crowds. The gas irritates the skin, eyes, nose, and throat, and incapacitates anybody who’s exposed for longer than



a few sections. The cloud of gas sticks around for about five minutes. If you enter the cloud or the gas affects you, you take d4 Stun and an additional d4 Stun each subsequent turn. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Grenade Launcher:** Grenade launchers can be stand-alone units or slung under an assault rifle's barrel. Grenades fired from a grenade launcher are designed specifically for that purpose; standard grenades aren't gonna fit. A grenade launcher can deliver any of the various types listed above. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Machine Gun, Light:** These heavy weapons are designed to spray large areas with hundreds of bullets and still be more or less portable. You mount them on a tripod or on a vehicle—unless you've got them properly braced, you'll end up shooting up a lot of dirt or knocking yourself over. Machine guns, like automatic weapons, can fire in bursts, full auto, and spray. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Machine Gun, Heavy:** Even bigger than light machine guns, these bad boys must be mounted on a vehicle or a fixed location. Machine guns, like automatic weapons, can fire in bursts, full auto, and spray. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d10.

**Mortar:** These ground-fired rockets are designed for indirect bombing. In other words, you don't point and shoot it. Using a mortar requires Intelligence or Alertness + Heavy Weapons/Mortar, depending on the conditions. A mortar delivers an explosive payload, just like a rocket launcher, complete with blast radius. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d10.

**Rocket Launcher, Portable:** These launchers are small enough to be used by a person. You see them in the movies all the time; they're supposed to rest on one shoulder when you launch the rocket. Then cars, trucks, etc. blow up. The rocket's the real explosive, and is obviously Large scale. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d10.

## Ammunition

Ammo is essential. You can pick up the standard slugs and rounds from a discount super-mart in most parts of the country. The more high-powered or specialized ammo is illegal or expensive. You'll want to keep any boxes of shells or bullets away from open flame.

Using any standard round as a miniature explosive or a component of some kind of trap (taping a bunch together and hooking them up to a detonator, for instance) gives you about d2 Basic damage worth of boom. Yeah, we figured you had something whacko in mind like that.

**Standard Rounds:** The typical bullet or round used in a firearm. You can get these just about anywhere. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

# CROSSROADS GUN SHOW



JUNE 19<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH THE 21<sup>ST</sup>  
AT THE RENO CONVENTION CENTER

**Shotgun Shells:** Filled with little ball bearings or other material, this ammo is designed to spread out when fired. Shot attacks two targets in the first range increment with one attack roll and you don't have to sweat a multiple action penalty. Can't target anybody effectively after that first increment, though. All range penalties are doubled. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Shotgun Slugs:** These solid rounds don't have the benefits or the drawbacks of shot. They function more or less like standard rounds. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d2.

**Armor-Piercing Rounds:** These rounds punch through most kinds of armor fairly easily. AP rounds ignore the first three points of an object's Armor Rating. On the down side, the bullet usually goes right through the target's body (called "over-penetration") so the damage drops by -1 step. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Hollow-Point Rounds:** These rounds create big holes in soft target (otherwise known as people). The weapon's damage gains a +2 step. Problem is, armor's more effective so you double the Armor Rating of any ballistic vest or barrier that protects the target. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Non-Lethal Rounds:** These bullets are made of wood or rubber. They still hurt like hell, and a shot in the head might kill you, but non-lethal rounds usually live up to their name. The weapon damage of a non-lethal round is Stun, not Wound. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Rock Salt:** You can load a shotgun with this, making it very useful against ghosts. Unfortunately it also reduces the weapon damage to Stun, just like non-lethal rounds. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Silver Bullets:** Ammo designed to hurt certain critters, like werewolves. You're probably gonna need to make it yourself, and that means melting down silver and setting it into a mold. Then you need to turn that into a bullet. At the end of all that, it may still not work. That's why it pays to find somebody who'll make these for you and then just buy them in bulk. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

## Scopes, Sights, and Attachments

Scopes make it easier to hit something. While they are designed for firearms, they could be added to crossbows and possibly even bows.

**Day/Night System:** This scope system accommodates two uses, one for day and the other for nighttime. The standard magnification for the telescope is 6x. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Laser:** A laser pointer on a firearm gives a +1 Skill step when you spend at least one turn aiming (in addition to the normal benefits). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Night-Vision:** This sight halves (rounded down) penalties for shooting in dim or dark conditions. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Telescopic:** This attachment allows the firer to ignore a number of range increments when attacking at range. A rifle with a normal range increment of 400 feet and a 12x scope has a modified range increment value of 1,600 feet. Pistols can't support a scope above 6x. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Thermal-Scope:** This lets you find a target in poor lighting conditions or smoke by using his body temperature. It's not flawless—if there's a lot of ambient heat or if the target's wearing clothing that reduces their body temp, it won't help. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Illuminator:** This small, standard flashlight is mounted on a firearm. That frees a hand up for other stuff—say, firing the weapon. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Silencer:** Silencers don't eliminate the sound of a firearm completely, but they do make a difference. It is Hard to detect the sounds of a silenced firearm firing more than ten yards away, and Formidable to identify the location or direction of the shooter. Silencers are legal in most states. Still, if you're in Kansas and looking to buy one, you're out of luck. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

## Armor

Most hunters don't wear body armor. It's expensive, bulky, and most of the things they deal with ignore it. That doesn't mean it's not a good thing to keep around, especially if you're going up against people instead of ghosts and demons and such. Armor comes with an Armor Rating, usually reducing Wound damage. Some of it reduces damage by converting it to Stun, other types simply take points off any Wound damage inflicted on you. Check the armor description for details.

**Helmet, Ballistic:** Standard-issue head protection for most modern military ground forces. Armor Rating 4 W (head only), but it doesn't shield the face or eyes, leaving them open to called shots. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Helmet, Riot:** Based with a ballistic helmet, the riot helmet also provides a face shield and neck guard for added close combat protection. Armor Rating 4 W (protects against high-speed projectiles as well as other types of damage). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Shield, Riot:** Modern police shields are used for riot control to protect against low-velocity or "soft weaponry." They are also bullet resistant, if not bullet proof. A modern

**TABLE 5.5: ARMOR**

TYPE	ARMOR RATING	STEP PENALTY
Helmet, Ballistic	4 W (Head only)	-1 Perception
Helmet, Riot	4 W See description	-1 Perception
Shield, Riot	See description	—
Vest, Ballistic	2W	—
Vest, Undercover	2W	—



riot shield adds +2 step bonus to Melee Combat/Shields Skill rolls to block. It is also effective against high-speed ballistics, and serves as light cover in such cases. *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4.

**Vest, Ballistic:** This armored vest is worn by modern law enforcement personnel. It has an Armor Rating 2 W, and can convert up to four additional Wounds to Stun (or Shock Points if the victims suffers too much Stun). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

**Vest, Tactical Deployment:** A light-ballistic vest that has a large number of pouches and pockets on it where additional or essential gear may be stored. Ballistic vests have an Armor Rating 2 W, and convert up to two additional Wounds to Stun (or Shock Points if the victim suffers too much Stun). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8.

**Vest, Undercover:** A protective vest worn by those seeking discreet added security. Undercover vests have an Armor Rating 2 W, and convert two additional Wounds to Stun (or Shock Points if the victims suffers too much Stun). *Suggested Lifestyle:* d6.

## Transportation

Cars, planes, and boats are kind of like people. Some are slow and clunky while others can make hairpin turns. Some have freaking computers to keep you from screwing up too bad (collision detectors, GPS, rocking sound systems). Vehicles have some of the same stats as characters. A classic muscle car's not gonna have Intelligence, for example, but it does have Agility and Vitality.

**Agility** is how a vehicle handles.

**Strength** is the size of a vehicle and how much punishment it can take.

**Vitality** is the vehicle's repair and maintenance status.

**Alertness** is something you're not gonna see much in your average car outside of expensive luxury vehicles. Also, some military vehicles and aircraft have sensors and communication equipment that grant them an Alertness stat.

**Intelligence** is also something you don't see too much in regular street vehicles. This is computer technology—the autopilot on an airplane is an example—though a good GPS navigation counts as well.

**Willpower** lets you see how far a vehicle can be pushed past its design limits. This includes safety features, backup systems, or that strange stubbornness some rides seem to have. These vehicles keep going even when they should have fallen completely apart.

When calculating a vehicle's **Life Points**, use Strength (not Vitality) and Willpower. Note that vehicles are almost always Large scale in relation to damage.

## 1967 Chevy Impala

**Description** Though it doesn't get the press of certain other classic cars, the '67 Impala has a great reputation among those serious about badass rides and the Impala was Chevrolet's most popular model in that era. The car is fast, tough, and has a huge trunk suitable for hunters wanting to stash a cache of weapons and supplies. *Dimension* 17 x 6 x 4 feet; *Passengers* 5; *Range* 300 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle:* d4

*Note:* The Impala driven by the Winchesters has had a special place in their lives. It was the only piece of their original lives that stayed with them. Originally purchased used by John in 1973, he passed it on to his son, Dean. The car has an engine that roars like an angry beast and is well maintained by its family of mechanics. It has a cassette-tape stereo, which Dean keeps well stocked with classic rock and heavy metal.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d8  
**Init** d6 + d0; **LP** 16; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2  
**Traits** Toughness d4  
**Armor** W 1, S 1

**Speed** isn't a measure of a vehicle's top speed. It's an abstract number showing how maneuverable it is during combat and chase scenes (a high speed chase through a town rather than on the race track). Speed 0 is extremely slow and cumbersome for tricky moves and turns, while the more nimble ground vehicles have Speed 3 or 4.

**Range** is how far it can go on a single tank of gas.

Each vehicle entry also includes notes on any Traits, Skills, weapons, armor, and so forth, if any of that stuff is applicable.

## AMBULANCE

**Description** This large van-like vehicle is stock full of medical equipment and supplies. *Dimension* 18 x 10 x 10 feet; *Passengers* 2–6; *Range* 300 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle:* d8

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d6  
**Init** d6 + d0; **LP** 14; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2  
**Traits** Toughness d4  
**Armor** W 1, S 1

**Notes** Emergency medical systems (+1 Skill step to medical-based rolls)

## COMPACT CAR

**Description** A small fuel-efficient vehicle. *Dimension* 12 x 5 x 4 feet; *Passengers* 4; *Range* 500 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d0; **LP** 10; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2

**Armor** S 1

## HUMVEE (MILITARY)

**Description** A stripped down, heavy-duty, all-terrain vehicle. *Dimension* 15 x 7 x 6 feet; *Passengers* 6; *Range* 350 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d8

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d8

**Init** d6 + d0; **LP** 16; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2

**Armaments** 1 heavy machine gun (Personal scale)

**Armor** W 2, S 2

## JET SKI

**Description** A small, open water craft. *Dimension* 7 x 2 x 2 feet; *Passengers* 1; *Range* 50 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d4 **Str** d2 **Vit** d2 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d2

**Init** d4 + d0; **LP** 4; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 1

## MINIVAN

**Description** A relatively large, family-sized vehicle with a high profile and good cargo capacity. *Dimension* 12 x 6 x 6 feet; *Passengers* 7; *Range* 450 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d6

**Init** d4 + d0; **LP** 12; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2

**Armor** W 1

## MOTORCYCLE

**Description** A two-wheeled, open land vehicle. *Dimension* 7 x 2.5 x 4 feet; *Passengers* 1; *Range* 185 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d4

**Agi** d6 **Str** d2 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d4

**Init** d6 + d0; **LP** 6; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 3

## PICK-UP TRUCK

**Description** A sizable, heavy-duty vehicle with a flat bed for cargo hauling. *Dimension* 10 x 6 x 7 feet; *Passengers* 4; *Range* 500 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d4 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d6

**Init** d4 + d0; **LP** 14; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2

**Armor** 1 W

## POLICE CRUISER

**Description** A family-sized sedan outfitted with better suspension and a bigger engine. *Dimension* 9 x 6 x 5 feet; *Passengers* 4; *Range* 500 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d8

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d0; **LP** 12; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 3

**Armor** 1 W

## RECREATION VEHICLE (RV)

**Description** Usually, a seriously big vehicle that can double as something close to a house. *Dimension* 30 x 12 x 10 feet; *Passengers* 8; *Range* 350 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d8

**Agi** d2 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d8

**Init** d2 + d0; **LP** 16; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 1

**Armor** 1 W

## SEDAN

**Description** A family-sized touring vehicle. *Dimension* 15 x 5 x 4 feet; *Passengers* 5; *Range* 400 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d2 **Int** d2 **Wil** d6

**Init** d4 + d2; **LP** 12; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 3

**Armor** 1 W

## SNOW-CAT

**Description** An enclosed-cab, truck sized, fully tracked vehicle designed to move on snow. *Dimension* 10 x 6 x 7 feet; *Passengers* 4; *Range* 600 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d8

**Agi** d2 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d4

**Init** d2 + d0; **LP** 10; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 1

**Armor** 2 S

## SNOWMOBILE

**Description** A smaller, tracked vehicle for traveling over snow or rough cold-weather terrain. *Dimension* 7 x 2.5 x 3 feet; *Passengers* 2; *Range* 150 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d4 **Str** d2 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d4

**Init** d4 + d0; **LP** 6; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2

**Armor** 1 S

## SPEED BOAT

**Description** A sleek water craft designed for speed. *Dimension* 25 x 10 x 8 feet; *Passengers* 1; *Range* 250 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d4

**Init** d4 + d0; **LP** 10; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 3

**Armor** 1 W



## SPORTS CAR

**Description** A low-slung, streamlined vehicle with a powerful engine. *Dimension* 8 x 5 x 4 feet; *Passengers* 2; *Range* 225 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d8

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d0; **LP** 10; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 3

**Armor** 1 S

## SUV

**Description** A larger, four-wheeled drive vehicle with good cargo capacity and capable of traveling off-road.

*Dimension* 11 x 5 x 6 feet; *Passengers* 6; *Range* 250 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d6

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d8

**Init** d4 + d0; **LP** 14; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2

**Armor** 1 W

## SWAT VAN

**Description** A larger van stocked with military equipment and supplies. *Dimension* 12 x 7 x 9 feet;

*Passengers* 8; *Range* 350 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d10

**Agi** d2 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d6

**Init** d2 + d0; **LP** 14; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 2

**Armor** W 1, S 2

## ZODIAC

**Description** This inflatable liferaft includes an outboard motor. *Dimension* 12 x 6 x 3 feet; *Passengers* 8; *Range* 50 miles; *Suggested Lifestyle*: d4

**Agi** d4 **Str** d4 **Vit** d2 **Ale** d0 **Int** d0 **Wil** d2

**Init** d4 + d0; **LP** 6; **Scale** Large; **Speed** 1

## Where to Next?

Loaded up on weapons and stuff? Good to hear. Now, you can look ahead to **Chapter Six: The Rules** if you know what the hell to do with your guns and gear, or check back with **Chapter Four: Traits and Skills** to make sure you have what it takes to handle the stuff right. If you're looking for more gear, your best bet is to check online or in mail-order catalogs from big department stores and outfitters. Since *Supernatural* takes place in the modern day, you should be able to get a hold of anything on sale in the United States—assuming the Game Master doesn't veto it.



# CHAPTER SIX

## Rules



This may be the scariest  
down thing I've ever seen.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plj657vSisk>

Waverly Hills - Hauntings seem mostly harmless.

- Main entrance - bleeding old woman
- Third floor - Little Girl (Mary?)
- Roof - spectral voice. Kids singing "Ring Around the Rosy"
- Room 502 - Spirit of nurse, possibly dangerous.
- Death Tunnel (Body Chute) - Spectral voices, lots of EVP.
- Cafeteria and Kitchen - Harmless spirit of old guy. White coat.
- Fourth floor - poltergeist activity (slamming doors) and shadow shapes.

Freaking tourist trap!

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Scared yet? You will be! Here are some of the  
Waverly Hills Sanatorium in Louisville. All of the folk  
by years of research.

Room 502 Suicides! The ghost of Mary Hillenberg has been sighted in this  
room. Nurse Mary was pregnant out of wedlock and so depressed that she took  
her own life, thereby CONFINING her to her ghostly state. Remember, suicide  
a sin and the cause of many hauntings.

Thousands of Deaths! Although the authorities say otherwise, all evidence  
points to there being as many as 63,000 deaths over the history of Waverly  
Hills! Many of these were tuberculosis patients who SUFFERED  
Waverly Hills doctors. The bodies were buried



**Y**eah, yeah, we hear you—all these Attributes and Traits and Skills are peachy, but what the hell do you do with them? How's a hunter actually supposed to get the job done? After all, decapitating vampires, exorcising demons, and burning bones don't happen by their lonesome. What you need now are the rules. Well, you're in the right place. The core stuff is earlier in the book (see **Chapter Two: The Basics**). Everything else you Game Masters need to get the hunters out on the road is here. The Cortex System engine that hums underneath the hood of the *Supernatural Role Playing Game* helps you make sense of whatever the players want their hunters to do.

Don't stress out about the details too much—the game's about telling stories, hunting demons and werewolves, and kicking ass. If the rules get in the way of that, veer around them! You got clear and present permission to change, disregard, remove, or create rules as necessary—as long as it makes the game more fun for you and your friends.

That said—before you go tossing out the rules like yesterday's hamburger wrappers, remember that rules exist for a reason. They let a group of people share an imaginary world, giving them ways to express in play the characters and horror stories that show up in their heads as raw ideas. The rules help the players' imaginations interact; a Game Master who ignores them has lost sight of that. You're gonna stay Game Master only so long as your buddies stick around at the table. If there're no rules and you just make things up at your whim, that's gonna get old fast. Play the game, learn which rules work for you and which ones don't, and make sure everyone's on board when you make changes. That's all we're saying.

Okay, so much for disclaimers. On to the nuts and bolts of the Cortex System ... with a touch of the *Supernatural*.

## Actions Revisited

Circumstances affect the chances of success. When it's a smooth ride or when your buddy's in the passenger seat, life's a little easier. When you've got a demon-possessed highway cop breathing down your neck and your brakes don't work, taking care of business is a pain in the ass. Sometimes it also takes a lot longer to do something than just one turn, which can really amp up the tension. Here's how it all works.

## Complex Actions

Most things are resolved with simple actions—single rolls taking only a moment or two of story time. Other tasks are longer and more involved—they're called complex actions. Complex actions involve more than one step, like

open-heart surgery, rebuilding a car's engine, or Googling the lore under “werewolf” or “Lindsay Lohan.” These actions take more story time to complete, and require several dice rolls.

When a character attempts a complex action, you set the applicable Attribute, Skill, and Traits as usual. You also set a Threshold. That's like a Difficulty, but the number is much higher. The Thresholds table presents a range of numbers and their descriptive terms. The simplest Threshold (15) would be a Formidable simple action if a dude tried to do it in one turn. That's because complex actions are expected to take more than one roll.

You gotta make two more decisions: how much in-game time each roll represents, and the limit on the amount of time that can be spent. The time per roll varies widely. Taking an exam might require ten minutes per roll, while searching for cryptic information in an ancient library might require a day for each roll. The most important thing here is the time limit, however. If a hunter has unbounded time and limitless supplies, even botches are meaningless. The dude'll get the job done eventually. On the other hand, if the guy needs to figure out how to disarm the bomb before it goes off in six hours, he'd better get a move on! Failures are bad and a botch really screws the pooch. Complex actions only come into play when the amount of time that a task takes is important. If a hunter needs to do it *faster*, or if he only has one shot at it (for example, life-saving emergency surgery), start the rolling. If he could keep trying over again until he succeeds by random chance, you should just determine how long it takes and move on.

Okay, time to roll the dice. Add the result to the total accumulated so far each time you roll. Once the total passes the Threshold, the character succeeds—well, as long as he beats the time limit. Oh, and about those botches. . . .

Botches such in complex actions. They increase the Threshold by one category. A Hard (55) Threshold would become a Formidable (75) one. Two botches—at any point during the process—and the whole damned project is torpedoed. Gotta start over ... if there's time.

**TABLE 6.1: THRESHOLDS**

ACTION	THRESHOLD
Easy	15
Average	35
Hard	55
Formidable	75
Heroic	95
Incredible	115
Ridiculous	135
Impossible	155

Extraordinary successes don't apply to complex actions. A character can keep working on something to make it better, even after the Threshold is reached, but he risks a botch undermining his work. Otherwise, whether successfully achieving an unneeded Threshold does any good is up to the Game Master.

No opposed complex actions exist. Two people might be working on similar projects, but that's just a race to see who reaches the Threshold first.

Plot Points spent for a bonus die on complex actions only apply to one roll, though more can be spent each turn in order to keep rolling bonus dice.

## Change of Circumstances

Nothing's ever predictable on a hunt. Things change, and when they do Difficulties should be adjusted. Lots of conditions are beyond the direct control of the character: weather, lighting conditions, storms of unholy energy, and the like. If they favor the guy—say, finding a pizza joint in a college town in central Pennsylvania—you should lower the Difficulty. Otherwise—trying to find good Cajun food in rural Montana—the Difficulty goes up. You can simply bump the Difficulty up or down levels (Average to Easy; Hard to Formidable) or you can tweak the numbers by a flat amount.

With opposed rolls, external modifiers generally aren't applied. Figure that the circumstances apply equally to both sides and thus cancel each other out. In some cases, one side gets a benefit. It's easier to pick somebody's pocket in the crowd at a Journey reunion concert than to notice which of the night's bumps and nudges is the one that involves a snatch. In that case, you could add a bonus to the picker's side, or a penalty to the pickee's, or both, as you see fit.

Adjustments rarely should go over +4 or -4—if it's too much of a tweak, you've probably picked the wrong Difficulty in the first place.

## Personal Edge

If the change is internal—about the hunter, not the hunter's environment—you're gonna change the actual dice rolled for the action. As you probably know by now, dice are arranged in **steps**, and modifiers are represented

by positive or negative step adjustments. A +1 step changes a d8 into a d10, or a d10 into a d12. A

-2 step drops a d8 to a d4, and so on. A +1 step above a d12 adds a new d2; each step beyond that increases the new die. If penalties reduce a die below d2, it is eliminated completely and the extra penalty is ignored.

It's possible that circumstances completely eliminate all dice. In that case, the action automatically fails. Because of this, the exact die modified should be made clear. Steps due to equipment or conditions that directly affect a hunter's ability to draw on his training apply to the Skill die. Poisons, disease, injury, or conditions that have a broader effect should be applied to the Attribute die. A bonus or penalty to a Skill the character doesn't possess is ignored.

## Assistance

Sometimes you can't do the job alone. Sometimes, it's better to share the load. When this happens, other characters can help out. If two or more folks work together directly, all of them roll as usual and the totals are combined. For example, three hunters could try hauling a coffin out of an excavated grave to check the grisly contents. Now, maybe not all the helpers can get in on the task. In that case, you might want to limit the number of characters that can combine efforts at one time.

When buddies can only offer aid indirectly—talking a hunter through a procedure over the phone, or helping out in some secondary part of the process—you don't add the





rolls together. Instead, both characters roll, and the highest result is used. This is usually the case when you've got somebody with less-skilled assistants, since they give the main actor a chance to make up for a bad roll.

## Plot Points

When your back is against the wall, your friends and family are at the end of their rope, you're questioning your sanity, and your chance of survival is looking worse than Mickey Rourke's face, that's when you need to pull out all the stops. Plot Points are great stop-pullers. They let major characters, usually hunters, throw their dramatic weight around. They give the hunters—and their players—a little more control over the storyline.

Use something physical to represent your Plot Points. Poker chips, colored beads, or spent casings work well. That way you can toss something tangible around when Plot Points start flying between the players and the Game Master; handing them out and taking them back is much easier. Once everyone knows how Plot Points work, you can spend more of time describing a scene or a hunter's actions, and how the story turns on a dime for him.

## Gaining Plot Points

All hunters start with six Plot Points. His player can get more during the game, but as soon as he's got a dozen, he needs to spend some before getting more. If a player spends or earns his Plot Points in a way that makes the game more exciting and fun for everybody, his hunter might pick up an additional Advancement Points (see **Chapter Three: The Hunters** for more details on Advancement Points).

Each player should keep track of his hunters' current Plot Point totals when a game session is done—they carry over. Plot Points are the primary unit of game currency, and should get handed out for good role playing, good ideas, completing goals, and adding excitement—even if that means the going gets tougher!

### Standard Rewards

You award Plot Points as you see fit, but don't be shy about nominating other players for rewards based on good role playing or cleverness. Use these guidelines and the suggested numbers to determine how many points you should be throwing at your players, and do it often.

**Hell, yeah! (1 point):** The player came up with an awesome idea, some superior role playing, a great line, or something else so cool that everyone enjoyed it. A Plot Point award encourages more of the same. No problem if this reward comes up multiple times during a game session, or several times in a minute, even.

**Completed a Challenge (2, 3, or 4 points):** A hunter (or the hunter and his buddies) overcomes an important challenge. The more dangerous or challenging the situation, the more Plot Points are sprinkled around. All characters involved receive the reward.

**Personal Goal (3, 4, or 5 points):** The hunter achieves a personal goal—banishing the demon that killed his brother, gaining important



TABLE 6.2: BONUS DICE

PLOT POINTS SPENT	DIE TYPE	MINIMUM BONUS
1	d2	1
2	d4	2
3	d6	3
4	d8	4
5	d10	5
6	d12	6
7	d12+d2	7
8	d12+d4	8
9	d12+d6	9
10	d12+d8	10
11	d12+d10	11
12	d12+d12	12

information, or almost anything else significant to him in a dramatic sense. The numbers suggested are for smaller stories and goals; life-long dreams, when accomplished, should merit an even larger reward. The hunter's personal goal might also count as a "challenge" reward situation for the rest of the group, if they were somehow involved.

**Team Goal (4, 5, or 6 points):** This reward should go to each player when the hunting team completes an important, challenging mission. When they manage to uncover the monster, stomp its ass, and have time afterward for a drink at the Roadhouse, everyone deserves a reward for moving the game forward.

## Complication Rewards

A hunter's Complications do just that—they complicate. If played well, they should be a regular source of Plot Points. Suffering from problems should give kick-backs once per situation—Dean's scared of flying, but he shouldn't get Plot Points handed to him every five minutes he's on a transcontinental flight. Complication rewards come up in any number of ways, but can amount to 1–3 per session per player.

**Character Initiated:** Many Complications are personality quirks, and they come up when a player role plays the hunter's less-than-perfect side. When this happens and it isn't just fishing, you should award Plot Points.

**Game Master Initiated:** Complications from a hunter's background or personal history sound off when you choose. If a story arc or adventure revolves around them, Plot Points are awarded when the root problem is revealed, not every time the Complication pops up.

**Situational:** Some Complications require a trigger, usually out of a player's direct control. You should award Plot Points only if the Complication places the hunter in direct danger, or causes him a significant difficulty.

**Constants:** Some Complications cause ongoing or unavoidable problems—like Blind or a missing a limb. In these cases, Plot Points aren't awarded in ordinary, day-to-day situations. Rather, you grant them when the Complication becomes a significant hindrance.

**Unanticipated:** Sometimes, the plotline places one hunter in a particularly dangerous situation. Completely screws him over, with no chance of escape. Perhaps you decide that his food was recently poisoned, or he was the one exposed to the nearly fatal disease. This might be worth a few extra Plot Points, even if no specific Complication brings on the problems. This should be rare, reserved for the extreme circumstances when you feel a specific hunter has been singled out for trouble, with little or no chance to avoid it. Hunters don't get Plot Points every time something bad happens to them! That goes with the territory.

## Spending Plot Points

If the players got a lot of Plot Points sitting around, things are going too well. You should ramp things up a bit—time for the crap to hit the fan. Here's how those points can help when that happens.

## Improving Actions

Plot Points can be spent before a roll to add an extra die. The more points spent, the bigger the die—a single Plot Point adds a d2, two Plot Points add a d4, and so on. This die becomes part of the roll, just like any other, and is added to the total. The Plot Point die does have one special trait: it can't roll lower than the number of Plot Points spent on it (half the maximum value of the die). If the result is a lower number, it counts as equal to the points spent. When two dice are added by spending seven or more Plot Points, or by having step bonuses applied to a die bought with Plot Points, the *total cost* is the minimum *total result*, not the minimum result on each die.

## Saving Your Bacon

Sometimes, a hunter fails when he least expects it, and often when he can least afford to. In these situations, a player can spend Plot Points after the die roll to increase the final total. Hindsight has a cost, though. Each Plot Point spent this way adds just one point to the total. Not

**TABLE 6.3: PLOT POINTS AND STORY IMPACT**

COST	IMPACT
1–2	Inconsequential: Of course there's some room in the trunk of the car.
3–4	Minor: Actually, there's probably a spare bag of rock salt in there.
5–6	Moderate: Rock salt AND a shotgun I borrowed from Uncle Jed.
7–8	Significant: You remember Uncle Jed. Retired hunter? I'm sure he's got an amulet or two stashed in with the salt and the gun.
9–10	Major: Hold on. I think that's Uncle Jed pulling up in front of us. Good timing!
11+	Defining: Uncle Jed's brought his hunter buddies and the Lesser Key of Solomon, too! What are the odds?



as valuable a windfall as if he had spent them before rolling (since that nets up to twice the value of the Plot Points), but it's a last resort for when he's already failed at everything else.

## Staying Alive

There's a good chance a hunter will take a wound that knocks him out or kills him outright. Or maybe the player just wants to avoid damage entirely! When this happens, a player can spend Plot Points to "realize" that the hunter just took a flesh wound. That can only be done when damage is declared, not latter on. The plot change can't heal anyone—it just makes the blow less devastating than it seemed.

When Plot Points are spent this way, the player buys a bonus die just like when he tries to improve actions. This time, however, the roll result is subtracted from the damage taken. Wound damage is reduced first; any remaining points drop Stun damage.

## Assets

Some Assets require a hunter to spend Plot Points to activate them or the special abilities they grant. Others increase the total number of Plot Points counted when they are spent on certain rolls. See the Asset descriptions in **Chapter Four: Traits & Skills** for details.

## Story Manipulation

For the most part, you, the Game Master, sketch out the plot and guide the action. Players get in the mix through their hunter's actions, but that isn't the only means they have to impact the storytelling. Plot Points allow players to modify the story in small ways. Mostly, they do this to help the gang. Whatever the case, it should always be done to make the game more interesting and fun for the players (though not necessarily the hunters).

Players shouldn't get cocky. You always have the power to veto plot-twisting Plot Points if they undermine the storyline. For example, Plot Points can't change core aspects of the tale, alter the very nature of a hunter, overturn prior events, or wrap the adventure up in a neat package.

Refer to the Plot Points and Story Impact table for an idea of how much this costs. In addition, here's a list of ways the players might use Plot Points to add their own brand of awesome to the story.

## OLD FRIENDS

Players can spend Plot Points to bring in a supporting character to help out for the scene, somebody who may not have appeared in the game before but who could, within reason, be available. This is different from the Contacts Asset in that the Trait benefits are pretty much always available, but a Plot Point-powered supporting character's just a one-shot benefit. You might even like this

new character so much you make him a regular; Bobby Singer is a good example of the sort of supporting character who, while he's only got a small part early on, gets more significant story time later.

## IT'S IN THE TRUNK

One thing that you can always count on is that a *Supernatural* adventure's not about finding a magical widget to solve the mystery, as much as it is about figuring out what the mystery is and having the tools of the job on hand to do it. **Chapter Five: The Gear** is full of useful stuff, but the players don't always need to write down everything that's stored in their arsenal of hunter gear. Have them spend Plot Points and, assuming you agree, they've got just the right thing stashed underneath the case of ammo and next to the bag of rock salt. They shouldn't count on having this next time, though. As a story edit, it's there for the story, so when the story's over it's gone.

## THERE'S A RITUAL FOR THAT

A good hunter's got a supply of rituals and occult texts around, especially if he has a d6 or higher in Lore or knows somebody that does. At least, that's a good justification for using Plot Points to grab the right book. It doesn't mean the hunters will be able to find what they want, or pull off carrying out the ritual, since they're not students at Hogwarts or anything. But if you don't want to sweat the hassle of playing out the scene of driving to a college campus to raid a library's Rare Books Room, let them spend the Plot Points and away you go.

## ONE MORE BULLET IN THE CHAMBER

Scene edits are also useful if a fact hasn't already been established. In other words, if you haven't come out and said yet how many bullets the hunters have left in the gun they just picked up from the bad guy, or nobody has revealed so far what songs are stored on the MP3 player, or even what's on sale at the drug store, go ahead and let them spend those Plot Points. There's always one more bullet in the chamber, a classic rock song they like on the iPod, and half price on last month's Men's Sophisticates.

Make sure Plot Points are only spent to alter the story in convincing ways, to stretch things a little bit, or to add or subtract subtle details. Sure, the hunters may have been to the Podunk town they're investigating before, when they were kids and on a road trip with their parents. Sure, the hunters might know the local mechanic in the Podunk town because their parents' station wagon broke down here and they struck up a friendship with the guy. But having the hunters' background also include knowing the Chief of Police, the mayor, half the shop owners, and even the primary suspect in the case because their parents like to send a lot of Christmas cards? No dice.

When a player wants to spend Plot Points to change the story, they make a suggestion and hand you the number of Plot Points he is willing to

spend, based on how far he thinks he is stretching things. If you agree, you keep the Plot Points and incorporate the suggestion—perhaps altered as you see fit. Remind the player that you have a better idea what's coming, so he needs to cut you some slack. If you like the idea, but think the payment is too light, you could reduce the impact and use it that way, or ask for more Plot Points. If you're not buying any of the player's line, simply reject the Plot Point bribe and hand them back. Give him an extra one, too, for all his trouble ... or the trouble he's about to get into.

Keep in mind that Plot Points are never a license to derail the story, to ruin another player's fun, or to destroy the adventure or an important premise of the campaign.

## Combat

Combat's an art, not a science. Actually, it isn't even very artistic. It's brutal, bloody, and painful—it's definitely not pretty, nor is it for those with weak stomachs. For the most part, combat involves opposed actions—whoever rolls higher does better. Keep that in mind, and the rest should fall into place.

You usually jump into the combat rules when things get violent, but not always. Whenever things just get tense, when you need to know who acts first, what happens before what, or how quickly someone can respond, the combat rules help organize things—they zoom in to moment-by-moment.

## The Turn

Time during tense situations is broken down into "combat turns" or just "turns." As in, "it's my turn now to punch you in the breadbasket." Turns last approximately three seconds—just long enough for a hunter (or your bad guys) to do one, or maybe two, different things. Combat moves fast. Players might spend time planning, plotting, and deciding on the best possible action, but their hunters don't have that luxury. In order to keep from getting bogged down, you should encourage players to make snappy decisions and deal with the consequences. Hesitate too much, and the hunter loses the chance to act that turn. It's the price of delaying everybody else's instant gratification. Give him a Plot Point and tell him to get his act together.

## Initiative

When combat starts, you decide who acts first. Usually, it's the character initiating the action, hostile or otherwise. That dude makes one action right away. After that, all the players roll their hunters' Initiative dice (Agility + Alertness), and you do the same for the opponents, allies, and incidental characters. To speed things up, you can roll Initiative once for each type of character—one roll for all the vampires, another roll for all the nightclub patrons, and a third roll for the demon-possessed nightclub owner. For the rest of the encounter or scene, **the characters keep their initiative rolls**, unless you decide that circumstances call for a new set of rolls.

Each turn, hunters and everybody else acts in order of Initiative result—highest goes first, followed by next highest, and so on down the line. Should a player wish, at the beginning of a subsequent turn, he can spend one Plot Point to reroll his hunter's Initiative. The reroll is used for the remainder of the fight if it's higher than the original Initiative; it's ignored if it's lower.

If two characters have the same Initiative result, they act at the same time. If a finer distinction is needed, the tied guys roll Agility or Alertness (depending on what's going on) in an opposed action until an order is established.

## Actions in Combat

A character can do all kinds of things during a turn. He can't do anything that takes longer than a few seconds, but otherwise damn near anything is possible. Players should use their





imaginations and have their hunters act as they see fit. Your job is to let them get away with lots of cool stuff. Just gotta rein them in from time to time so the storyline plays out smoothly.

An important distinction in the *Supernatural* game is whether a hunter's activity during a turn is an action or not. Actions take some degree of concentration. One action is generally all a character can perform in one turn without suffering penalties.

Certain activities don't amount to actions. They're too short, automatic, or otherwise don't occupy enough attention. Shouting a brief warning or order, looking around quickly, or anything else that doesn't actually interfere with a character's ability to perform other tasks fits in here. Call 'em nonactions.

When an activity isn't an action, it can be done at any time, even during another dude's turn. Nonactions can be combined too, as much as makes sense—if you start to see a player getting greedy with “free” action, shut him down or charge him an action. A hunter can't speak more than a few seconds' worth of words during a turn, for instance. A guy starts getting all wordy, call it that turn's action.

Everything else a character does counts as an action. Taking a shot or a swing, diving for cover, steering a bus, staunching the blood oozing from his stomach, sneaking past the vampire, sweet-talking the bartender out of a drink without paying—all these and more are actions. They take time and concentration.

For the most part, a hunter's actions take place during his turn in the Initiative order. Some actions, also called reactions, can occur during somebody else's turn, but this usually only applies to things like dodging an enemy's attack or diving for cover from a grenade blast.

Also, opposed rolls most often require actions from both sides. Some situations—a hunter uses an action to sneak by some guards; the guards roll their Perception as a nonaction—vary from that general rule. You make the call, as usual.

Actions can't be saved from one turn to another, and nobody can hold his turn until later in the same initiative cycle, waiting to declare his actions. Turns happen too fast for that to be possible; any hesitation means the character has to wait until the next turn to act.

## Multiple Actions

It's possible for a character to take multiple actions in one turn. Again, the watchword is “sensible”—keep a close eye on multiple actions in a turn. Again, shut them down if they get abusive. Combatants have only three seconds to act—only so much can be done in that time. They can't divide their concentration too far. If you think a hunter is attempting too many things at once, cut him off at an appropriate number of actions. As a general rule of thumb, attempting three separate actions is pushing the limit. Certain actions almost certainly chew up an

# Chases

Chases can be exciting—pounding down a dock, along a street, or through dusty corridors, one step ahead of a foe! Sure, the hunter might be the one doing the chasing, but let's be real here. This is how these scenes play out.

First, check to see if one person (or group) is clearly faster than the other. Being faster usually means that character is gonna win the chase, whether it's getting away or running the other side down. No rolls are necessary most of the time, though navigating rough or dangerous terrain at full speed might require a roll of some kind—screwing up here means the opponent wins the chase.

If both opponents have the same speed, the outcome ain't a given. The chase becomes a series of simple actions that are compared (they aren't actually opposed actions). The “distance” between the two sides is abstracted onto a sliding scale:



When the chase begins, follow these three easy steps:

1. Set starting distance (usually either Close or Far).

2. Each turn, at the same time, each character rolls for his movement. They all usually make the same roll, and the situation determines the dice used and the Difficulty. Flat, clear terrain is Easy and uses Strength + Athletics/Running; a hillside or narrow ship's corridors would be Average and uses Alertness + Athletics/Running; quickly climbing a ladder up to a catwalk is Hard and uses Agility + Athletics/Climbing.

3. If both groups succeed, fail, or gain extraordinary successes, they remain at the same distance. If one succeeds and the other fails, or one succeeds and the other achieves an extraordinary success, the distance slides one level in the favor of the winner. If one fails and the other gets an extraordinary success, the distance slides two levels in the favor of the winner. When the distance reaches Caught, the two sides are close enough to fight it out; the chase ends in favor of the chasers. If the distance reaches Escaped, the chasers are left behind or lost—the chased should be allowed at least long enough to catch their breath before the chasers catch up or find them again.

Each turn that one side moves faster than the other (for example, if one side runs out of breath and is forced to stop sprinting or running, or chooses to move more slowly), the distance automatically slides one extra level in their favor for each speed level (standing still, walking, running, sprinting) of difference.

entire turn —struggling with Jenny Greenteeth while she's trying to pull you under the water, or trying to hotwire a brand new car. In those cases, multiple actions just aren't gonna happen.

When a hunter is allowed to take more than one action, he's better earlier than later. The first action gets no penalty. Every action after that labors under a cumulative -1 Skill step. If this penalty reduces a Skill die to nothing, the action can't be tried. If an action doesn't require a roll of the dice, such as running, it still increases the penalty for any other actions performed after it in that turn. Not too surprisingly, something that isn't an action (i.e., a nonaction) doesn't count toward multiple action penalties. At the end of the day, again, you make the call.

## Movement

For the most part, characters in the *Supernatural RPG* don't need to worry about movement. If a hunter needs to walk across a room to look at a strange symbol carved into the oak paneling, or climb up a ladder to get into the attic of a creepy old house, just assumes it happens and move on. Sometimes, though, it's important to know how far that hunter can move in a given amount of time. This usually happens during tense moments or action sequences.

### Walking

Characters walk their base movement in one turn. For most, base movement is equal to 15 feet, but that might be altered by Traits. Walking doesn't count as an action. You can lump it in with the general intent of any other action the hunter's taking.

### Running

Running doubles a dude's base movement (usually 30 feet) in one turn. This does count as an action.

A character can run for a number of minutes equal to the maximum result on his Vitality die. After that, he must slow to a walk for at least 10 minutes, or rest for five minutes, before he catches his breath.

### Sprinting

Sprinting triples base movement (usually to 45 feet per turn). This counts as an action, and also prevents all other actions during the turn—shooting and reloading isn't possible when moving at this rate. Dodging's also impossible, but a guy gets to use his innate defense with a +1 Attribute step.

A runner can sprint for a number of turns equal to the maximum result of his Vitality + Athletics/Running dice.

After that, he can't sprint or run, and must slow to a walk for at least 10 minutes, or rest for five minutes, before he catches his breath.

## Jumping

Adults can jump gaps of less than three feet from a standing start, or five feet with a moving start. No roll is needed. In a dangerous situation, over longer distances, or when an action is hindered, a roll is made, usually Strength + Athletics/Jumping. The Jump Difficulties Table shows how tough it is to clear a certain distance in feet, depending on the leaper's movement before the jump (a dash means the jump isn't gonna happen under any circumstances). Jumping counts as an action.

TABLE 6.4: JUMP DIFFICULTIES

DIFFICULTY NUMBER	DISTANCE (STANDING)	DISTANCE (RUNNING)
3	3 feet	5 feet
7	5 feet	8 feet
11	7 feet	12 feet
15	9 feet	16 feet
19	11 feet	18 feet
23	—	20 feet
27	—	22 feet
31	—	25 feet

## Climbing

If a climber is in a controlled environment and using safety equipment, like the local gym, or he's tackling a particularly easy tree or ladder, no climbing action is needed. Otherwise, use Strength + Athletics/Climbing. The Difficulty depends on the surface—a tree with many limbs might be Easy, the side of a house would be Hard. The roll is made at the start of the climb, and the climber doesn't need to roll again unless conditions change (an attack, harsh weather sets in, etc.) or if he's climbing for more than a minute. If things get tense, you can call for a roll each turn, or each turn something impedes the climber (say, a successful attack). Climbing counts as an action.

A character can move vertically or horizontally five feet per turn if climbing "freestyle"—on an unprepared surface. If using a knotted rope, ladder, or similar aid, 10 feet per turn can be covered going up, 15 feet going down.

A climber can't dodge or perform other actions, but you can vary that if it seems right. The dude does apply his innate defense against attacks he is aware of, as usual.

## Attacking a Target

Attacks always use Skills. A player rolls the appropriate combo of Attribute and Skill, and if the result equals or exceeds the Difficulty, the attack is successful. Bring on the pain. Attacks at range generally use Agility or Alertness and





a Skill; close combat attacks (with or without a weapon) use Strength or Agility and a Skill. The nature of the attack or the weapon used determines which Attribute you call for on the roll. You could even change your mind from one turn to the next, depending on what's going down.

The Difficulty of hitting an unmoving or unaware human-sized target is Easy. Most times, the target's gonna try to get out of the way. In that case, the Difficulty depends on the target's choice of defense.

The result of the dice roll sets the attack's initial damage. Subtract the Difficulty of the defense from the attack roll result. If it's zero, no harm, no foul. Otherwise, the difference is almost always Basic type damage.

If the attack has a damage die (such as when a weapon is used), roll that and apply it in addition to the Basic damage. Armor, if any, then reduces the damage (see page 89).

## Attacking at Range

If you're serious about shooting someone you've gotta get as close as possible. Point blank range is 15 feet for projectile weapons, five feet for thrown weapons. Getting that close grants a +1 Skill step. Beyond that, accuracy depends on a weapon's range increment. For each range

increment beyond the first, the attack's Difficulty increases by two. Thus, at four range increments, the Difficulty is six points higher. Refer to the Ranges Table for a brief summary.

## Not Being Hit

Targets don't just stand there and take it, unless they're impervious to mortal weapons, unconscious, or dead. That means the Difficulty of an attack is rarely the default Easy. The defender's choices depend upon the situation and how much concentration is devoted to defense. As with attacks, most defenses combine an Attribute and a Skill.

## Innate Defense

If a hunter's aware of somebody trying to attack him, or is moving around at walking speed or faster, the player can roll Agility dice for him and substitute the result for the Difficulty of the attack. Innate defense can't be botched, but the character has to use the new result of the die even if it is less than 3—he zipped when he should have zagged, in other words. You might give a +1 or +2 Attribute step to Agility if the hunter is moving quickly or in an unexpected direction, or if he is moving through areas with some cover. Innate defense rolls are nonactions.

## Blocking

Keep your guard up, dude. Blocking intercepts an attack with limbs, weapons, shields, or any object that's handy. Roll Agility + close combat Skill/Specialty. If the hunter's got some kind of shield, use Melee Weapons (and Shield Specialty, on the off chance that the guy's former SCA) with a +1 to +4 Skill step. The result is the attacker's Difficulty. Blocking is a reaction.

It's possible to block a weapon while unarmed—it just isn't too smart. If successful, the defender takes damage (minus armor, if any) from the damage die the weapon would have inflicted on a hit. Better than getting stabbed someplace more vital, but it still hurts like hell.

Guns and ranged attacks can't be blocked. A sturdy enough shield might provide cover (see More Rules for Defense, page 88).

## Dodging

You live longer out of an enemy's line of fire. Ducking, leaning, sidestepping, jumping to the side—dodging is all that. Roll Agility + Athletics/Dodge; the result's an opponent's new attack Difficulty. Pretty much the same as innate defense, but dodging allows a character to use Skills where innate defense doesn't. Oh, and dodging can be increased with Plot Points.

Dodging is usually a reaction. You might allow a hunter to throw himself to the ground as a nonaction, but no further movement or dodging is possible that turn. Hitting the dirt is rolled as a regular dodge. After that, the hunter's prone. This gets him out of the way fast, but can cause problems later.

## More Rules for Attacks

The following rules expand on the basic combat rules for making an attack.

### Aiming

A character can aim a ranged weapon for up to three combat turns, as long as he doesn't do anything else (some nonactions, like talking, might fly; walking or hitting the dirt are out). Aiming grants a +1 Skill step for each turn spent at it. If distracted before he gets off the shot, the aimer loses the bonus unless he makes an Average Willpower + Discipline/Concentration roll, with a -1 Skill step for each turn spent aiming.

### Called Shots

Called shots target a specific part of the body or other small area or object. They suffer penalties to hit, but bring on a world of hurt. A called strike can be done at range, or with a close combat attack.

**Full Target:** In general, assailants target the central body mass—or, an object about the size of a person, doorway, etc. This kind of attack doesn't change the Difficulty.

**Moderate Target:** Targeting a leg, arm, or torso, or an object about the size of a chair. The Difficulty of the attack action increases by four.

**Small Target:** Attacking a hand, foot, or head, or an object about the size of a book, rifle, or helmet. The Difficulty of the attack action increases by eight.

**Miniscule Target:** Targeting something as small as a heart, kneecap, or eye (or doorknob, poolball, Cipher visor, etc) raises the Difficulty by twelve.

Called shots to specific body parts cause greater harm. As usual, you have the final call, but some suggestions follow.

**Leg/Arm:** The limb is useless, which may reduce or eliminate movement or the ability to take certain actions. The damage inflicted is dropped from Wound to Basic, or from Basic to Stun, depending on the initial weapon damage type.

**Torso/Stomach/Back:** The target makes an Endurance roll against the attack roll. If he fails, the target is stunned for two turns (see page 92).

**Vital Area:** When a vital area is hit, the attack's weapon damage die gains +1 step for every four points the attack roll topped the Difficulty, and all damage is Wound. Making a called shot to a vital area with an unarmed attack causes Basic damage (improved from Stun), and the attack's weapon damage die starts at d0. If the attacker has the Brawler Asset, his weapon damage die is his Trait die and it deals Wound damage, although the remainder of the damage is still Basic. Any Wound damage inflicted by a called shot to a vital area (either directly or because of Basic damage) also causes the target to start bleeding (see page 92).

### Covering

Covering an area is a good way to keep the bad guys from moving into it. If anyone enters that area (passes through a doorway, comes around the corner, stands up from behind the barricade, etc), the coverer starts swinging or firing. Covering is an action, and the area covered must

be declared when it starts—as a rough guide, a character can't cover an area much larger than the width of a roadside diner or the front porch of a suburban home.

If something happens in the area, the coverer can act immediately even when it's not his turn. If nothing happens, he loses his chance to perform any action until his Initiative comes up again. Covering can carry over from turn to turn as long as the character performs no other action during that time (nonactions, like talking, are possible), or moves out of range. However, this doesn't accumulate an aiming bonus.

When a player declares a covering attack against a single target, rather than a general area, it's called a threat.





If that sucker moves or does something he's not supposed to, the coverer can attack immediately even if it isn't his turn. Threatening someone for more than one turn *does* grant aiming bonuses. Also, threatening a person adds a +2 Skill step to any attempts made by the attacker to intimidate the target, or anyone who cares about the target in a significant way.

## Crowds

Anyone who fires into a crowd is either a criminal or really confident of his aim. When firing at a target in a crowd, or at someone engaged in close combat, any near miss is a problem. A roll that comes up with all dice showing ones or twos is considered a botch (instead of just ones). Botching becomes a separate, unintentional attack action against a nearby target determined either randomly or by you. Also, you've got a damned good reason for the whole crowd to get very, very pissed at the attacker.

## Disarming

Getting rid of the other guy's weapon does wonders for making a fight easier. A character can attempt to disarm an opponent's hand-held weapons, but the attack suffers a -2 Skill step. It's even harder for a ranged weapon; that's a -4 Skill step. If the attack succeeds, no damage is inflicted but the target has to make a Hard Agility + (Weapon Skill) roll. If he fails, he drops the weapon. He can pick it up again on his next turn, but this counts as an action. An extraordinary success on the disarm roll means the weapon, if dropped, is either out of reach or disabled.

## Extraordinary Successes and Damage

Getting busted up is always bad, but some injuries make doctors reach for the insurance forms or speed-dial a priest. A bullet might put a hole in you, but if it pierces a lung or a kidney you've had it. A club could just leave some nasty bruises, or you could wind up with a concussion. That's how extraordinary success works with damage.

If an attack results in an extraordinary success, the victim makes an Average Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) roll. Success means nothing unusual happens. If he fails, the victim takes the damage and an additional effect based on the type of damage inflicted:

**Basic:** The victim breaks a limb (which is useless until treated), or is blinded, deafened, or under some similar condition. You determine the exact nature of the injury, depending on the situation, but it's going to affect the character's ability to do lots of things.

**Stun:** The victim immediately falls unconscious and takes a number of points of Shock equal to the Stun inflicted during the attack. Doesn't matter if the dude's not taken enough Stun to put him out! He's down and out.

**Wound:** The victim suffers a serious injury. Without successful treatment, he starts bleeding (see page 92).

## Feinting

Feints only happen in close combat and use opposed rolls. The trickster goes with an Intelligence + combat Skill or Specialty roll; the defender uses Alertness + combat Skill/Specialty. If the attacker is successful, the defender can use only innate defense against the next strike. The feint effect lasts until the end of the attacker's next turn. You can also combine this with disarming somebody, too, since that's technically an attack. Make as if you're going for something else, then switch direction and knock the gun from the guy. Have fun with it.

## Grappling

Grabbing someone requires an Agility + Unarmed Combat/Specialty roll. The target defends using Agility + Unarmed Combat/Specialty. A player can make a case for using Strength + Unarmed Combat/Specialty when attacking, but he'll take a -2 Skill step penalty. If this drops the hunter to less than d0 Skill, he can't try it.

If a character succeeds at a grapple action, no damage is inflicted, but his opponent is an Easy target for close combat attacks. The grappler can start doing other things, like squeezing the air out of the defender (Strength + Unarmed Combat/Grappling attack against the defender's Vitality + Unarmed Combat/Grappling). Maintaining the grapple doesn't count as an action, but the defender is the only guy the grappler can attack. In order to escape a grapple, the defender can go the brute way out, with Strength + Athletics, or go for slippery and use Agility + Athletics, opposed by the Strength or Agility of the grappler (plus Unarmed Combat/Grappling).

A grapple can also be used to push or knock over a defender, making him prone. In that case, the grappler can maintain the hold or release the defender. Either way, the attacker falls prone as well.

## Improvised Weapons

Sometimes a quality weapon just isn't at hand. When someone grabs a bottle, chair, stick, crowbar, or other improvised weapon, you decide the effect. The more unwieldy the item, the greater the Skill step it applies (-1 for a chairleg or bottle, to -4 for a bar fridge or toaster oven). Most common items also have fairly small damage dice. On the other hand, the weapon does Basic, not just Stun damage (as fighting unarmed does).

The range increments listed in **Chapter Five: The Gear** only apply if a weapon is used as intended, and is designed for such use. A gun's normal range increment means zilch when it's tossed. A pointy piece of metal may cause damage like a knife but it sure doesn't throw like one. Again, improvised weapon modifications apply.

## Fighting Prone

A close combat attack while prone incurs a -2 Attribute step. Damn hard to get into the right position. A ranged attack might not have the same problem, depending on the circumstances and your call.

## Sneak Attack

Attacking from behind or on an unaware target isn't nice, but hunting and nice don't hang out much. In that case, the target Difficulty is Easy, unless the target's moving around enough to deserve an innate defense roll. Ambushing gets really ugly if the attacker has time to aim.

## Throwing

Hurling a weapon built for tossing (such as a throwing knife) is handled like any other ranged attack. The attack might use Strength or Agility, depending on the weapon. Chucking a grenade or other explosive has an Average Difficulty to hit the correct area, up to 100 feet away. If the target is beyond 100 feet, the thrower also has to make a Strength + Athletics/Throwing (or other Skill) roll. The maximum distance he reaches is  $(100 + \text{roll result})$  in feet; if that isn't enough, it falls short. If the thrower fails the Average roll to target the right area, it lands where you say.

## Two-Weapon Fighting

Fighting with a weapon in each hand imposes a -2 Attribute step on attacks using the off-hand weapon. The attack with the primary hand is one action; the off-hand attack is a second one—yep, we're talking multiple action penalties (see page 83). The Two-Handed Fighting Asset from **Chapter Four: Traits & Skills** eliminates the off-

hand penalty, and allows a special double attack. Only the highest weapon damage die applies, however—the other weapon is more or less being used to unbalance or feint the target.

## Unarmed Combat

It's much harder to kill someone by slugging him than it is by hitting him with something hard, sharp, or explosive. Resolve unarmed combat just like other kinds of close combat, but the damage is all Stun, instead of Basic. Where a situation increases a weapon's damage dice by steps, treat unarmed attacks as d0 Stun—any increase raises this to an actual die type.

Unarmed combat damage can be improved with the Brawler Asset from **Chapter Four: Traits & Skills**.

## Visibility

Smoke, fog, and dim light making tagging a target much harder. Darkness or blindness is a real bummer.

**Dim Light, Thin Smoke/Fog:** The Difficulty of all attacks or attempts to see beyond 10 feet (except autofire) increases by two.

**Dark, Thick Smoke/Fog:** The Difficulty of all attacks or attempts to see beyond 10 feet (except spray fire) increases by four.

**Pitch Black, Blinded:** Can't hit what you can see. In that case, it's all about finding some other way to acquire the target. An Alertness + Perception roll locates a target in conditions of zero visibility. The Difficulty is Average for a target that is shouting or making a lot of noise, Hard for anyone talking or making a moderate amount of noise, Heroic for someone not moving or making much noise, and Ridiculous for sneaky types who make Covert/Stealth rolls (the Perception roll result must also be higher than the target's Covert/Steal roll result). Success allows the searcher to make an attack on his target. The actual attack action is still affected by poor visibility—add four to the Difficulty of any close combat attack action and six to the Difficulty of any ranged attack.

## More Rules for Defense

The following rules handle cases where more than just diving out of the way is required.

### Cover

Here's a helpful tip—put a hard object, as large as possible, between you and danger. It's probably the best defense short of not being there at all. Cover doesn't use rolls—it adds





a flat number to a character's defense, depending upon how much concealment is around. Hard objects also protect against explosive damage. There're four levels of cover (five, if you count sucking dirt).

**Light Cover:** Up to half the body is covered. This adds two to the defense Difficulty. Also, remove one die of explosive damage.

**Medium Cover:** More than half the target is safe. Add four to the defense Difficulty. Drop two dice of explosive damage.

**Heavy Cover:** Almost all the defender is protected. Add six to the defense Difficulty. Three dice of explosive damage are left off.

**Total Cover:** Target can't be hit. If a hit is possible for some reason (defender is peeking through a hole in a bulkhead), or might do damage anyway (a heavy, but portable piece of metal could push back on the target), add eight to the defense Difficulty. Explosive damage loses four dice. Cover bonuses only apply if you think the blocking object is tough enough. Substances that conceal but don't block fully are treated as armor.

Cover bonuses can be avoided by using a Called Shot. That's possible only against a body part not behind cover. The defense doesn't get the bonus from Cover, but the attacker's Skill dice suffer normal Called Shot penalties.

**Prone:** Being prone is treated as light cover, except it removes two dice from nearby explosions instead of one. Unless a dude is on top of the explosive, that is, in which case that brave chump takes the maximum possible damage, and reduces damage by one die for everyone else. On the flip side, being flat on the ground sucks against close combat attacks. An attacker gains a +2 Skill step. The defender can't dodge or use innate defense. Depending on the situation, even blocking might not be possible. Best get the hell up off the ground!

## Protective Gear

Staying behind large, hard objects is best. If that isn't possible, strapping on a bulletproof vest or something even better is the way to go. Armor doesn't stop the hit like cover does, it just make the hurt less bad. Hunters don't wear a heck of a lot of armor, although the thought may occur to them from time to time. Truth is, a lot of supernatural critters aren't impressed by armor. That's something to think about before the hunters rip off an army surplus warehouse for Kevlar.

**Chapter Five: The Gear** lists the Armor Rating of certain types of armor. You make the call on the Armor Rating of any *ad hoc* armor (e.g., an object that isn't hard enough to amount to cover). That Armor Rating is subtracted from any damage inflicted. Wound damage goes down first, then Stun damage. Called shots to areas not covered by armor, and attacks that garner exceptional successes ignore armor.

Heavier body armor interferes with movement, range of motion, and perception. Armor like that applies a negative step to Agility, Alertness, or any other rolls you deem proper. The penalties shouldn't be applied blindly however; consider the type of armor and how it could impair a character's actions.

## Special Situations

You thought we were done with the special rules for combat? Not quite. Here's a grab-bag of other things that can crop up from time to time.

### Automatic Weapons

Some guns can fire more rapidly than one bullet per trigger-pull. **Chapter Five: The Gear** tells whether a weapon can fire bursts, autofire, or spray. If not, each shot is an action.

**Burst:** The attacker fires three bullets using one attack action against one target. The weapon's damage die advances by +1 step. Burst fire counts as one action, but a character can't do it more than twice each turn. Called shots can't be bursts, and burst can't be aimed.

**Autofire:** Autofire is a single attack roll that burns a third of the weapon's ammo against a single target. The weapon's damage die gains a +4 step. Can't take any other actions in the same turn—that includes dodging or moving. Autofire can't be used for called shots or benefit from aiming.

**Spray:** Spray fire uses as many bullets as autofire but directs them at an area roughly five- to ten-feet wide, rather than a single target. The attack is a single sustained action. Everybody in the area, or who moves through the area until the attacker's next turn has to defend against the attack. Cover bonuses to Difficulty are halved (rounding up) and visibility penalties are reduced by two in the face of spray fire. Any successful hit gains a +2 step to the weapon's damage die. Like autofire, spray fire prevents the character from taking any other actions in the turn, can't be used for called shots, and can't be aimed.

If the sprayer is knocked unconscious, knocked aside, disarmed, or otherwise prevented from standing there and unloading his weapon, the target area stops being dangerous to enter or move through.

Spray fire can also be used as suppressive fire, penalizing everyone in the target area by forcing multiple action penalties. It's also hard to concentrate when standing in a hallway filled with bullets, so the Difficulty of any action that requires focus or concentration is increased by two.

### Breaking Objects

Maneuvering is great, but sometimes you just gotta go through something. When a hunter needs to hack through a door, smash a box open, or otherwise break stuff, the attack is handled just like any

other. Objects have Armor Ratings and Life Points, but are immune to Stun damage. Once the number of Wounds taken by the object equals its Life Points, it's wrecked. You set the object's specs using the following as illustrative examples.

**Handcuffs:** Armor Value 6, Life Points 2.

**Rope:** Armor Value 2, Life Points 2.

**Standard Door:** Armor Value 4, Life Points 6.

**Reinforced Door:** Armor Value 10, Life Points 8.

## Drawing a Weapon

Drawing a weapon is an action, unless a Trait says otherwise. That means drawing and firing in the same turn imposes a multiple action penalty.

## Explosions

Grenades, missiles, mining charges, ordnance, and cars set on fire—lots of things go boom. The very best defense is to be nowhere near.

Explosions or explosive weapons list a number of damage dice and a blast increment. Anyone within one blast increment suffers the full damage rolled. Those beyond one increment but within two increments take one less die (the one with the highest roll) of damage. Keep moving out one blast increment at a time, always removing the die with the highest result, until no more dice are left.

If circumstances create a die step to damage in an explosive attack, the damage die type is affected, not the number of dice rolled. Thus, a +1 step to weapon damage on an explosive charge that deals 3d6 increases the damage to 3d8. Also, the attack roll with a grenade or similar explosive is made to deliver the package, not to cause damage—there is no initial damage, unless the grenade hits someone in the head.

If a hunter's a big damn hero and throws himself onto a small explosive, like a grenade, that selfless act of sacrifice removes the highest die from the damage ... applied to others. The belly flopper's gonna take full damage. TV shows that dispel urban legends and commonly-held beliefs might say this isn't how it works, but those bozos don't think vampires and werewolves are real, either.

## Restraints

Prisoners are bound, handcuffed, or otherwise restrained for a reason. A target that can't move is an Easy Difficulty to hit. If a guy's hands are bound, he suffers a -2 Skill step penalty to attack rolls made with pistols and close combat weapons. He can't use any form of rifle, and is extremely limited in terms of non-combat actions—exercise common sense here.

Escaping from restraints depends entirely on the binding—handcuffs, for example, must be broken, opened with a key, or picked. A character might

wriggle out of a binding with an Agility + Athletics/Escape Artist roll against a Difficulty set by the competence of the person doing the binding (you decide, but usually Hard or Formidable).

## Getting Hurt

So a hunter ended up on the business end of a shotgun or got clobbered by a baseball bat. Should've known this was a dangerous job.

Every character has a derived Attribute called Life Points, based upon Vitality, Willpower, and certain Traits. Life Points are a yardstick measuring how bruised and battered a character can get before he's out. When the total damage taken, regardless of type, is greater than the dude's Life Point score, he probably drops unconscious. When total Wound damage exceeds Life Points, he's dying.

(By the way, they're called Life Points, but you never actually lose or gain any, unless you permanently change your Vitality, Willpower, or Traits. Got it? Good.)

## Damage Types

Damage comes in three flavors: Basic, Stun, and Wound. A fourth type, Shock, comes into play when someone is already down for the count.

### Basic

Basic damage is a mixed bag of all-purpose hurt. Split all Basic damage a character takes between Stun and Wound, favoring Stun with any excess. For example, if a hunter takes five points of Basic damage, the player writes down three Stun and two Wound. Initial damage—the first part of an attack's damage, determined by subtracting the defense Difficulty from the attack roll—is almost always Basic. Even if a target isn't affected by Stun damage, he's still going to take the Wound part of any Basic damage he suffers.

### Stun

Stun is all about light injuries—bruising, scrapes, fatigue, shallow cuts, and so on. Still hurts like hell, but it goes away quickly. At worst, Stun results in nothing more than unconsciousness.

Stun can exceed Life Points. If the guy remains conscious, the extra damage simply accumulates and is recovered normally.

### Shock

If an unconscious character acquires Stun damage, it's recorded as Shock. If Shock rises above a character's Life Point score, he falls into a coma.



## Wound

Wound damage is serious. Broken bones, punctured organs, internal bleeding, and anything else that could eventually result in death—it's all Wound damage. That kind of hurt causes intense pain; wounded characters suffer penalties. When the Wound track gets up there, death is coming.

## Effects of Damage

There're downsides to being hurt. Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) comes in handy a lot in these cases.

## Wound Damage Penalties

When a character has accumulated half his Life Point total (rounded down) in Wounds, he suffers a -2 Attribute step to all actions. That doesn't go away until he recovers or is treated thoroughly enough to stop the pain (at your discretion—some injuries may not be treatable in this way).

## Passing Out

When a chump's damage, regardless of type, is greater than his Life Points, he risks falling unconscious. Make an Average Endurance action. Success keeps him on his feet—or at least awake. Every turn after that, repeat the roll with a cumulative +4 to Difficulty each time.

## Dying

When a character suffers Wound damage equal to his Life Points, roll Endurance every minute to stay alive. The first time, it's Easy, but it increases by four each minute. A dying character can be treated with a Hard Alertness + Medicine/First Aid roll. This jacks up the time between Endurance rolls to one hour. A Hard Alertness + Medicine/Surgery roll, or a Formidable First Aid roll stabilizes them completely.

If a character's Wounds are more than double his Life Points, he dies right then and there—most likely in really grisly way. Yuck and bummer.

## Special Damage

Getting shot, stabbed, broken, or beaten is bad enough, but that isn't the only way to get hurt.

## Disease and Viruses

Characters fight off disease with Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) rolls. The Difficulty and effects depend upon the disease. Again, you gotta make these calls. Illness effects range from a -1 Attribute step to all actions for a minor



cold, to almost certain death. And don't forget that it's not all good old-fashioned natural diseases like the plague. Nope. When you're a hunter, you may be facing off against demon viruses and ghostly bacteria.

## Drugs and Poison

Alcohol, drugs, and poisons cause a variety of effects, but all are fought off with a Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. The exact Difficulty and effects are up to you. As a guideline, the downside of heavy drinking starts as a Hard Difficulty and gets worse as the character drinks more. A rare poison that causes unconsciousness and, later, death if left untreated might be Formidable to resist.

## Inclement Weather

Extremes of temperature can cause damage. Every hour of exposure without adequate protection causes d2 Stun damage. You might also bring in frostbite, heatstroke, and so on, depending on how much fun that sounds; if so, the affliction imposes a -1 Attribute step for minor fun, a -2 Attribute step for major fun. Getting the afflicted person away from the source of the damage and into appropriate recovery should clear things up within a couple of hours.

## Falling

Hitting the pavement after a long drop hurts. The falling, conscious character rolls Agility + Athletics/Gymnastics to avoid damage (no roll if he's out). This is Easy if the fall is 10 feet or less. The Difficulty increases by four for every 10 feet beyond that. If the damage isn't avoided, the fall is treated as an attack with a roll result equal to its Difficulty. Damage is Basic type.

Agility penalties from armor affect these rolls, and Armor Rating doesn't apply. Padding on the ground, on the other hand, might help soak up some of the hurt (your call), but how often does that happen?

## Fire

Burns are Wound damage caused by heat or fire. They heal at half the normal rate and often leave disfiguring scars.

## Radiation and Toxic Waste

Exposure to harmful radiation causes damage—first Stun, and then Wound. Like burn damage, radiation injury is difficult to treat. Stun doesn't begin to recover until the victim receives proper medical treatment; Wound damage takes twice as long to heal.

When exposure begins, you set a time increment—one day for light radiation, one minute for heavy radiation, or even one turn in extreme cases. Exposed characters take d2 Stun with each time increment. When Stun equals Life Points, he begins to suffer d2 Wound damage each increment. Radiation injury can be prevented with proper precautions, such as inoculations or radiation-proof HAZMAT suits. These measures either increase the time increment, or render the wearer immune to the radiation.

## Suffocation and Lack of Air

You can't take breathing for granted. When prepared, a character can hold his breath for 30 seconds with an Easy Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. Every 30 seconds beyond that the Difficulty increases by four. Once a roll is failed, the nonbreather begins to suffer d2 Stun damage every turn. Once he's passed out, suffocation causes d2 Shock and d2 Wound damage every turn.

If the guy is unable to prepare by drawing a quick breath, the Resistance roll starts at Hard.

## Conditions

Being shaken up or wounded is a problem, but that isn't all the bad there is. Any one of these nasty conditions makes life harder to hang on to.

### Bleeding

A bleeding character takes d2 Basic damage every turn he performs strenuous activity. Even if he lays still and moans, he takes this damage every 10 minutes. Use of the First Aid Skill can stop bleeding (see page 96), so that's generally a good course of action.

### Fatigued

Hunters are up at all hours of the day and night, and getting enough rest isn't easy. Problem is, anybody who stays awake longer than 24 hours suffers penalties from fatigue. Every eight hours a character remains awake past the first 24 imposes two Stun damage.

As fatigue poisons drain his strength, he also suffers a -1 Attribute step for every 24 extra hours he's been awake. If any Attribute is reduced to less than d2 this way, he passes out.

Combat causes exhausting adrenaline rushes and often involves strenuous activity. You could rule that every half hour of battle-readiness, combat, or similar activity counts as being awake for eight hours for fatigue purposes.

Taking a nap staves off fatigue penalties. Sleeping for 10 to 30 minutes removes a number of "awake" hours equal to the result of a Willpower die roll. Resting an hour or two removes a number of "awake" hours equal to the result of a Willpower + Discipline/Specialty roll. A character can gain fatigue-reducing nap benefits once every 12 hours.

A full night's rest (8 to 12 hours) zeroes out "awake" hours and removes all fatigue damage and penalties. Stimulants, energy drinks, or other forms of chemical enhancement can temporarily alleviate fatigue damage and penalties.

## Intoxicated

Drugged characters are affected in various ways based on the drug in their system. Being drunk adds four Stun damage that clears up only after sobering up. Really drunk characters also suffer a -2 Attribute step to all actions.

## Stunned

Stunned characters can't take any actions. They defend themselves with innate defense, if at all.

## Short Example of Play

The Winchester brothers are hunting a demon that possesses people and crashes airplanes. It's bent on killing the remaining survivors from a previous crash. The brothers' plan is to exorcise the demon using a ritual from their father's journal. Sam and Dean are now stuck on a flight. They've learned the copilot is possessed, but he's safely behind the locked cockpit door. Everyone on the plane is in real danger unless they can draw the possessed out. They try to convince Amanda, the flight attendant and the demon's primary target, to help out.

Keith is playing Dean; Joe is Sam. Jess is pulling Game Master duty. The scene opens with Sam and Dean heading to the flight attendant's area toward the back of the plane.

**Joe (in character):** "She's not gonna believe this."

**Keith (to Jess):** How much time left?

**Jess:** 12 minutes until you reach the point where all the other planes went down.

**Joe:** Fantastic. . . .

**Jess:** Amanda is working in the back galley and looks up as you step in.

**Keith:** Does she recognize me? Here's two Plot Points.

**Jess:** She sure does! "Hey. Flight's not too bumpy for you, I hope."



**Keith:** “Actually, that’s kinda what we need to talk to you about.”

**Joe:** We explain to her about why Flight 2485 crashed, and that the pilot Chuck Lambert died when his plane went down for the same reason.

**Keith:** And that now we need her help to stop the same thing from happening again.

**Jess:** Okay, you two have totally freaked Amanda. Her kindly smile evaporates, replaced by a look of confusion and fright. She definitely doesn’t want to believe you. Both of you roll Willpower + Influence/Persuasion, if you have it. We’ll go with the higher of your rolls.

*Rather than making it an opposed roll of some kind and rolling for Amanda, Jess decides it’s gonna be pretty tough to pull this off. She goes with making it a Formidable task to persuade Amanda, which means a Difficulty of 15. Keith and Joe each roll their Attribute and Skill dice. Keith (with Willpower d6 + Influence/Persuasion d8) doesn’t do so well, getting a total of 6. Joe, however (with Willpower d6 + Influence d4 and the Sensitive Asset at d2), throws four Plot Points into the mix to get a bonus d8. He rolls very well; his total is a 17.*

**Jess:** You seem to have gotten through to her. She remembers something. “On 2485 ... there was a man ... he had these ... eyes.”

**Joe:** “That’s exactly what we’re talking about.”

**Keith:** We ask her to bring the copilot back to the galley.

**Jess:** Amanda’s clearly hesitant, but she agrees. She seems to be holding herself together, for now. She leaves, and after a few nerve-wracking minutes she returns with the copilot. He’s talking to Amanda.

**Keith:** The moment he steps through the curtain I’m knocking his ass to the ground and keeping him down.

**Joe:** And I duct-tape his mouth and his hands.

*Deciding that Amanda did her job and that the co-pilot/demon suspects nothing, Jess doesn’t ask for an Initiative roll. The copilot is an unmoving, unaware target so his defense is Easy (Difficulty 3). Keith is performing a knockdown grapple and rolls a total of 12 with Agility (d8) + Unarmed Combat/Brawling (d8). The possessed man takes no damage but goes down in a heap with Dean.*

**Jess:** Even held down, he’s still squirming around. Joe, you’re up. We’re gonna roll opposed Agility + Athletics.

*Jess and Joe roll the respective Attribute and Skill dice of their characters. Joe gets a 12 with his d8 + d6, two points shy of beating the 13 that Jess rolled for the possessed copilot. Joe decides to go ahead and spend two Plot Points after his roll to reach the 14 he needs to secure the man.*

**Joe:** There goes the last of my Plot Points!

**Jess:** Amanda’s freaking out. She doesn’t scream, but she looks like she might soon. “What are you doing?! You said you were going to talk to him.”

**Keith:** “We are going to talk to him.”

**Joe:** I take the holy water we put in the plastic bottle and splash some right on his chest.

*This is Sam’s second action of the turn, but Jess decides that he can’t miss with the water against a held target so no roll is required (any multiple action penalty is meaningless). She also figures that the water causes d4 Basic damage to the possessed man. She rolls a 3 and notes 1 Wound on the copilot. She doesn’t mark down any Stun damage because she’s already decided that the possessed man is unaffected by Stun. Bad news for the boys!*

**Jess:** The copilot screams—or would have if his mouth wasn’t taped shut. His skin burns where the holy water touched it, and it starts to smoke. He thrashes around even harder. Amanda doesn’t seem to know how to process what’s going on. “What’s wrong with him?!”

**Joe:** “Stay calm! Go outside the curtain—and don’t let anyone through!”

**Jess:** Okay, next turn. Same initiative order: Dean, Sam, then the copilot.

**Keith:** I get right on top of the guy and hold him down. I punch him in the head for good measure. “Hurry up with the exorcism! I don’t know how long I can hold him down.”

*Maintaining a grapple is not an action so all Dean’s attempting here is an unarmed attack. The only target he can attack is the guy he’s got grappled, but that’s his intention so we’re good. Keith rolls a Strength (d8) + Unarmed Combat/Brawling (d8) against an Easy target and gets a 9, so he connects. The copilot’s immunity to Stun would negate any damage caused by a punch normally, so it’s a good thing Dean’s got the Brawler Asset at d6. Joe rolls a 2 on the d6, adds it to the 6 points of Basic damage he caused by beating the Difficulty by 6, and halves it. That’s 4 points of Wound and 4 points of Stun, but only the Wound counts. Total Wound for the co-pilot: 5.*

**Jess:** Dean, you connect with your fist, but even though you hear his jaw crack you can tell this guy isn’t slowing down.

**Joe:** I’ll throw some more holy water on him before starting on the ritual.

*Jess again allows the water to hit automatically, rolls the damage, gets a 2, adds 1 Wound to the copilot’s total, and again ignores the Stun damage. Total Wound so far: 6.*

*The exorcism ritual is in Latin, so Joe has to roll Sam’s Willpower (d6) + Knowledge (d6). Jess explains that it’s not something Sam can read out in a single combat turn. She sets it as a complex action with each roll taking up one turn. The Threshold is Average (a mere 35), but it has to be done twice—once to pull the demon out, and again to send it back to Hell. Jess reminds Joe to apply a –1 Skill step as a multiple action penalty (Sam has already tossed holy water this turn).*

**Joe:** Here we go. (Rolls and adds.) 11!

**Jess:** His eyes turn black—like a shark’s. He looks pissed, but he’s still held down. I’m going to say that the holy water is enough of a shock to the copilot that he’s unable to act this turn. Okay, next turn. Dean’s up first again.

**Keith:** I’m doing all I can to hold the guy down. I’m not going to do anything else so I don’t suffer any penalties when opposing this clown’s attempt to break free.



**Jess:** Good thinking. You know how nasty possessed humans are. (*Grins malevolently.*) Doncha hate demons? Okay, Sam's up. Roll again for the ritual.

**Joe** (*rolls*): I rolled an 8. That brings it to 19. . . .

**Jess:** Gettin' there. Dean, the guy's bucking against you something fierce; roll your Strength + Unarmed Combat—Wrestling specialty if you've got it.

**Keith:** I don't. That's a 9.

**Jess** (*Consulting the possessed's roll*): Closer than you would think. The copilot breaks free but only partially, throwing Dean to one side and snapping the duct tape. He tries to shove Sam. Do you break off the ritual to defend yourself?

**Joe:** No. I just try to step out of the way as best I can.

*Joe rolls his innate defense (Agility d8) and gets a 5. The copilot does quite a bit better—Jess gets a total of 12 after rolling Strength + Unarmed Combat, even accounting for the -1 Skill step for his second action that turn (the possessed guy bucked off Dean as his first action). Sam gets slammed back for 7 Stun. Jess makes Joe roll an Average Agility + Athletics to hold onto the journal and holy water bottle. Joe gets a 6, and doesn't have any Plot Points left to use.*

**Jess:** You drop the journal and the water—which spills out. No more help there. New turn.

**Joe:** Screw the water. I'm getting the journal. Can I keep going?

**Jess:** Yes, you can keep your old totals as long as you aren't interrupted for too long ... Okay, since everyone's somewhat separated now, I'm going to restart Initiative. Everyone roll!

*Jess rolls Alertness + Agility for the copilot, scoring an 8. Joe gets a 13, Keith a 4. Sam acts first.*

**Joe:** I'll help Dean as best I can while still reading. Don't know how much good that'll do, though. (*Rolls for the ritual.*) 12! I'm up to 31!

screaming."

**Keith:** Oh, crap.

*Joe knows that Sam's horror about his girlfriend's fate is a big deal. He's so obsessed with hunting the monster responsible that it is listed as a Complication.*

**Jess:** Next turn. Sam's up first.

**Joe:** I freeze ... I'm totally freaked out about this.

**Jess:** Excellently done. That's a totally realistic way to play Sam's Complication. I'm giving you two Plot Points as an award. Dean, you're up.

**Keith:** I punch him again! (*Keith rolls and hits, but just barely—3 Basic damage means 1 more Wound is applied, for a grand total so far of 7.*) I yell for Sam to hold it together.

**Jess:** The copilot focuses on getting you off him, Dean. (*Another opposed roll occurs; Dean takes a -1 step penalty because he punched already this turn. Dean loses badly.*) Doesn't look good. Dean is shoved off completely. Back to the top of the order. Sam's up.

**Joe:** Screw it. I keep reading. (*Rolls a 10, which when added to his current total of 31 easily beats the Threshold of 35.*) Made the Threshold and then some!

**Jess:** The copilot opens his mouth impossibly wide and emits a horrible sound. A cloud of black, acrid smoke billows out. It snakes around the galley and slides into a nearby air vent. Before you get a chance to recover, a violent jerk shakes the plane and the whole thing pitches forward. The plane is going into a nosedive!

As oxygen masks drop down and panic grips the passengers, Sam and Dean now must perform the second part of the exorcism ritual or become yet more of the demon's victims. . . .

**Keith:** I'm trying to pin him back down!

**Jess:** Got it. The copilot's using his action to get clear so you guys basically act at the same time. Opposed roll time. Keith, roll Dean's Agility + Unarmed Combat again, but take a +2 Skill step since Sam is helping out.

**Keith:** Cool! (*It's Agility d8 + Unarmed Combat d6, shifted up two steps to d10, and rolls.*) How's a 17 grab ya?

**Jess** (*comparing it to her roll of 13*): Wow, nice roll. You keep the guy down, but he rips the duct tape off his mouth. He growls at Sam, "I know what happened to your girlfriend. She died



## Medical Attention

Once the firing stops, it's time to tend the wounded and bury the dead. Healing takes time and sometimes a lot of money. Serious injuries, if left untreated, can prove fatal. Running to the ER might be good for getting healthy, but it's hell when it comes to explaining the damage.

## Recovering Stun and Shock

Stun damage is the easiest to recover. As long as the character has no points of Shock and no special conditions apply, Stun goes away at the rate of one point per hour of rest, or per two hours of light activity. Combat, high stress levels, or heavy work doesn't count as light activity—reading, talking, and eating does.

If a character is unconscious, he wakes when enough Stun damage is recovered that total damage drops below his Life Points.

If unconscious, Shock must be removed before Stun damage heals. Shock ensures unconsciousness for at least one hour. After that, the guy makes an Average Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) roll once per hour to recover one point of Shock. Once all Shock has been removed, the character recovers Stun normally.

## Second Wind

Aside from Plot Points, hunters have an extra edge. Once per day, they can use second wind to get rid of some Stun instantly. Choose either Vitality or Willpower, roll the chosen Attribute die, and take the result away from the Stun total.

## Recovering Wound Damage

Wound damage is much harder to cure. Nothing is going to get better without sufficient rest and nourishment. Light activity is possible but it must be limited in duration.

After two days of rest, a character makes an Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) roll. The Difficulty depends on the amount of Wound damage inflicted. The Wound Recovery Table has the details. Major injuries (over 6 points of Wound) are extremely difficult to recover from without medical aid. If the Endurance roll is failed, the character must wait until the next day to try again.

Once the appropriate Endurance roll succeeds, the character begins recovering. From that point on, he can get rid of a point of Wound damage for every two days of rest.

## Getting Worse

If a messed-up dude botches the Endurance roll to begin recovery, he gets worse. Every day, he suffers d2 Wound damage, and must make another Endurance roll, based on current Wounds, to halt the deterioration. Once the damage is stopped, another Endurance roll is needed to begin recovery.

## Medical Assistance

Getting hurt is practically part of the job description, but the Winchester family business doesn't come with a health insurance plan. Hunters should count on being hurt, and then figuring out how to deal with that hurt before the demons show up to make things worse.

## First Aid

When a character's taken as many points of Wound as he has Life Points, or if he's bleeding, First Aid keeps him alive until the docs arrive. The medic must succeed at a Hard Alertness + Medicine/First Aid complex action, with each roll taking a single combat turn. While he's working, he can suppress any bleeding or additional trouble, and if

**TABLE 6.5: WOUND RECOVERY**

WOUND DAMAGE	RECOVERY DIFFICULTY	SURGICAL THRESHOLD
1-2	No Check Required	-
3-4	3	15
5-6	7	35
7-8	11	55
9-10	15	75
11-12	19	95
12-13	23	115
14-15	27	135
16-17	31	155
18-19	35	175
20-21	39	195
22-24	43	215

successful, the time between the hunter's Endurance rolls to stay alive increases from one minute to one hour. A botch on this action causes the patient to take 1d4 points of Shock and somebody else needs to jump in and take over. Otherwise, so long as the medic's not interrupted, the patient should be stabilized.

First Aid actions assume that the guy treating the wounded is in the field with a standard first aid kit. If no kit's available, First Aid attempts suffer a -2 Skill step. If a field hospital or ambulance is available, the attempts gain a +1 Skill step. Full-on medical facilities grant a +2 Skill step.

## Waking the Unconscious

A character who is out cold, but has no Shock points, can sometimes be roused with a slap, a shout, cold water, or the like. He rolls Average Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) to wake up. This can be done once a turn. If the character succeeds, his Stun damage is reduced to the point that total damage is one less than his Life Points.

## Stimulants

While there's a world of difference between draining a dozen cans of energy drink and being hopped up on speed,

**TABLE 6.6: FIRST AID**

FIRST AID CONDITIONS	SKILL STEP MODIFIER
Improvised supplies, heavy distractions	-2
Limited supplies, light distractions	-1
Standard supplies, no distractions	±0
Superior supplies, ambulance conditions	+1
Cutting-edge supplies, hospital conditions	+2

all stimulants have similar game effects. For six hours (or more, if it's strong stuff), a character on stimulants experiences a state of heightened awareness—all fatigue penalties are eliminated and a +1 step is granted to Alertness and Agility. After this time period, the dude crashes, and returns to whatever fatigued state he started in. He also suffers an additional -2 Attribute step until he gets at least 12 hours of rest or takes another round of stimulants. Each six-hour up-cycle imposes cumulative Attribute step penalties. Using stimulants continuously for more than 12 hours can be extremely dangerous. That's adding recklessness to desperation.

Stimulants also temporarily heal Stun damage, but when they wear off (in about six hours), that damage comes back. Stimulants eliminate d2 to d12 Stun, depending on the dosage.

## Sedatives

Barbiturates temporarily apply an across-the-board Attribute step penalty, ranging from -1 to -4, depending on the strength of the sedative. This is accompanied quite often by a feeling of relaxation and lowered anxiety, which makes sense given the chemical knock-out. If the step penalty would reduce a character to d0 in any Attribute, he's unconscious.

The sedative lasts from as little as an hour to as much as

12, again depending on the dose and the sedative type. Most often, a character's exposed to this kind of drug from an involuntary, outside source. After all, he's got better things to do than sit in a chair and stare at the melting wallpaper.

## Painkillers

If there's no time for healing or for feeling the hurt, painkillers can at least relieve the agony. Prescription painkillers temporarily relieve the penalties imposed by Wounds. These drugs are formulated for easy application by anyone; no roll is needed. With other medicines, the user must make an Intelligence + Medicine/Pharmaceuticals (Easy for common drugs, Hard for complicated or rare compounds) roll to determine how much of what will be useful, rather than fatal or impotent. Most painkillers last six hours, but some might last as long as 12.

## Surgery

It's possible for an unfortunate to get so badly injured that he can't begin recovery on his own—he needs a bullet taken out, a heart bypass, that sort of thing. In that case, surgery is needed. Surgery is a complex action, usually with time increments of 10 or 30 minutes, using Agility + Medicine/Surgery. The Threshold is based on the number of Wounds the patient has taken—see the Wound Recovery Table. For badly injured and dying patients, the surgery prevents the character from having to make Endurance checks during the operation.

If the surgery is successful, the patient begins to heal. Particularly bad injuries might require advanced treatment, therapy, or even more surgery to put the guy back in fighting shape. Just because a hunter is healing from the mangling of a limb, that doesn't mean he gains use of that limb right away.

Botching surgery sucks hard. If the surgeon botches twice, the complex action fails and the patient suffers an extra d2 Wound damage. The entire process must be started again, and the doc gets slapped with a huge malpractice suit.

## Getting Scared, Freaking Out, and Losing It

Being a hunter means going up against some of the scariest crap imaginable. You'd think that seeing blood and gore and hearing the clanking of chains or creaking footsteps gets old after a while, and you'd be right. The regular stuff doesn't bother most hunters. Problem is, there's still a lot that does. Also, good chance there's some regular style people around when the scary happens. Hunters and others can get afraid, they can freak out, and they can lose it ... sometimes all three at once.



## Getting Scared

What's scary to one person might not bother another. Usually, a threat of physical harm's involved—if a guy's not worried about getting hurt by something, he's unlikely to be afraid of it. Think of it as a fight or flight reflex, and who goes with what tells a lot about him in any given situation. If the scaree's gut does a flip when something jumps out, it's because his instinct is to bolt. If his muscles tense up, he isn't going anywhere—he wants to take the thing head-on.

Whenever a character is exposed to a scary situation, call for a Willpower + Discipline check. The Difficulty depends on the perceived threat, and may be modified up and down based on the environment. A bloody-handed corpse leaping out at a hunter is probably scarier in the creaky hallway of an old abandoned house than it is in a brightly lit toy store (or maybe that's even worse). If the roll comes a failure, the dude takes a hit on his nerves. Until he's out of the immediate danger zone, he suffers a -1 step on his Willpower-based actions. Basically, he's gonna high-tail it out of there. If the roll is a botch, it's a -2 step and it lasts until the guy gets some serious help.

Getting a success on one of these rolls means the hunter's able to take care of business as usual. It's possible he's a bit rattled, but nothing to run screaming for. In fact, if the roll's an extraordinary success, his fight instinct kicks in—until the end of the scene, his Willpower gets a +1 step to account for his steely nerves.

The decision to have a character make a roll is entirely up to you. Typically, if the guy's got a high Willpower or Discipline, there's probably no point worrying about it. He can tough most anything out, right? If you do push the roll, let the player know he can spend some Plot Points on the roll. That's what they're for. Of course, if the character is a bit nervous (or just a total wuss), the player might choose flight over fright without making the roll—if that ties into a Complication, he's gone and earned himself some plot points.

## Freaking Out

Sometimes it isn't what jumps out and shrieks that messes up a character's day, it's that slow, building dread, or the sight of something so terrible that his brain fails to register it. A guy who can't trust his senses or is worried that he isn't seeing the whole big bad picture might be showing the early signs of freaking out. Not the same as fear though. It's a fundamental disconnect with reality forced by the supernatural or circumstances that most people don't have to deal with. Seeing a good friend opened from neck to waist with a jagged knife, or seeing somebody remove his own head and still keep talking, might do this to a person. He's either gonna start shutting down, or muscle past that gag reflex and keep going.

When something horrible or freakish happens, call for an Alertness + Discipline roll. The degree of horror determines the Difficulty, modified by current circumstances

or by how often this has happened before. People who've seen a lot of freaky stuff either become used to it or are just really good at blocking it out. A failure on this roll means the hunter's senses are working overtime to deal. He takes a -1 step on all Alertness-based actions until he's away from the horror-show, or at least until he can take a breather. A botch on this roll isn't good—that means a -2 step to Alertness-based actions and it persists until some heavy-duty therapy can be applied. You could be kind and soften that after a couple of hours to -1 step, or apply it to only certain kinds of Alertness-based actions. Soft and kind doesn't happen much in *Supernatural*, but you never know.

Success on the roll means the hunter stays cool, and can more or less act in whatever way he likes. Doesn't mean he isn't on the verge of blowing chunks, or muttering curses to himself, but he's sucking it up. With an extraordinary success, exposure to such horrible stuff without freaking out lends a degree of sharpened focus and trust in a guy's senses that can really help. That's a +1 step on Alertness-based actions until the end of the scene.

## Losing It

Finally, there's the stuff that just challenges the way the world is supposed to work, or betrays any understanding of how things are. This is when the rational brain can't wrap itself around something, and often comes as a result of learning something truly awful from a book, or putting two and two together and getting five. Supernatural things do this all the time, because they aren't bound by reality like mundane things are. On the other hand, a guy might be forced to come to grips with some uncomfortable truths about his life that he's never had to deal with before (my blood is tainted by what?!), and sometimes that can make a body lose it, too.

Things that run the risk of having a character go insane generally call for an Intelligence + Discipline roll. The Difficulty depends on how irrational, mind-blowing, or sanity-reducing the thing is, and can be modified by various circumstantial influences. Is the source of this new information reliable? Has the hunter dealt with this kind of thing before? Is it tied pretty close to family or friends? All of these things could adjust the Difficulty.

Failing the roll indicates that the freak-magnet is confused, stunned, emotionally wrung out, or otherwise distracted by the weird or terrifying nature of what he's just learned. He takes a -1 step on all Intelligence-based actions until he has time to clear his head, think things through, or rationalize something. If he botches, rationalizing probably won't happen any time soon, and he's gonna have to suffer through a -2 step and perhaps some kind of enduring neuroses. Expect people who botch a Losing It roll to wind up on the floor in the fetal position.

Success, of course, means the dude is actually fine with what he's just discovered, or the information that's presented itself can fit into a larger

world-view. He might be a little weirded out, and might have some strange dreams later, but he muddles through that. With an extraordinary success, the new information not only doesn't make the stalwart flip out, things kind of make more sense for a while. He gains a +1 step on all Intelligence-based actions until the end of the scene, or until you decide that it's no longer helping.

## Related Traits

A number of Assets and Complications can have a role in how a hunter deals with what's scary, freakish, or wrong. Most are situational—if the guy has the Paranoid Trait, it's going to make dealing with weird conspiracy stuff a lot harder. Naturally, a Phobia lends itself directly to any fear-based situation involving the object of that Phobia. Uncommon Knowledge could help in scenes that threaten Intelligence, and Unbreakable Will makes scaring a dude somewhat less likely.

If a character botches a Getting Scared, Freaking Out, or Losing It roll, you could throw a new Complication onto the pile. Likewise, on an extraordinary success, you might offer up a new Asset after the current adventure is over with. Situations like this, which challenge a hunter's grip on reality or give him a thicker skin, are perfect for justifying changes in Skills as well. It might make sense to put Advancement Points toward Discipline or one of its Specialties, for example. On the other hand, if a guy's more inclined to run away from something that spooks him, maybe those points are best spent on Athletics.

## Vehicles

Most vehicles in the world of *Supernatural* serve much the same purpose they do in real life: they get a body from place to place. Most of the time, this isn't a big deal. The plot doesn't center around the long drives on the Interstate—it's about what happens when the hunters arrive on scene. For some people, a car's just a car—a piece of equipment that does its job and doesn't require rolls to use. Sometimes though, it pays to know a bit more about the ride. Sometimes it's a matter of life and death.

## Scale

Forget what the chick magazines say—size does count. A combat knife or 9mm pistol can wreak some real havoc on a person, it's just a scratch or a pinhole in the side of an SUV (or worse, some badass SUV-sized critter that wants you for lunch).

The game deals with this in terms of scale. The three scales are Personal, Large, and Massive. Personal scale is just that—the size of roughly human-sized characters (including the really small or large specimens).

Humans, wendigos, and Dobermann Pinschers are all examples of Personal scale. Damage at Personal

scale is only 10% effective against Large targets—it takes 10 points of Personal damage to inflict just 1 point to a Large opponent. Damage at Personal scale to a Massive target is nearly impossible, only 1% effective—taking 100 points of Personal damage to inflict just 1 point to a Large opponent. Round down when determining damage at shifting scales.

Large scale (sometimes called Vehicle Scale in other Cortex System games) includes things the size of cars to small buildings. Elephants, tractors, and Chevy Impalas are all examples of the Large scale. Damage at Large scale is quite effective against Personal scale targets, inflicting 10 times the normal damage. So 3 points of Large damage are actually 30 points to a player character (and probably ruining his entire weekend). Damage at Large scale is only 10% effective against Massive targets—meaning it takes 10 points of Large damage to inflict just 1 point to a Massive opponent. Twelve points of Large damage would only inflict a single point against a massive victim (10% rounded down).

Massive creatures are mentioned in ancient myths and generally only seen in cheesy movies. But in a world of ghosts and monsters anything is possible. Ghostly galleons, skyscrapers, and Godzilla are all examples of the Massive scale. Damage at Massive scale is ridiculously effective and nearly always fatal to those at the Personal scale, inflicting 100 times the standard damage. Seven points of Massive damage would cause 700 points of damage to a human-sized target and probably leave nothing more than a greasy smear or charred circle where he once stood. Massive damage is quite effective against Large targets, causing 10 times more than normal. An attack that caused 2 points of Massive damage would inflict 20 points on the Large victim.

## Hazardous Conditions

Usually, driving, sailing or even flying doesn't require a roll—why? Well, you don't wanna call for a roll unless there's a chance of failure. You also don't want a roll if failure could completely ruin the game in a way that has nothing to do with the story. Hunters should never die in a completely random accident before the adventure even starts!

However, if demons unleashed from Hell are *trying* to kill the hunters, it's no random accident. And if there's a good chance the hunters can survive, then the failure of the pilot or driver isn't gonna be unavoidable death.

When the reasons are appropriate, bad conditions might force the driver or pilot of a vehicle to make a roll. When this happens, only one character rolls—in a vehicle with a multi-person crew, others might be able to offer indirect assistance if you like, but the primary roll is made by the character most directly in charge of steering.

Rolling to control a vehicle usually involves a combination of Strength (to control a bucking, pulling wheel), Agility (to accurately make rapid adjustments to direction or speed), or Alertness (to avoid road hazards, know where to point the vehicle, and so on) combined with the appropriate Skill (Watercraft, Pilot, or Drive). As usual,



you set the Difficulty based on the conditions. Controlling a vehicle at normal speed (whatever those are for the vehicle), in good terrain, during calm weather in daylight should be Easy, and that's only if a roll is really needed. Bad weather, bad terrain, distractions (like a pack of vampires following on motorbikes, or one clinging to the roof), high speeds, and so on all increase the Difficulty—each negative factor could bump up the Difficulty by as much as four. For example, driving a car at normal speeds during a light rainstorm (+2 Difficulty) on a dark night (+4 Difficulty) while a bunch of friends chatter quietly in the back seats (+1 Difficulty) takes an Easy task to just short of Hard ( $3 + 2 + 4 + 1 = 10$ ).

The quality of the vehicle adds a modifier to the driver's Skill dice. The vehicle's Maneuverability ranges from a -3 Skill step to a +3 Skill step. Most vehicles have Maneuverability 0, which has no effect on a driver's action, but damaged, old, or high-tech or tuned-up rides can change that.

## Getting Wrecked

Just like characters, vehicles can be destroyed. Follow the standard rules for Breaking Objects (see page 90)—they are immune to Stun damage, have an Armor Rating that protects them, and have Life Points to determine how much damage they can take before failing.

Vehicles busted up for half or more of their Life Points become harder to control; their Maneuverability take a -2 step drop (which can bring it down to as low as a -5 Skill step). Vehicles out of Life Points just stop functioning, which creates additional problems. Most boats sink and airplanes crash at this point, but depending on how the damage was inflicted, it might not be an immediate, sudden affair. Vehicles that take double their Life Points in damage are toast—completely totaled.

Barring the totaled part, most vehicles can be repaired. This takes time, money, and a competent mechanic—no something to be role played out. On the other hand, should it be important to the plot that the characters repair a vehicle promptly, you might allow a mechanic to get started on the repairs right away. As long as he's got the parts and equipment, repair works in the same way as surgery (see page 96), save that each roll takes an hour and the final result actually "heals" the damage to the vehicle.

## Crashes and Collisions

Nobody wants to get nailed by a car. Generally speaking, bouncing off a vehicle causes serious problems. Calculate the damage based on the speed the vehicle was moving—

up to 10 miles an hour inflicts d4 Basic damage. Beyond that, every 10 mph adds a +1 step to the damage die, and it becomes Wound instead of Basic damage. If the vehicle takes damage from the collision (for example, it hit a tree), the same amount is applied to it (after Armor reductions). If two vehicles collide, calculate and roll damage for each separately, and apply both results to both vehicles.

If a character is trying to use his vehicle as a weapon, roll Alertness + Skill/Specialty, with the Skill modified by the vehicle's Maneuverability. Unlike normal attacks, there's no initial damage—beating the target's defense (which could be a Dodging roll, an Initiative roll, or anything else you feel is right; some creatures might be able to Block the attempt!) simply counts as a successful hit. Damage is determined as normal for a collision. Character-type armor doesn't help much—a car is pretty far off the ballistics chart.

## Chase Scenes

Car chases (or boat chases, or bike chases. . . ) work just like any other chase (see page 83). The important thing to remember is that driving faster than is safe in a particular vehicle increases the Difficulty of the rolls the driver has to make to stay in control. Then again, that may be necessary if one side of the chase has a superior vehicle!

## Where to Next?

Rules come up a bunch in this book—good thing you've just finished reading up on them. If you're a player, you don't need to go all Rain Man on the rules. **Chapter Two: The Basics** should keep you on track 90% of the time. You might want to go back and check out **Chapter Three: The Hunters** and **Chapter Four: Traits and Skills** to make sure anything that stumped you before is now clear. The stand-up guy taking on the Game Mastering should spend a little more time with this chapter, but feel free to jump ahead to **Chapter Seven: The Game Master** and come back later.



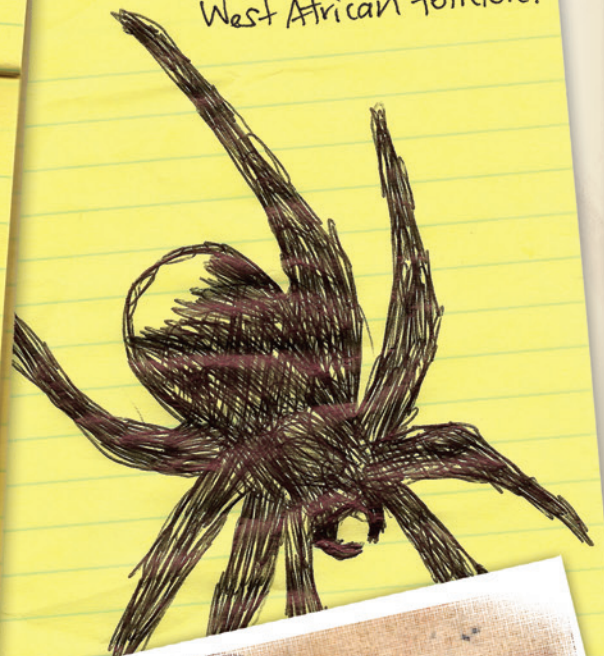
# The Game Master

From "Lokasenna"—

"So alone shouldst thou be,  
hadst thou strict and prudent beer  
towards thy mate;  
but one I know,  
and, I think, know him well,  
a favored rival of Hlorridi,  
and that is the wily Loki."

Bobby swears a stake dipped  
in the blood of the victim  
can undo these suckers.

Anansi—possible tie to  
West African folklore.





**O**kay, it's time to run. That's why you're nosing around here, right? You want to run a *Supernatural* game? No problem. Running a game is easy—if you're ready. Getting you ready is why this chapter exists. It's got tips, tricks, secrets, tools, techniques—everything you need to build and run a good game. You figure this is your toolkit, and you're Joe the Game Master. You can pick and choose from the whys and wheres and hows as you build your game, and as you run it. Whether you've run plenty of other games before or whether this is your first time behind the wheel, by the time you're finished reading, you'll be ready to run with the best of them.

## Role of the Game Master

Okay, so who's this Game Master guy, anyway? What's his role in all this?

The Game Master's the guy who builds the story and sets it rolling, the guy who tends the plot and provides the details, the guy who informs the hunters and keeps them involved. He's the one running the show.

Pretty simple, eh? Fat chance. Role playing games are interactive—that's one of the best things about them. The players aren't just reading a novel or watching a movie, they're part of the action. Players get to call the shots, for their hunters at least. That means the Game Master isn't doing all the work or pulling all the strings.

Think of a Game Master as a movie director and head writer, rolled into one. As Game Master, you set up the story. You assemble the players. You help them create their hunters and make sure those hunters play nice. You fine-tune the story to make sure it fits the hunters. Then you start the story off. You explain the initial events, describe where each hunter is and what he or she sees, and let the players tell you what their respective hunters do next. You detail what happens as a result, give them a chance to react and act, and go from there.

Basically, you and the players are writing the story as you go. You might have some solid ideas about what you *want* to happen, and even some stuff that's definitely *going* to happen, but you don't know what a hunter'll do before the player decides. You can't know it all. You're just gonna have to roll with the punches, respond to what the hunters do, and keep the story moving no matter what.

The other thing a Game Master does is take care of all the supporting characters. Anyone not being run by a player is a supporting character—both the major villains and the bit parts. As Game Master, you've got to keep all those supporting characters straight, get them involved, and make them active and believable. If the hunters walk into a bar and no one in the joint is talking or moving or even breathing, either something is really wrong in the bar (which, since this is *Supernatural*, is possible) or you're not doing a very good job handling the supporting characters. If it's the latter, that'll pull the players right out of the game.

## Running a Game

The single most important thing to know about running a game—any game—is keep the players invested. Players will forgive a lot as long as they're engaged. The minute you lose them, the minute you break their suspension of disbelief and let them fall out of character, the whole business suffers. From there, you've got to work twice as hard to get them back in, and even then, they're more prone to fall out again.

So how do you keep them involved? Every Game Master has to decide which one way works for him. Sometimes it's a question of which one works at a particular moment. Still, the best way is just to keep things moving. If you can maintain a good pace—not breakneck but not plodding either—you can hook them good. Picture the story like a bus, and the players as passengers. You're driving. If you stop the bus at any point, people get off. If you go too fast, people start panicking—and you could get pulled over. So you've got to stay somewhere between the two. You can and should vary the pace occasionally—otherwise you run the risk of falling asleep yourself, never mind the players—but always stay within that range.

The other way to keep players involved is to make sure their hunters have something at stake. If the hunter's family is at risk, he—and his player—is gonna want to see this through to the end. If he's just a stranger passing through, he's got less reason to stay and fight when things get hairy—unless he's the kind of person who does that kind of thing, or the victim is a really cute girl whose caught his eye. Work with the players beforehand so you've got reasons for each hunter to get involved, and then figure out the particular story hooks that match up.

## Portraying the World

Keeping the players involved also means dragging them into the setting kicking and screaming. Details play a large part of that. You could say:

*You walk into a bar.*

That's fine, but it isn't rocking anyone's world. Try this instead:

*You walk into the bar, your feet kicking up dirt around you, and stare. Cobwebs festoon the long bar covering one wall, and a thick coat of dust covers the bar, the stools, and even the bottles. The far wall is lost in shadows. You can just make out yellowing posters hanging here and there along the dingy side wall, but they're so faded it's hard to see what they show.*

That's gonna draw more interest. Doesn't mean you have to go nuts describing every room the hunters enter and every person that passes them on the street—too much detail makes everything blur together. Details are for dropping in now and again to capture the players' attention. The more important a place is, the more distinct it should be. Add a touch of color, something distinctive here and there. It'll make the elements of your world stand out more.



*Supernatural* is set in the real world—that's both good and bad for running a game. It's good because you don't have to invent everything from scratch, or explain lots of stuff. Your players all know how phones and cars and ATMs work. They "get" handguns and rifles. They've heard of the series of tubes called the Internet. That means you can use those elements, and other aspects of everyday life in your story without having to explain them.

On the flip side, since players already know the game world, it's easier for them to get bored. You're busy describing a city street and they're going, "Yeah, yeah, we get it—it's a city street. Can we move on now?" The more familiar they are with the setting, the less you need to tell them but also the more likely they'll find it boring.

How do you get around that? In part you don't. They're right—it's a city street. So move on. They may all know what an urban setting looks like, but none of them have dealt with an angry spirit or a crazed werewolf or a cold-blooded shapeshifter in real life. That mess'll capture their attention far more than describing the buildings and the parked cars!

## Supernatural Storytelling

This is *Supernatural*—spirits, werewolves, shapeshifters are par for the course. They're almost required, really—how many episodes of the show have we seen that didn't have some supernatural element to them? Seriously, the name of the show is a dead giveaway. When you watch an episode—or play the game—you know what you're getting into. So do your players, and you don't want to disappoint them. No player wants to sit down to a *Supernatural* game and discover that's he's wandered into a police procedural or a romance tale instead.

So what are the key elements to a *Supernatural* game? The same ones that feature so heavily in the television series: horror, family, and humor. Nail those three and you'll leave your players begging for more.

## Horror

*Supernatural* is a poster child for the horror genre. If you don't know much about horror stories, you'd better get up to speed on them. Horror has to be done with just the right touch or else it comes off as either too hopeless or too cheesy. Find the balance between the two is key.

Classic horror stories are about creatures, objects, and events that don't square with our established worldview. Things go bump in the night, strange creatures appear and disappear, the dead walk, and so forth. That crap makes no sense in our rational world, yet here they are, staring you in the face and, more often than not, threatening your life. That's horror.

*Supernatural* is a little different because it's really horror-adventure. It's a mix of those two genres. Why? Because in classic horror, the protagonists don't do much fighting back. They run away, find out a few things, then they get scragged. The unknown is so far beyond anything they could imagine that they have no defense against it, no way to stop it.

That works fine in a story designed to scare the hell out of you. In a role playing game, television story, or any other continuing tale, not so much. After all, if they'd failed in the first episode, we wouldn't have been able to watch the Winchester boys for four seasons and counting, right? So—the combination of horror and adventure.

Adventure tales are more optimistic, more heroic. The protagonists usually come out on top, or at least survive. That's what we're looking at in *Supernatural*. You need to make the story scary but at the same time provide ways for the hunters to defeat the menace or at least escape to face up to it again some other day.

That means keeping the power levels low and the numbers down. A single ghost is scary and can kill a few people at a time, but it's not overpowering. An entire town of ghosts, all of them out for blood, is probably too much for a group of hunters to handle. Likewise, a single demon is a lot for even a group of seasoned hunters to face. A dozen demons, then, would be more than they could take on and hope to survive.



As usual, it's a balance. Don't make the menace too weak, or there's no challenge or risk. The menace has to be real, and something the hunters aren't one hundred percent sure they can defeat. As long as there's a chance of both success and failure, the story stays interesting.

## Atmosphere & Mood

When telling a horror story, atmosphere and mood are crucial. Look at the television series again. Watch a few episodes. See many bright colors? Not so much. Everything seems drab, washed out, and dreary. How about cloudless blue skies? Nope. More often than not, the weather's gray and overcast, cool but not quite cold. That's atmosphere. It would be a very different series if Sam and Dean were decked out in Hawaiian shirts, driving a bright blue Mustang, searching pastel-painted houses, and calling each other Crockett and Tubbs.

So how do you replicate that in your game? First off, match the show's setting. Hunters never go to bright, cheerful places—don't set your game in a spotless theme park or a nice friendly suburban neighborhood. Or if the game does happen to go there, dim the color spectrum a bit—describe the houses as rundown, the lawns as poorly tended and brown, the people as wearing dark colors or blah khakis. Keep the weather dreary as well—that'll help keep the colors from getting too bright, since an overcast day makes even the cheeriest paint job and brightest shirt look washed out. Play up the dark, the shadows, and the dimness. Don't talk about bright colors unless you're doing so to deliberately draw attention to that contrast:

*Yes, the truck is new and shiny and bright red. It seems out of place against the dingy old firehouse, with its crumbling brick and peeling front door.*

You might want to avoid bright lights even in the game room. If you're playing in a big, well-lit room, dim or turn out a few lights. If you've got big windows nearby, close the curtains or the blinds. Obviously you'll need enough light to see notes and character sheets and dice clearly, and to see each other's expressions, but turning out a lamp or two can add some interesting shadows. It reinforces the dark atmosphere you're trying to convey in-game, and helps keep the players focused on that.

## Shocks & Scares

Horror is scary. That means, every so often, you've got to scare the hunters—and possibly the players as well. So how do you do that?

Scares come in three flavors: shocks, creeps, and riddles. Shocks are sudden things, like someone jumping out at you. They're easy to do, and fun, and make people crawl out of their skin. Don't overuse them in your game, however, or they'll lose impact—it's cool the first time a dead man opens his eyes and sits up, but after the fourth time the hunters know what to expect. It might still be disturbing, but it's no longer shocking.

Creeps just feel wrong. A man has dark skin, dark hair, and eyes so light they seem almost white. A woman walks with a strange gait, as if her legs were jointed wrong. You reach out to flip the light switch and it's fuzzy, like fur. These things make you go "ick!" and sometimes you can't even explain why. So what if the woman walks funny! Why should it matter what color the guy's eyes were? Sure, the light switch needs to be cleaned, but that's no reason to jump, is it? But it is. These small details just don't add up. They mess with our assumptions about the world around us, and make us uncomfortable. They give us the creeps.

Riddles are things that nag at you, tugging at your brain until suddenly they come into focus. These are slow, subtle scares. You keep seeing a stranger walking past, just at the edge of your vision. You don't really think much of it, though something about him makes you nervous. Each time, he's walking away from you, hands in his pocket, slouch hat pulled down, long coat flapping behind him. But you're busy trying to figure out why people are dying



in this small town, suddenly and without any apparent reason. Then one person holds on long enough to gasp something about a stranger in the slouch hat. Now it all comes together. Now you're really scared.

No matter which type of scare you choose, don't overdo it. Don't overplay your hand. A little horror can go a long way. If you want more information about scaring the hunters, check out **Chapter Six: The Rules**. You'll find rules for when the hunters get scared, freak out, or lose it, which corresponds to the scares, creeps, and riddles.

## Realization & Implications

The idea of riddles in horror goes along with the horror-adventure genre in general. Why? Because in order to have a chance at beating a creature and surviving a threat, you have to have some idea what you're up against. In most *Supernatural* episodes, Sam and Dean spend at least half the episode trying to figure out what sort of creature they're facing. Once they know whether they're up against a ghost or a vampire or a nature spirit, they can start to plan. Now they know a little about the threat—they can start figuring out where the creature will attack, who it'll go after, how it attacks, and maybe even what its weaknesses are. Without that, the boys don't stand much chance of defeating the son of a bitch, and surviving to go after the next one.

Figuring out the type of threat isn't the only discovery the Winchesters usually make. More often than not, they have to find out "why" just as much as "what." Okay, so they're dealing with a ghost, a vengeful spirit—that only gets them so far. Who's it after? What did that person do to it? Or maybe they're facing a shapeshifter. What does it want? Where is its lair? What are its plans? Most supernatural creatures are as smart as regular folks, and many are smarter. They have hopes and dreams and plans and vendettas—they aren't blind forces or dumb beasts. Figuring out the creature's motivation can be the key to stopping it, and doing so before anyone else gets hurt.

Of course, this is horror, and horror-adventure to boot, so there's no shortage of the old classic: the switch. The Winchester boys are pursuing a supernatural killer, and they figure out that it's been masquerading as one of the people within the small community. They snoop around and finally decide it has to be Mr. Cooper, the middle-aged retiree who's always puttering around in his garden. The boys confront Cooper, who seems shocked. Just then the mailman, Mr. Williams, walks by with the mail—and recoils in horror from the holy symbol Sam is holding. Damn!

Pulling a switch like this can be a lot of fun if it's done right. That means leaving enough clues to make the hunters think it's one thing (or one person) when it's not—but not making any of those clues conclusive. It's one thing if the evidence could point to Mr. Cooper but,

in retrospect, really does single out Mr. Williams. It's another thing if one or more clues specifically name Cooper (unless Williams planted them himself to throw the hunters off his scent).

## Hope in Darkness

Always remember that there's got to be a way out. Never make the threat so big and so powerful the hunters don't have a chance of defeating it, or escaping it. It might be a slim chance—more a prayer than anything else—but it's got to be something.

Prayer may enter into it, actually. One thing about the Winchesters is that they have faith. Sam has real faith, the religious kind. Dean has faith in himself and his brother, but that's better than nothing. They each have someone to watch their back, someone they can count on to get them out of a situation when they can't do it themselves. Whenever Sam or Dean is caught, hope remains—the other brother is out there and, without a doubt, he'll be coming to the rescue.

Hope is a major element of the show, and should be in your game as well. The hunters should always have something to hope for, and something or someone to pin those hopes on. Hope is what keeps them going when the situation gets black—when it looks like they're utterly doomed. Hope is what keeps them looking for a solution until they find one.

How can you build hope for the hunters? A lot of that is up to the players, but you can and should work with them when they're first creating their hunters to make sure they have something along those lines. You can also keep hope alive through game play. Some creature's going around slaughtering people, and each victim dies almost instantly. Then the hunters get involved and manage to keep one victim alive long enough to get emergency medical attention. That's *something*, and not a small thing, either. It means this creature can be frightened, can be confused, and possibly can be stopped. It means the creature's attack isn't automatically fatal. That may be enough to keep the hunters going when the creature starts going after them. Just a little chink in that armor, a tiny ribbon of light in the darkness, can be enough to raise the hunters' spirits and encourage them to fight on even when, a moment before, they were ready to give up altogether.

## Family

One of the things that makes *Supernatural* so popular is the rapport between the two main characters. Sam and Dean Winchester are brothers, but they're more than that. They've fought together and bled together. They've faced creatures together that few others have survived. They're family—each knows he can absolutely trust the other to watch his back, no matter what the cost. The



trick is replicating that sense of family, that bond, in the game. If handled poorly, trying to force it can backfire and destroy a game. If done right, though, it'll make a game unforgettable.

### LITERAL FAMILY

The easy method is to have the hunters actually be family. Sam and Dean hunted with Dad; Jo received at least some training from her father—no way those second-gens are the only ones. Hunting makes sense as a family business, at least for those hunters who survive long enough to have families. Keeping the family in the dark while you go all Kolchak isn't gonna be easy.

If the hunters are related, it simplifies matters. They all know about hunting, so secrets are kept to a minimum. Being family, they know each other well and have trained together, so they can anticipate each other's moves. That's a definite plus in combat. Knowing that bro Jimmy always goes for the kneecaps while sis Betty prefers headshots leaves the torso free and clear for you.

Of course, working with family creates problems too. First there's sibling rivalry—Jimmy's annoyed because Betty's always getting credit for the kill. After all, it's his shots that slow the nasties down enough for Betty to blow their heads off. Since you all spend so much time together, both "on" and "off" duty, arguments are bound to arise. There's very little incentive for cushioning your words; it's not like anyone's going anywhere if they get pissed off. Hunting with a crew that you're not speaking to—not exactly the best idea. Could be fun to play though.

If your players all want to have related hunters, talk over the details beforehand. Work out a basic family history, who's who and how everyone's related. You can leave a lot open—got to leave room for the players to tell embarrassing stories about each other that they make up on the spot—but you should know the basics to make sure they'll fit into the game you're planning. You may need to alter things to accommodate the family aspect, but adjusting is the name of the game for the Game Master.

### CREATED FAMILY

Blood relatives aren't the only way to go. Sometimes we're closer to people we aren't actually related to. In a high-

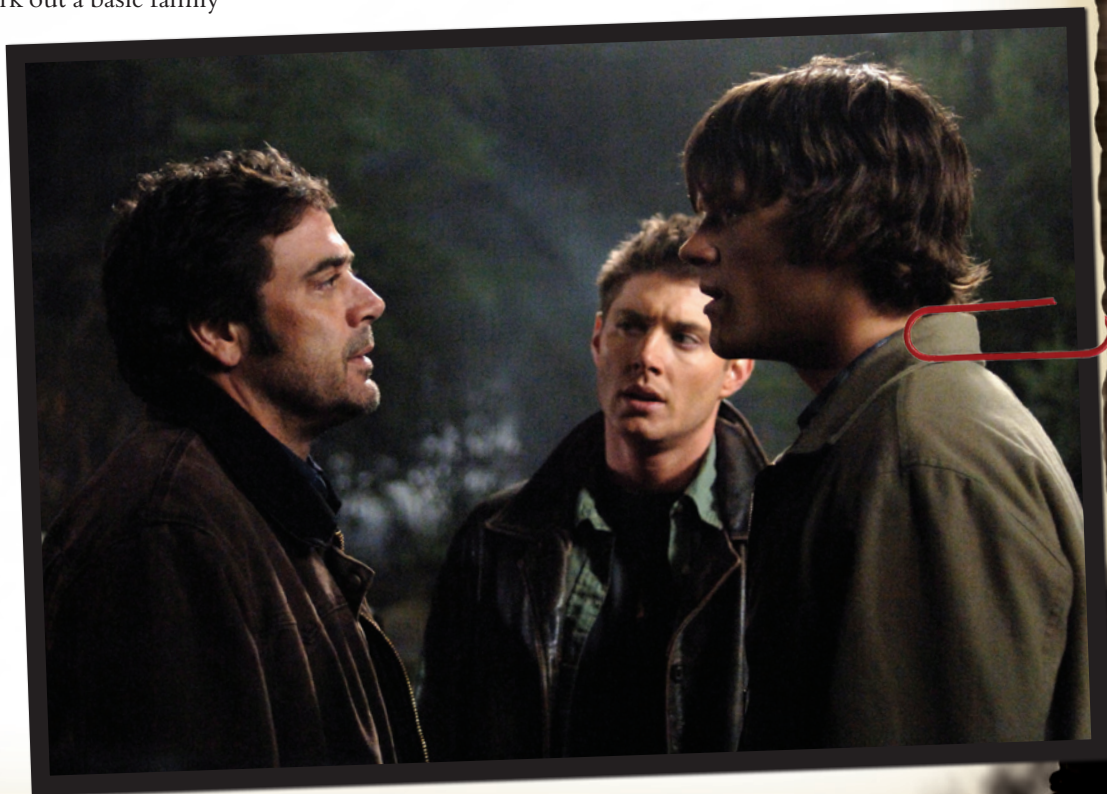
risk profession like hunting, if you work with someone long enough, you'll get to know them, respect them, and eventually trust them implicitly. That's pretty much what family's all about.

Created families often avoid the problems you find among natural families. After all, if you consciously adopt someone as your brother that's a deliberate decision. You're not gonna adopt someone you can't stand, or even someone who annoys the crap out of you. You're gonna bond with someone you can relate to, someone whose attitudes and skills match or complement your own. In that way, created families often avoid the feuds and disputes that natural families have all the time.

Being deliberate, created families often share stronger bonds. There's no special honor in being born someone's brother—you didn't do anything to earn that privilege. But being designated "family" by someone else is pretty special. It's usually taken quite seriously by all the people involved. Siblings say things like "I wish you weren't my brother!" all the time, but you don't usually hear anyone shouting "I wish I'd never decided to adopt you as my virtual brother!"

On the other hand, the fact that such bonds are voluntary makes betrayal that much more painful. It's an awful thing when brother fights brother, but it's far worse when honorary brothers fight. If you're betrayed by someone you chose as family, the pain is all the worse for the added regret and self-loathing about your own judgment call. That kind of break is hard as hell to mend.

Working out the relationship is a bit harder with created families. You've got to be more careful. Detailed timelines may be required. You can't just say:



“Look, this guy had two sons, each of them had kids, and they’re all hunters—that’s all of us.” You have to work it out: “Okay, our two hunters met here and bonded over this event. Then my guy and this other guy met and bonded here as well, and then I brought him back to meet my first adoptive brother and they got along like a house on fire.” The more players you have in your group, the harder it would be to justify having everyone get along so well they’re like family.

## Humor

The third of *Supernatural*’s key elements is humor. The Winchester brothers are constantly taunting, teasing, and tricking each other. They totally have each other’s backs in a fight, but sassing each other—or pulling pranks when lives aren’t in danger—that’s par for the course. That humor keeps the show from being too dark and dreary.

Oppressive gloom is a major danger with any horror story, and humor is the best way to alleviate it. That doesn’t mean you should pause your *Supernatural* game each night to trade a few one-liners. Having a supporting character say something funny, or having something more silly than dangerous occur every so often gives the hunters something different to think about, and provides a nice contrast for all the gloom and horror. Your hunters are often the best source for in-game humor, and you should allow that, within reason. Cut them off if their jokes and general silliness are preventing them from taking the game seriously, but otherwise a little humor can make the horror elements both more pronounced and easier to handle.

## Hunting Evil

*Supernatural* is all about the hunt. It’s the hunters versus whatever evils you’ve cooked up for them. Sure, you run scenes where the hunters deal with suspicious cops, paranoid sheriffs, overzealous federal agents, and the occasional clueless ghostbuster wannabes. But at the end of the adventure, if no supernatural creature shows, the players are gonna be disappointed. You’ve got to deliver the goods at some point. How you bring in the threat is just as important as what the threat is. You can have the coolest evil creature ever, but if you can’t set up the story properly no one’s gonna get excited about it. Fortunately, there’s a formula to follow. Break the adventure into elements, and as long as you tap all of them, the creature—and the story—should be a hit.

## Discover

Big shock—discovery comes first. That doesn’t mean discovering exactly what the creature is. No, at this point, the hunters just have to discover that something is going on, something of a distinctly supernatural bent. You’ve got to grab their attention and arouse their curiosity.

How do you do that? Old school says an unexplained death. Hunters are constantly checking the news, the Internet, and other sources for anything out of the ordinary. When a man dies in a car accident, no one says boo. When a man dies by ramming his car into the far side of a ravine—a ravine too wide for the car to realistically jump, and too far away from any road for a car to get there anyway—time to sit up and take notice.

One strange death will draw hunters’ interest, but it isn’t a slam-dunk. There’s always the possibility that local news and other agencies exaggerated aspects of a murder to make it more sensationalistic. A second killing—preferably one the hunters witness, narrowly miss seeing, or narrow miss being a part of—makes it clear that things are serious. No one likes to be made a fool, and that’s how a hunter feels when someone dies right under his nose. If someone dies by being drained of blood without a mark on them, and the hunter sees the body firsthand moments after death, there’s no arguing that something funky and most likely evil is definitely nearby. The hunters get more involved because they know for a fact that something supernatural has just occurred.

When the hunters do discover that something’s going on, don’t give everything away all at once. Let them know they’re on the right track, and that it is definitely a supernatural threat. Why? Because that leads into the next element.

## Investigation

Some hunters operate entirely upon instinct—but not the longer-lived ones. They know that a little research significantly improves chances of survival. The more you know about your prey, the better you can anticipate its moves, locate its lairs, foil its traps, discover its weaknesses, and survive to the next hunt. On the television series, Sam and Dean have a vague idea what type of creature might be troubling an area before they even arrive. They roll into town, investigate the site of whatever deaths or accidents or disappearances have already occurred, look for clues, and use those to narrow down the list of possibilities. Then they research the area itself, looking for anything that might hint at a supernatural presence. Next, they study the victims, again looking for anything supernatural in their histories. Even if these searches don’t turn up anything specific, they help narrow things down. Discovering that the town is built atop an old Native American burial ground points to creatures from a certain set of legends; finding out one of the victims had a rare blood disease might eliminate the traditional bloodsuckers (they would smell the disease and refuse to drink). Finally, the Winchesters study each of the remaining creatures on their list and try to match them up with the situation around them. Hopefully they narrow it down to one creature that fits every clue, and that’s their winner. Now the boys know what they’re facing, and have an idea what to do about it.



As the Game Master, you need to think about the investigation as well, only in reverse. You already know what the supernatural threat is. Use that to lay the clues. What sort of victims does the creature favor? What settings? How and when does it kill? What traces would it leave behind? Figure out what the hunters might find from physically examining the crime scenes. Think about myths and legends about the creature. What will the hunters find when they start searching the Internet or their old monster books? Remember that you can create legends—you're not limited to existing ones. But if you create one, you need to know what it says, so when a hunter searches the Web successfully you can hand him the resulting information without hesitation. Think about the victims in terms of what the hunters may find in their backgrounds to narrow down the choice of suspects. Remember that it's okay to have vague clues and ones that seem misleading, provided in retrospect they make perfect sense. The only time you should have actual false evidence, however, is if one of the supporting characters has deliberately planted it.

## Confrontation

What happens after the boys find out what they're dealing with? They deal with it, of course. Now that they know it's a shapeshifter or a ghost or an Incan fire god or whatever, they know the tools they'll need. They also have some idea where and when the creature'll attack next and can hunt it properly.

Confrontations can be tricky. It seems like they'd be very simple—the hunters confront the bad guy. But if that's all you do, the confrontation could wind up boring, and that's the last thing you want to have happen. Think about the show. The Winchesters rarely walk up to the threat and say, "okay, let's go." Even once they know what type of threat they've got on their hands, they still have to plan, prepare, track, and challenge. That's half the fun.

What you need is a buildup. From the moment the hunters realize what they're facing, the pace should pick up and so should the tension. Make them tell you what they're doing and fast-forward through anything uninteresting—no one wants to spend time talking about cleaning guns and loading ammo. If the players aren't describing their hunter's actions quickly enough, pepper them with questions. Keep things snappy. Make sure the momentum of the telling starts to accelerate.

Ask the players what they're gonna do about the threat. Where are they going? What are they bringing? What do they have planned? Meanwhile, you need to think about



what your nasty is doing. It sure as hell isn't sitting around waiting for the hunters—not unless it's planning to hunt them in turn. So where is it now? What is it doing? When will it attack again, and where, and whom? Don't let the hunters' plans affect yours unless the creature is somehow aware of their plans. You need to keep your monster's actions consistent and let the hunters' activities intersect it naturally.

## Surprises

Let's say the hunters know they're dealing with a werewolf. They know it has been hiding out in an old barn on the farm just outside town. They sneak up on the barn, burst in through the half-rotted doors, and—the place is empty. They search it quickly and find signs of recent occupancy, but clearly the creature is out hunting now. Damn! The hunters turn away, annoyed—and the werewolf leaps out of the nearby bushes, bowling them over and knocking the silver-loaded guns from their hands.

Surprise!

No plan survives contact with the enemy. When it does, it's just a set up for the hosing you're going to get later. This is especially true in *Supernatural*. How many times have Sam and Dean confronted a monster and discovered it wasn't what they'd thought? How many times did it sneak up on them while they were trying to hunt it? How many times did they realize it was smarter than they'd realized, and had led them into a trap instead? In almost every episode, there's a surprise. That's what keeps things fun.

The trick for the Game Master is figuring out what the surprise is and revealing it when appropriate. Although you know the creature's true nature and plans from the start, the hunters may



misidentify it or underestimate it or simply decide its lair was someplace it wasn't. If one of those self-created surprises happens, roll with it. Let them build their own unpleasant discoveries into the game. But what if the hunters did everything right? What if they identified the beast correctly, figured out its hunting pattern, located its lair, and set up the perfect trap?

Big deal. You can still change things up. Maybe the creature's hunt tonight was unsuccessful so it's returning earlier or later than normal. Maybe it ran across something that attracted or repulsed it. That means it returns to its lair by a different route. Maybe a local kid enters the old caves on a dare and stumbles onto the hunters by accident. Whatever it is, it should make sense. If you have something ridiculous happen just to throw the hunters off, you'll lose the players' trust. Still, no one can account for every variable, and the hunters know that. They do the best they can, planning for everything they can think of, but just when they think everything is ironed out, they discover the creature is pregnant, or there are two of them, or the lack of a moon that night makes it much harder to see. The surprise shouldn't completely destroy the hunters' chances, but it should create unwelcome complications and make the hunt just a bit more difficult. That's the challenge, and the fun.

### Evil Within

A nagging worry hanging over the television series is Sam's powers—what are they, where did they come from, and what does all that have to do with the Yellow-Eyed Demon. You may not have anyone playing a character exactly like that, but that doesn't keep you from using a major horror theme—the evil within. Every hunter has to deal with that issue from time to time. Hunters kill things for a living. Sure, most of those creatures are outright evil and definitely deserve to die. On the flip

side, some are little more than beasts. Is it a bear's fault that it savages campers stupid enough to get in its way? Is it a pack of wild dogs' fault when they tear apart a wayward cyclist? The same question applies to some supernatural threats. Sometimes the creature lived in its area long before humans arrived. It has a right to defend itself against invaders, doesn't it? And if the creature is in the right, doesn't that mean the hunters are in the wrong? Are they evil for killing all the time?

Of course, for some, the question goes much deeper. Every hunter faces evil on a regular basis, but some have a more ... personal connection to it. Some hunters have been touched by evil in one way or another—from the boy whose dreams are haunted by demons to the man who was bitten by a werewolf to the woman who once made a pact with an evil spirit. Some argue that evil must be fought at all costs. Those types are willing to sacrifice their own souls for an edge against their foes. Others see hunting as a spiritual as well as physical calling, and believe a hunter has to be pure in order to combat evil—any taint and the hunter becomes as bad as the enemy. These Medjai claim that once you've touched evil, it's got its claws into you. You're tainted and have to be put down. The wide gray area in between—use whatever you have to but don't let it corrupt you irreversibly—is not an easy path to walk.

Whichever way players choose to take their hunters, and whatever you and the players cook up together, the question of evil is always present. This is something the players will wrestle with themselves, but as the Game Master you can provide hints and examples and incidents to make them confront this issue, especially as a group.

### Campaign Concepts

Running a *Supernatural* campaign is all about deciding what sort of story to tell. You already know the genre—horror, with flashes of family and humor to offset the darkness. You already know the elements to include, like investigation and confrontation and surprise. To work out the type of hunters you'll allow you need to know which campaign concept you're gonna use. Three basic types exist for this particular game: Hittin' the Road, the Evil at Home, and Professionals. These three cover a lot of ground, so there's a good chance one of them'll fit your needs. That doesn't mean you can't come up with other ideas, whether wholly original ones or things you've cribbed from other sources. If that's your plan, you still probably want to know something about the three presented here.





## Hittin' the Road

Ah, the road trip. It's a major element in the *Supernatural* television series—almost every episode opens and closes with the Winchester boys in Dean's sleek black muscle car, cruising down some highway, blasting a hard rock tune. Sam and Dean go anywhere they're needed, anywhere they've heard of a supernatural threat. They have no fixed abode, no local support, and no base (other than their car). They also have no bills to pay, no mail to collect, no mortgage, and no ties.

That's just the way they like it.

This is a popular choice for *Supernatural* campaigns. It allows you to set the campaign anywhere, including multiple locations. As long as the hunters have transportation, they can go without worrying about packing or taking time off from work or leaving other responsibilities (and people) hanging. They can also change course on a whim, detouring if they've heard of a worse threat or making side trips to investigate something that might be connected to their current mission. There's a lot of flexibility involved with being out on the road.

Of course, for some people that's a bad thing. Not everyone likes living out of their back seat and sleeping in sleazy motels all over the country. It can be a rough and lonely life. That gives you, as the Game Master, a lot of chances to mess with the hunters (and thus make the story more interesting for everyone). At the start of the television series, Dean was still completely in the "on the road" lifestyle. Sam, on the other hand, had settled down a bit—he had a graduate school lined up, had a girlfriend, had an intended career. He was all set to study, get a job, get married, buy a house, and be happy. Then Dean dragged him back into the hunting life. Sam's mostly used to it now, but for a while he wasn't very happy about living on the go, and particularly about doing so with Dean.

Hittin' the Road doesn't require the hunters to be completely free and clear. Some people hunt but still hold down a regular job. That means any time they hear about something going on somewhere, they've got to set up some vacation time, board the dog, find someone to watch the house, stop the mail, and so on. That can be a major hassle, and makes actually being on the road more difficult. But it also gives the hunter a sense of belonging, somewhere they can return to afterward.

As a Game Master, running a Hittin' the Road campaign means maximizes the sense of being unconnected. Don't select a setting right near any of the hunters' current homes (if they have any) or near one of their favorite haunts. That makes things too easy for them. Instead, go for some town or city they've never been to before, or only passed through once, or had a bad



experience in years back. Give them no local contacts, no easy points of reference. Make them work for everything they get—each encounter is a question mark. They don't know much about the person they're meeting and don't know how things will go from there. Keep the hunters guessing. Is the local sheriff gonna be helpful or difficult? Does the local priest actually believe in the supernatural or is he one of those narrow-minded individuals who only pay lip service to such ideas? Is this the type of place where the town librarian calls the sheriff to report how these strangers were poking through the city founders' diaries and maps?

Part of the fun in a Hittin' the Road campaign is seeing what sort of relationships the hunters build. Will they regret leaving this town once they've finished the hunt? Will they develop feelings for any of the townsfolk, romantic or otherwise? Will they leave the place one step ahead of the local law, and just shy of being run out on a rail? Is this a town they'll vow never to visit again, and an adventure they'll chalk up to bitter experience, even if the hunt itself was successful?

## The Evil at Home

The opposite of the Hittin' the Road campaign is Evil at Home. Here you deliberately set the story in or near the hunters' home region. Something happens nearby, probably to people they know, and the hunters have no choice but to get involved.

Evil at Home campaigns are more personal, more desperate. The first victim wasn't just some random guy—it was Mike, the guy you used to fish with on Saturdays, or Billy, who just brought his car in for repairs last week. The sheriff isn't just some local law officer, it's Tom Daniels, who used to beat you up in second grade but turned into a decent pal when you were in high school together. The hunters know everyone involved. That makes each incident much more painful and horrifying.

## Mixing it Up

'Course, you don't have to stick with one of the concepts here for your own campaign. You can create something new. One way to do that is to take pieces from the existing concepts and merge them into something new.

You could start with one concept and then switch to another. Perhaps the hunters are professionals, out on a job that turns into a hunt. They think it's over and head for home, but the creature survived (or had a mate) and follows them back. Now you've gone from Professionals to the Evil at Home, and the hunters have to deal with facing something supernatural in their own backyards, the one place they always assumed was completely safe.

Maybe the hunters start out at home, facing something strange. The situation grows worse and worse, the threat proving to be far more powerful than they'd realized, and then either it flees to a new location (perhaps after destroying their home town completely) or they cut and run in the hopes that it will follow and spare their remaining friends and neighbors. You've taken them from the Evil at Home to Hittin' the Road, and now you get to play with the element of hunters cut adrift and forced to face a life away from everything they've ever known.

You could also start out with the hunters untethered and on a hunt, and then they wind up some place they really discover they like. They settle in a bit, make friends, build relationships, carve out a niche for themselves. They become locals. But then a supernatural threat appears there, and the hunters discover it's a lot harder to hunt when you care about all of the creature's potential victims—and when you yourself have more to lose. From Hittin' the Road to the Evil at Home in nothing flat.

Whatever you decide, keep the players on their toes a bit. If you can shake up some of their preconceived notions—without being ridiculous or unreasonable—it forces them to pay closer attention, and keeps them more engaged in the game.

Playing the Evil at Home gives the hunters some major advantages. Because they know everyone, they've got a head start on what happened, and can rule out certain questions or concerns right away. Mike, Billy, and Jake were all married—could this be a creature that preys upon abusive husbands? No, because Billy would never lift a hand to his wife or to anyone else—he's an avowed pacifist and one of the gentlest people you've ever met. What

else did the three men all share? Well, they were in the Bowling League together, and they all hit the same bar Friday night after work. Time to check out the bowling alley. The hunters also know the local

law—how helpful or obstructive they might be, and the best way to talk to them. Not least is the fact that the hunters live here, which means they can work from home—no sleazy motels needed.

Evil at Home does bring some hunter disadvantages. Each new death is someone they know. There's more pressure, more tension, more grief. And more questions from anyone who sees them involved. The hunters may find themselves having to explain what they're doing and why—to spouses, to bosses, to their best friends, to the sheriff. And when it's all over they can't simply cut and run—they'll have to explain why they killed nice Mr. Hawksley down the block, what that big mess on his front lawn really is, and why cousin Jenny can't take their picture for the local paper.

## Professionals

In some ways a Professionals campaign is the best of both worlds for the players and for the Game Master. As professionals, the hunters actually do what they do for a living. That means a regular paycheck, among other things. It also means some legal function, a way to speak to local authorities legitimately about incidents, and a way to explain their involvement to anyone who asks. Professionals also have a base of operations somewhere. They may range far afield, depending up their own preferences and the clients they choose to take, but they have a home and an office and an established phone number, possibly even a website and company emails. That means no matter where the hunters go, they can always go home afterward.

A Professionals game is less footloose than a Hittin' the Road one, but far more free than an Evil at Home scenario. At the same time, it gives the hunters more contacts than they'd have if they were just driving all over creation, and more authority than either of the other scenarios (unless they're playing Evil at Home and they're the local law).

This style of campaign is good for you as Game Master as well, for many of the same reasons. You can send the hunters to a town they've never encountered, but now they have an official reason to be there instead of having to sneak about all the time. You can set it close to their homes, but now they face the problem without having to worry about risking their day job or exposing their hunting to family and friends. You have a lot more leeway in what you're doing, and can play up of entering unfamiliar territory while still hitting the theme of fighting something terrible close to home and among familiar faces.

## Designing Adventures

How do you build your *Supernatural* adventure? Get in touch with your inner Kripke or M. Night. Everyone has different techniques, but certain basic guidelines always apply.



The first thing to decide is how much detail you prefer. Some GMs like to have every last element in the game worked out well in advance. These GMs know not only the name and history of whatever town the hunters enter, but also its entire layout and the names, descriptions, and personalities of every single occupant. They've got every aspect planned, at least as much as they can before the players get hold of the plot.

Other Game Masters are the opposite. They have only the vaguest notions of the game beforehand, perhaps an idea of the major foe and a basic setting. They freeform it, improvising everything as they go. That way they can adjust to anything that happens, and never have to worry about wasted time beforehand building a character or building or subplot they never use.

If you don't already know what you'd prefer, the middle ground is an excellent place to start. Have a concept, a setting, a major foe, and a basic storyline, but don't map out every last detail. Leave yourself room to play, and room for the players as well. One good idea is to have a basic timeline of events that will happen if the hunters don't interfere. Could be major elements or minor details; they give the story some momentum and some depth. That way you aren't simply waiting for the hunters to do things before things start happening.

Always remember about plans and "contact with the enemy." Whether they're trying to or not, the hunters will alter your story just by their presence and by the input of their players. That's a good thing—it's what makes role playing games special. One person telling a tale and everyone else just listening—that's story hour, not role playing. Make sure there's flexibility built into your adventure, and don't get so attached to any one event or detail. Adaptability is the name of the game.

## Adventure Concepts

You know your genre, you know some of the elements, you know which campaign concept you want. Now you need to decide upon the adventure concept. What sort of story is this? Is it a rescue mission—save the victim before things get bad ... or worse? Is it search-and-destroy—they know there's a supernatural threat out there to be put down? Is it a fact-finding mission—something strange is happening but they have no idea what yet, or even if it's supernatural in origin? These basic tropes tell you a lot about what to expect, and what you'll need to devise.

Once you know the basic concept, think about the specifics. Where is the story set? Each region of the country has its own flavor, as do cities versus towns versus wilderness. **Chapter One: Be Afraid of the Dark** details what you can do with each area. If you already know someplace that works, great—that means you already know details about the setting that you can work into your game. If you're choosing a place you're not familiar with personally, do some research. Figure out if it's gonna fit your adventure idea or not. Whatever you do, don't pick a setting one of your players knows and you don't! That's just asking for trouble—they'll notice mistakes and feel compelled to correct you. That takes you and them and everyone else out of the game. Better to choose someplace no one knows, where you can make up details with impunity.

Now figure out the actual story. The hunters are going up to the Rockies to hunt—but what are they hunting? They're going out to Savannah to find and retrieve someone—but who is that someone, what sort of danger are they in, and are they still alive at all? Think of this in terms of the blurbs you see in your television guide and what they say on the "Tune in Next Week" ad at the end of each episode. If your idea sounds like something you'd see on the show, you're on the right track.

## Adventure Structure

Even if you prefer to freeform your adventures, you should think about the basic structure. Certain questions need to be answered. Otherwise, you wind up running with no plan, no direction, and a good chance of no impact. The more you consider the elements below, the tighter your story is and



the more it draws the players into the game. Remember, it's okay to change your mind about some elements as the adventure progresses, based upon things the hunters do and new ideas you have when the rubber hits the road. Each time you change something, think about all the structural elements again and make sure they all continue to work together.

## Desire

What do the hunters want? What are they trying to do, both individually and together? On the surface a simple question, but it can get more complicated. What do Sam and Dean want? Stop the supernatural threats, 'course. But they also are looking for their father. Dean wants to protect Sam as much as possible. Sam wants to find out what's happening to him and why. Sometimes Sam also wants a return to the normal life he had so briefly. Sometimes Dean wants that for him too, though one thing Dean does *not* want is to be alone.

People are complex. They want different things at different times and with different intensities. Those desires can change, as can their relative importance. A good hunter has these same complexities, and that's something you can use in your game. The hunters all share the same desire to complete the adventure, whatever that requires—rescue the girl or stop the monster or find out why people are dying along Route 239. But what else is going on here? One of them wants to find out who killed his wife all those years ago, and avenge her death. Does this adventure give any clues toward that? Another wants to quit all of this hunting and settle down—will this town tempt him, and can he hang up his guns while threats like this still exist in the world at large? You can't work every desire for every hunter into a single adventure, and you shouldn't—too many elements make the plot unwieldy and awkward and confusing. But you can work in details from a few desires and give the story more depth. This works particularly well if you set up these possibilities and then leave them for the hunters to find and explore if they choose. Just don't make those secondary elements important to your main plot unless the hook you've created is strong enough that you know the hunters will bite.

## Conflict

You can't have a good story—or a good adventure—without conflict. Of course conflict can take many different forms.

The first, and most important, conflict is between the protagonists—the hunters—and the antagonist—the nasty. What is the threat in this adventure? What sort of creature are you using? Keep in mind that it should be powerful enough to face all of the hunters together but not so powerful that they can't defeat it, even if that only means driving it off for the time being. You need to know what the evil is. Otherwise, you can't lead the hunters toward finding and combating it.

That's not the only conflict in a story, however. People butt heads all the time, and hunters aren't usually the most easy-going and sociable of individuals. They tend to roll into a town, snoop around, ask a lot of nosy questions, then attack something (or someone), cause some property damage, and leave. That doesn't exactly lead to warm feelings from the locals, though certainly the people the hunters save may feel differently. You usually rely on your players to create this sort of conflict for you. You just need to have an idea about the personalities of the normal people they'll encounter on their hunt, and leave it to the hunters to ruffle feathers and rile tempers. They're bound to piss someone off. More often than not the locals are in a position to help or hinder a hunt, so ticking them off only creates new obstacles for the hunters.

Another conflict you're liable to get is one between the hunters themselves. Even Sam and Dean fight from time to time. If the players created unrelated hunters, they got far less reason to smooth over differences. Hunting is a risky business—people get tense, and lose their temper at someone for something minor. Some hunters even deliberately give in to their tempers because it allows them to blow off steam. Again, this is a conflict you can let the players engineer. All you need to do is keep an eye on them, and referee the shouting match when it does break out.

## Rising Action

The classic five-act play structure is Introduction, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Resolution. Most stories follow this basic path, and the rising action is everything that occurs between the opening gambit and the climactic battle. So what's that entail?

Think about your setting, your villain, and your basic story. What's going on? If you've got a creature that's nabbing—and killing—stray hikers in the mountains, is it getting worse? If you've got a missing girl and the hunters are out looking for her, is there some sort of deadline? Are there others seeking her?

Rising action should be an increase in tension and some complications. More people are dying, and more quickly. The girl has a medical condition; the heroes have ten hours to get her medicine before she keels over. A team of rival hunters appears, and they're known for shooting first and asking questions later. The local sheriff takes exception to the hunters nosing around and throws them in jail.

These complications can be part of the established story—an encroaching deadline, or that the beast only strikes three times before vanishing each year, and he's just killed his second victim. They could also be new elements like the rival hunters or the sheriff's recent decision regarding pushy strangers. They need to make sense in the format of the story—it's one thing to have other hunters show up, quite another for the President of the United States to suddenly arrive on an impromptu visit



(unless part of the story setup was that this is one of his favorite haunts). And you don't want to add complications just because you can—they should fit with what's already happened.

Fortunately, players are very good at creating their own complications. Keep an eye on what the hunters do, and specifically watch for anything that could come back and bite them later on. One of the hunters stole something from the sheriff's office? He may have been caught on tape, and the local Alan Pangborn, or worse Collie Enragian, shows up to arrest him. Another hunter called a local expert to ask about something? The expert shows up to offer his help, and winds up getting in the way—or he may call a hunter he knows and tell him what's going on.

## Climax

The big moment. The showdown. That's your climax. In a *Supernatural* game, it's usually something physical. The hunters finally locate the monster, and confront it face-to-face. Maybe it's guns blazing, maybe it's a clever ambush, maybe it's a warding circle and an incantation. Whatever it is, it's the big payoff for everything that's happened up to now.

Don't blow it.

Remember, the hunters don't have to win—if they lose, they lose. But this should definitely be a super-charged scene. You need to make sure it gets there. Everything was building to this moment, and if it's not riveting the players will feel let down—and so will you, really.

So how do you make sure the climax is the high point of the story?

Jack up the pace on the way into it. Shorthand some of the minor details when describing scenes up to this one so that they move along more quickly. You don't need to tell the players about the peeling paint on the barn doors, not unless it's a major clue to something. You want to get things going at almost breakneck pace.

Then, when you hit the climactic scene—pause. The supernatural threat appears, it faces off against the hunters ... and you hold it there for a second. Let the players take it all in. Savor the moment. After charging into the scene headlong, slam on the brakes. That'll throw the players for a second, and hit them with the scene's impact full-force.

Then, once they've had a second, start things up again in full frenzy. The players had half a second to catch their breaths, now take that back away from them. Don't let them get another breath until the scene is over, one way or another. Don't let them think about what's going on, just make them react to everything you're tossing at them. Hit them rapidly and then hit them again. Don't let anything they do throw you, either. You have to keep everything moving as much as possible and as quickly as possible to maintain the pace you're setting.

## Resolution

The big battle's over. The monster's down, the threat is ended. Time to wrap things up. Now we've come to the resolution, the downward slope toward the final moments. Sometimes it seems there's not much to do here—the hunters rode into town, heard about a ghost that's been terrorizing locals to death, found its bones, consecrated and then burned them, and now they ride back out again. But often there's more to it than that, more than the players or hunters realize. You need to take care of whatever's left before everyone can move on.

A large part of the resolution is the repercussions. Yes, the hunters took down the bloodsucking fiend, but during the day he masqueraded as kindly Joe Philmore, who worked as an elementary school crossing guard. What happens when the school board—not to mention the kids and their parents—ask where Joe is the next day? If any of the hunters were seen staking Joe, that's gonna create an entirely new set of problems to resolve. What about





# Subtext & Themes

Sometimes a gun is just a gun and a monster is just a monster. Sometimes it's not. Working subtexts into the *Supernatural* game or applying a theme to your adventure or campaign is easy. Are the monsters metaphors for human cruelty? Are the ghosts symbols of our own inability to let things go, particularly painful memories? You're the Game Master; you decide. If everything has a deeper meaning and the plot and the supporting characters have hidden layers, it may provide for a more engaging game.

Just be careful not to overdo it. You don't wanna be too heavy-handed with theme and subtext. A few subtle hints is enough to catch the players' interest, if they notice. Lay it on too thick and you go from providing added depth to preaching. No one's looking for that. You also wanna be careful not to let themes and subtexts overpower the story elements. If you have a flower theme going in your adventure and tie everything important to that, it's gonna be very easy for the hunters to figure out that Ms. Violet, not Mr. Henderson, is the bad guy. When using subtext, themes, or motifs, a little bit goes a long way. A lot goes way too far.

Joe's victims? Did he kill them, or kidnap them and keep them in his basement for feeding? Do the hunters set those people loose or just call the cops and tip them off about Joe's strange habits?

A lot of the resolution depends upon the hunters and their attitudes. Dean, for example, would just tip off the cops and split. Sam, however, would insist on freeing the victims himself and then sticking around to make sure they'll be okay. Both choices have repercussions, not only right now but possibly later. What happens when someone recognizes Dean's voice from the 911 call, or remembers a survivor's description of Sam and his empathy.

Resolutions are a good time to set hooks for the next story. The nature spirit was defeated—but swore it would return. The strange beast in the woods was killed—but its cavern lair suggests it had a mate. The demon was banished from the child—but warned that it was not alone. The trick here is not to make too big a deal about the follow-up just yet. Give the hunters a chance to wind down a little before launching into the next story. A resolution should provide a breather for everyone.

Don't drag out the resolution too long. Sure, it's cool that the entire town now considers the hunters heroes and wants to thank them. But take a page from the series—never dwell on such scenes. Describe the party where the town thanks them, touch on the mayor's speech, and then wrap it up.

## Scenes

You've heard talk of scenes several times now. It's best to think of an adventure as a series of scenes strung together. A scene is an unbroken chain of events in a single location. Any time the hunters drive to another house or pull up at the police station, you cut to a new scene. Some scenes are longer than others, and that's fine—that's part of the story's pacing. If you want to increase the momentum you play short, quick scenes. To slow things down, you draw out each scene instead.

The good thing about scenes is that they help focus you and your players. Whatever happened out in the cemetery last night, that was a different scene. The hunters can sit around jawing about it but there are probably more important things to do. Scenes help compartmentalize elements, focusing on the humor here, the drama there, and the information gathering over there.

Scenes have links between them, which can be very flexible. When Sam and Dean decide they need to go speak with a particular local, we don't usually see them wandering the streets searching. Instead, we see them heading out of their motel room, and the scene shifts. Next thing we know, they're walking up to the old guy in front of the barber shop and saying, "Mr. Halley? Mind if we ask you a few questions?" How long were they out driving around looking for Mr. Halley? Who cares! That wasn't important to the story so we skipped that stuff. This is a particularly useful trick when the hunters are traveling, or when they're doing something boring like looking through microfiche or sharpening their knives. We don't need to see any of those things, so fast-forward past them to the next scene.

Hitting only the most important stuff makes people pay more attention during scenes. The hunters have been going house to house asking questions, and for the past three houses you've responded, "No one knows anything here either." When they get to the next house, you start describing the lady who answers the door. Dropping into a role, you say "Yes? Can I help you?" Right away the players perk up. Clearly this is a new scene, and something is about to happen. Same deal for travel scenes. After glossing over most of the trip, you start describing the hunters driving down the street. That must mean there's something for them to notice. You can adjust the story's pace this way, slowing the action and showing clues. You can even misdirecting them by giving a theoretically inconsequential moment or action its own scene.

## Events, Adventures, and Campaigns

Scenes aren't the only units of game-measurement. Three of them that nest together, one inside the other, are events, adventures, and campaigns. Each one is a discrete unit, but each can be used to build larger stories.



## Events

The smallest story unit is an event. It might be a single scene, but it doesn't have to be. It's literally one event, from start to finish. Perhaps it's an explosion, over quickly but carrying a long aftermath. Maybe it's a hostage situation, lasting an entire adventure and running through dozens of scenes. The important thing is that an event centers on a single clearly defined action. Events are immediate—the build-up and the aftermath are not part of them, though the three are closely connected.

Your story probably has several events, some of them planned and some arising from the hunters' activities. Most *Supernatural* stories begin with an event, usually a bizarre death that attracts the hunters' interest.

Events are always extremely localized. You can have a series of events so closely connected they seem like a single large event, like a crime spree, but really it's just a linked series. Each crime is an event in and of itself—it occurs in one place, at one time, with one set of people.

When building a *Supernatural* game, it's best to have several events already in mind. If your threat is killing people, plan out each death in turn. Those are major events. If the sheriff panics and calls in the FBI for help, that's an event. If the creature realizes it's drawn too much attention and goes to ground, that's an event as well.

Remember that events don't have to be flashy, but they must be important. The creature taking on human form and hiding among the homeless is an event because it has a significant effect on the story. The sheriff pacing his office while waiting for the feds to arrive isn't an event; the feds showing up is.

## Adventures

Events link together into adventures. An adventure is basically one short story, from start to finish. Most have the five-part structure mentioned above, lead off from a single event, and feature a single antagonist or a small group of antagonists.

Adventures are more flexibility than events in terms of time and place—a single adventure can have the hunters going between towns, even between cities. But the story itself doesn't change. If the hunters arrived in a small Georgia town hunting a rogue golem, and wind up going to Boston instead, it's because the golem was never there,



it escaped and headed north, or someone in Bean Town has information they need to defeat that golem. That's two major locations, and a span of time, but only one antagonist and one storyline. That means one adventure.

It's important to keep the endgame of an adventure in mind, particularly when dealing with subplots. Detouring to check with an old mystic about the golem is fine, provided it doesn't completely destroy any momentum you were gathering toward the final confrontation. Turning off the main road and spending time at an old haunted farmhouse is not a good idea. That's a different story, not part of this adventure. You need to dissuade the hunters from going there now, and save it for later—when you've had time to create a story to back up that plot direction.

Of course, you need to maintain your focus as Game Master too. Don't get sidetracked from your story. The town you've brought the hunters to may have a fascinating history involving Puritans, Native Americans, and nature spirits, but if the adventure is about a transplanted eastern European flesh-eater, you don't want to spend hours going on about the Pilgrims. You can always build a new adventure around the town's history later. The only thing you need to do right away is start thinking about a rationale for keeping the hunters in the area after the current adventure is over.

## Campaigns

Several adventures link together to create a campaign. A campaign is like a multiple-episode story arc. The individual adventures can stand alone, but when taken together, they create a much larger story.

The big deal here is the link that ties the adventures together. How do they all connect? It might be something obvious. In each adventure, the hunters are taking down different vampires, but the creatures all come from the same family and all answer to the same master. It could be a matter of placement—all the adventures occur in the same region or the same city. It could be something subtler, like character development—the campaign focuses on the hunters' growth from rank amateurs to hard-bitten veterans. The exact connection is up to you. Just make sure it's strong enough to justify calling what results an ongoing campaign. Make sure all the pieces fit together neatly, but not too blatantly.

Just as adventures usually follow a five-part structure, campaigns often have a common structure. Usually it's a steady increase, like ripples in a pond, growing larger and larger with each pass. There might be a small step back at the end of an adventure, as the pace slows, but then it builds back up. Each adventure winds up a little faster, rougher, more tense, and more important than the one before it. The last adventure of a campaign should be for some seriously high stakes, much greater than anything that's gone before. Success should require elements (knowledge, experience, or something more prosaic like a particular book or weapon) that the hunters acquired during the previous adventures.

The trick is to make sure you wrap everything up at the end of the campaign. It's fine to leave plots hanging after each adventure; the players know that those unresolved storylines will reappear in some subsequent, related adventure. When you end a campaign, every major element you should be done, and most of the minor ones as well. You can leave a few things dangling to lead into another campaign, and you can summarize outcomes if you like. Don't create a villain in the first adventure, increase his importance and power in each subsequent adventure, and simply have him disappear partway through the finale. That's a major league let down.

## Breaking the Mold

The advice so far is all well and good, but don't sweat it if you decide to go a different direction. Make sure you know what you're doing, and can handle the deviation, then feel free to go for it. Maybe you weave a secondary plot through your adventures, seemingly at random. Then turn it into the primary plot in the last adventure of the campaign. Cool. The players won't see that coming, and all their griping about pointless side trips is replaced with gasps and curses and cheers when they realize how carefully you planned things out—provided you pull it off, 'course.

Get to know the basic stuff until you feel like you've mastered it. Then think about ways to break the mold, and why. Don't walk away from the adventure structure just because you can—do it because a particular story works better without gradual rising action or with three climaxes, one after the other.

The best way to go about this is to think about the story and where you want it to go. Does it fit neatly within the events-adventures-campaign structure? Great, go ahead and use it. Does it violate those forms and that relationship? Good enough. Walk away from those guidelines and stay true to your story. Don't gut it by forcing it somewhere it doesn't want to go.

## Unusual Scenes

Normal scenes take place in the real world and proceed in an orderly chronological way. Not everything works that way though, especially in a *Supernatural* game. By adding some variety to your scenes, you not only emulate the show better but also highlight past events, hint at upcoming encounters, deliver subtle or downright confusing clues, and generally keep the players on their toes.

Again, don't overdo it. Unless you have a specific reason for doing so, it's best not to use any of these unusual scene types more than a few times in a single adventure, and certainly not more than once or twice in a single game session. You should also figure beforehand exactly what sort of scene you plan to use, what you're gonna set up as happening, and why. Don't throw in a flashback and have it mean nothing. That's a waste of a powerful tool, and it dilutes your story.

## Flashbacks

Flashbacks are a great way to highlight some information the hunters may not have realized was important—and the players may have actually forgotten. Any hunter can have a flashback—it isn't even necessary that they were present for the original event. That's overly restrictive for a world with psychics and witches and demons. Just make sure that if the flashback belongs to someone else, you know how and why the hunter got it instead. Then give some hints to help the hunter realize what's going on.

Flashbacks take two forms: those that are literally flashes and those that are longer sequences. Flashes often overlay the real world. A hunter might drive by his aunt walking down a busy street corner, then suddenly she's shouting out a warning just before she dies. Longer sequences usually blank out the real world—the hunter retreats into his or her head as the memory plays out, and comes out of it a second later, disoriented.

Best way to highlight a flashback is to play up sense memory. If the hunter's in an office building and flashes back to an encounter in the woods, the heady scent of fresh pine overwhelms him. If he suddenly remembers when he almost drowned, the pounding of the water all around him fills his ears. Tap into the hunter's senses to make the scene feel real. And remember that flashbacks don't happen without a reason.



## Dreams

Everybody dreams, though not everyone remembers them. Sometimes dreams are a way for the subconscious to review the day and work through whatever went down. Other times, dreams embody our fears, our hopes, our ideas. They give us unique insight, not only into our own minds but also into the minds and emotions of those around us—in dreams we aren't fettered by logic and society. We can do and think and feel whatever we want without being told it's wrong or false.

Some people pay close attention to their dreams, and learn to sift through the whacky stuff to find warnings and truths and ideas. For those who can do this well, dreams become a valuable tool. As any hunter knows, it's the more tools the better in the battle against evil.

Of course, that doesn't mean every dream is important. As with linking scenes, any time you describe a dream to a player he or she knows it's more than just idle background. You can play on this by detailing one or two unimportant dreams as well, or dropping a single major clue into an otherwise useless dream. Just remember not to exhaust your players' patience or they won't notice or care when you do provide critical information.

## Visions

Dreams are our own minds working things out. Visions are something else completely. A vision is a glimpse of something outside us, an event in the real world. It can be a view of the past, but more often it's either the present or the future. Some visions center on the recipient; others are of people and places the hunter doesn't even know or recognize. Unlike dreams, visions are always a big deal.

First question when you're planning to use a vision is why. Why does a hunter receive a vision? Is he tapping into big mojo, the way Sam does? Or does he stumble onto something that grants him this vision? Is it an object, or a place? The hunter may not understand where the vision comes from but as Game Master, you certainly need to know.

Then think about what the vision reveals. Visions are important and usually pertain to whatever mission's giving the hunters fits. That's not always readily apparent—the hunters may be looking for a wild animal that's been tearing apart coeds, and one of them has a vision about a small, balding man in a retirement community. What does that have to do with anything? It only makes sense later, when they realize that little man has somehow tamed a hell hound and has been siccing it on the sorority girls who once taunted him.

Visions should never be confused with anything else. They hit like a ton of bricks and are clearly supernatural in nature. Hunters shouldn't wonder, "was that just a weird dream?" Play up the strangeness of each vision to make sure it feels important and powerful and confusing.



## Hallucinations

Sometimes the mind plays tricks on us. Sometimes it has a little help.

Hallucinations are when we sense things that aren't there. Sometimes those things seem completely normal—a woman walking down the street and smiling hello as she passes by, a car rounding the corner, a small child playing ball, an old farmhouse at the top of a hill. Sometimes they're out of place, like the shirtless man blithely dancing down a snowy Minnesota road. Other times they're completely bizarre and don't make a lick of sense—they're just distorted and unclear and contradictory.

Why do we get hallucinations? Maybe the brain can't handle every coming down on it and starts sending out random signals. Sometimes, especially in *Supernatural*, something starts jamming it. An otherworldly presence can make electronics go haywire—why not brainwaves

as well? Mere proximity could be enough to make people see things that aren't there. Maybe it's a creature broadcasting images and emotions so powerfully that anyone near it starts experiencing those as well.

As with other unusual scenes, you got to know why the hunters are experiencing hallucinations. Decide whether these strange images and smells and sounds carry some importance, like revealing clues about a ghost's past or showing a demon's past victims, or whether they're just jumbles.

## Playing the Parts

As the Game Master, you get to play the supporting characters—every character except the hunters that the players control. Depending on the story you create, that could mean anything from playing a single creature to bringing an entire city to life. So how do you go about doing that without losing your mind or mingling all the supporting characters together or both? How do you handle all these supporting characters while keeping the interesting and not overpopulating your story?

First off, divide your supporting characters into three categories: stock characters, important characters, and antagonists. Each category requires a different level of detail, creation, and maintenance. It's a lot like a painting—some things are in the foreground, sharp and detailed, others are fuzzy in the background. If everything had the same level of detail, the eye wouldn't know where to focus. You'd simply walk away confused. By having different levels of detail, we know what is important and what to look at first, even as our brains assemble the entire picture.

### Stock Characters

Stock characters are basic everyday people—bankers, bakers, cops, teachers, waiters, and so on. They can be any ethnicity, any gender, any age, any race, any religion, and almost any occupation. The one thing they share is that they are not important. Not to your story, anyway. When Sam and Dean pull into a town and check into the motel, what does the motel manager look like? Who cares? What about the waitress who serves them breakfast at the diner the next morning? Again, whatever. The kids who cross in front of them on their way to school? Just kids.

These people might be crucial to the world, and they are no doubt important to someone, but your story is about hunters and their supernatural prey. If the people in question aren't part of either group, a victim, or someone who can help or hinder the hunt, don't waste time worrying about them. They're just background filler.

So what do you do with stock characters? Very little.

No need to give them stats because they're not gonna get into combat or any other die-rolling situation.

No need to give them names unless they wind up directly interacting with the hunters and someone asks their name—in which case you can simply

make one up on the spot. "Joe" and "Bob" and "Lisa" is good enough. No need to describe them in any detail. They walk past once and are gone. Stock characters are the cardboard cutouts of the adventure, the extras who don't have speaking parts in movies. They are listed in the credits as Man in Street #1 and Woman in Line #2. That's all the detail you need for them—just enough so they form part of the scene but not enough to draw any attention to them. If a stock character becomes more important later, flesh him or her out then. Until that time, they're strictly window dressing.

### Important Characters

Characters that are important to a story have information that can help the hunters, are victims of the evil the hunters are after, or are actively hindering the hunters' investigations. They'd be called supporting cast in the episode or a movie.

Important characters have names and faces. They have personalities, and are on-screen long enough for the hunters to discover them. They may even have individual quirks and distinctive personal habits, particularly if that stuff might become important later.

So how much detail do you need for important characters? A name and basic description, definitely. An idea of the character's job and personality. Just as important is information on what role the character plays in the adventure. Beyond that, it depends in large part upon that role. Is this character one of the creature's victims? If so, was the attack fatal? If so, you don't have to worry about giving the character statistics—he or she is already dead. Sketching out the personality's a good idea, though—when the hunters question the victim's family and friends, they have something to say beyond "Billy was a nice boy. It's a shame he's dead." You also need to know why Billy died. Was he just in the wrong place at the wrong time, or did he do something, know something, or go somewhere that got him killed? If all the victims were amateur spelunkers, obviously that's something you'll want to build into Billy's background.

If the character is someone the hunters actually encounter in person, you need more detail about the person's life, background, interests, and occupation. Give yourself a few tags to help identify the character, like "Jason: tall, skinny, boring, officious." That's enough to keep him straight from the other important characters. If you think you might need to roll dice for Jason at any point, work out his basic stats (**Chapter Nine: The Mundane** could help). If he has information the hunters need, figure out what that is—and why he has it. If he's gonna be an obstacle for them, figure out the how and why of that as well.



## Antagonists

Now we get to the big enchiladas. Antagonists are the hunters' rivals, the people actively working against them. One or more of these bad boys is gonna be supernatural, but mundanes can be antagonists as well—rival hunters, local law enforcement, suspicious federal agents, old friends with a serious grudge.

In an episode, the antagonists get their names in the credits right after the title sequence. They're second only to the hunters in importance. Some of them may even be recurring characters, particularly within a single story arc/campaign. Antagonists always get a lot of screen time, and that means you have to prepare accordingly.

No short cuts here. Work up full character stats for each antagonist, and give some serious thought to their personality as well. Background details can vary, depending upon their relationship to the hunters. If they're old friends turned rivals, you need to know all about their past history together. If they're feds who've just taken an interest in the hunters' trail of suspicious activity, you only need a sketchy bio and a hint as to why the agent is so obsessed with catching the hunters.

With an antagonist, you've got to be ready for their full involvement in the story. If the hunters set a trap for one of the antagonists, you need to know whether the dude falls for it or notices the tripwires, and what he does next. It's better to have more detail than you need with an antagonist—the alternative is discovering you don't know something you really should. That can really mess up your game. You should have only a few antagonists in each adventure, so take the time to give them each as full a work-up as if they were regular hunters. This could work well later, because something you build into an antagonist might come back as a later storyline, like the child she had with one of the hunters or the mentor who sent him to seek revenge. These details can lead to additional adventures later. Hell, if the antagonists (particularly a mortal one) survive the storyline, he might pop back up later as well. If he pulls a yellow-eyed bastard routine, you've got a good start on knowing what he's all about.

## Keeping It Real

When running your characters, particularly the antagonists, make sure to breath life into them. They're not just a list of stats and skills, and a hasty back story. They should be real people, or real creatures. This goes as much



for the supernatural characters as the mundane ones. The more you can flesh out these characters, the more you can make sure their actions in-game are consistent and believable and the better they'll be in their role.

## Motivations

The big question with any character is "Why?" Why are they killing people? Why are they staying on that one farm? Why do they never attack priests? Why do they always leave the victim's right hand behind?

You need to know the answer to these questions. You need to get inside the supernatural creature's head. Where did it come from? What is it doing here? What was it doing before the adventure began? Why does it act the way it does?

Some creatures are little more than beasts and have as much intelligence as your average bear or wolf. They aren't master manipulators; most of their actions are based upon instinct and prior experience. A priest once burned them with holy water and now they stay away from all priests. Their former master's right hand was made of iron and unbreakable, so they gnaw off each victim's right hand and leave it behind, assuming it is just as dangerous.

Other threats are far more cunning—as intelligent as any human, and perhaps more so. Their reasoning is significantly more complex, but you still need to figure it out. Remember that most supernatural creatures were never human and don't think like humans. For all their intelligence, they may still do things that make no sense to any normal person, not even you. That's okay. Their motivations don't have to make sense to you as a person. They have to make sense to you as the Game Master. Their motivations should be internally consistent and be based on rationales you know even if you can't appreciate them.

## Portrayal

Evil is evil, right? Dark and ugly and powerful and nasty and utterly unredeemed? Yeah ... not always. Sometimes evil is beautiful and seductive. Sometimes it's plain and ordinary and unremarkable. Sometimes it's just not as clearly evil as we'd like.

Remember this in your game. Sometimes it's good to have the hunters going up against obvious evil, something no right-thinking person would ever defend. Other times you can send them after a creature that's killing people for a damn good reason—a justification the hunters can appreciate (like defending its children or avenging an old wrong). Evil isn't monolithic and it isn't always clear-cut. You could devise some great game sessions by using an evil some of the hunters actually agree with, at least in part. That creates tension among the hunters and can lead to interesting in-game debates.

Even if your evil is of the Demon Prince of Hell variety, be careful not to overdo it. Evil taken too far is silly, like a campy horror movie. If you're going for Rocky Horror, okay, but if you want something more visceral and gut-wrenching, it's better to be understated than over the top. Look at the yellow-eyed demon on the series—he's chilling, in part because he doesn't make a big deal about his power. We know he's evil and we can see his arrogance, but at the same time his casual manner and twisted humor make us wonder. If you can get your players to feel the same way about your antagonist, you've got them hooked. Then again, if you can get them riled up about a clear and obvious threat, that's hooked as well. If they're hooked—no matter how you managed it—that means a good game for everyone.

## Technology

*Supernatural* is not a tech-heavy show—some hunters don't use anything more complicated than a Bowie knife and a longbow—but it is set modern-day, so technology does play a part. That part can be as major or minor as you choose, within limits. After all, if you set your adventure in a big city, you can't exactly claim there're no cars, no computers, and no cell phones. Technology works to your advantage just as much as to the hunters'. Part of the show's charm is the juxtaposition of ancient Evil, Dean with his car, and Sam with his laptop—fighting the bad guys the modern way.

## The Modern & the Ancient

Of course, not everything a hunter uses is modern. Knives play a part, and so does salt—can't get much more simple than fire, and that's one of the best weapons going. Research could uncover a warding spells—a ritual create hundreds if not thousands of years ago but still just as effective today.

The weapons hunters turn to most often, however, are firearms. Most of the time, those babies work just fine. Sure, the shotgun might filled with rock salt—that scares off most people just as well as temporarily dispelling a ghost—but pistols generally hold normal bullets. Why do those work against supernatural creatures? Maybe it's simply that these creatures don't expect it. Many monsters are thousands of years old, and only awaken every few decades. They don't know much about modern technology, and when someone points a short stubby metal thing at them, they have no idea that a big noise and flying metal is coming their way. Part of it is simply that many supernatural creatures are still mortal. If they have physical forms, a bullet can mess them up. Even the ones that aren't mortal can usually feel pain. A couple slugs could at least buy the hunters some breathing room while they figure out what to do next.

It is fun to contrast the old and the new in a *Supernatural* game. Imagine a hunter who stores his wardings and other spells on a smart phone. What about using that phone's camera to see vengeful spirits that are invisible to the naked eye. In theory, someone could record a spell into an MP3 player and play it back when necessary. These high-tech toys can give hunters an edge, partially because most of their prey never sees it coming.

## Arcane Knowledge

One of the first things hunters should do when encountering a new threat is to hit the books. Check the local papers and archives. Don't forget personal resources, including, say, a father's journal or other





arcane texts. Lots of times a creature—or something similar—has appeared before. If so, the hunters can learn its name, habits, and weaknesses. If they're particularly lucky, they may already have a spell to use against it.

So how big is arcane knowledge for a hunter? Maybe not absolutely critical, but seriously important. It's possible for a hunter to survive and even succeed without it, but that requires considerable luck and enough combat skill to make up for the utter lack of book smarts. Such hunters are more often than not going in blind, stalking prey they haven't identified. That sets up combat against a foe they know nothing about. Not conducive to longevity—even what passes for hunter longevity.

Does that mean every hunter should be a wizard? Nah. Even assuming wizards exist (see the next section), they should be exceedingly rare and probably don't have the right temperament for a hunter. Still, a good hunter should know something about the supernatural world—he should be able to identify some of it. If nothing else, he needs to some of the creatures are out there and how to kill them.

'Course, some hunters have more of the pencil-necked geek in them. Sam's a bookworm by nature, and he's a whiz at tracking down supernatural info online. But even Dean has some basic research skills, and hits the books before a hunt to make sure he knows his quarry as well as possible. A little arcane knowledge can mean the difference between life and death.

## Managing the Occult

In the *Supernatural* setting, evil definitely exists. So does Hell. Demons are real, same with vampires, werewolves, and a whole bunch of other horrors most people see only in books and movies. The supernatural is absolutely real, and no hunter can deny it.

But what does all that mean? Do people cast spells and turn invisible or fly across the sky or see through cat's eyes? Can witches toss around curses or make suckers fall in love with them? Where do we draw the line?

That's really up to you as the Game Master. We know for a fact that certain spells work. But every one we've on the TV show was demon-related, including both bindings and summonings. We haven't seen anyone kicking in levitation, blasting fireballs, or controlling the weather. Does that mean that stuff doesn't exist? Who knows? They can if you want them to.

Keep in mind that the amount of magic you allow can't help but alter the feel of the game. If you say yes to all sorts of magic, you may have hunter mages who can literally shoot fire from their fingers or fly faster than a small plane. What will that do to your adventure? How much of a mystery is your supernatural evil if the hunters can simply scry for it in a pool of water? How much of a challenge is it if they call lightning down on it or solidify the air around it.

Then again, if the hunters have that kind of juice, the antagonist could be even more potent. Now we're talking sorcerous duels. Greater magical ability raises the stakes and wanders farther away from the low-key, low-magic stories of *Supernatural*.

If you decide to eighty-six magic, you need to decide if it's a complete ban (other than the whole supernatural nasties). If you're making exceptions, you need to make sure they are consistent and well reasoned. Why? Because your players may not be happy about magic-free adventures. They'll be justifiably ticked off if they think anyone else (including you, through your supporting characters) is getting special treatment.

## Game Mastering Tips

We've talked about setting up a story, planning out an adventure, what to do with the supporting cast and dice, and handling tech. But what about when you're actually running the game? What tips can we offer to help make you a stronger, sharper, smoother Game Master?

First and foremost, keep your cool. No matter what happens in your game, never lose control of it or of yourself. Always act like everything is going exactly according to plan, or at least like you're on top of things—even if, deep down inside, you don't have a clue. You'd be surprised how well this works. As long as your players think you've got it covered, they won't worry in the least.

## Develop Your Own Style

You need to figure out your own game mastering style. If you've run games before, you may already know your style. In that case, you just need to adapt it to the *Supernatural* setting and the Cortex system. If you're a new Game Master, your style will develop as you run your first game, make adjustments, and run again. Are you an organization freak who knows every detail of every person, place and thing even mentioned in your game? Are you a seat-of-your-pants ad libber who barely has a story concept in place? Do you focus upon the setting, or the characters, or the dialogue, or the horror? Are your games funnier than scary, or vice-versa? Think about ways to make your game different from others.

Role playing is a form of interactive storytelling. As with other forms of storytelling, the narrator's voice has as much to do with enjoying the book as anything else. The same is true of the Game Master. Your style is your voice, your particular way of creating and running a game. Don't try to shoehorn your voice and style into someone else's just because you think that's what people want. They rarely do. Usually they just want a Game Master who is comfortable in his own style, confident in his game, and clever in his ideas. You can be all of that.

## Learn From Your Players, But Run Your Game

Role playing is interactive, which means the players have a say in events as well. Otherwise role playing would actually be a one-man show, and the players would be your audience. Always listen to what your players are saying. Consider any suggestions they make to improve the game, especially if their suggestions involve specific areas or objects or people they know far better than you do.

Having said that, don't let your players tell you what to do. It's ultimately your game—you're in charge, and you may need to remind people of that from time to time. Players can be like predators sometimes. If they smell fear and scent blood, they might think you're gonna be a weak Game Master and they can push the game around. Running a game is one of the few times after preschool when "because I said so" is still a valid response. You're the Game Master, you created the stories and chose the rules—that means what you say goes, period. You can discuss ideas and issues but ultimately if you put your foot down, that decision should be final.

### Act vs. Tell

One problem starting Game Masters often have is that they tell, rather than show. It's a problem beginning writers have as well, and for the same reason. They simply don't know any better. Telling conveys the information quickly and cleanly. But it does so with no subtlety and, worse, no inflection. Showing details can take longer and may obscure some stuff, but it's far more engaging and far more active. Showing gives the players a chance to draw their own conclusions. They get to feel more like a part of the story and get more involved. It's not a blanket prohibition though. Sometimes you need to skip to a different scene and the only way to handle the transition is by giving a quick summary—"Here's what's happened since X." Just be sure that when you're telling, you're doing so deliberately and for the right reasons.

### Pacing

We talked about how to pace a scene by adding or removing details. But what about your pacing? Everyone has a different speed for storytelling and Game Mastering, just like everyone has a different walking speed. Just got to find yours. You need to gauge your players' reaction too. If they're acting a little bored, pick up the pace a bit. If they look confused and frazzled, you might want to slow it down. Don't go outside your own comfort levels—if you like to run fast and furious, you'll go nuts trying to do something slow and stately, and vice-versa. It's always fun to stretch a bit, and adds some extra challenge, but really you want to go for a pace that keeps both you and your players active, interested, and happy.

## Game Mechanics

The game is moving along nicely. You've just described the town, which is eerie and evocative and hauntingly familiar. The players are into their hunters, who are all looking around nervously. Something doesn't feel right here and no one's sure what's wrong. Everyone's on edge. A shape appears in the early evening fog directly ahead of them, in the middle of the road. As they approach, it seems to darken, drawing definition from the air around it, coalescing almost, gaining depth and detail. And then you tell the players to make Willpower rolls against shock.

What a way to slam on the narrative brakes! Nothing can take you and your players out of the story faster than bringing up game mechanics, pulling out dice, rolling them, and calling out numbers.

So why use them at all? Why not just freeform the entire game? Narrate events rather than rolling them?

Because that has its own disadvantages. Without mechanics, all outcomes seem arbitrary. Say the hunter is stunned by the stranger's appearance and can't react, and the player wants to know why. You say ... "because I said so?" That's pretty lame. Too much of that and your players are going to get pissed off. Now there's tension and it isn't a collaborative effort anymore.

That's why we have game mechanics. They help determine potential outcomes in an impartial manner. The players roll the results of their hunters' reactions. That way they can't blame anyone else of bias—if their hunter panics, it's not anyone else's fault. Everyone has a chance at failing or succeeding—not an equal chance necessarily, but a chance nonetheless. In sports, any team can defeat any other team on any given day. Game mechanics are the same way. Sometimes you get a lucky die roll; sometimes you don't. That's just the way it goes, but everyone runs the same risk so it all works out.

Okay, so mechanics are good. Still, they do slow down a game and interrupt a good narrative. What can you do? Work them into the flow. Don't stop short and say "Okay, everyone roll Willpower." While you're describing the scene, quietly point to one player and ask him to roll for his hunter. Continue with another sentence or two of description, then ask the next player to roll. And so on. If you do tell them all at once, just drop it in between two lines of description, so you don't lose your momentum. It's like grabbing something off the table as you're running past—you may slow down a little to make sure you get it, but you don't need to stop completely.

### Skilled Actions

Two situations require die rolls more often than anything else. The first is skilled actions. These are tense, often dangerous situations, and dice keep things fair. If you say the hunter didn't crack the code or lost the car pursuing him, players might claim favoritism or say you're not allowing them to succeed. Can't accuse the dice of that crap. They're don't pay any attention to it.



So, for the most part, skilled actions require die rolls. But that isn't a hard and fast rule. If a hunter has only a d4 in Computers, and the computer security system has an Impossible Difficulty to crack, rolling is a waste of time. It's legit in that case to simply say, "you study it and quickly realize it's way beyond you. You don't have a chance of hacking it." On the other hand, if the system requires an Average roll and the hunter has an Intelligence d12 and a Tech/Hacking d12 + d4, not much chance of him being stumped. Feel free to skip rolling and tell him he's in.

If the outcome is in question, have the player roll. Just try not to let it slow the story down too much. Tell him up front what he needs to roll (Intelligence + Tech/Computers). What total he needs—you can tell him or not. Just make sure you know. That way the minute he tells you his roll result, you can narrate what happens and jump right back into the story.

## Combat

No way to avoid rolling dice in combat. It's just too chaotic and too chancy, and the outcomes are too important to risk accusations of cheating and bias. Just try to keep things moving as much as possible. There're two ways to do that—it's important to master both.

First, as with skill checks, know what needs to be rolled and what the Difficulties are. The more you or the players have to hunt for details and check charts and ask questions about what dice to roll, the more momentum you lose from your story. If you can say, "Okay, everyone give me Initiative checks—that's Agility plus Alertness," it means less fumbling about and less wasted time.

Second, try to insert narrative whenever possible. When a player tells you "I draw my gun and fire. I got a 12," narrate that as "Wynd pulls his pistol and levels it at the charging beast, standing his ground and targeting the creature's central body mass. The bullet hits but doesn't seem to slow the creature much." Combat is a major element in *Supernatural*. It deserves full descriptions. Adding narrative lets you mix story with die rolls so that, after combat ends, it's easier to move on with the adventure.

## Player Involvement

Sometimes players are their own distraction, and a distraction to others. They talk during the game, laugh at things that are going on, don't pay attention, and have their hunter act in ways that don't make any sense, usually by doing or saying something silly and utterly out of place. Why do they do this? Sometimes it adds some funny to the social gathering, but usually it's because they're bored.



That doesn't mean your game is awful. It might be that their hunter isn't involved in the story much. That's something you definitely need to fix.

How do you make sure a hunter stays involved? Well, you can't—not really. You can minimize the chances he'll be left hanging, but there's no guarantee.

*Supernatural* is, by its very nature, a game about loners. Hunters are strongly independent—they have to be, given what they do and how they do it. But that can cause problems within the game because you're running a group and the group needs to stay together or the storyline goes haywire and become impossible to run.

If a hunter take off on his own, you'll have to roll with it. Best bet is to try and prevent it from happening in the first place. Create a story that works best if the hunters all stick together. One example is the plague town. Everyone around is falling sick, dying, turning monstrous, or worse. The hunters' best chance at survival is staying in a group and working as one. Another example is the backfired hunt—the hunters are out hunting something and it turns on then and begins picking them off one at a time. They need to stay together and watch each other's backs if they want to kill that creature before it kills all of them.

Another way to keep everyone involved is make sure they all have something to do. Some hunters are research-oriented. Some are trackers. Some are exorcists. Everyone should have something they're particularly good at, something they can do better than everyone else in the group. Make sure of this by watching over the hunter creation process and encouraging each player to take on a specialty. Once you know the various strengths, tailor you're adventure to use them. One of the players created a tracker? Make sure tracking is important. One has a security specialist? Find a way to use that expertise on this hunt. When a player realizes his hunter doesn't really need to be there that a player becomes bored. That's when they get disruptive.

# Miniatures in Play (Optional)

Some people like miniatures. Some don't. Handled properly, they can add to the game by giving the players—and the Game Master—a clear sense of who's where and what the scene looks like. On the other hand, they can be a distraction, and might cause additional confusion if not used well.

Even if you're using miniatures in your game, you don't want them out all the time. If you have miniatures sitting on the table, that's what the players'll focus on. That means, even if you're describing a dark, dank cave with stalactites that seem to drip blood and stalagmites that resemble colossal fangs, all the players are actually seeing are small figures lined up on a tabletop. For them to really let themselves enter the imaginary world you're describing, they need to be free of distractions.

So when should you use miniatures? Combat—that's when miniatures really shine. Combat can be confusing, with people diving and rolling and running, and it's easy to lose track of who's where when. Miniatures make keeping track much easier. With a glance, you can see exactly

where each person is, who has line of sight on the monster, or who has an easy way to sneak around behind it.

Be careful with miniatures in combat. Fights can get slow enough with die-rolling. Once you add in moving miniatures exact distances each turn, things can slow to a crawl. Unless your game really relies on such precision, it's best to approximate the figures' locations and relative distances. Don't bother with rulers and tape measures, just say, "we'll call that close range" and be done with it. That way you don't lose any more time than you have to, and you keep everyone engaged.

Some people like to find miniatures that suit their hunters, and get involved in painting them. That's fun, and can help the player get attached to the hunter. The problem is, when that cleverly painted miniature is set on the table, everyone wants to look at it. That's a distraction. If you're using miniatures, it's probably best for each player to keep his or her miniature close at hand and only move it to the common area for combat. That also means the player has his hunter's image right next to him at all times, which can help him stay in character more easily.

## Rules Debates

One of the most common arguments Game Masters and players have is over rules. "This says I can do this!" "No it doesn't." "Yes it does!" and so on. The problem could arise because wording of the rule is deliberately left vague (so it can apply to many different situations) or

because the rule wasn't designed for this particular situation. Whenever something is unclear people have to decide for themselves. One player decides one way and you decide another way. Presto, you've got a rules debate.

The real danger of a rules debate isn't that you'll be wrong. People are wrong all the time—no big deal. Nope, the risk is that you'll lose your authority. When the other players see you arguing, they'll realize that they can argue with you as well. Suddenly every decision you make is gonna be contested. It's impossible to run a game that way. Once you've shown one decision isn't solid, lots of others could be called into question.

So how do you avoid that? Put your foot down. If a player says "I don't think that's the way this rule works" or "You're wrong, that's not what it says," do one of two things. First, you can simply say, "Well, my game, my rules—I say it's this, and that's that." Second, you can take a minute, consider his argument, and then either say, "You're right, we'll change it to this from now on" or still make the "my game, my rules" statement above. Whatever you do, don't consider it for more than a minute. Think about it, decide one way or the other, and move on. Don't allow any further debate on it, either—whether it's the same player continuing to protest or someone else throwing in, just say, "Sorry, that's my decision and it's final. Moving on. . . ." Make you follow that up by doing so. The players see that you're still in charge, and they'll settle back down.

## Scaring Players vs. Scaring Hunters

*Supernatural* is a horror game, not a horror reality. You want your story to be creepy and scary, but limit it to scaring the hunters. If the players feel a slight chill down their spine during a scene, that's great—you've captured the right tone and they're totally into it. But at the end of the night, it's just a game, and the players are your friends. You don't want to send any of them home upset, make them afraid to walk home, or make the question turning out the lights. Don't let the story spill over into the real world. Keep referring to the hunters and not the players, and keep the horror to the scenes you're describing. When taking a break, make sure to act normal again so the players see the difference.

## Keeping Everyone Alive

In role playing games, there's a natural tendency to keep the hunters alive if at all possible. After all, the players' characters are the stars of the show—you don't want to kill them out of hand. The players are your friends and have invested tremendous time and energy to developing their hunters. No need to upset your friends, or lose these really cool characters, even if that means you have to occasionally



fudge the results just a little. If it's a question of a bullet doing 4 instead of 7 W, and 6 W would kill the hunter, just lower the numbers a little. Hand out the 4 W and move on. What's really gained by killing the hunter instead?

Nothing wrong with that, as long as it doesn't get out of hand. Don't coddle the players. If a hunter is stupid enough to leap into a beast's lair not knowing if it's occupied, he deserves whatever he gets. If the players suspect you're being a little soft on them, they'll appreciate it. If they think you're protecting them completely, they'll become utterly careless. Angle the bullet away just a little, fine, but don't stop it altogether.

## Death

What if a hunter dies? That can be an awful thing, but a powerful one as well. Some players actually enjoy it when their hunters die. Not because they're happy to lose a hunter they poured energy and thought into, but because it gives them an opportunity for serious in-game drama. A hunter's final moments can be grandiose, funny, or somber, but they are rarely forgotten, both in- and out-of-game. A good hunter death scene is something players talk about for years afterward, just like a really good death scene in a novel or a movie.

Some players aren't interested in a big scene. If that's the case, don't force it on them. Take your cue from the player. If he wants to narrate the events, hand over the reins and let them take control. If he'd rather not, go ahead and describe what happens yourself. Keep an eye on the player—if he seems to be enjoying the attention, go ahead and drag out the scene a bit. If he looks genuinely upset or just uncomfortable, wrap it up quickly.

Also, keep in mind that players can get very attached to their hunters. Losing one is like losing a friend, a friend you created yourself. It's best to show some sympathy after a death, and to encourage the other players to do likewise.

## Beyond Death

Of course, one of the nice things about a game like *Supernatural* is that death isn't always the end. Characters have come back on the television series, so why not in the game? Just need to think carefully before you allow it or cause it to happen.

First off, talk to the player privately. Does he want his hunter to return, or would he rather move on and create someone new? Just because he says he'd like the hunter back doesn't mean it's a done deal, but if he says

"no thanks" you need to respect that. The next question is "What about as a supporting character?" Let's face it, most of the returned dead in *Supernatural* aren't exactly nice guys—they're the kind the hunters ... well, hunt.

If the player is fine with the character coming back, either as a get-out-of-hell-free hunter or as a Game Master-controlled supporting character, you're part way there. Next, wait and see what happens. The other hunters may be researching ways to bring him back. You can give it some time and see where they go and what they do. Narrate what happens and let it develop. After all, they may not succeed—bringing someone back is a tricky business. Even if they do pull it off, something might go wrong. They may experience what it means to succeed ... mostly. The hunter could return as a soulless, conscience-less zombie.

In the best of circumstances—the hunter comes back all human and in fighting shape—there's always consequences. Death is not supposed to be a transitory state. The repercussions are probably far-reaching, and may take a long time to manifest. In other words, they should be an entire adventure, possibly even a campaign, of their own. Something along the lines of scary corruptive powers, otherworld manhunters, or new "appetites." Nothing like having to hunt your former friend—the one you raised from death who has now become an evil worse than any you faced before.

## Where to Next?

Okay, you've handled Game Mastering 101 now. You're wise to the ways of structure and plot and player expectations. Time to move on to **Chapter Eight: The Supernatural** and **Chapter Nine: The Mundane** for ideas, suggestions, game stats, and backdrops. That'll help get your Supernatural stories up and running, and get the pesky hunters out there doing their business. Return to **Chapter Six: The Rules** if you want a refresher on the rules. Another glance through **Chapter Four: Traits and Skills** and **Chapter Three: The Hunters** can't hurt. There's a lot of stuff to know, but you don't need to get it all down right away. You may be the Game Master, but you're not the only one bringing the goods to the party. Trust your players. They know what they like.



# The Supernatural

Yeenaaldlooshii — Navajo  
Skinwalker — English!

Common forms: coyote, wolf, owl,  
fox, and crow.

Also bear

practitioner of the Witchery Way, and gained their power through the murder of a sibling. These foul creatures practiced cannibalism and necrophilia.

The Yeenaaldlooshii had far more power than simply to change their shape. By taking the blood, hair, clothes, shoes, or even spit from a person they could apply their power over it. Stories say that the Yeenaaldlooshii could shape a specific curse that could cause great harm to the victim. This is a reason why the Navajo took great care to protect themselves and even cut hair or clipped fingernails.



Coyote



Wolf





**T**his book's too short—by about a library's worth—to get into all the lore on ghosts, demons, nasty creatures, and the other whacked-out stuff that a hunter's gonna run into on the job. Don't get us wrong—there's good stuff in this chapter. Just don't get cocky. Reading all this stuff isn't gonna give you all the answers. This is the Cliff Notes version of the bad that's waiting in the dark. Stupidest thing you can do is make assumptions.

So, we start with the basics. First, you need to know how to get enough information to deal with the critter you're facing. Next, you need to know more about it. Last, you need to know the kind of stuff that might be going down in a haunted or supernatural location. Once you have a clue, you may just survive.

## Monsters in the Game

The regular text of this chapter runs down basic info on the various creatures that hunters might encounter during a *Supernatural* game. As Game Master, you can hold this stuff back as you see fit, but any player who's watched a few episodes of the TV show is gonna know most of this material. Most of the chapter is written with this in mind and speaks directly to the players and their hunters.

The goods in these Game Master sections, however, covers game mechanics and other stuff that you probably don't want the players to be too familiar with. We've used this handy graphic touch to let you know when the eye-only stuff comes up.

## Understanding the Unknown

Right up front—there's no standard text on hunting. Even if another hunter brings you into the business, it's not the kind of job with an employee handbook. You work with scraps of information, stuff you hear from other hunters—the best we got for “experts” in the field—and old books written by dead guys. Eventually, you put enough lore together than you can rattle off demon names and haunted locations without thinking about it. But all it takes is one more outbreak of zombie plague or an African death-totem smuggled into the country by a tourist to remind you that you don't know nearly as much as you need to.

## Sources of Information

So where does all the lore come from? How do you get hold of it? Outside of just general knowledge folklore from movies, bedtime stories, and superstitious locals, there's a few tried-and-true sources that any hunter should keep his eye on. As soon as there's word about some kind of supernatural critter or demonic possession somewhere, jump in the car and start making a list. And check it twice.

### Personal Experience

That means you. Nothing beats actually being there, and this is one of the reasons hunters keep journals. If you run into something, and manage to get right up close and personal, recording what happened and remembering what you did to make it go away, die, or even get away is gonna be vital info for later. A lot of hunters base their entire careers on what they've gone through, and usually it's the same kind of critter. Vampire hunters, demon hunters, ghost hunters—they're all about keeping personal logs, checking out what they've experienced with what's commonly known.

The downside, of course, is that you might not understand what's happening to you. And you might mistake one thing for another. You could get it dead wrong, and that's gonna screw you up something bad. With any luck, there'll be a next time, and you'll write it all down again just to make sure.

### Eyewitness Testimony

The next best thing to being there is talking to somebody else who was. Hunters who share information, regular folks who were attacked by the thing you're hunting or who saw somebody else get attacked, people who have lived in the area and can clue you in—this is the



kind of information that keeps you going on a hunt. The same problems show up with eyewitness testimonies as they do with personal experience, and sometimes it's even worse. If your witness has no idea what he's seen, or thinks it's something else, that bias is gonna show up when you talk to them. Sometimes, a hunter who is used to dealing with a specific kind of monster assumes everything is somehow connected to it. Hairy, fanged, hunts at night? Werewolf hunters know that's a werewolf, but it could be anything—a wendigo, maybe, or a really hairy dude who turned into a vampire.

The other problem with eyewitness testimony is that you're gonna have to find some way to talk to the guy. A lot of the time, hunters need to flex their acting skills, pretending to be cops or detectives or researchers. If you've been attacked by something and you're freaking out, you don't always want somebody to remind you over and over that the thing is still out there. You have to follow leads, pick your moment, and see if you can get as much information out of the person as you can without having them freak out, tell you to go away, or call the cops.

## Ancient Sources

People have been dealing with the supernatural and paranormal for centuries. Records of civilization going back to the earliest populations of Mesopotamia and Asia don't just tell historians what they ate, drank, and fought about. Hidden in plain sight are actual accounts of hunters taking on monsters, clues to defeating and overcoming demons, and a bunch of lore that gets tossed aside as "just" myth. There's the thing. Mythology is exactly where all of this crap first shows up.

Clueless translators usually mess up the oldest mythological texts. Big museums and universities dealing with antiquities have whole rooms filled with scrolls that'll fall apart if you touch them, but that's usually the only place you'll find the ritual of banishment or the true name of the demon you're stalking. Schools and museums are starting to put this stuff online, though, as scans or images ... got to love the Internet. Others consider this dangerous knowledge, though. In that case, you're just gonna have to find a way to get your hands on it directly.

Books and scrolls aren't the only written records, of course. Big clay tablets, carved pillars, murals on the walls of tombs—real Indiana Jones stuff—are also useful. Not so useful if you can't get to it, but anybody with connections to archaeologists should be able to squeeze in a bit of time for you to quiz them about what they saw on their last trip to Iran or Laos. The more you can dig up this way, the better. Just because some modern author of an occult book did the same thing doesn't mean he got it right. Don't

hurt to brush up on your dead languages either ... when you're lazing around between hunts.

## Texts

The most common way to get information outside of simply asking people is to use reference books. Dictionaries of the supernatural are a dime a dozen at your local chain bookstore (actually, they're more like \$19.95 if they're not on clearance, but you get the point). Some are really handy—in fact, some authors don't know how real the stuff is that they're messing with. If the back cover blurb says "real rituals that work" or "true names of angels" or something like that, it could be worth a look. Most likely, it's crap though, so don't get your hopes up. Research is about dead ends, most of the time.

Don't stint the library. Look up the great minds of the Renaissance and Restoration periods: Bruno, Bacon, Dee, Shakespeare. Yeah, yeah, it's murder on your "cool" cred, but keep telling yourself that some chicks dig it. Then check in on the occult writers of the Victorian and Edwardian era: Blavatsky, Crowley, anybody who ever channeled a Seventh Order Being or started his own Secret Society. Buried in the recruitment talk is a lot of material you could bring to the investigation, and at the very least you'll get a laugh out of it. Be careful. A lot of these writers, magicians, and natural philosophers were crazy. Big-time, brain-leaking-out-the-ears, talking-Enochian-to-their-cats-crazy. You don't want to end up like they did.

## Newspaper Archives

Many of the critters you'll tangle with in this business fall into that broad "urban legend" category. They either don't have any good books written about them, or the only ones who know enough to write it down are dead. You need to visit the local library's newspaper archive and spend a couple hours digging through microfiches and bound periodicals. Newspapers have a kind of unfiltered usefulness that can't be beat. Records of deaths, births, strange events, reports of weird activity, even letters to the editor can hold valuable info.

Researching a small newspaper or magazine's archive might not be as easy as visiting the library, though. It's sometimes best to pretend to be some guy writing a book (always a good start). If you're able to visit during the day, you can talk to folks who work for the paper. This leads to some more eyewitness information, and you can verify it. And hey, some of those newspaper interns are hot. If all else fails, you're looking at breaking in. Usually not a huge problem; security isn't a primary newspaper concern. All in all, remember that the records rooms can be disorganized or incomplete. Hell, if there's been hunter activity in the past, you might not be able to find what you're looking for on the shelf.

## The Internet

The World Wide Web, as they used to call it, has only been around for a dozen or so years, but it's become one of the hunter's best tools. Sit in a diner or a coffee house with your laptop and a WiFi connection, and you can



search all kinds of online archives and databases for occult information. Websites started by crazy people can't be avoided, but you never know when a kernel of truth pops up in those bozo's ramblings. Message boards are good places to go and read up on eyewitness accounts, hearsay, legends, and folklore. It's not primary source, really, and it comes loaded with other crap, but the Internet's got a lot of immediate benefits.

Don't expect to just type "South Carolina baby possession savage beating horns" into Google and score a hit on the first go, though. It takes some real talent to narrow down things to the point that you're reading the truth and not some made-up BS. And there's no online hunter network waiting for you to just log in and ask for help. Sure, you can set up a mailing list, but hunters are kind of scattered, unorganized, and ornery. Getting more than three into a single place usually takes beer and a good-looking waitress. It's best to use the Internet as a tool to hook you up with people who might know what's going on, rather than as some kind of giant encyclopedia. You never know who might be wandering the web, "revising" info.

## Using Skills When Investigating

Before you head out with a shotgun, a knife, and a Tibetan prayer scroll, hoping not to get torn up by a yeti possessed by the spirit of a dead lama from Lhasa, you should spend some time learning. If you're not up on your Tibetan folklore, Buddhist protective mantras, yeti cryptozoology, or import restrictions from Nepal, it could cost you big time. You got skills that don't involve pulling a trigger (at least you should). Use them.

There's any number of Skills that you can bring to bear when checking out the lore. Obviously, Knowledge and Lore are the basic research Skills, but they aren't all there is. Here's a short list of Skills that could crop up in your investigation:

**Covert:** Used for breaking into places, sneaking about, and identifying forgeries.

**Influence:** Use this for convincing people to give you information, chatting up locals, or cutting through red tape.

**Knowledge:** This covers mainstream knowledge: history, philosophy, literature.

**Lore:** This Skill covers folkloric or less-academic knowledge: local legends, gossip, personal accounts, superstitions.

**Medicine:** Use this for studying autopsy reports, accidents, weird health problems, and symptoms.

**Perception:** Always helpful for searching, studying, watching, or sizing up people and places.

**Science:** The nuts and bolts of any investigation can come down to scientific evidence. Or the lack of it.

## Handling Skills

This chapter deals with a lot of monsters that can't be researched in conventional manner. Getting the lowdown on them depends on the hunters being open to new ideas and new sources of information. Many of the creature write-ups include a Lore section, but that's just a rough guide to what information a Game Master can hand out. Don't be afraid to let the players suggest new uses for Skills, or pull in appropriate Traits. Part of any enjoyable investigative session is having the players come up with clever choices. If all of their ideas turn up zip, the game can come to a screeching halt. It's always best to keep some information to the side, to reveal as the investigation progresses, whether or not the Skill checks succeed. That way, the story continues to move along, the hunters grow as characters, and the players stay engaged and excited.





**Tech:** Really getting the most out of your database, online research, or security system takes this Skill.

## Demons

Legends, stories, and myths concerning demons come from every major religion and from every corner of the globe. The tales don't agree on much. Fallen angels, powerful evil spirits, beautiful, ugly, yaddayaddayadda. But there are some common themes. Possession is a biggie, along with cutting deals for personal gain. Stories say that demons can be summoned and controlled, but that it's risky business and can end badly if the summoner doesn't have the juice to deal with the demon if it breaks free. Whatever the tale, demons are bad mothers and you should take them seriously.

Remember, what you read here isn't the be-all, end-all about demons. This just gets you started—there's way more that we don't know. But maybe this is enough to keep you from getting killed or worse—possessed.

## Origin

No clue. The lore is all over the place. Fallen angels, powerful evil spirits who escaped Hell—nobody knows. Some hunters claim that demons have said they were once human souls stuck in Hell, and once their humanity burned away they became something else—something more. The spirit theory makes some kind of sense, because they don't have any bodies of their own and have to hitchhike. Then again, demons lie—if it came from one of them it's probably best to ignore it.

## Manifestation

Black smoke that, by itself, can't do much of anything except leave behind traces of sulfur. There're certain exorcism rituals that actually make the smoke-form able to do some damage by itself if you don't finish the job. (Step One, give the demon physical form. Step Two, send it back to Hell.) But mostly the smoke can just move around to find someone it can possess. So a demon can be anyone—man, woman, child. Every once in a while their eyes go solid-black (or if you're in deep kimchi, it'll be other colors) but otherwise they look and act perfectly normal—so watch your back. Demons mess with a person's aura enough that someone with ESP might be able to spot one instantly, or it might cause an EMF meter to spike. They also flinch or react to the spoken name of God—though you're gonna have to go for an ancient version that holds some power. English isn't gonna cut it.

## Motivation

Demons are certainly up for a little random murder and mayhem, but you can bet that they're up to something more specific. Some demons like to stick with a theme—release plagues, start fires, crash planes, you name it. Others are part of some more elaborate plan, and are reporting to some bastard from a higher pay grade. And here's a real scary notion: They could all be working on some really huge game-ending kind of plan. You know, the cats-and-dogs-living-together apocalypse stuff. End-of-the-world lore points to some signs, and we've already seen the earliest of them. Here's hoping that any demon confrontation doesn't start the clock ticking on the end of days.

## Abilities

As if it weren't bad enough, no one really knows the full extent of demonic powers. The really badass ones can do things from a serial killer's worse nightmares. Here's some of the things that the black-eyes variety seems to be able to do on a routine basis. Higher-ups might show different colored eyes when they possess someone. It's anybody's guess what their full range of powers might be or even what they're up to.





**Possession** Demons don't have much of a physical form in our world. They look like thick, nasty black smoke that smells a bit like sulfur—and in fact, as demons move around like this they'll leave little traces of sulfur around as a clue. Not usually gonna happen though—they don't like to hang out in chimneys. Demons find a person to possess, and that changes the whole ball game.

Possession isn't an automatic thing, which is one piece of good news. There's got to be a chink in your psychological armor—some fear, anxiety, jealousy, or whatever that it can use to wedge its way in. To anyone watching, you've got black smoke going into your mouth, nose, and ears. For a moment, you got completely black eyes. Once you're possessed, it's almost impossible to regain control. Mostly you're stuck inside your own meatsack, watching whatever the demon says and does and being completely helpless to do anything about it. Worst part is that, while the demon is running the show, you've basically got superpowers. You're strong, might have some freaky mind-powers, and you're practically invincible—able to shrug off being shot, stabbed, or pushed from the 18th floor window. And all that means squat because you got no control over your actions. Once the demon is done, you have to deal with whatever damage's been done to your body while it was along for the ride. If you were pretty badly hurt, you may only have a few moments left after the demon takes off.

By hopping from body to body, a demon can stick around and keep coming back for more. It can "die" over and over and that only slows them down a bit. You got to actually banish them back to Hell in order to get rid of them semi-permanently—though the lore says some of them can claw their way back from the pit.

**Invulnerability** A demon can keep a possessed body alive when it should be pushing up daisies. Shot, broken neck, drowned, or stabbed with pinking shears—the demon can take a lickin' and keep on tickin'. If the body gets so mangled it's not of much use (say, blown to smithereens), the demon just goes back to black smoke and hunts around for a new body. Once the demon leaves, though, the poor bastard it controlled is left with all the damage.

**Telekinesis** Like ghosts and some other supernatural beasties, stronger demons can move stuff around with their minds. They can slam doors and windows, throw things at you, or go all Darth Vader and choke you to death from ten feet away. And not all mind-over-matter demons are created equal. If you see one doing minor stuff, like bending a spoon, don't get too sure of yourself—it might be screwing with you.

**Super-Strength** Make no mistake, these mothers are strong. The demon takes the human body way past its normal limits. The cute girl next door might suddenly be able to throw you clear through the drywall and into the next room. If you see solid black eyes, hang back and don't let the damn thing get its hands on you.

**Communication** Some old stories say that a demon can use the blood from a fresh kill to make some kind of freaky unholy phone call to other demons—usually higher-ups so it can check in and get fresh orders. Look for slashed throats with no sign of robbery or any other motive.

**Deal-Making** Not clear this is a widespread power, but one particular nasty worth mentioning is the **crossroads demon**. With the right mojo and right place, you can summon her and cut a deal. No one's sure if she really has the power to fulfill her bargains on her own or if she trades favors with more powerful forces. Either way, she can make just about anything happen. The price, of course, is your life and your soul. Once your time is up, the hellhounds come for you. No one knows if there is just one wish-granting demon or if there are more. Either way, it's a sucker's deal and you shouldn't throw away your ass and your immortal soul for something unless you're damn sure it's worth it.

## Limitations

If you're gonna mess around with demons, make sure you know you've left Little League behind and you got to play with the grownups. A lot of stuff that works with angry spirits or evil creatures don't have much effect on a pissed-off demon. Some can enter hallowed ground, and they can take all kinds of punishment and it barely slows them down.

But there are things you can do to protect yourself.

**Salt** Good ol' salt is there for you. Demons can't cross a line or ring of salt, and spreading it over the entrances and windows effectively secures a room.

**Mystical Symbols** More than one magical circles and symbols can affect a demon. They come from all sorts of traditions and religions. Problem is, you never know which one is gonna work and when. Still, there's one that's fairly reliable—a Devil's Trap. Probably a good idea to memorize that sucker. It can be inscribed with anything—chalk or a black Sharpie, even—but the ancient ways with candles and all that jazz are a bit more reliable. Just be warned that some demons can still use their powers to break or disrupt the trap, and then you're beyond screwed.

**Holy Water** Yet another cheap and easy weapon against demons. A simple ritual and the right prop (say, a rosary) and you can turn anything from a public fountain to a men's room toilet into a font of holy water. Splashing or spraying the god juice on a demon burns it like fire. Keep a fair amount on-hand, and know how to make more in a pinch.

**Exorcism** The big enchilada, the one way to get a demon back to Hell. Some real old-school Catholic rituals do the trick, but there're ancient versions from other cultures that can work just as well. Details matter on this one. You got to have the right ingredients and say the words just right. If you fudge it, the demon's not going anywhere but after you.

**Items** Hunters swap stories about weapons that'll actually destroy a demon permanently. Some folks talk about talismans that can prevent possession or possibly keep a demon at bay. Most agree these tales, specially the ones about weapon, are just stories. Best stick with the stuff that more readily available and that works. Don't obsess over finding *D&D*-style magic weapons or items to bail your ass out of demon trouble.

## Demons in the Game

As black smoke, demons can move quickly (base speed 45 feet) and they're impervious to normal harm. Smoke-formed demons can only be affected by mystical means (such as a Devil's Trap or a special power).

When a demon attempts to possess, the potential host must succeed on a series of Hard Willpower + Discipline/Resistance (as modified by any relevant Traits such as Unbreakable Will) actions. There's a catch though. Because the demon is exploiting the person's weaknesses, you should raise the difficulty by a roll of that character's highest die-value Complication. At least one success within three turns prevents possession, and the demon must move on. Three failures leaves the character possessed. Some talismans or mystical protections can enhance a character's chances or leave him completely immune to possession, but certain demons are too powerful to resist that way.

A possessed character gains enhancements to Attributes depending on the power of the original demon. Strength is usually increased by at least a +3 step, while other physical Attributes receive a +1 or +2 step as well. A demon uses its own mental Attributes in place of the host, but it may borrow its host's Skills and Traits if it so chooses. Most demons suffer damage normally, but they don't die when they take their full Life Points in Wound damage. They also suffer no Wound penalties, and recover from 1 point of Stun per turn. A demon that takes twice its Life Points in Wound damage has gotten its body too mangled to be much use, so it abandons it. Once a demon's gone from the host body, the damage remains but the demon's immunities depart. That usually leads to a quick death.

Demons may have other powers and abilities as you see fit.

## Demonic Traits

A demon could exhibit any of these powers. They are basically Traits, and behave as such for game purposes. There're even rumors of normal people who have somehow been charged up with these demonic abilities. Some of it's milder—visions, increased strength, mind reading—but some of the powers are right out of the demonic playbook.

## Electrokinesis (d6/d12)

You have power with electricity and lightning.

**d6:** You can deliver a zap of electricity with the smallest touch, causing your Trait die in Basic damage or adding it as bonus damage to an unarmed attack. If delivered directly over the heart of a living creature it might result in death (Average Endurance check to resist; no extra damage, but the character is dying, see page 91). You can sense electricity, be it thunderstorms in the sky or current running through power lines.

**d12:** You may also use your ability on a target within 10 feet, attacking with Alertness and the Trait die, and getting the Trait die as bonus (Basic) damage. You can also disrupt electronics within line of sight.

## Mind Control (d6/d12)

You get your way most of the time, because people always do what you say.

**d6:** You must be able to speak your commands to someone who can hear them directly (in other words, it doesn't work over the phone). Characters have no ability to resist your suggestions unless you suggest that they hurting themselves or others. When you do that, or when the psychic command goes strongly against the person's natural inclination, he can make an opposed roll to resist—your Willpower + Influence/Persuasion + Mind Control Trait versus his Willpower + Discipline/Resistance (and any applicable Trait).

**d12:** People have no ability to resist your commands no matter how horrible they might be. You can give orders over the telephone and can give silent, mental commands to anyone you can see.

## Telekinesis (d4/d8/d12)

Mind over matter. You can move things around or even attack someone just by thinking about it, and anything within 50 feet is fair game. You can use this power to do the same kinds of actions as normally available, but you roll the Attribute + Skill + Telekinesis Trait die. Attacks against characters or objects use mental Attributes only (usually Willpower). Your effective Strength with this ability is your Willpower and Telekinesis Trait combined.

**d4:** You can use your power on one target at a time.

**d8:** You can use your power on two targets at a time.

**d12:** You can use your power on three targets at a time.

You are powerful enough to damage the environment to disrupt things such as Devil's Traps, salt barriers, and so on.



## ACHASHVEROSH

### Hangman's Juror

**Description** Achashverosh changes hosts frequently.

It never stays in one longer than it takes to accomplish its task. The demon always possesses people of Eastern European Jewish or Ashkenazi descent, although male or female doesn't matter to it. The statistics below represent a typical host with normal physical Attributes d6.

**Motivation** Achashverosh seeks out trials where the accused (often Jewish) is innocent of the crimes charged. He possesses one of the jurors, and exerts his influence over the jury throughout the trial. Through psychology and hundreds of years of experience, Achashverosh is usually able to convince the entire jury to wrongfully convict. The demon continues this pattern over and over, often exhibiting outward signs of guilt and shame, but always leaving the host immediately before the sentencing.

**Limitations** Achashverosh focuses on hosts descended from the Germanic Jews or Ashkenazi. Talmudic rituals and rabbinic lore all have a stronger hold on him than Christian or other religious symbols. He is more resistant to exorcism via The Roman Rite, while a rabbi or Talmudic scholar using the correct incantations would have a greater chance at success. Achashverosh is also vulnerable to a specific Roman gladius that is often in its possession. This weapon will drive it out of a host body with an extraordinary success and, if properly prepared with a rabbinic ritual, could be used to kill it.

**Agi** d8 **Str** d12 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d8 **Int** d12 + d2 **Wil** d12

**Init** d8+d8 **LP** 22 (doesn't die at 22 Wound; body destroyed at 44 total Wound; recovers 1 Stun per turn)

**Traits** Danger Sense d4, In Plain Sight d6, Slave to Tradition (strictly kosher) d4, Talented (Influence/Persuasion, Knowledge/Law) d6

**Skills** Athletics d4, Covert d6/Sabotage d8/Streetwise d12, Discipline d6/Concentration d10, Influence d6/Bureaucracy d12/Persuasion d12/Politics d10, Knowledge d6/History d10/Law d10/Religion d10, Lore d6/Jewish d12, Melee Weapons d6/Sword d8

**Attacks** Achashverosh doesn't usually resort to combat. When it does, it favors the use of a sword, especially a Roman gladius (d6 W) that it arranges to be sent along to a new destination shortly before it abandons a body. Keeping the weapon around is always a risk for the demon, as it can inflict great pain, but Achashverosh feels compelled to have it nearby while "working." If it doesn't have access to the sword, it can exert demonic powers to cause cramping, muscular pain, and even heart attacks

## The Devil's Trap

Demons are freaking scary, no doubt about it. And while they can be exorcised, it's often difficult to keep a horrifically-strong person to sit still long enough to chant a bunch of Latin before they rip your throat out. Fortunately there's a few things you can do. Holy water weakens 'em, salt can block 'em, and some talismans can prevent possession or possibly keep a demon at bay. And then there are mystical symbols—cheap, easy, and if you know what you're doing they can make all the difference.

There's magical circles and symbols from different religions that can have an effect. There are a few, though, that are reliable in trapping demons. They are known as devil's traps. Some are drawn from an ancient text known as the Lesser Key of Solomon, and the others come from equally ancient sources. But they work the same way. The symbol can be done with paint, chalk, charcoal, or crayon—doesn't really matter. It needs to be large enough to surround the demon, but otherwise it can be on the ground, a floor, or the ceiling. You could also draw one on the trunk of a car, on the door of a room, or on the outside of a suitcase to protect whatever's inside from demons.

A demon trapped inside the circle is pretty screwed. He can't escape his possessed body (at least without an exorcism to help him back to hell). He cannot take any

actions that require physical Attributes or directly affect any living thing, nor can he leave the circle. A powerful demon might be able to literally crack or otherwise disturb the environment enough to break the symbol—but otherwise the demon is at the hunter's mercy.



in others from a distance of 30 feet (Willpower + Discipline/Concentration attack, defended by target's Vitality + Willpower, d6 bonus Stun damage)

**Lore** The following information can be acquired through an investigation into Achashverosh.

A number of US court trials over the past sixty years have been notable because of their dramatic swing in jury voting, even in cases where the evidence supporting a guilty verdict isn't as strong as usual.

Several reports of these trials include jury deliberation records that show a pattern in a single individual, always of Eastern European Jewish descent, presenting the most convincing argument. The accused is similarly often Jewish.

Stories from as far back as the Middle Ages mirror this lore. Indeed, a figure known as the Wandering Jew or Ahasuerus is said to have been present at the Crucifixion and may have either taunted Jesus or aided in his flogging. Cursed by God to walk the Earth until the Second Coming, he continues to be present at trials of the innocent.

The US Customs Service seized a Roman gladius belonging to a juror in a major homicide case 63 years ago as it was shipped over from Germany. Anything connected with Germany was under suspicion at the time, especially since many relics were being smuggled in during Hitler's regime. The gladius disappeared a week later and hasn't surfaced again since, although every few years somebody approaches a dealer or museum for information about it.

## MEG MASTERS

### Azazel's Daughter

**Description** The true name of this demon is unknown.

It prefers to maintain a possessed host for the long haul, rather than the frequent switching enjoyed by other demons. It generally prefers to possess attractive females—the better to make others underestimate it—but will use whatever host is convenient. “Meg” is also capable of creating an unholy brand that will bind it within a host and make it more difficult to exorcise. During its tenure as “Meg,” it's an attractive college-aged girl with short blonde hair and brown eyes; its normal physical Attributes are all d6.

**Motivation** More than one source says that the “Meg” demon is the daughter of Azazel, but whether that's literal or figurative is anyone's guess. It is known to serve its “father's” agenda—unless it's gotten so tired of Azazel's orders that it goes rogue. “Meg” is fond of both seduction and torture, and is known to use live (human) bait to set a trap for hunters. It uses a blood-ritual to communicate with Azazel, leaving behind the corpses of victims with slit throats.

**Limitations** “Meg” is a strong mid-level demon. It's obedient to the wishes of Azazel but it's not blind or unquestioning. And when someone really pisses “Meg” off it'll stop at nothing for revenge. All of these things can be used to a hunter's advantage.

**Agi** d8 **Str** d12+d2 **Vit** d12 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d10

**Init** d8+d8 **LP** 22 (doesn't die at 22 Wound; body destroyed at 44 total Wound; recovers 1 Stun per turn)

**Traits** Allure d4, Telekinesis d8, Unbreakable Will d4, Amorous d4, Duty (Azazels' Agenda) d8

**Skills** Athletics d6, Covert d6, Discipline d4, Drive d4, Influence d6/Seduction d8, Knowledge d4, Lore d6/Demons d10, Melee Weapons d6/ Knives d8, Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d6

**Attacks** “Meg” makes full use of its telekinetic abilities in a straight-up fight, but it demonstrates a penchant for bondage and torture. It's not afraid to get up close and personal, however, and will use its strength and speed in a straight up brawl when necessary.

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into “Meg Masters.”





A string of bodies might be found along the back roads, all with slit throats and stolen possessions. Though the authorities chalk it up to murder-robberies, the one common thread is the lone hitchhiker (usually an attractive young woman) who was seen with the victim.

Meg Masters was a college student from Andover, Massachusetts. When she disappeared her family kept looking for her, and all evidence has pointed to their daughter becoming a serial killer and a thief.

The demon-possessed girl is using the blood of victims in a ritual to communicate with a powerful demon identified by the yellow eyes of its host: Azazel.

## Ghosts

Spirits, Phantoms, Spooks, Specters. Whatever you wanna call them, we're talking about the same thing. They're souls that continue to hang around long after their bodies have rotted away. A ghost is holding onto something, often obsessed with a particular place, person, or other piece of unfinished business.

Most of the hauntings out there are of the harmless variety—and don't do much more than generate creaking footsteps, cause cold spots in the living room, or freak out the family cat. Unless a hunter is having a really slow week, he's not much concerned with a chain-rattler. The ones to watch out for are the dangerous kind—the angry spirits.

In China they call them "hungry ghosts," which isn't a bad way to look at it. They want something, even if it's not food. If you're very lucky, the ghost gets what it wants without killing anybody, then goes away. Perfectly honest, though, it's more likely that they can never fill up the empty place that has driven them all Cuckoo's Nest. That means the "hungry ghosts" always have something else on the menu.

Some ghosts are tied to a particular place. Handy, because it means you can get folks outta danger while you come up with a plan to get rid of it. If you can convince the family to leave the haunted house, then time is on your side. And if you can't stop it any other way, you can always just burn the place to the ground and hope it doesn't show up again when some idiot puts a new house on the lot.

A threatening haunting isn't something to screw around with, so know what you're looking for. Those creaking staircases, cold spots, and freaked-out cats could easily be the house settling, a drafty window, and a can of bad tuna. Plus, they're not worth your time. Some poltergeist moving the forks to the spoon drawer isn't a big deal, but when it starts breaking the dinner dishes, that's a sign of violence that's probably only gonna get worse. If something messes with you in your sleep or while you're in some other vulnerable position (shower, using the bathroom, watching quality adult entertainment), it might be time to deal with it. And while some chatty ghosts can

threaten without anything to back it up, if you're getting harassed, threatened, or abused, better take it as serious as you would an ex-convict next door neighbor holding a tire iron.

If the spirit is the kind you can sometimes see, one clue of a messed up, potentially dangerous nature is the incomplete ghost. Normal ghosts that manifest look mostly like they did in life or just after they died. One that's missing an arm, leg, or head is usually making a statement of some kind—a sign that it's feeling incomplete. Maybe it literally lost an arm, but just as often it's missing something crucial and the missing limb is a sign of how bad it's in pain. Either way, don't screw with an incomplete ghost unless you have a clue of what to do.

And if a ghost starts a fire, you should probably take it seriously. Fire bad.

## Origin

Folks who live happy lives and die peacefully in their sleep are not top candidates to become troublesome ghosts. They're called angry spirits for a reason—usually because something terrible happened to them, something so bad that they're hanging on to something. Most ghosts died in a way that wasn't pretty, usually violently or tragically, and probably unjustly. That's not always the case, though. Sometimes a person's just so obsessed in life that he stays that way even after he's wormfood.

The following short list is just some of the reasons why someone becomes a ghost. Yeah, the list covers a lot of ground but it also barely scratches the surface. Here's the deal. Any one ghost's story could include specifics that isn't covered by easy explanations. An old lady might have given her life savings to the church to help fund its good works—only to find out that a crooked preacher stole the money. The shock gave the poor old lady a stroke and left her as one cheesed-off spirit. The ghost goes after the person who stole so it can give the money to the more deserving. Make sense?

**Sudden or Unexpected Death** Sometimes you just don't see it coming. Some folks die so abruptly that they just don't have a clue they're actually dead. Usually they're so focused on something important from their lives that they're hanging on without realizing it. This origin explains many of the more warm-and-fuzzy ghosts, but some pretty scary ones can result from this origin, too.

**Vengeance or Violence** A person croaks and is seriously pissed. He may not have been evil when he was alive, but what happened to him was awful, horrible, unfair—and it's payback time. Or maybe he just liked hurting people in the first place, like serial killers or pro wrestlers. The desire to hurt keeps the spirit around.

**Unfinished Business** This is the big, fat, "miscellaneous" category that kind of sums up the earlier two origins as well. In life, this ghost had something important—work to be done, a message to be delivered, a person to protect, cheesecake to

eat—whatever. This unfulfilled mission keeps it from moving on, and it's ready to hurt anyone who gets in the way.

## Manifestation

This's a fancy college-boy word for “what the ghost looks like”—if it looks like anything. Some ghosts you can't see at all. They're just a sudden chill as they pass by, or an invisible force that picks up a coffee cup and slams it into the wall ... or your head. Invisible spirits aren't revealed unless special measures are taken to show them—and that means a séance, magic ritual, or psychic power.

When you can see them, a ghost's appearance seems to be based on its self-image. Some ghosts look like they did before they died, right down to the out-of-style clothes and hairstyle. Other times they look like that, only pale and scraggly, like a fresh corpse from a lousy mortician. Of course, there are some that show off the way they died—you might see spirits with bullet-holes, knife marks, sucking chest wounds, burned faces, you name it.

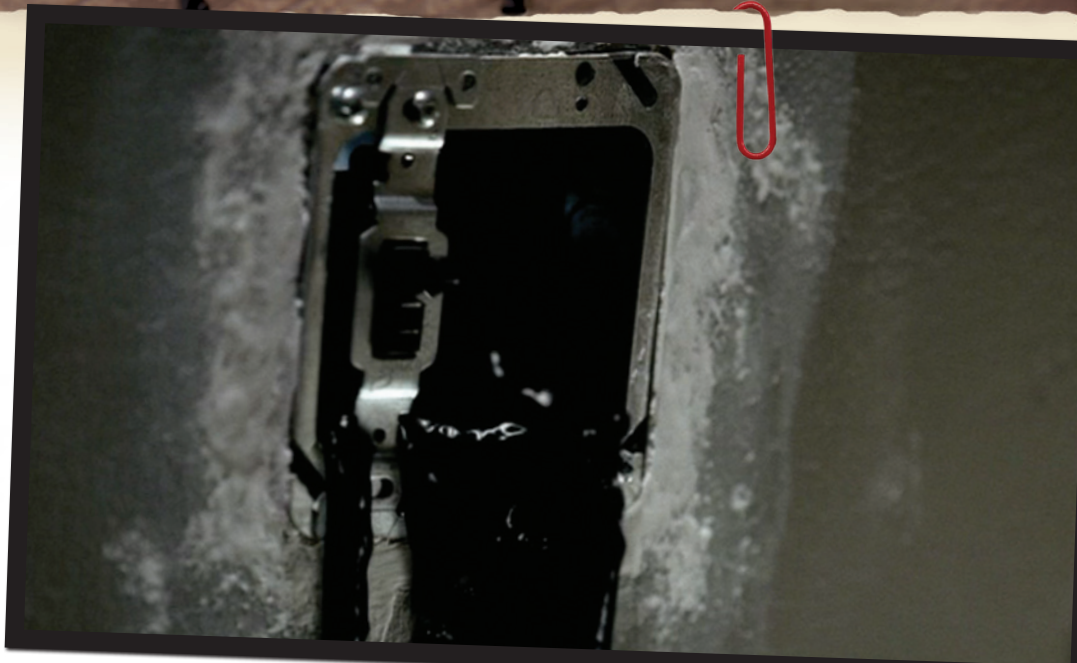
But you never know. Like everything else supernatural, there are the general rules and then there are the exceptions. A ghost might not look quite like it did in life. A former model or actress who died old and wrinkly might have a ghost that looks more like it did during the glory days. Someone with an eating disorder who died rail thin might still make a fat ghost based on screwed-up self-image.

Most ghosts have about as much substance as smoke. You throw a punch and your fist goes right through. A few ghosts have the ability to seem fully real. There's a pretty little ghost in Chicago that's known for dancing with guys at a local club before being asked to go home—to a cemetery. That's creepy, but still a cake-walk compared to big beefy ghosts who use their physical presence to smack you around.

Oh, one other thing about manifestation: ectoplasm. Happy to say that most ghosts don't create this nasty black goooey stuff. Only the most evil, powerful, and enraged spirits generate it. But if you find one that does, you can track its movements—the glop will be visible on things the ghost has touched as it passed by.

## Motivation

Ghosts that just haunt a house and not much else might not have any particular goal. They're trapped, confused, whatever. The kind that go around



hurting people—they're driven by a purpose. Angry spirits are so single-minded that they usually can't think about much else. Most of the time you can't reason with them or even distract them from their purpose.

Most times, the ghost's motive will relate to its death. Plenty of pissed-off spooks are all about justice or revenge on whoever or whatever led to their untimely demise. These ghosts have one thing going for them—if they get their way, there's a fair chance that they'll get to move on, or whatever it is that spirit are supposed to do.

Others take it a bit farther. They'll blame a whole profession, organization, or graduating class for their revenge-trip. They might never be satisfied, and never move on. These ghosts keep finding new victims until someone comes along to break the cycle and burn some bones.

It's a bit more rare, but some ghosts seem to latch on to certain kinds of emotional energy. The ghost of a preacher might latch onto an overly religious young girl who's preoccupied with her sinning neighbors. Another ghost might feel the anguish of an abused child. These spirits take on some kind of crusade and lash out at those who torment the living. Problem is that the victim might have no idea what's going on, and would probably be horrified to find out that they're part of the reason why their neighbor got ripped limb from limb.

The “unfinished business” ghost is a bit different. This guy had a mission before he kicked the bucket. The mission goes on after death—which may not have anything to do with the way the dude died. Emotions are strong for the goal-oriented spook. “Sell vacuum cleaners” doesn't have the emotional oomph to anchor an angry spirit to the world, but it's a different story for a cop who died before making a major drug-bust against the neighborhood gang. The spirit may not give a crap about how the cop died; it just wants to finish the job—taking out gang-bangers and dirty cops that get in the way.



Then there's those sickos that were just horrible and murderous in real-life. Some serial killers, arsonists, and other psychos just want to keep doing what they do after they die.

## Abilities

You've heard this before but it's true about lots of supernatural stuff—you never know exactly what one ghost can do compared to another. The weakest can't do a whole hell of a lot, and the strongest are nasties you don't take on alone unless you're in a hurry to become a ghost yourself. The abilities below are a few things that ghosts are known to do. Really nasty mothers can do things like set fires, plunge their icy hands into your chest and rip your heart out, and other crap that'll give you nightmares for a few years.

**Cold & Chills** Just passing a spirit raises the ghost-bumps, and it's not just psychological. For whatever reason, the ghost actually lowers the temperature by at least a few degrees. On the crazy-strong end of the spectrum, it can get so cold so fast that you suddenly see your breath and you're wishing you were sporting thermal underwear. Some ghosts have a "chill touch" that's like grabbing onto a flagpole on the top of K2—so cold that it causes pain and shock.

**Possession & Channeling** Some ghosts can force their way into someone. Usually sleeping, but sometimes awake. Someone young, naïve, or weak-willed is a likely target for this. Most of the time the ghost can't do much more than "speak through" the poor sucker being possessed. Full ghost possession is something really frickin' rare, but pretty damn scary when it happens and sign of a really angry or strong-willed spook.

**Electrical Interference** Better to leave the technical explanations to the real geeks, but the short version is that ghosts mess with electrical fields. It's why you can use an EMF (electromagnetic field) meter to help figure out places spirits are or have recently been. It also means that ghosts can mess with electronic devices or even screw with more mechanical machinery like cars. Some twisted spooks use this talent to do things that are way creepy, like playing a radio with no batteries, calling a telephone even after the cord has been ripped out of the wall, or shorting out your flashlight so you're alone in the dark (they love that last one).

**Telekinesis** This little talent makes some ghosts poltergeists. Any stronger spirit has the ability to do this to a lesser or greater degree. It's what lets them slam doors and windows shut, shove would be ghost-hunters

against the wall without getting too close, or hurl knives at potential victims. It can also be used to straight-up beat the crap out of someone. Nothing like getting punched with invisible fists.

## Limitations

Time for the good news. Ghosts may be able to walk through walls, stall your car, and ignore a hailstorm of perfectly good bullets—but some paranormal rules seem to apply. You can use these weaknesses to keep them at bay, and send their asses on to their final reward.

**Salt** Not just for french fries, popcorn, and demons. Salt has been hugely important throughout history, and its purity is used in ritual, magic, and to drive away evil spirits. A line of pure salt across a threshold or a circle acts as a barrier that a ghost can't cross or even touch. Salt doesn't "kill" a ghost, though. If you hit a ghost with flung salt, or better yet rock salt rounds in a shotgun, you stun it and force it lose its form for a short time. Angry spirits usually pull themselves together pretty fast, so don't think you've done more than buy yourself a little bit of time.

**Iron** Like salt, pure iron messes with ghosts. They can't cross iron barriers, and if struck with an iron object—say, a fireplace poker—they poof into nothing for a short while—hopefully enough time for you to retreat or regroup. If someone is able to get inside something made of pure iron and keep the door shut, he should be able to keep the spooks out while he figures out his next move.

**Consecrated Ground** Can't say one religion is necessarily better than another, but it seems that some areas, blessed by one faith or another, are "holy." That means they're not healthy places for evil spirits. Most ghosts won't willingly enter such a place—if they end up there, it's enough to send them straight to Hell.



**Talismans, Hoodoo, & Magic** This stuff's a bit more dicey, and your mileage may vary. Certain faith-based, superstition, and magical beliefs, when done right, can ward off dark spirits. Note the "done right" part, and don't mess with anything without knowing what the source of the power may be. You could be making a deal with the devil, and I don't mean that in some figurative way.

That covers the ways to hold an angry spirit off and ruin its weekend. But how do you get rid of one for good? Read on.

**Salt & Burn the Bones** Better make friends with your trusty shovel, because more often than not you're gonna need to do some digging. Figure out where the body was buried, douse the mortal remains with salt, then set the whole thing on fire. Not the most glamorous work, but the earthly remains usually act as an anchor that lets the ghost stick around. The salt purifies the corpse, which is step one, and the fire cleanses and destroys it. That often makes the ghost scream and freak out for a minute and then it's gone for good. Just remember that "often" doesn't mean "always." Sometimes a ghost has an emotional connection that makes the body irrelevant. Sometimes it's a completely different object that anchors it to the world. In that case, burning the remains gets you nowhere. Do your homework and it might save you hours digging a very big hole.

**Cause the Spirit to Let Go** This means something different to every ghost. A revenge-driven ghost might be put to rest once the object of its vengeance is either dead or has received "justice." The spirit of an extremely religious person may move on after receiving last rites. Another may just need a good talking to, or a sympathetic ear to simply accept its fate, and finally become ready to move on.

**Sic Another Ghost On It** Okay, it's messed up, but sometimes ghosts go after each other, for reasons good or bad. Either way, when spirits go after one another, they seem to cancel each other out. Maybe one just drags another down to Hell. Whatever it is, when you can set this up to happen, it usually works. Some ghosts have just as much reason to hate each other as they do the living—or even more.

## Ghosts in the Game

Ghosts work largely like characters, with the big exception that they lack bodies and physical attributes. Instead, ghosts possess the three mental Attributes and a trait that defines their level of power and ability to affect objects and other characters.

The three mental Attributes perform double-duty for a spirit. Here's how it plays out.

**Alertness** This Attribute represents how the ghost handles the environment and how it moves through it. A spirit with low Alertness has a poor sense of its surroundings, while one with a high die value has a strong sense of what is there in the physical world and what can be used to its advantage. Alertness usually doubles as Agility.

**Intelligence** This Attribute demonstrates how well the ghost is able to understand its situation and adapt. A low-Intelligence ghost doesn't understand that it's dead and usually can't accept things that don't relate to its former life or its purpose. A Brainiac ghost is able to understand change and maneuver around obstacles placed in its way. Intelligence usually doubles for Vitality.

**Willpower** This Attribute is the force that the ghost projects out into the living world. A low-Willpower spirit doesn't have a strong physical presence, while one with a high value is strong and forceful. Willpower usually doubles for Strength.

Ghosts aren't alive, so they do not have **Life Points**. They also don't have any of the standard Derived Attributes except **Initiative**—which is a function of Alertness + Spirit Trait.

## Damaging & Destroying Spirits

Ghosts ignore most physical attacks, but there are ways to stop or slow them down. Weaknesses not mentioned below are completely psychological and are about role playing rather than rules. The ghost of a highly religious figure might react strongly to the symbol of its faith (crucifix, Star of David); a spirit that was terrified of big dogs might carry that fear into its ghostly personae. A good hunter does his homework, and the Game Master should reward clever ideas that take the ghost's history and personality into account.

**Salt** A ghost can't cross a line of salt. If the ghost is hit with a flung handful of salt—or perhaps a rock-salt shotgun blast—the ghost disperses. It can't manifest or take any action for d6 turns unless it succeeds in a Hard Willpower + Spirit Trait. Success allows it to re-form and act normally on the following turn. A ghost usually chooses to retreat and regroup, unless it is focused and angry enough to continue the fight.

**Iron** If a ghost is struck with an object of pure iron (not steel or other alloy), it affects the target exactly the same as salt. Iron also acts as a barrier, though it's got to be solid. A band of iron on the floor isn't gonna deter a spirit.

**Anchor** If the anchor that ties the ghost to this world is destroyed (such as a salted and burned corpse), the ghost disappears forever in d2 turns—perhaps taking one final action or attack, but more than likely simply screaming in panic as it is ripped away from the mortal world.





**Rituals** Certain exorcisms, and other faith- or magic-based rituals might be able to banish or ward off a ghost. The effectiveness of this mumbo-jumbo varies and it never actually removes the spirit, only its ability to haunt a particular location.

## Ghostly Traits

All ghosts possess the Spirit Trait, which is a rough yardstick for how dangerous it is. Spirits can have other traits—either carried over from its former life (in which case they work largely as they did in life) or new powers that make it different from the run-of-the-mill spook.

### Spirit (d2+)

This Trait is used for all unquiet spirits that have not yet moved beyond the mortal world. The level is used in conjunction with all rolls made for physical actions. The standard formula for ghostly action is Attribute + Skill + Spirit Trait. As the trait die increases, so does the types of actions the spirit can take.

**d2:** At this level the spirit is weak. It rarely manifests and can only do so as an unstable, fleeting image. It has little power in the physical world, and cannot do much more than create EVP, generate cold spots, make a little noise, offer up a short whispering message, or nudge a small object.

**d4–d6:** Spirits of this level can manifest at will and make themselves clearly heard, though their bodies are not substantial. They are capable of telekinesis, and can take physical actions within a short distance (50 feet) without having to touch anything. They can only work with one object at a time.

**d8–d10:** These ghosts are strong and dangerous. Their forms can be as solid and real as in real life, though they can become insubstantial at a moment's notice. They can use telekinetic powers on two objects at a time, and can take those actions with greater force and strength. At this level, the ghost may also “blink” from one place to another within 20 feet as a defensive action (much like Dodge), making the Difficulty to score a hit on them equal to Agility + Spirit Trait.

**d12+:** These ghosts often exude ectoplasm (a disgusting, black viscous but otherwise harmless substance). They are not only stronger and more powerful than all but the rarest spirit, but they often exhibit an

unusual power of your choice (ability to spontaneously start fires, possess the living, teleport, summon swarms of insects, or something else). They can use telekinetic powers on up to four objects simultaneously.

## TIMOTHY TIMBERLAKE

### Death Echo

**Manifestation** Tim's shade is rarely seen, but when it does, it appears as the boy did just before he died. Tim was a skinny teenager with red hair, green eyes, mild acne, and thick glasses. He wore jeans and a T-shirt. Most of the time, however, the spirit comes across as EVP over cell phone conversations, an unexpected chill, or objects knocked over around the school campus.

**Motivation** Tim's ghost is simply caught up in the tragic unfairness of the boy's death. Most of the time it wanders around the high school where he was murdered, routinely reliving the teenager's death. Tim is shown being beaten to death by unseen fists and bats—and only those friends and family who were close to the boy, or those who know intimate information about his life, can shake the ghost from this gruesome reenactment. If the four boys (now men) responsible were to be confronted with Tim's murder, Tim's soul would be able to move on.

**Limitations** The spirit of Tim Timberlake is trapped on the school grounds, but it wanders throughout them. The ghost stays off the football field most of the time, except when it's reliving the murder, which took place near the fifty-yard line.

**Agi — Str — Vit — Ale d6 Int d4 Wil d4**  
**Init d6 + d2 LP —**



**Traits** Duty (be a good citizen) d4, Honest to a Fault d4, Hooked (playing chess) d4, Spirit d2

**Skills** Knowledge d6, Perception d6/Chess d10

**Attacks** Tim's weak ghost doesn't have many abilities other than to scare and unnerve—some of which is unintentional. Most of the time, the spirit is trapped in a dream-like state where it imagines it's still a student gonna school. It visits Tim's old classes and follows his old routine, occasionally and accidentally frightening students and faculty alike. When it's lucid, however, it's smart. If it felt there was a reason to punish someone, it might engineer an accident that will teach the victim a lesson. Other than that, at best it could manage a weak telekinetic punch (Willpower + Spirit Trait causing Stun-only damage).

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into Timothy Timberlake.

Tim was an honor student and president of the high school chess club. He was a bit on the nerdy side, but was mostly well-liked and had a number of friends. Chess was a major obsession, and he played on his computer, like speed-chess matches with old folks at the local park on weekends, and participated in tournaments outside of school.

Tim was honest and had somewhat of a boy-scout complex, always trying to do the "right thing." When he discovered one of his athlete friends taking drugs with friend on campus, he planned to tell the principle. The boys lured him out onto the football field at night, saying they wished to explain things. But there was a

confrontation and things got out of hand. They did not intend to kill Tim, but the beating they gave him left him bleeding internally and he died before the paramedics arrived.

The spirit of Tim usually follows his old schedule, gonna the same classrooms at the same time he did when he was a living student. Most of the time the ghost seems unaware that it's dead or that anything has changed—when confronted with the differences it gets upset and confused. At night, the spirit often relives Tim's tragic beating and death, replaying his last day of life over and over again.

## CONSTANCE WELCH

### Woman in White

**Manifestation** Constance's ghost appears as she did in life, a lovely woman in her mid-twenties with dark hair and eyes, pale skin, wearing a white dress. Those who watch it closely might see its form shimmer slightly. When the spirit becomes angry, its form shifts to a more terrifying visage—Constance's skeleton is visible beneath translucent skin.

**Motivation** The spirit is driven by conflicting desires. It wishes more than anything to go back home, so as it wanders the roadside it asks passing drivers to take it to Constance's house. Her spirit is driven to tempt, then punish and kill unfaithful men. The memory of Constance's unfaithful husband makes the spirit crave praise and attention from men, though it then punishes them for them for their infidelity.

**Limitations** Although the ghost wishes return home more than anything, it cannot bring itself to enter the house. It was in that house that Constance murdered her own children. The ghost has no interest in women, though it might ask one to bring it home and simply vanish upon reaching the old house.

**Agi** — **Str** — **Vit** — **Ale** d8  
**Int** d6 **Wil** d8

**Init** d8 + d6 **LP** —

**Traits** Allure d4, Spirit d6

**Skills** Influence d6/  
Seduction d8, Perception d6,  
Unarmed Combat d4

**Attacks** Constance's spirit prefers to use siren song, an almost imperceptible high-pitched wail, to immobilize a victim. In order to take an action on his turn, the target uses Willpower + Discipline/





Resistance against the ghost's Willpower + Spirit Trait. If Constance's spirit is distracted, it can't maintain the song. Every other turn, Constance's shade can choose a single target and deal d2 Basic damage to him. The spirit can use its powers to move heavy objects and will pin its victims if given the chance (using Willpower + Spirit Trait in place of Strength). The ghost can attempt to kill an immobile victim by plunging its hand into the victim's chest and ripping out his heart. This is a Willpower + Unarmed Combat + Spirit Trait action against an Easy Difficulty and deals Basic damage.

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into Constance Welch.

Constance was a pretty small-town girl from Jericho, California who married her high school sweetheart. She had little ambition beyond a simple life as a housewife and mother. She loved her husband, Joseph, and thought daily of ways to keep him happy—perhaps with a touch of obsession.

Constance's life was torn apart when she stumbled upon proof that her husband was cheating on her. She fell into a dark despair and she could not see a way out. So great was her anguish that she drowned her little boy and girl in the bathtub. When she realized what she had done, she could not bear to live anymore. She stumbled down to the Centennial Bridge and threw herself into the river.

At night Constance's ghost wanders the road next to the old Centennial Bridge, asking passersby to take it home to Constance's home at the edge of Breckenridge Road, which is now an abandoned wreck. The spirit seeks attention from men, but when it decides they are unfaithful (or will be), it becomes angry and kills them. Some nights the ghost relives Constance's suicide and can be seen leaping from old bridge into the river below.

## DR. H.H. HOLMES

### Undead Serial Murderer

**Manifestation** Holmes's ghost likes to remain hidden until it is ready to strike, so most of the time it is heard and felt before it is seen. The spirit and enjoys the buildup of terror before it snatches a victim. Holmes's spirit looks much as he did in life, a disheveled gentleman dressed in the manner of a 19th century professional—balding, but with bushy hair and a full beard. Even when the ghost appears alive, it looks smudged and dirty.

**Motivation** In life Holmes was a serial killer before the term had been coined. His ghost continues his horrible crimes in death. The spirit prefers female victims—particularly pretty young blondes—and

enjoys letting its victims linger in captivity where it can listen. It likes to snatch female hair as a kind of twisted trophy. It found a secluded chamber in an abandoned sewer perfect for its purpose.

**Limitations** The ghost of Holmes cannot leave the immediate area where his execution took place, but can freely roam the apartment building built on the spot and the abandoned sewers that run beneath it. Its presence leaves behind traces of ectoplasm, which makes it possible to track some of its movements.

**Agi — Str — Vit — Ale d6 Int d8 Wil d10**

**Init d6 + d10 LP —**

**Traits** Hideout d6, Out for Blood d8, Spirit d10

**Skills** Craft d6, Influence d6/Intimidation d10, Knowledge d6/Medicine d8, Perception d6, Unarmed Combat d6

**Attacks** Holmes's ghost makes use of stealth, hiding in the walls and then tearing through to grab a female victim and knock her unconscious with telekinesis (Willpower + Unarmed Combat + Spirit Trait). This allows it to take her to its hidden layer where it can delight in her whimpers and screams as she suffocates or dies from dehydration and starvation. When the ghost must confront enemies directly, it does so without mercy and can make full use of its Spirit powers—attacking up to four opponents with a single action (which uses of the same roll against varying defenses).



**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into Dr. H.H. Holmes. In truth, he was a terrifying figure in real history. Further research could enhance any story in which his evil spirit is a part.

In life H.H. Holmes (born Herman Webster Mudgett) was a serial killer who confessed to 27 murders, but is possibly responsible for hundreds more. After a life of small-time crime, he built a “murder castle” in Chicago that allowed him to trap female victims in secret rooms where he could delight in their slow deaths. He also would sell organs and skeletons to the medical community of the day.

Holmes was eventually caught. After his confession, he was hanged in Philadelphia. That location now contains an apartment building in which his spirit has begun to commit the crimes all over again—with a taste for pretty blonde young women. The spirit drags them down into a chamber in the old abandoned sewers below.

The body of Holmes cannot be easily salted and burned, as he requested his remains be buried in cement so that his body could not be mutilated. He sought to avoid exactly what he did to so many corpses during his life.

## Shapeshifter

Almost every culture’s got some kind of shapeshifting monster or magic in it somewhere. Not counting werewolves, skinwalkers, changelings, and body-hopping demons, the tale of the shapeshifter—someone who can change appearances as easily as a pair of boxer-briefs—is pretty common. Possible that these things have been living among us since the earliest recorded days. It’s enough to make you to keep something silver and sharp nearby when the neighbor starts acting funny.

For whatever reason, shapeshifters get obsessed with something and go straight to the “all work and no play” stage of crazy. They lose their grip on right and wrong, and some have a victim-complex they use to justify murder, theft, or whatever floats their freak boat. Obsessions might be anything—money, love, sex, a collection of commemorative spoons. You know the Seven Deadly Sins? You could probably map one of those to a shapeshifter without much trouble.

Nobody knows for sure where shapeshifters come from, but it seems likely that they were born to ordinary parents who just scratched the wrong numbers off the genetic lottery ticket. Male or female, black or white, the shapeshifter figured out sometime in its youth that it didn’t have to look the way it did. It could make itself look like somebody else, somebody it had seen and interacted with.

Its skin, hair, body fat, even its muscles and bones deform and stretch to make it perfectly believable.

When it’s done looking that way, it sheds its skin like a snake—leaving disgusting remains behind.

A shapeshifter creates a sort of temporary empathic link with its target the moment it takes on his appearance, like a shot of temporary ESP. This gives it a bunch of juicy details, selected memories, quirks, and feelings that it can use to complete the match—the longer it keeps the copied person alive the more tuned-in it becomes. A shapeshifter also becomes a pretty good actor over time. If it plans to take someone’s place, it will study that person’s habits and life style. It can adjust their voices to be a perfect duplicate—even under high-tech testing. Thanks to its empathy and experience, the shapeshifter can bluff its way through a conversation even with the copied person’s friends and family. In the end, you got to outwit it, ask it something only Bob would know (assuming there’s a Bob)—because while it gets some info from the ESP-link, it doesn’t get a full download.

There’s a couple of other ways to help determine whether a shapeshifter is the real deal or not. One thing all of them share is a flash in the eyes—a retinal flare, something like a cat’s. Sometimes, in the right light or when the shapeshifter is excited, you can catch it. For some reason, it’s easier to find on video. Next, silver. A shapeshifter, in any form, usually won’t carry any silver items or wear silver jewelry—it’s toxic to them. Only if it needs the silver around to keep up appearances will it abide it, but it definitely makes it cranky. You’ll usually want to keep this mind when you’re scuffling with one, because it’s a quick answer to a long and painful question—how am I gonna stop this slippery sonofabitch? Silver is the best way to kill it.

## Shapeshifters in the Game

Shapeshifters are stronger than average (Strength anywhere from d8 to d10), resilient (a d8 or higher Vitality) and empathic (d10 or higher Alertness), and have no less than a d6 in Covert and Performance Skills. Because their bodies are capable of transforming into an almost perfect physical match of another person, they can use this to their advantage when masquerading as that person. They automatically fool anyone who doesn’t have a reason to be suspicious. If a roll is needed, shifters get a +4 Skill step to pass themselves off as the imitated person. If a hunter knows what to look for (the retinal flash, for instance), he can make a Hard Alertness + Perception roll to tell a shapeshifter from the real deal.

When it comes to changing form, there are two varieties. For some, it takes a good ten minutes, sloughing off old skin and fat while growing the new. Others are more lucky and can pull it off inside of a minute—though they’re still gonna have to get some new threads if they’re going from a grizzly janitor to a hot cocktail waitress. It’s not something that can be pulled off in the middle of a fight, but if there’s an opportunity to hide, the shapeshifter might have time to ditch its skin around a corner.



Shapeshifters all possess at least a d4 in the ESP Asset, which reflects their strong empathic power, and the Hardy Constitution Asset, which covers their weird body chemistry. When shapeshifters copy somebody, they briefly get an even stronger ESP reading from their target, equivalent to the d8 rating. They've left their original identities completely behind, so they benefit from the Low Profile Asset as well.

As a result of its weird metabolism, shapeshifters recover from injury very quickly. They drop Stun damage at a rate of 1 point every minute, and Wound damage at a rate of 1 point an hour. Scars, injuries, and other trauma often disappear when they shapeshift. Shifters never suffer from Shock; if they accumulate enough Stun and Wound to exceed their Life Points, they might drop unconscious, but they immediately start to recover. Injury from a silver weapon, however, should be recorded separately since shapeshifters recover from those injuries just like normal people do.

## HOLLYWOOD SHAPESHIFTER

### America's Top Polymorph

**Description** The shapeshifter can look like anybody, but prefers to take the form of those who are attractive and popular.

**Motivation** This shifter loves the spotlight, and desperately envious about the lives of celebrities. It spends time as a paparazzo, following a young, beautiful starlet (or occasionally a young, beautiful male model) from event to event, until it can find time alone with them. Then it kills the chosen target, shapechanges, and takes over his or her life. Usually, the celebrity suffers a series of devastating and outrageous media catastrophes afterward until reports of their suicide or overdose hit the tabloids.

**Limitations** Like other shapeshifters, the Hollywood version is unable to recover quickly from damage inflicted by silver weapons. Also, it's addicted to cocaine, and may occasionally be so high that it forgets to maintain its cover, which results in bizarre and atypical behavior. The media, of course, chalks this up to the corrupting nature of Hollywood stardom.

**Ag** d8 **Str** d10 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d12 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6

**Init** d8 + d12 **LP** 16 (recovers from Stun and Wound damage quickly, vulnerable to silver)

**Traits** Addiction (cocaine) d8, Amorous d4, ESP d4, Glory Hound d4, Hardy Constitution d4, Low Profile d6

**Skills** Artistry d6/Photography d8, Covert d6/Disguise d10/Forgery d8/Stealth d10/Streetwise d10, Drive d4, Influence d6/Persuasion d10, Knowledge d6/Culture d8, Lore d4, Perception d6/Empathy d10, Performance d6/Acting d10/Singing d10, Tech d4, Unarmed Combat d4

**Attacks** If it come to blows, the Hollywood shapeshifter resorts to pummeling a hunter with its fists. Usually, however, it tries to get away and change shape as soon as possible. Although the shifter has no Guns or Melee Weapons Skill, it picks up any handy weapon if it has to, and simply defaults to its high Attributes.

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into the Hollywood shapeshifter.

Every six months or so, another former teen star seems to succumb to the dark side of the glamorous Hollywood society and end his or her life. Friends and family are shocked that things went so bad so quickly.

The latest teen celebrity was engaged to be married to a high-profile football player who claims she attacked him, screamed insults at him, and then threw him with amazing strength into a support pillar in a parking structure. He filed charges and their engagement was broken off. Two months later, she was found hanging from a rope in her apartment.

Among the paparazzi, there have been similar cases of photographers who seem to go off the deep end, usually around the time that they focus on a specific up-and-coming celebrity starlet. Their co-workers claim



that they were even more obsessed with the star than normal, giving up plum jobs across town with other agencies in order to follow their celebrity obsession around.

## Shtriga

In case you don't have enough to keep you from sleeping soundly for the rest of your life, we come to a nasty piece of business called a shtriga. Kinda like a nasty cross between a witch and a vampire, but really it's something completely different. It feeds off of *spiritus vitae* (life essence), which leaves the victim alive but weak and with a useless immune system. A common cold becomes enough to do you in. Worse, younger people have more life force than older, so children are the tastiest snacks for a *shtriga*. Worse still, once this nasty gets a taste, it likes to work its way through families. Get all the kids, one after another. All of which looks to the rest of the world like some kind of virus or flu or other kind of epidemic. Doctors scratch their heads and a bunch of kids die.

Because it feeds off the life force of others, the damned thing lives forever. Nice, eh?

The shtriga's true form is pretty horrific—skin like old dried paper, pruny mouth with only a couple of teeth, long fingers that look like dried up twigs. Just like something that's lived for hundreds of years feeding off little kids. Its form is more or less on the human side, and the thing is usually wearing a nasty old robe. Then again, it has the power of disguise. The old legends say that a shtriga prefers the shape of an old crone—most like its true form. Fact is a shtriga can find a guise that's young, old, male, female, doesn't matter. They're not shapechangers though. It takes a lot of work for it to build up a convincing human form, so it sticks with what it knows.

There's lore on how to deal with a shtriga, and it's pretty messed up. Some of it deals with blood the thing has spit back up, which is right out the window since striga doesn't actually drink blood. A really bizarre one involves trapping it in a church on Easter Sunday—something that most hunters aren't willing to wait all year for. Shtriga are vulnerable to iron (some say it needs to be consecrated), and can only actually be killed when it's in the process of feeding.

## Shtrigas in the Game

A shtriga adopts a disguise and cannot be detected as anything but human through normal means. Some special ritual, psychic power, or what have might just do the trick though. When it prepares to feed, it must drop the disguise.

Like just about everything else hunters have to deal with, a shtriga is strong and can't be killed by normal means. Any damage it takes is downgraded: Wound becomes Stun, and Stun is ignored. You can plug

it with bullets or stab it, but it's only gonna slow it down or drive it away. Shtriga are vulnerable to certain types of attacks and weapons, and those will damage and kill it normally.

The crone can pack a pretty mean punch, but it would rather suck life force. Once it has a victim stunned, it can drain for a number of turns equal to half the maximum result of the victim's Vitality Attribute. If the shtriga is interrupted, the attack fails. When the victim's *spiritus vitae* has been drained, he immediately suffers a -1 Attribute step to Vitality, and an additional -1 Attribute step every two days until the Attribute reaches zero. After that, the victim only has d4 days before dying of some common ailment that he is no longer able to fight off. Proper medical care can slow this down, but not stop it. Once a shtriga is killed, the life-essences of any living victims are restored to them, and they begin to recover immediately—their Vitality increasing +1 step each hour until back to normal.

## FITCHBURG SHTRIGA

### Family Killer

**Description** This crone stands about a six-and-a-half feet tall but is thin and wiry, with thin parchment-colored skin and yellow eyes. You're probably not gonna get a great look at it because this one is big on stealth and surprise. Usually it looks like a pediatric specialist at a local hospital.

**Motivation** As a vampire craves blood, the shtriga wants the *spiritus vitae* of the living—with a particular preference for children and a horrible fondness for feeding on children of the same family. It gets perverse pleasure out of its disguise as a doctor, which also allows it to keep a watch out for anyone who might suspect a supernatural cause to all the sick children.

**Limitations** The shtriga cannot feed while disguised, and to protect itself it uses caution and stealth as it stalks its prey. As a victim to its own compulsions, it habits makes it easier to track, and consecrated iron rounds can kill it while it feeds.

**Ag** d6 **Str** d12 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d10 **Int** d8 **Wil** d10  
**Init** d6+d10 **LP** 20 (ignores Stun, Wounds become Stun)

**Traits** Cool Under Fire d6, Slave to Tradition d4

**Skills** Athletics d6/Climb d10, Covert d6, Discipline d6/Concentration d8, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Medicine d6/Internal Medicine d8, Perception d6, Unarmed Combat d6/Wrestling d8

**Attacks** For a child, the shtriga simply creeps into the room, pins him down, and use its life-draining attack. For an adult, it tries to beat or stun the victim, then drain his life while he's helpless.

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into the Fitchburg Shtriga.





Children are getting sick and dying in Fitchburg. They are contracting bacterial pneumonia and no standard treatment seems to have much effect. Investigation reveals that other communities have had similar outbreaks for more than a hundred years.

The homes of some of the sick children reveal strange “hand-prints” (with long, skeletal fingers) outside the window or on the outside wall. The wood has literally rotted beneath the creature’s touch.

Old 19th-century and early 20th-century records from towns with child pneumonia outbreaks include photographs of the shtriga in his human guise—identical to the doctor who’s now treating the sick kids at the local hospital.

## Vampires

Thanks to Bram Stoker, Bela Lugosi, Anne Rice, and Wesley Snipes, everybody’s heard of vampires. All you have to do is watch a Dracula flick on TV to know their strengths and weaknesses and how to hunt them down. Everybody knows they drink blood, sleep in their coffins by day, turn into bats, and are repelled by the power of the cross. Problem is, only one of those things is actually true, and that’s part of why they’re still around even after hundreds of years of being hunted.

Now, you have to give guys like Van Helsing and Daniel Elkins credit. Up until the last few years, the hunter community was pretty damn sure all the North American vampires had been hunted to extinction. No packs had surfaced in a good long time. But vampires are like a blood-sucking plague that’s just been in remission. Now they’re

active again, and the next generation of hunters has been saddled with dealing with them. That means knowing what’s true and what’s just the stuff for the goth kids to be sweet on.

## Origin

Most of our vampire lore comes from Europe. Accounts of blood-sucking undead appear in documents from the 16th and 17th centuries, and that’s just the ones where they’re actually referred to as vampires. Similar creatures have been recorded in folktales and legends for thousands of years. Like everything else, sorting out fact from fiction’s part of the business, so if the evidence points to your mystery killer being a vampire, don’t rule it out just because one or two things aren’t right.

Even vampires don’t know the truth about where they came from. If you believe the stories, vampirism is a curse. Vlad Dracul, the Transylvanian prince that Bram Stoker thought would make a cool bad guy for his book, was a bloodthirsty warlord who defied God and was overcome by his baser instincts. Of course, he’s not the only one, and his story doesn’t explain the *vrykolakos* of Eastern Europe, the *penanggalan* of Malaysia, or the hopping vampires (*jiangshi*) of China.

Regardless of which psychotic sonofabitch started it, the disease spread from there. A vampire’s blood is like a carrier for the curse. If the blood gets into your system, it brings the curse along with it. In a matter of hours, you’re a card-carrying fang-monkey. Vampires like to play up the sensual side of this, probably because all of their own senses are so jacked up, and it gets the chosen victim into the right sort of mood. When the change hits, it’s like a

massive high. No surprise, then, that somebody who's made into a vampire has a serious loyalty for the one who turned it. This same bond gets shared among all the vampires in a pack, making them even more dangerous.

## Abilities

Vampires are predators. They're stronger, faster, and tougher than you are, and their senses are superhuman. Although some vampires may have abilities and tricks beyond those listed here, here're the basics.

**Enhanced Senses** One of the reasons it takes a while for a newly made vampire to get up to speed is sensory overload. It's said that if a vampire gets your scent, it never forgets it, and will eventually be able to find you. The bloodsucker can see you when it's really dark, and it can hear your heartbeat from the next room. If you're up against a vampire, you want to be prepared, because you're not gonna be able to hide from it.

**Inhuman Strength** Vampires are really strong. A backhanded blow from one can knock you ten feet and into a wall. They can kick down doors, hurl heavy objects, and tear up wood and aluminum like cardboard. Many vampires don't seem to know their own strength, holding back until they get into a fight. It's possible that, as creatures of passion, vampires can't exert themselves fully until they're worked up.

**Retractable Fangs** A vampire has a set of scary-sharp teeth that it can extend from its gums over its human teeth, giving it a smile only an undead mother could love. These teeth let a vampire rip a victim's throat out, but usually they'll be more careful.

**Supernatural Speed** The quickness of vampires is legendary. Some lore has them flying about like Superman, but in truth they're just freakishly fast. You'll almost never outrun a vampire, though if you can slow it down with dead man's blood or get it out into the sunlight, this isn't as much of a problem.

**Hard to Kill** It's not just that a vampire can take a knife in the chest and keep on coming, it's that wounds like this are healed so fast that they have almost no effect. Vampires feel pain, but because their bodies are unnaturally tough and regenerate from injury, most of them just shrug off a bullet or a baseball bat. This makes them kind of reckless and overconfident. If you could jump from a speeding car or off a railway bridge and live, wouldn't you be a little cocky?

## Limitation

With everything vampires can do, it's a good thing that they've also got some weaknesses. Here're a few of the major ones; some vampire packs may actually have others.

**Cutting off the Head** Most things don't like having their heads cut off, and this goes double for vampires. It's the one reliable way to kill them. Carry a machete, or a length of piano wire. It's gonna work a lot better than fists or guns.

**Dead Man's Blood** You wouldn't know it unless you read up on your vampire lore, but the blood of somebody who has recently died is like poison to vampires. They have to feed off the living (or blood taken from the living). If you dip an arrow or a knife in dead man's blood, it can make a vampire very sick very quickly. Getting hold of it isn't always easy, but if you're able to break into a morgue ...

**Setting it on Fire** Vampires can heal amazingly quickly, but fire really hurts. While only total incineration gets rid of them for good, at least you can hold the fangs off for a while with a well-placed Molotov cocktail or a house on fire.

**The Light of Day** The movies make this out to be a bigger deal than it is, but even Bram Stoker didn't have a problem with Dracula walking about in the daylight some of the time. Sunlight gives vampires a really bad sunburn and weakens or stuns them. A vampire trapped out in the daylight isn't able to pull together all of his supernatural strength and speed, because he's too busy trying not to suffer from massive sunstroke.

## Vampires in the Game

A character who gets vampire blood into his system becomes a vampire himself. The change from mortal to vampire increases the character's Agility, Strength, and Alertness by a +3 Attribute step, which quite often pushes those Attributes into superhuman territory. A vampire's Speed increases by 10 feet and it gains a second set of retractable (and sharp) teeth that can inflict d2 W. Vampires are addicted to blood, a hunger that equates to a d6 Addicted Complication. If a vampire doesn't drink blood taken from a living creature at least once every 12 hours its enhanced Strength, Agility, and Alertness drops by a -1 Attribute step each hour until reaching human levels. At that point, it suffers a cumulative -1 Attribute step to all its actions every six hours. Once its Vitality is reduced to d0, the vampire slips into a coma and won't wake up again until given blood.

Some exceptional vampires acquire other abilities and Traits over time, and vampires from places other than North America may even greater or lesser degrees of ability in these areas. The *jiangshi* of China can leap great distances, for instance, and the *penanggalan* of Malaysia is said to actually separate her head from her body and fly about at night, dragging her entrails behind her. Yeah, pretty sick.

## Damaging and Destroying Vampires

Vampires are really hard to kill. While they're not immune to Stun damage and still have a Life Points score, they recover Stun at a rate of 1 point every turn, and Wounds at a rate of 1 point every hour. Once a day,



a vampire can make a Willpower or Vitality roll and immediately recover that many Wound points, just as normal characters can use a second wind to recover Stun damage. In addition, while a vampire still feels pain and can get drunk or otherwise drugged, he recovers from all of these effects in a matter of hours. Even if a vampire has taken Wound points in excess of its Life Points, it won't die until its body is properly disposed of (head removed, in other words, or incinerated). Its body keeps regenerating Wound damage until it wakes up.

Vampires are quite vulnerable to certain attacks and sources of damage, however.

**Dead Man's Blood** The blood taken from a dead human acts as a poison to vampires. Weapons dipped in this blood do normal damage, and can knock the vampire out. The vampire must succeed at a Hard Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) action every turn, beginning with the one in which it was hurt, or fall unconscious. Each successive turn it fights off the blood-taint, it accumulates a -1 Attribute step to Vitality until it fails. A vampire who has been poisoned in this way recovers in an hour or two, but is fatigued until it gets its usual rest.

**Decapitation** Cutting off the head of a vampire means game over. It's not easy to do, though—it takes a sharp object and a called shot (see page 86) with a Difficulty increase of +8 points. If the attack hits, the damage die of the weapon used increases by a +1 step and all damage from the attack is Wound type. If the vampire ends up with more Wound points than its Life Points as a result of this attack, it's dead. If not, it's really, really mad. It's usually a good idea to do this when the vampire is Stunned (from dead man's blood poison, for instance) or weakened by sunlight. A defenseless vampire, such as one that's asleep, is obviously easier to hit (the normal Easy Difficulty is increased by 8 to Hard).

**Fire** Vampires can't regenerate burn damage as quickly as other types of damage. If you set a vampire on fire, it may eventually get better, but not as quickly as it would if you knifed in the gut or shot it in the chest. Keep damage from fire separate from other kinds of damage for the purposes of recovery; burns recover at a rate of 1 point a day.

**Sunlight** It won't kill a vampire, but true sunlight (including UV light from full spectrum lamps) causes it weakness and pain. Once exposed to sunlight, a vampire takes two points of Stun damage every ten minutes. While exposed to sunlight, the vampire can't recover Stun and Wound damage at his accelerated rate, and it suffers a -2 Attribute step to all actions until it gets into some shade.

## KATE

### Hot Chick Vampire

**Description** Kate appears to be an attractive, brown haired woman in her late twenties. She tends to dress in jeans, black band T-shirts, and a denim vest. Much of her appeal is in her aggressive and feral manner. She's direct and to-the-point, and isn't shy about using her sexuality to turn a confrontation to her advantage.

**Motivation** Like all vampires, Kate is driven by bloodlust. She's passionate in everything she does, to the point of being violent. It's clear that she loves her vampiric state, which isn't always a common response to becoming one of the undead. Kate was once the mate of the vampire Luther, but now that he's been killed by the Winchesters, she's something of a free agent. Her confrontations with hunters have left her wounded in the past, so she's now more careful than she used to be. Even so, once she's in a brawl, she doesn't pull any punches and has to be dragged from the fight by her pack members.

**Limitations** Kate has all the standard vampire limitations: allergy to sunlight, poisoned by dead man's blood, always hungry.

**Agi** d12 **Str** d12 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d12 **Int** d6 **Wil** d10  
**Init** d12 + d12 **LP** 18

**Traits** Allure d4, Amorous d4, Out for Blood d4, Sharp Senses (smell, hearing) d4

**Skills** Athletics d6/Climbing d10/Jumping d10, Covert d6/Stealth d8, Drive d4, Influence d6/Intimidation d8/Seduction d8, Lore d6/Hunters d8, Perception d6/Smell d10/Tracking d10, Unarmed Combat d6/Bite d8/Grapple d8

**Attacks** Kate likes to bring other members of her pack with her when she hunts, but she's always in charge. She softens up her targets with a little sweet-talk, but drops the act and slams her opponent with a vicious backhand if that doesn't work. If she's hurt, she withdraws long enough for her pack members to engage, and then circles around looking for a new opening. She'll use her bite (d2 W) once she has somebody in a secure hold.

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into Kate.

She is the mate of a hundred-year-old vampire named Luther.

The legendary hunter Daniel Elkins wiped out Luther's family, all of them vampires.

Kate takes the pack out on hunts while Luther remains in the pack's lair. The number of vampires in the pack has varied over time, but it's usually about six or seven.

Kate and Luther operate in the West, from Nevada to Colorado. They're off the radar, actively covering their steps.

## Wendigo

There's got to be a dozen different ways to spell "wendigo," but let's just stick to one to keep things simple. What we're dealing with is a creature that started out as regular man or woman. (Never actually heard of a chick-wendigo, but the lore doesn't say it couldn't happen.) But hunger drove him (or her) to eating the neighbors. The act of consuming human flesh is a mystical big deal in plenty of cultures, and in the case of the wendigo, it's someone who grew addicted to it—eating folks even when other sources of food became available. This causes a transformation into something less than human—scary-fast, unbelievably strong, and hard as hell to kill.

Hunger is the driving force of a wendigo. The beast may go into a kind of hibernation for a generation or so, but when it's awake, it wants to stock its larder. People are the only ones that really satisfy. If someone's taken by wendigo, they're pretty much history. Still, a wendigo likes to keep his lunch alive for a good long while until he's ready to eat. Track it back to its lair and you might be able to save the victim. Otherwise, you still got to track it back to its lair so you can torch the evil son of a bitch.

A wendigo keeps the basic shape of a man, but grows taller. It usually stands between six and seven feet, but looks even taller because it's stick-man thin. The beast's got leathery skin stretched paper-thin over its bones, usually an ashy-gray color or something that looks like old parchment. Its mouth is nightmare-fuel, all shredded lips and jagged teeth. It smells just about as good as it looks if you get close enough, like you just walked into a meat locker that wasn't kept refrigerated.

A wendigo is a bad nasty—if you're running around in the wilderness you're on its turf. The creature enjoys the hunt, and it is a cruel, evil bastard who could kill or grab its victims in the blink of an eye but has fun "playing" with people, scaring them before going in for the kill. It's mostly about the meat, so it might leave a little kid alive because he wasn't brawny enough to bother with. The bastard is also really good at imitation. If it hears someone's cries for help, it can repeat them with pitch-perfect accuracy, to try to lure friends out into the dark where they're easy pickings.

More good news. Stop me if you've heard this before. The thing is strong, wicked-fast, and expert in tracking and camouflage. Oh, and it can't be killed with normal weapons. Best you can do is drive it away or get it seriously pissed off. So what's a hunter to do?

Wendigos are evil creatures, so certain types of protection seem to work. Some mystical symbols do the trick, like those of the Anasazi, but you might get lucky with other kinds of emblems used to ward off evil or dark spirits. Legends say that you can shatter a wendigo's icy heart with a blade of silver or pure iron. Man, you got to be packing serious cojones to get that close and personal with a wendigo, and hope that you hit it just

right. My recommendation? Fire. These guys are all dried-up, so they light up like kindling. Just try not to burn the whole forest to the ground, because that'll make Smokey Bear sad.

## Wendigos in the Game

These suckers may once have been human, but whatever bad mojo it was, it has changed them into something so completely different that it doesn't really matter how they started off. Doubt that they even remember being human. They're just hungry and mean. Remember that they're not all exactly alike either. One may be a bit faster, another stronger—you get my drift. Its claws inflict d2 Wound and use the Unarmed Combat/Clawing Skill.

Like the shtriga, a wendigo is pretty hard to kill. Any damage it takes is downgraded to the next type: Wound becomes Stun, and Stun is ignored. So it feels a bullet- or knife-wound, but that'll only slow it down or drive it away. If someone can cause 4 Wound damage to its tiny heart with silver or pure iron (requiring an extraordinary success on certain kinds of attacks or a called shot with a +12 to the Difficulty), the wendigo dies instantly. Fire is extremely effective—it can't downgrade any damage caused by fire, and it catches on fire for an additional d6 Wounds per turn unless extinguished.

## BLACKWATER WENDIGO

### Ruthless Hunter

**Description** This monster stands about a six-and-a-half feet tall but is thin and wiry, with thin parchment-colored skin and yellow eyes. You're probably not gonna get a great look at it, because this one is big on stealth and surprise.

**Motivation** A wendigo wants to eat—not just now, but for weeks. It kills immediately when necessary, but it would rather grab a victim and keep him tied up for days or weeks until it's ready to eat. It taunts its victims to drive them into a panic. Divide and conquer tactics. It's not big on taking an armed, organized group head-on, though. It may be not be a contender in a spelling bee, but it's a smart hunter and knows how to use its terrain.

**Limitations** The Blackwater wendigo only comes out of hibernation once every 23 years, but when it does it wanders through the territory surrounding its lair—an abandoned mine in Blackwater, Colorado. It grabs campers, hikers, park rangers, and whoever else is convenient. The wendigo won't stray too far from home, though, and it won't cross certain types of mystical protection. Anasazi symbols definitely keep it away. It knows how dangerous fire is to it, and it keeps its distance from a flame.



**Agi** d12 + d4 **Str** d12 + d2 **Vit** d12 **Ale** d12 **Int** d6  
**Wil** d6

**Init** d12 + d4 + d12 **LP** 20 (ignores Stun, Wounds become Stun except for fire-based damage, vulnerable to attacks to the heart with iron or silver)

**Traits** Fast on Your Feet d12 (base speed 35 feet per turn), Tough d4

**Skills** Athletics d6/Climbing d10, Covert d6/Stealth d10, Perception d6, Survival d6/Camouflage d10/Tracking d8, Unarmed Combat d6/Clawing d8

**Attacks** When the wendigo attacks it can do so with its claws (d2 W), but it often uses nonlethal attacks to subdue its prey. It also can mimic any voice it has heard, such as the screams of its victims—requiring a Heroic Alertness + Perception/Hearing check to tell the difference. It uses speed and stealth to its advantage, setting up ambushes and luring victims into vulnerable places.

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into the Blackwater wendigo.

There's a pattern of missing persons in the same area of wilderness every 23 years. An old man named Shaw was a childhood survivor of a "grizzly" attack, but he'll confide in those willing to believe that it was a tall, gaunt creature that dragged his parents out of a cabin into the night and left him with a terrible scar.

Though there's evidence of a struggle at the sites of the attacks, no remains suggest anyone was killed at the scene. That's because the wendigo takes victims back to its lair.

The wendigo prefers to keep its victims alive, but it kills anyone who seems to pose an obvious threat.

If anyone can track the wendigo back to its lair, they'll find it in a long-abandoned silver mine. It keeps victims alive and bound, in a kind of larder in a lower chamber.

## Zombies

If you wanna sound like a snob, you can call it a "re-animate." Basically we're talking about a dead body that's been brought back to life. Necromancy, or whatever you wanna call it, nasty spells or rituals. It isn't quite clear if the soul is thrown back in the body or if it's just a soulless body just going through the motions. Also, these aren't Romero zombies or shambling brain-eaters. A fresh body that had recently received the help of a good mortician might look pretty good—for a while. But a corpse is a corpse, of course, of course, and eventually it withers and rot away.

A zombie has the mind and basic personality of the original person, at least in the beginning. But its moral compass doesn't come back with the rest of it. So even the biggest Boy Scout might kill an old lady rather than help her across the street. And as the brain inside the skull rots away, the old vocabulary and table manners go bye-bye.

One possible sign of the dead brought back to life is to examine the gravesite. You might notice that the local plant life around it—grass, trees, you name it—is dead in a nice, wide circle. The magic that puts life back into the corpse sucks it outta whatever's nearby. The zombie has the same effect as it roams around. Follow the trail of dead plants and you might find the walking corpse.



So how do you kill what's already dead? There is so much lore on this that it'll drive you batty. And it seems to be tied to the type of magic that brought it back in the first place. Here's a few ideas.

#### **Cut Off the Head and Place Between its Feet**

You might just wind up with a headless corpse that comes come running after you.

**Feed its Heart to Wild Dogs** Two pain-in-the-ass tasks—removing the heart and finding wild dogs. And removing the heart doesn't do jack. Some zombie-creation rituals involve removing the heart from the body before bringing it back to life anyway.

**Burn it to Ashes** Gotta be number one in monster solutions. This is always a good stand-by, and usually works when everything else fails. Just remember that setting a zombie on fire doesn't make it lay down. You just bought yourself a pissed-off flaming enemy, so keep your distance.

**Stake it Back into its Own Grave** It's not exactly gonna lay back down willingly, and these things can put up a hell of a fight. Some lore says the stake should be silver, and through the heart is always best—assuming it still has one.

## **Zombies in the Game**

A character brought back as a zombie has the same stats and abilities that it had in life—except that the necromancy has made it much stronger than before (Strength increased by a +3 step). As a dead creature, it feels no pain and completely ignores Stun damage. Though a zombie has a Vitality score (based on what it had as a living character), it ignores many checks that require them. It doesn't succumb to poison, alcohol, disease, lack of air, whatever. Even when a zombie takes Wound damage equal to its Life Point total, it doesn't drop unconscious or die; it keeps coming at you. At that point, though, it's pretty obvious the zombie isn't a living person. Once the zombie takes twice its Life Points in Wound damage, it's sufficiently destroyed that it can't be considered much of a threat. Still, it's an animated, freakish corpse unless the magic that has brought it back is undone or it's burned to ashes. A zombie can't heal, though it could possibly be "repaired" of some damage if someone wanted to go to the trouble.

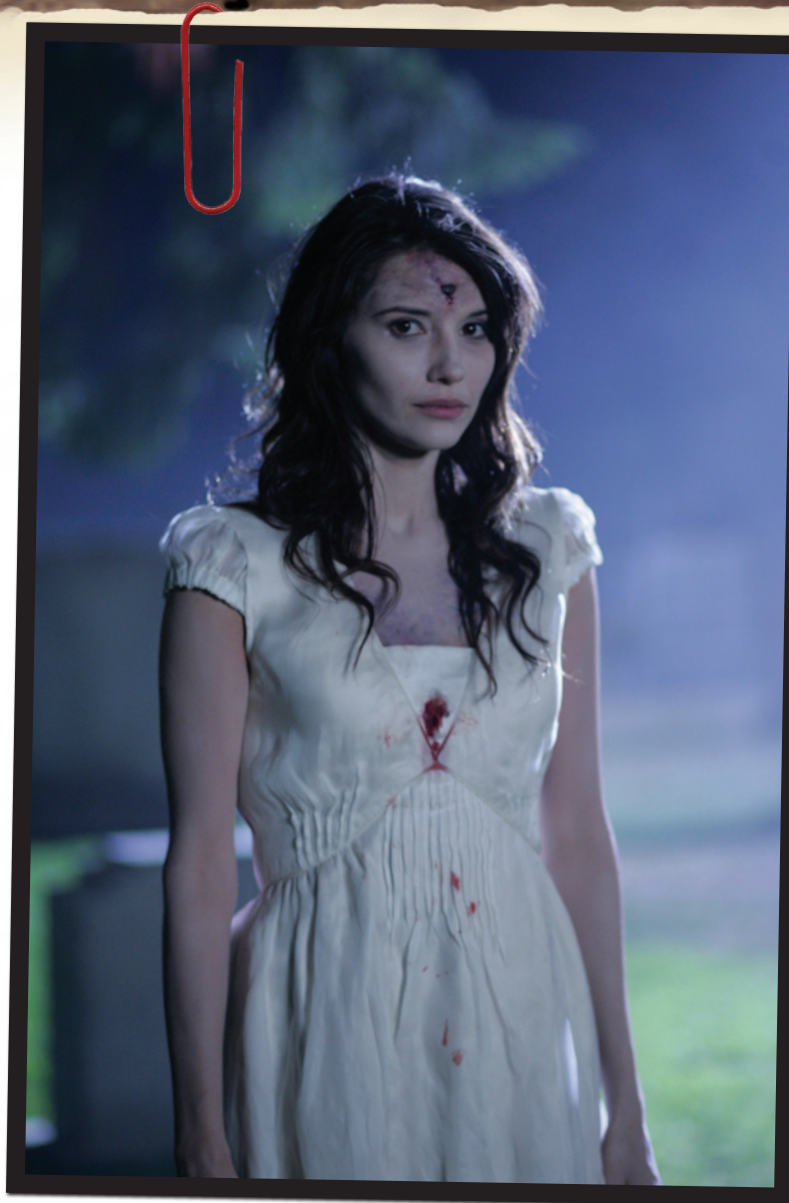
### **ANGELA MASON**

#### **Heartbroken Zombie**

**Description** Angela is a pretty young college student with dark hair and brown eyes—at least she was.

Now her body is a bit pale and cold to the touch.

Not surprising seeing as how she's actually dead and brought back to life through the power of



necromancy. The corpse appears normal enough at a distance, still wearing the white dress that Angela was buried in. As it gets hurt, though, and as time goes on, it'll begin to wear and rot away.

**Motivation** In life, Angela was a sweet girl who would have never hurt anyone on purpose. But what came back as Angela might have her memories but none of her conscience. It does, however, remember the pain caused by Angela's cheating boyfriend Matt and her slut roommate Lindsey. Getting payback is on the list. The undead is grateful to Neil, Angela's friend who loved her enough to bring her back from death—but even that only goes so far if he pisses the zombie off. It has no qualms about killing anyone who gets on its bad side.

**Limitations** Angela was brought back with Greek necromancy. If someone properly understood the ritual that raised it, her zombie could be put to rest through a ritual. If it was burned to ashes, that would obviously be the end. The simplest solution, however, is for someone to stake it back into Angela's grave bed.

**Agi** d10 **Str** d12 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8



**Init** d10 + d6 **LP** 14 (ignores Stun, doesn't drop at 14 Wounds, "killed" at 28 Wounds)

**Traits** Fast on Your Feet d6, Lightning Reflexes d4, Out for Blood d8

**Skills** Athletics d6/Running d10, Covert d4, Influence d6/Seduction d8, Knowledge d4, Unarmed Combat d4

**Attacks** Angela was not a skilled combatant before her death, but her corpse is much stronger since rising from the grave. It grabs whatever is handy to hurt an enemy, or just resorts to its bare hands. The zombie'd much rather ambush an unaware opponent if possible, and if it feels threatened it'll run away with all the speed of a former track star.

**Lore** The following information may be acquired through investigation into Angela Mason.

Angela was a college student who had not yet decided on a major. She was a sweet girl with a big heart. She was well liked and had a boyfriend named Matt, best friend named Neil, and a roommate named Lindsey. Angela died in a car-crash while talking on her cell phone, with no evidence of foul play or anything unusual about her death.

The grave of Angela Mason is surrounded by a circle of dead plants and insects. Those who follow her trail find evidence of dead plants wherever she has recently been. If the grave is dug up, ancient Greek symbols and text relating to a ritual of necromancy are inscribed on the inside of her empty coffin.

Angela's father is a Classics professor, and Angela's best friend Neil is his T.A. (teacher's assistant). Neil had always loved her, and used the ritual after she died to bring her back hoping they could finally be together. He did not understand that she would not be truly be alive, or that she would now be ready to kill.

Matt and Lindsey were sleeping with each other, and Angela caught them in the act. She drove away in tears, and when Matt called she was so distracted that she crashed her car. Now that she's back without a human soul, she wants revenge.

## Supernatural Locations

Confronting demons, ghosts, and shape-shifting terrors in the dark might be the central aspect of being a hunter, there's still something to be said about weird places and the stories that come about as a result of them. Of course, a house with an angry spirit attached to it is considered haunted, but it's sometimes more of a theme—or a feature—that makes a place suitably supernatural.

**Chapter Nine: The Mundane** includes a whole section of normal, if iconic, locations in which to stage a *Supernatural* scene. From biker bars to sheriff's stations, there's nothing inherently weird or creepy about these places. Nothing for a hunter to worry about. This section, on the otherhand, is all about adding the supernatural element to a location to make things more interesting.

## Apparitions

For whatever reason, a location could be prone to manifesting apparitions, from flickers of people who may have once lived there to mysterious images in mirrors or in windows. The apparitions are not strictly ghosts, but rather psychic impressions that linger on long after the inhabitants have moved on. Often, the apparitions are connected to a tragedy or some actual creature that haunts or lairs in the location. Demons have also been known to create such effects simply by virtue of being in the location for a while. Certain ghosts have been reported to cast visual hallucinations instead of manifesting themselves.

## Bizarre Vegetation

Something in the location causes plants to grow wildly, to wilt, or to spontaneously behave in a manner that isn't normal. Vines might creep across the floorboards of a building overnight, revealing a carpet of green in the morning. Plant life may just die as soon as it's brought into the location. Moss, fungus, mold, and other forms of plant life may be virulent. It's also possible that the trees whisper what appear to be words when the wind blows through them, or become animate at the direction of the location's inhabitants.

## Dreams

When hunters spend the night in this location, they're affected by the same dreams that have been plaguing other people for weeks, months, perhaps years. These dreams could be vivid nightmares, or perhaps everyone shares a common theme or individual within the delusion. The dreams might be foretelling a coming event, or perhaps replaying out something that happened in the location in the past. The connection between the dreams and any supernatural creature in the area may not be obvious, but it should be there.

## Electromagnetic Phenomena

These places screw with electronic devices, causing radios and cell phones to become flooded with static, or simply not to work. EVP is commonly associated with ghosts, but many other forms of electromagnetic weirdness are out there. Ferrous metals may become magnetized after only minutes, or within hours of being in the location. Perhaps the center of the location is itself a strong magnet, either attracting or repelling metals. The location may be prone to static electrical build-up, surges in electronic fields, fuses constantly blowing, and other things that occur with alarming frequency.

## Entropic Fields

In this location, things break down. This isn't the same as electromagnetic phenomena, as it may not have anything to do with electricity or magnetism or even technology. Cars don't work, plumbing backs up, relationships fray at the edges, and ideas are

blocked. There's a persistent feeling of inertia, too, because nobody tries to accomplish anything. People are depressed, resigned, or downtrodden. Children don't play outside. The local authorities have nothing to go on. If there's a supernatural creature present, it's either riding this wave of entropic forces, or it may be the cause of them.

## History of Violence

For as long as anybody can remember, this location's been a battleground. Maybe it's the site of an actual battle and the restless spirits have an influence over those who live here now. Or maybe the place was cursed, and conflicts have broken out ever since. Whatever the cause, tempers flare and disagreements always end in a fight. Like the suicidal tendencies location, the people who actually live here may not always be affected by the forces at work, but visitors or tourists are almost guaranteed to find their hearts racing and their blood pumping soon after they arrive.

## Sacred Ground

This location is blessed—or cursed—by the religious or spiritual purpose that it was originally intended for. This category includes Indian burial grounds, churches, fairy mounds, Satanic altars, and so on. Powerful forces have been gathered here, attracting all kinds of supernatural creatures or inquisitive parapsychologists. If the sacred ground is beneficial, it might serve as protection for anybody who recognizes it as such. If it's the other kind, it may increase the power of a demon or ghost to terrifying levels. There's usually a way to reverse the blessing or curse on the land, but the hunters probably have to do a little research and work some major ritual mojo to do so.

## Suicidal Tendencies

Much like history of violence locations, something happened here (or lurks here) that drives people to physical harm. In this case, it's self-inflicted and not against others. Hangings, cutting wrists, jumping from a long way up, dropping a toaster into the bathwater ... folks are always trying to off themselves. Depression might be common, or the air might just be so thick with gloom that it gives people the idea that they should end it all. The locals are probably used to it by now, but newcomers and people passing through won't be. The majority of suicides are outsiders, and who can tell with strangers, right?

## Temperature Extremes

Ghosts create cold spots, and some kinds of supernatural creatures can start fires, but this isn't either of those. This is a location where the ambient temperature is much hotter or colder than it should be. Could be weird meteorological events aligning together, could be connected to a major event that took place in the area, but it doesn't usually have any obvious cause. Technically, this includes those underground coal fires that don't stop burning for years and years, making the ground really warm and giving off poisonous gas. Locations like that are dangerous enough without adding some demonic influence to the mix.

## Time Distortion

In these places, time plays tricks on you. Might be that you stay a night in the place and a week goes. Might be you spend a week here and it's only been a day since anybody last saw you. Those are extreme cases, though. Most of the time, a time distortion location stretches or compresses time in bursts, messing with clocks and watches. It might be localized, advancing things like rot or spoiling food, or making it so nobody ever seems to get old. A time distortion doesn't need to be connected to anything, but sometimes it's a Groundhog Day thing where each morning the day starts over. There's usually a trick to breaking the cycle, and that trick is connected to some supernatural threat or bad guy. Those sorts of event completely defy science, so the sooner you get away from it the better.

## Where to Next?

So now that we've aired all of the dirty laundry surrounding ghosts and vampires and demons, what do you do with that? First, read on to **Chapter Nine: The Mundane**, which should bring you back down to Earth. Then go back to **Chapter Seven: The Game Master** for some refreshers on story elements and scenes. The supernatural stuff in this chapter works in tandem with those chapters, giving you all that you need to create a *Supernatural* session with very little preparation. Need more inspiration? Grab a book of urban legends, ghost stories, or watch an old horror movie. You'll see how even the weirdest spooks and critters don't make for a scary story unless you've got something normal to contrast it against.



# CHAPTER NINE

## The Mundane

### MRS. C. CORDES BURNED; ILL TWO HOURS

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### Overcome After Pick- ing Up Cloth Found on Front Porch

Mattoon's "anesthetic prowler," at first believed to have fled the city after his acts of last week, was on the loose again Tuesday night, adding another victim to his list.

The latest person to suffer from the "fumes" or "anesthetic" was Mrs. Carl Cordes, 921

first street, but the under which she had differed from five previous cases. Mrs. Cordes as a result of her experience with the "anesthetic" was violent more than two hours. Her mouth and nose were so badly swollen she inhaled the fumes she inhaled. She came from cracks in her and swollen lips and her throat and the roof of her mouth. She showed the condition of her lips and mouth to a Journal-City reporter today and said the swelling of her lips had nearly closed but that the roof of her mouth was still parched. She experienced difficulty in swallowing.

Mrs. Cordes was the first person to find concrete evidence that a type of drug or anesthetic is used.

### Cloth Against Screen Door.

She told the following story: "My husband and I arrived home about 10 o'clock Tuesday night and according to our usual custom entered our home through the rear door. We had been in the house a few minutes and were sitting in the front room when we noticed a white cloth on the front porch against the screen door.

"I picked up the cloth which was larger than a man's handkerchief and unfolded it. There was a large wet spot in the center inside the fold and without thinking I brought the cloth to my face and smelled of it.

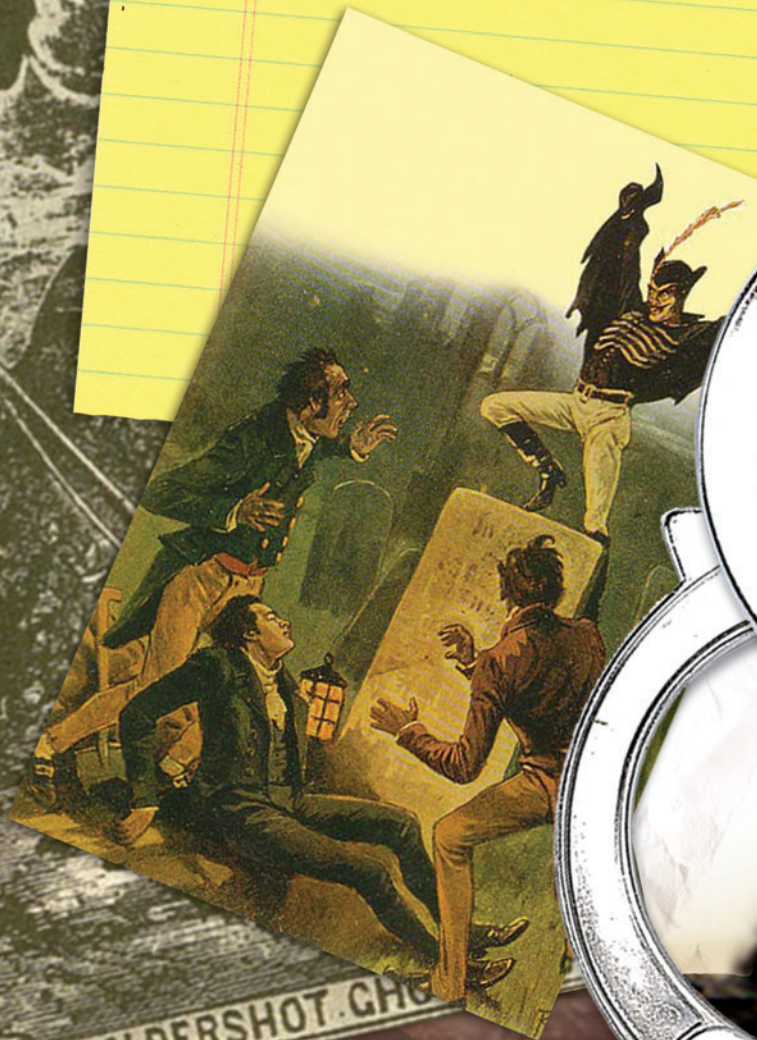
"When I inhaled the fumes from the cloth, I had a sensation similar to coming in contact with a strong electric current. The feeling raced down my body to my feet and then seemed to settle in my knees. It was a feeling of paralysis.

"My husband had to help me into the house and soon my lips were swollen and the roof of my mouth and my throat burned. I began to spit blood and my husband called a physician. It was more than two hours before I began to feel normal again. You can see my lips and face are still swollen today."

Mrs. Cordes said the prowler may have intended to knock out their dog, which was at home and usually slept on the front porch, before attempting to enter the house. She said that he might have been frightened away from the front of the house as she and her husband entered the back door.

Witness to Jenkins disappearance - Evan McKay (10 years old) - Saw something drag Albert Jenkins under the Cadillac - heard a "Whining growl" - County has more missing persons reports than anywhere else in Minnesota. - Phantom Attacker?

~~Spring Heeled Jack~~





**S**ometimes, the real world messes with the honest work of sending demons to hell or ridding a house of angry spirits. The authorities frown on carrying shotguns into people's homes, or that big, hairy thing in the woods leaving behind grisly remains turns out to be a ... grizzly. This chapter covers the more mundane things that turn up during the course of any *Supernatural* investigation, from natural critters to regular folks to iconic locations. The world of the mundane brings the world of the supernatural into sharp focus, and it's just as important to a hunter's life as the things he hunts.

This chapter's gonna be used mostly by Game Masters so it's focused on them. Players aren't gonna spoil much by reading this stuff, but they're not the target audience.

## Animals

If a hunter's doing his job, mostly he's gonna be dealing with ghosts, demon-possessed waitresses, monsters leaping from the shadow—that sort of thing. But some of the creatures out there are plain old animals. A hunt in a south-Georgia swamp includes a chance the hunter might become gator-chow. The big house he's breaking into might have a cheap security system in the form of a half-starved pit bull. Even if it looks like a mundane problem, no hunter should relax. Not only are mundane critters dangerous, but they just might come enhanced with some nasty curse or other bit of evil that turns them into truly supernatural dangers.

### Animals and Traits

Like the creatures in **Chapter Eight: The Supernatural**, animals have abilities that normal folks don't. Some can fly, some can rip a body open with claws and teeth, and some have thick hides that soak up damage. Traits aren't needed to cover that stuff. Some animals do have qualities that act like the Traits. In that case, they act just like the ones humans have (see **Chapter Four: The Traits & Skills**).

## ALLIGATOR

**Description** You're gonna find alligators in regions of the Southeast with swamps and wetlands. They're also in the sewers of big cities, if you believe what you read. The big ones are a half-ton of lizard, waiting patiently in a river or pond for some damn fool to stick his foot in. A gator attacks with a **bite** (d8 B) and, given its powerful jaws, it gains a +2 Strength step for purposes of grappling following a successful bite—and by grapple, I mean hold you pinned in its jaws. Their muscles aren't nearly as powerful when it comes to *opening* their jaws,

however—those wildlife guys on TV love working that angle. Gators suffer a -2 Strength step when trying to make a bite attack after somebody's already grappled them Tarzan-style. Gators have an **Armor Rating 2 W**.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d10 **Vit** d12 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8  
**Init** d4 + d6; **LP** 20

**Skills** Athletics d6/Sprinting d10/Swimming d10, Covert d6/Ambush d10, Perception d4, Survival d6/Swamps d10, Unarmed Combat d6/Biting d8

## BIRD OF PREY

**Description** Raptors sounds all Jurassic Park, but it's just a word for eagles, falcons, hawks, and owls. They're hunters, only they do it by flying overhead and diving down, tearing up their prey with their **claws** (d4 B) and **beak** (d2 B). You can train them to bring things down and fly back to you, if you've got the patience and free time.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d2 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d4  
**Init** d6 + d4; **LP** 8

**Traits** Sharp Sense (sight) d6

**Skills** Athletics d6/Flying d12, Covert d6, Perception d6/Sight d10, Survival d6, Unarmed Combat d6/Clawing d8/Pecking d8

## BOAR

**Description** Boars are extremely aggressive and ignore the -2 Step from accumulated Stun and Wound damage. The boar's **tusks** (d2 W) can cause horrible injuries, 'specially when the ornery pig gets a **charge** in (d4 W). Its **bite** (d4 B) is not used as often but still dangerous. Boars have an **Armor Rating 1 W**. Drop Strength to d6 and make Unarmed Combat d4 and these stats work well for one of those big hogs that show up in the Weekly World News.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d10 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d10  
**Init** d4 + d6; **LP** 18

**Traits** Tough d4

**Skills** Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d6/Biting d8/Goring d8

## BROWN BEAR (GRIZZLY)

**Description** Bears are big, strong, and fast as all get out. A **claw** (d10 B) from a grizzly can snap the spine of a bull, and its **bite** (d10 B) can tear a deer open. Bears can catch a hunter if he runs from them, and they'll follow a runner right up a tree. If one gets hold of a hunter with a grapple, it automatically deals Basic damage equal to Strength. They have an **Armor Rating 2 W**. Bottom line? Don't mess with bears.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d12 + d2 **Vit** d12 + d4 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8

**Init** d4 + d6; **LP** 24



**Traits** Formidable Presence d4, Sharp Sense (smell) d6

**Skills** Athletics d6/Climbing d10/Sprinting d10/Swimming d8, Perception d4, Survival d6/Mountains d8/Forest d10, Unarmed Combat d6/Biting d8/Clawing d10

## BULL

**Description** If someone's stupid enough to get a bull mad at him in its field, he better get over the fence as soon as possible. Why those rodeo guys risk their lives with these big bastards every weekend is still a mystery. A bull's **gore** (d4 B) is worse after a **charge** (d6 B), and that's the ones that have their horns blunted (if they're still sharp, increase the damage by a +1 step). A bull can also **trample** (d4 B), and has an **Armor Rating 1 W**.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d12 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8

**Init** d4 + d4; **LP** 20

**Traits** Tough d4

**Skills** Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d6/Goring d8

## DOG

**Description** This is one of those big dogs people breed to guard places or go hunting with. A dog attacks with a **bite** (d4 B), and if it gets an extraordinary success, it grapples the target. These stats work for a wolf, too, just by switching Devoted (master) for Devoted (pack) and pushing its Strength up to d8.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d4 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d8; **LP** 12

**Traits** Devoted (master) d4, Sharp Sense (hearing, smell) d6

**Skills** Athletics d6/Running d8, Influence d4, Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d6/Biting d8

## GREAT CAT

**Description** Great cats include lions, tigers, cougars, and jaguars. They're meat-eaters and can range from a few feet in length to as much as ten or eleven feet and weigh as much as 700 pounds. They attack with **claws** (d4 W) and a **bite** (d6 W).

**Agi** d8 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8

**Init** d8 + d6; **LP** 14

**Traits** Formidable Presence d4, Sharp Sense (hearing, sight) d6

**Skills** Athletics d6/Balancing d10/Climbing d8/Dodging d8/Jumping d10, Covert d6/Stealth d8, Perception d4, Survival d6, Unarmed Combat d6/Biting d8/Clawing d10



## GOAT

**Description** Yeah, yeah, big scary goat. Hey, folks don't get attacked by goats all that often, but they're always turning up in those Satanic horror flicks, and who knows what those black goats are all about? Assuming somebody gets in a tussle with one of these living garbage disposals, their prime attacks are **head butt** (d4 B) and **kick** (d2 B). These stats also work pretty well for sheep; just drop the Traits line.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d4

**Init** d4 + d4; **LP** 10

**Traits** Hardy Constitution d4, Sure-Footed d4

**Skills** Athletics d4, Perception d4, Survival d4, Unarmed Combat d4

## HORSE

**Description** Horses are big mofos and when they get spooked they get scary. A **kick** (d6 B) is damn painful, but it's worse when the attack is an extraordinary success—the damage gains a +2 step, and the target ends up on his back in the dirt. Next thing you know, the horse is **trampling** (d8 B) and the guy is in a world of hurt.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d12 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8

**Init** d6 + d6; **LP** 18

**Traits** Sharp Sense (sight) d4, Tough d4

**Skills** Athletics d6/Running d12, Perception d8, Survival d4, Unarmed Combat d6/Kicking d8

## HOUSE CAT

**Description** House cats are everywhere, especially in big cities or on farms. Feral cats are not something to mess with. Cats attack with **claws** (d2 B) and a **bite** (d2 B).

**Agi** d6 **Str** d2 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d8 **Int** d4 **Wil** d4

**Init** d6 + d8; **LP** 8

**Traits** Sharp Sense (hearing, sight) d6

**Skills** Athletics d6/Balancing d8, Covert d6/Stealth d8, Perception d4, Survival d4, Unarmed Combat d2

## INSECT SWARM

**Description** Got an angry, murderous swarm of bees, wasps, or ants? Here's the deal. The swarm moves at a speed of 10 feet per combat turn. Normal weapons don't do a thing to it—only weapons that affect an area, such as gas, chemicals, or flame can stop it. Once the swarm takes more than 8 points of Stun or Wound damage, it disperses.

**Swarms** attack by **stinging** (d4 S), and can't be dodged or blocked. Some swarms are also poisonous—the target needs an Easy Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. Each turn he takes damage from a swarm, the poison's Difficulty goes up +1 step. If the Resistance roll against the poison comes up an extraordinary success, the poison does nothing. If the action is just a success, the target takes d4 B damage from the poison. If failed, the damage gains a +2 step; if botched, it's a +4 step.

**Agi** d8 **Str** — **Vit** d2 **Ale** d2 **Int** — **Wil** d2

**Init** d8 + d2; **LP** 4

**Skills** Athletics d6, Unarmed Combat d6/Stinging d8

## SHARK

**Description** Sharks can smell and track blood for miles, so the story goes. They're also unlikely to bother anyone unless the person happens to fall out of a boat, horses around on a Florida beach at night, or goes diving with a nosebleed. Good thing too, 'cause these beasts are one of nature's ultimate killing machines, ripping their prey apart with a **bite** (d8 W). Sharks have an **Armor Rating 1 W**.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d12 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d6 **Int** d2 **Wil** d10

**Init** d6 + d6; **LP** 20

**Traits** Formidable Presence d6, Infamy d6

**Skills** Athletic d6/Swimming d12, Covert d6/Ambush d8, Perception d6/Movement d12/Tracking d12, Survival d6, Unarmed Combat d6/Biting d10

## Ordinary People

Most people live "ordinary" lives. They drive the minivan to the nine-to-five, have two-point-five kids in a split-level house with an expensive

mortgage. It's the American way—they don't give any thought to ghosts and vampires and flesh-eating monsters. You have to deal with ordinary people all the time, asking witnesses questions, dodging cops, or dealing with a mean drunk at the local watering hole. Usually, they're a pain in the ass. They're also the folks you're trying to save.

Keep in mind that these are exactly what they look like—stereotypes, some painted with a fairly broad and stiff brush. That's the idea. Take a handful of them, tweak them as you like, and drop them in your game. The players will get into the spirit of things pretty quick, which is good, because they're gonna have to deal with some real freaky stuff soon enough.

Each ordinary person entry has statistics, description, motivation, and the usual stuff. They're not built with the rules hunters use, so their Skills and Traits might not add up to a Rookie, Veteran, or Seasoned hunter's totals. Don't sweat it.

## The Bar

These are the folks who hang out in any alehouse, corner pub, or seedy bar. You can use these statistics for any drinking establishment, even adjusting them somewhat to work for scenes in a nightclub, a diner, or a coffee house.

## BARFLY

### Everybody Knows His Name

**Description** Now this is a loyal customer. He's a regular fixture in the bar, perched on his stool every night until last call. A heavy drinker, with the build to match, he never seems to go over his limit. Buy him a round, and you've got a friend for life. He'll talk your ear off, spinning stories of variable authenticity about life and work and a wife that no one's ever actually met.

**Motivation** As far as he's concerned, there's no better way to end the day than hanging out in his favorite bar, swapping stories, and blowing the suds off a few cold ones. That human interaction is just what he needs to wind down after a long day at work ... and prepare for another one tomorrow. As much as work sucks, a game of darts and a couple beers make the whole thing bearable.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d4

**Init** d4 + d6 **LP** 10

**Traits** Addiction (alcohol) d4, Hardy Constitution d2, Reputation d2

**Skills** Athletics d2, Influence d4, Knowledge d6, Perception d4, plus any two of the following: Lore d2, Mechanic d2, Science d2, Tech d2



## EVENING HOOK-UP

### Gone Before Breakfast

**Description** She's been downing shots all night, and she's ready for some action. She's probably ten pounds and five years past being a knockout, but she's cute enough in the right light. The beer goggles have a nice way of adjusting standards and lowering inhibitions. She may hate herself in the morning, but she's having fun tonight.

**Motivation** It's not always about compatibility and love and soul mates. Sometimes a girl just wants to have some dirty, meaningless fun. He's cute, he's interested, and chances are she'll never see him again. Sounds perfect. Add in just enough alcohol that she can blame her impaired judgment in the morning, and she's good to go.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 10

**Traits** Amorous d4, Hooked (sex) d4, Light Sleeper d4, Talented (Influence/Seduction, Performance/Dancing) d4

**Skills** Covert d2, Influence d4, Perception d4, Performance d4, Unarmed Combat d2

## MEAN DRUNK

### Drowning His Sorrows

**Description** After a hard day at work, he just wants to drink his beer, shoot some pool, and head home. God help the tourist that accidentally runs into him, spills his drink, or screws up his shot. The regulars know better than to mess with him, and some have learned it the hard way. He's a nice enough guy by day, but pour a couple drinks into him and he turns into one belligerent sumbitch.

**Motivation** Things aren't going too well at home. He's behind on the mortgage, the wife's pregnant again, and they're constantly fighting about money. Some days, he just can't bear the thought of going home. So he drinks. A lot. Blackout drunk. He'll wake up the next day with pains and bruises he can't quite explain, but he'll feel a lot better. Less tense. It's not the healthiest way to live, but it's working ... so far.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d4

**Init** d6 + d4 **LP** 12

## Traits

Addicted (alcohol) d4, Anger Issues d2, Formidable Presence d2, Tough d4

**Skills** Athletics d4, Influence d2, Knowledge d2, Melee Weapons d4, Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d4

## BARTENDER

### Waiting for Last Call

**Description** Standing behind the bar, towel slung over his shoulder, he's always ready to pour a drink or lend an ear. He's an easy guy to get along with, but he won't hesitate to break up a bar fight or toss a drunk out on his ass. Pull up a stool, and don't forget to tip.

**Motivation** He's a people person. That's probably the only thing keeping him in this job. It's not the great hours, and it's damn sure not the pay. Sometimes people just need someone to talk to, and he's happy to listen. He's cheaper than a shrink, and more forgiving than a priest. He'll dole out advice if he's asked, but usually listening does the trick. That and the alcohol; it's an important part of the process.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d8 **LP** 12

**Traits** Cool Under Fire d2, Dead Broke d4, Sensitive d2

**Skills** Artistry d4, Craft d4, Covert d2, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Lore d2, Perception d6, Unarmed Combat d4





## High School Students

These are the archetypes of any high school student body. They also work well for college students, just by changing one or more Skills or by giving them Higher Education d2 or d4, or for employees at a research institute or corporation. Hey, stereotypical labels don't go away after high school, y'know.

### FREAK

#### Goth Chick

**Description** She goes out of her way to stand out.

She slumps in the back of the class, furiously writing horrible, angsty poetry in her notebook. Dressed all in black, no matter the weather, her inky black hair (everywhere but the roots) and multiple facial piercings help to reinforce the "oppressed and misunderstood subculture" vibe she's going for.

**Motivation** She's bombarded on all sides by media and advertising telling her to fit in. Conform. Obey. Be just another thin, tanned, cheery automaton in the Gap army. She's not buying it. It would be easier if she could look past it all, but the world is a messed up place and she's too sensitive to ignore it. It's depressing, and she isn't gonna hide it just to make other people feel comfortable.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d8 **LP** 10

**Traits** Memorable d2, Unbreakable Will d2

**Skills** Artistry d4, Craft d2, Discipline d4, Knowledge d4, Lore d2, Tech d2

### GEEK

#### Nerdy Guy

**Description** He's awkward, he's shy, and if he can survive high school, he'll probably run the world some day. Lanky, nearsighted, and asthmatic, he's practically begging to be bullied. But put him in front of a computer, and he's a god. While other students sprint back and forth on the grass, chasing a ball in PE class, he sits in the computer lab, fingers flying across the keys as lines of code reflect off his glasses. He's got a doctor's note excusing him from anything that might be considered physical activity.

**Motivation** Four years. He just needs to make it through the next four years and he'll be on his way to college, where knowledge isn't considered a negative trait. He can't wait for the day when his intellectual curiosity and rote memorization of Monty Python sketches will actually be assets in social situations. In the meantime he keeps his head down and surrounds himself with a tight knot of equally minded science, drama, and band geeks. Together they stand a better chance of making it out alive.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d4 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d6 **Int** d8 **Wil** d4

**Init** d4 + d6 **LP** 8

**Traits** Dull Sense (sight) d2, Illness (asthma) d4, Socially Awkward d2, Talented (Science/Math, Science/Physics) d4, Tech Expert d4

**Skills** Knowledge d4, Performance d4, Science d4, Tech d4

### JOCK

#### Football Hero

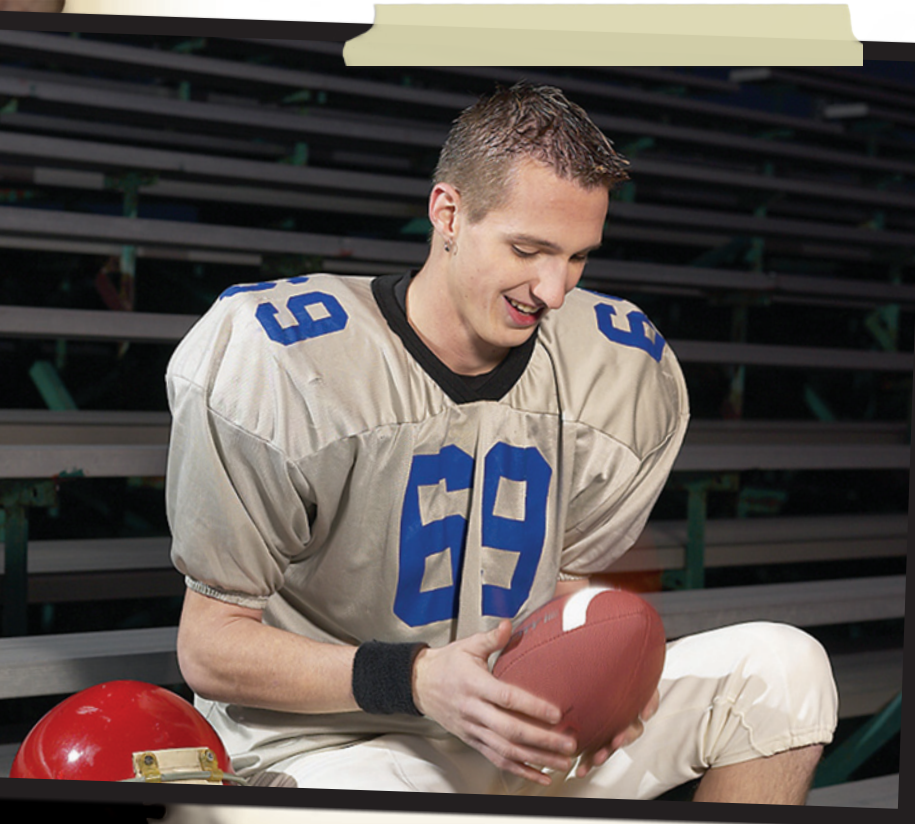
**Description** Six-pack abs, a dazzling smile, and a cannon for a right arm pretty much guarantee him a spot at the top of the high-school social hierarchy. He made varsity in three sports, dates the hottest cheerleader, and is always surrounded by a crowd of friends, teammates, and sycophants. If he can just hang on to that C-average long enough for the college recruiters to draft him, he'll be set for life.

**Motivation** It's all about impressing Dad. Dad wants his boy to play pro ball, and by God he will. He's never really stopped to think about what he wants to do. Never considered what happens if he doesn't make the draft, never makes pro, or blows out a knee. Chances are good that he'll end up just like his dad, pushing his own kid to achieve a dream that he couldn't.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 12

**Traits** Allure d2, Natural Athlete d2, Reputation d2, Smartass d4





**Skills** Athletics d4, Drive d4, Influence d4, Mechanic d2, Unarmed Combat d2

## MISS POPULARITY

### Prom Queen Princess

**Description** Being this perfect isn't an easy job. She's up at 5 every morning just to get her hair and makeup done before school starts. Between classes, student council meetings, and cheerleading practice after school, she's barely got any time left for homework. There's no time on the weekends, what with her "tutoring" sessions with the varsity quarterback. Good thing that dork in her chemistry class does most of her work for her. She's got flirting down to an art form.

**Motivation** Puberty has been very kind to her, and she uses it to her advantage. The skinny tomboy from elementary school had to struggle along on her own, but the boys drop everything to help out the prom queen, and the girls hang around to snatch up her cast-offs. Deep down, she knows it's a superficial life, and a lonely one at that. For now, she'll push those feelings back down and enjoy the popularity while she's got the looks for it. There's a harsh realization coming somewhere down the line, but that's years off.

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d6

**Init** d8 + d4 **LP** 10

**Traits** Allure d4, Glory Hound d2, Lightweight d2, Memorable d2, Reputation d2

**Skills** Artistry d4, Athletics d4, Discipline d4, Influence d4, Performance d4

## Here to Help

It's probably more accurate to say that they're here to help everybody else. Hunters run foul of law enforcement all the time, and emergency services people aren't keen on cleaning up after a showdown. Use the Cop for city police, the Sheriff's Deputy for county or state police, and the Federal Agent for guys in suits. Doctors and Nurses can be modified slightly to represent EMT or paramedics. The Soldier works in a pinch for anybody in the military.

## COP

### Thin Blue Line

**Description** Crime rate is up, gang violence is on the rise, and drug problems are worse than ever. His job has never been more important. He's a symbol of hope on these troubled streets, walking his beat in his crisp blue uniform. The shopkeepers greet him with a smile, grateful for the police presence.

**Motivation** He can't stand what's happened to his city. It used to be safe to walk down the streets at night. Your kids could play basketball down the block, and you wouldn't have to worry about pushers or perverts. Someone needs to clean up the streets. He joined the police so he could do his part.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 12

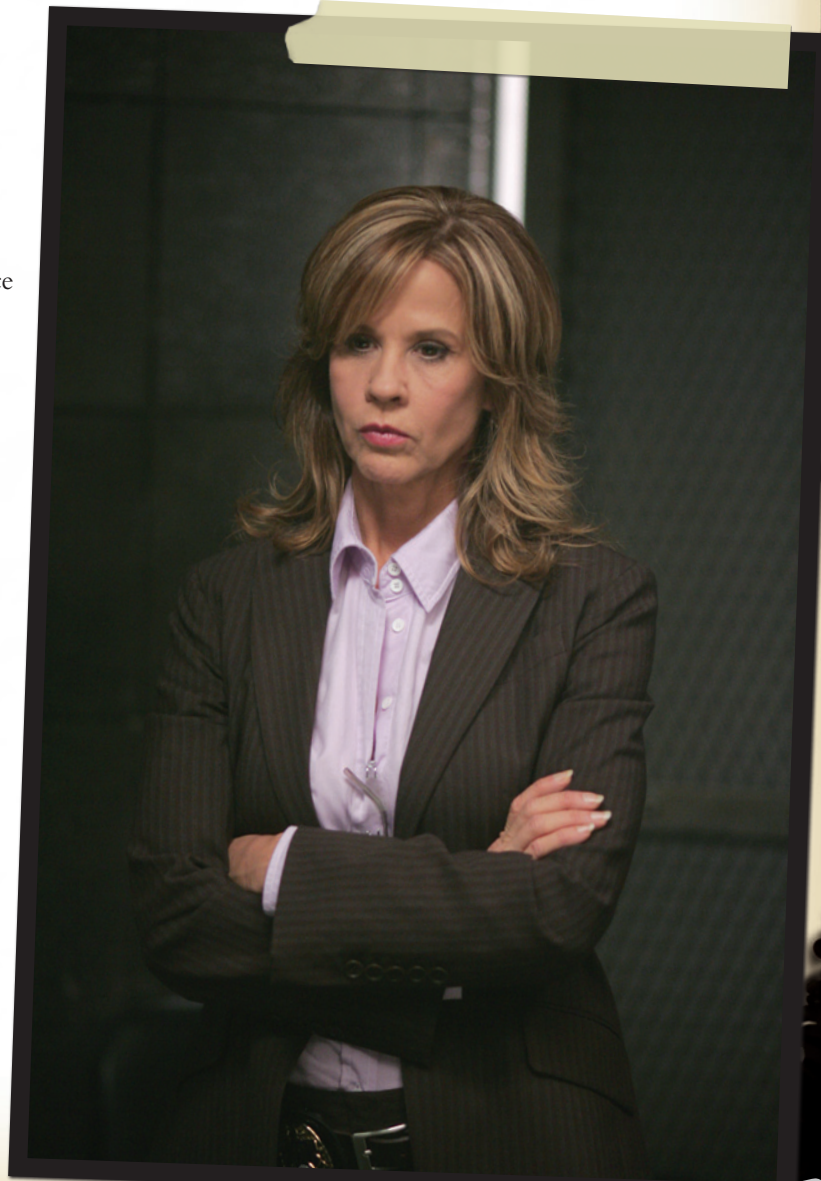
**Traits** Addiction (smoking) d4, Carries a Badge d2, Contacts d2

**Skills** Athletics d4, Covert d4, Drive d4, Guns d4, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Unarmed Combat d4

## DOCTOR

### First Do No Harm

**Description** It's worst during the full moon. The crazies come out in force, and the ER fills to capacity. The doc moves from bed to bed, treating stabbing victims and car crash survivors and ODs. She calls down a psych consult for the homeless guy talking



to the coat rack. She's on her third set of scrubs tonight, the others having been spattered with blood and bile and God knows what else. She's treated forty patients, and only lost one so far. It's been a good night.

**Motivation** She always wanted to be a doctor. Her parents might have pushed her in that direction a little bit, but it wasn't much of a struggle. She'd always excelled at biology and chemistry, and the human body fascinated her. She'll be paying off those student loans for the foreseeable future, but she's right where she wants to be.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8  
**Init** d6 + d8 **LP** 14

**Traits** Good-Natured d4, Pacifist d4, Sensitive d4, Stingy d4

**Skills** Animals d2, Craft d4, Discipline d4, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Lore d2, Medicine d6, Perception d4, Science d6, Tech d4

## FEDERAL AGENT

Mr Jones or Ms Smith

**Description** These folks don't get called out for the small stuff. A crime has to be pretty big before the feds get involved. Bank robberies, serial killers, human trafficking—the sort of things the local police just aren't equipped to handle. Not to mention the weirder stuff. You can spot feds a mile away, with their dark suits and regulation haircuts. The sunglasses are probably overkill, but they do look damn cool.

**Motivation** The local cops are never too happy when the feds show up, but the G-Men aren't there to make friends. They solve crimes. If some toes get stepped on along the way, too damn bad. Lives are hanging in the balance.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8  
**Init** d6 + d8 **LP** 16

**Traits** Carries a Badge d4, Formidable Presence d2, Slave to Tradition d4, Straight and Narrow d2

**Skills** Athletics d4, Covert d4, Discipline d4, Drive d4, Guns d6, Influence d6, Knowledge d4, Medicine d2, Perception d4, Tech d4, Unarmed Combat d4

## FIREFIGHTER

Guy with a Hose

**Description** Doesn't take much to be a firefighter. Anyone with a killer physique, 600 hours of intense mental and physical training, and balls of steel can do it. The moustache is optional, but it helps. They took the pole out of the firehouse a couple years ago, but he's still the first to the truck when a call comes in, and the first one out when they get to the scene. Whether he's performing CPR on a heart attack victim, or carrying someone to safety through the flames, this guy gets the job done.

**Motivation** He loves this job. Speeding down the streets with the siren blaring, battling blazes, saving lives—this is what he lives for. It can get scary, but he never hesitates to strap on a tank of air and rush into a burning building. Maybe he's got a bit of a hero complex, but he keeps the city safe. Yeah, he's pretty much Superman.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6  
**Init** d6 + d6 + d4 **LP** 16

**Traits** Overconfident d4, Split-Second Timing d4, Straight and Narrow d4, Tough d4

**Skills** Athletics d4, Discipline d4, Drive d4, Mechanic d2, Medicine d2, Melee Weapons d2, Ranged Weapons d2

## NURSE

Bedside Manners

**Description** Changing sheets, emptying bedpans, sponge baths—it's not as glamorous as it looked in the brochure. Between abusive patients, rude doctors, and the mess she had to clean up in Exam One, it's almost not worth coming to work anymore. But one heartfelt "thank you," one frightened child comforted, and she remembers why she got into nursing in the first place. That's enough to get her through the night. Tomorrow's another story.

**Motivation** She loves helping people, connecting with them, and nursing lets her do that. She never had much interest in being a doctor. It seemed too impersonal—just patch them up and send them on their way. As a nurse, she has a chance to connect with her patients, really get to know them. It makes it that much harder when they don't make it, but that much sweeter when they do.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6  
**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 12

**Traits** Sensitive d4, Straight and Narrow d4

**Skills** Discipline d4, Influence d4, Medicine d4, Perception d4, Science d4, Unarmed Combat d2

## SECURITY GUARD

Rent-A-Cop

**Description** He hates working nights, but at least he's working. After the plant closed down, jobs were hard to find. A high-school education isn't worth much these days. He was too old for the army, too fat for the police. Instead, armed with pepper spray and a flashlight, he watches the monitors and walks his patrol, dreaming of a better life.

**Motivation** He's got bills to pay. In an ideal world, he'd be in a job he loved, with decent pay and benefits. But the world isn't gonna hand that to him on a silver platter. He'll make do with what he's got. For now, he's a security guard, but he's definitely keeping an eye out for something better.



**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d6

**Init** d4 + d4 **LP** 12

**Traits** Gullible d2, Light Sleeper d4, Overweight d2

**Skills** Athletics d2, Covert d4, Discipline d2, Guns d4, Perception d4, Ranged Weapons d2, Unarmed Combat d4

## SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

### County's Finest

**Description** He spends most days either behind the wheel of his cruiser or bellied up to the counter of the local diner. He should probably cut back on that last part, seeing as his uniform is feeling a little tight, and he just had to punch a new hole in his gun belt. There's not a lot of trouble out in these parts. Mostly speeding tickets, a few drunk drivers, the occasional domestic disturbance. A couple years back, he helped bust up a meth lab at the old Robinson place—that was exciting. Most days are pretty quiet though. He'll just roll down his window, prop up the radar gun, and take a nice nap in the cool country air, his Stetson pulled down to shade his eyes.

**Motivation** There's worse jobs than deputy. It beats the hell out of working at the quarry, and the ladies love a man in uniform. Don't tell the Sheriff, but he's been on a couple of dates that started as minor traffic infractions. You get lots of sunshine, it's safer than working in the big city, and people are almost always happy to see you. All told, it's a pretty sweet gig.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d6

**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 14

**Traits** Born Behind the Wheel d2, Carries a Badge d2, Lazy d4

**Skills** Athletics d4, Drive d4, Guns d4, Influence d2, Mechanic d2, Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d4

## SOLDIER

### An Army of One

**Description** He signed up after 9/11, right out of high school. If America was going to war against the terrorists, he wanted to be a part of it. Basic training taught him the discipline he needed and whipped him into the best shape he's ever been in. He's back in the country now, after a tour in Afghanistan, and three more in Iraq. It's been tough to adapt to life back in the states, but at least he doesn't have to worry about IEDs and rocket attacks.

**Motivation** Public school, Medicaid, subsidized

housing—his country's done right by him, and he's happy to return the favor. Growing up poor, the Army was always an option, and his best bet for getting a college education. After the attacks, his path was clear. He serves his country with honor and pride.

**Agi** d8 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6

**Init** d8 + d6 **LP** 14

**Traits** Duty (God and country) d4, Talented (Guns/Rifle, Perception/Sight) d4

**Skills** Athletics d6, Discipline d4, Guns d6, Influence d4, Melee Weapons d4, Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d6



## American Family

Many hunters were part of the American Family once, until something horrible happened. These people are perfect for any Cleaver family set-up, with as many kids as you want and a family dog from the Animals section earlier in this chapter. Switch out one of the parents for a grandparent, or an uncle. One of the other mundane characters from this section would fit in here, too. But, if you're looking for the stereotypical suburban nuclear family, here they are.

## MOM

### Stays At Home

**Description** She's no Martha Stewart, but she likes to think she does pretty well. Once the husband and kids are out the door, her typical day is

a blur of cleaning, meal planning, and grocery shopping. When school gets out, she runs a shuttle bus between soccer practice, dance classes, and scout meetings, getting home just in time to start dinner. As the day winds down, Mom and Dad tuck the kids into bed, and she heads back into the kitchen to make the two dozen cupcakes that the kids need for school tomorrow. Supermom to the rescue.

**Motivation** Someone's got to keep these monkeys in line. If it weren't for her, they'd be probably be living off of junk food and wading through garbage. They run her ragged, but fueled by diet soda and love, she somehow manages to keep them clean and fed.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8  
**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 14

**Traits** Devoted (family) d6, Idealist d2, Straight and Narrow d4

**Skills** Artistry d4, Athletics d2, Craft d4, Discipline d4, Drive d4, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Medicine d2, Perception d4

## DAD

### White Collar Job

**Description** Up at 5 am each day, he's just got time to put on his suit and grab a cup of coffee before he has to catch his carpool into the city. After a long day's work, he's bound to be exhausted, but he's always got time to play a game of catch or throw some burgers on the grill. Once the kids are down for the night and Mom's taken care of whatever baking she's got to do, Dad like to relax together in front of the TV before heading off to bed.

**Motivation** He's the provider. He's got a good job with great benefits, he's bringing in enough to sock away some money each month for college and retirement, and his weekends are free for T-ball games and yard work. Not a bad life.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6  
**Init** d4 + d6 **LP** 12

**Traits** Devoted (family) d6, Overconfident d2, Slave to Tradition d4

**Skills** Athletics d4, Craft d4, Discipline d2, Drive d4, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Mechanic d2, Perception d2, Science d2, Tech d4, Unarmed Combat d2

## KID

### Grade Schooler

**Description** Bright-eyed, freckled, and tow-headed, this little tyke is always up to some kind of mischief. Whether he's building a fort in the abandoned lot, digging for pirate treasure in the back yard, or painting the dog blue in the garage, he keeps Mom and Dad on their toes.

**Motivation** Boundless energy and infinite curiosity are a dangerous combination. Every day is a new chance for adventure and knowledge. Eventually he'll become jaded and cynical like the rest of us, but that's a long way off. For now, the world is a wonderful and exciting place.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d4 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d4  
**Init** d4 + d6 **LP** 8

**Traits** Lucky d4, Insatiable Curiosity d4

**Skills** Athletics d2, Covert d2, Craft d2, Knowledge d2, Perception d4, Tech d2

## Others

This is a mixed group of random people that can crop up in any *Supernatural* story, from the Workin' Joe to the Small Time Criminal. The Local Hunter works for one of the regulars at the Roadhouse, and the Creepy Old Lady can be a Creepy Old Man instead. Mix and match these folks with the ones in the other groups.

## BUTLER

### Manservant Extraordinaire

**Description** He comes from a long line of personal valets. His father was a butler, as was his grandfather. Prim, poised, and always at the ready, he is proud to carry on in the family tradition. He has a particular talent for disappearing into the woodwork when he's not needed, yet responding promptly when summoned, with a subservient demeanor that almost borders on sarcasm. When he's not greeting guests or tending to the needs of his employer, he can usually be found downstairs, organizing the rest of the household staff. He takes great pride in the proper running of the house.

**Motivation** Loyalty is the hallmark of a great butler. That was his father's personal credo, and it is how he lives his life. There's a certain satisfaction in a job well done, and he takes great pleasure in his work. He does not aspire to greatness—leave that to his employer. He knows his station in life and is content in it. If he can make his employer's life better in even the smallest way, he is satisfied.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6  
**Init** d6 + d6 + d2 **LP** 12

**Traits** Cool Under Fire d2, Duty (employer) d4, Split-Second Timing d2

**Skills** Craft d6, Discipline d6, Influence d4, Mechanic d2, Perception d4, Tech d2

## CREEPY OLD LADY

### Get Off Her Lawn

**Description** You can usually see her peeking through the curtains, ready to rap her cane against the glass if anyone sets foot on her property. Stooped and gray,



she's lived in the neighborhood longer than anyone else. Groceries are delivered to the back door, and a gardener comes around every couple of weeks to tend the yard. No one's ever seen her leave the house.

**Motivation** She's never been able to trust people. Her parents made sure of that. She never married, never had kids. The few people she ever considered friends are dead and gone. Now it's just her and the cats in a big, empty house. She doesn't go out anymore. Too many people out there wanting to take advantage of an old lady. Steal her things. Hurt her. Instead she sits by the window, a cat purring softly in her lap, keeping an eye out for trespassers.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d2 **Vit** d2 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6  
**Init** d4 + d6 **LP** 8

**Traits** Dull Sense (hearing, sight) d2, Formidable Presence d2, Infamy d2, Unbreakable Will d4

**Skills** Animals d4, Artistry d4, Craft d6, Discipline d4, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Lore d4, Perception d4

## GAME HUNTER

### Sportsman Type

**Description** Deep in the woods, rifle at his side, he'd be invisible if it weren't for the neon orange vest. Kind of makes the camouflage fatigues seem worthless now that he thinks about it. He might bag a deer, he might not. He's spent the weekend sleeping under the stars and drinking beer around the campfire with his buddies. That's good enough for him.

**Motivation** There's something very primal about the whole thing. Man versus beast. Kind of makes him feel like a caveman, albeit a caveman with a scoped rifle

and a cooler full of bratwurst in case the hunt doesn't go well. He may work forty hours a week in a lifeless gray cubicle to pay the bills, but for six weekends a year, he's a mighty hunter.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d4  
**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 10

**Traits** Focused Hunter (deer) d4, Lazy d4

**Skills** Animals d4, Athletics d4, Craft d4, Discipline d2, Guns d4, Knowledge d2, Melee Weapons d2, Perception d4, Science d2

## LOCAL HUNTER

### Supernatural's Foe

**Description** Hunting's a dangerous trade, and she's got the scars to prove it. Her body is a roadmap of bites, scratches, and broken bones. Each one is a trophy, a reminder of a hunt she made it back from alive. There's no denying her skills, but in the end it always comes down to luck. She's been very lucky. One of these days, that luck is gonna run out. She plans to go out fighting.

**Motivation** You've got to be a special kind of crazy to choose this life. Finding out that the nightmares are real, that monsters really are under the bed—something snaps inside your head. It's a matter of instinct: fight or flight. She fights. She fights because someone's got to do it, and it might as well be her. If even one person is only alive today because of her, it's all been worth it.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6  
**Init** d6 + d8 **LP** 14

**Traits** Anger Issues d4, Brawler d2, Contacts d4, Cool Under Fire d2, Dead Broke d4, Lucky d4, Unstable d4

**Skills** Athletics d6, Covert d4, Discipline d4, Drive d4, Guns d4, Influence d4, Lore d6, Mechanic d2, Melee Weapons d4, Perception d4, Ranged Weapons d4, Unarmed Combat d4



## PREACHER

### Man of the Cloth

**Description** Pounding the pulpit, preaching fire and brimstone, he's in his element. Decked out in his vestments, he's got the congregation on the edge of their pews, and he's loving it. He's never happier than when he's tending the flock, proclaiming the word of the Lord.

**Motivation** He felt the calling from an early age; always knew that God had a plan for him. He's had his moments of doubt through the years, but in his heart he knew that he was meant to serve the Lord. He's on a path that led him through seminary to his current congregation. Right where he needs to be.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8

**Init** d6 + d6 **LP** 14

**Traits** Combat Paralysis d4, Faith d4, Idealist d2, Ordained d2

**Skills** Discipline d4, Influence d6, Knowledge d4, Lore d4, Perception d4

## SMALL-TIME CRIMINAL

### Crooked and Cheap

**Description** If you saw her on the sidewalk, you'd probably cross to the other side of the street. That's a good instinct. She's got the lean, hungry look of an animal, and she's usually armed. She doesn't seem big enough to pose much of a physical threat, but what she lacks in size, she more than makes up for in ferocity. She knows how to take care of herself. Just give her the wallet and no one has to get hurt.

**Motivation** Growing up on the streets, she learned to do whatever it takes to survive. She's not one for robbing banks, but she's mugged her share of tourists. Smash and grabs, convenience store holdups, carjackings—that's more her style. She's strictly a "crime of opportunity" sort, not big on the planning. She doesn't expect much out of life. As long as she can steal enough to keep a roof over her head and food in the fridge, she's happy.

**Agi** d4 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d6

**Init** d4 + d4 **LP** 14

**Traits** Dead Broke d4, In Plain Sight d4, Tough d4, Wrong Side of the Law d4

**Skills** Athletics d2, Covert d6, Guns d4, Influence d4, Melee Weapons d4, Perception d4, Unarmed Combat d4

## SMALL-TOWN PSYCHIC

### Card Reader and Clairvoyant

**Description** She's certainly dressed for the part, but the gypsy skirts and babushkas are just window dressing, playing into her client's expectations. Same goes for the fake accent. She was born in the Midwest, not Romania. Fact is her psychic ability is pretty much the only real thing about her.

**Motivation** Lots of fake psychics out there—con artists who trace their fingers over your palm, tell you what you wanna hear, and cash your check. She's not one of them. For some reason, the spirits have chosen her, used her as a conduit for contacting the living world. Sure, she's dabbled in palmistry and horoscopes—sometimes people just wanna be lied to, and a girl's got to eat. But the Tarot, the talking boards—those are real. Even the crystal ball. It's a great prop for the civilians, but she's never found a better tool for scrying.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8

**Init** d6 + d8 **LP** 12

**Traits** Clairvoyant d4, Dead Broke d4, Insatiable Curiosity d4, Medium d4

**Skills** Artistry d4, Covert d4, Discipline d4, Influence d4, Knowledge d2, Lore d6, Perception d6

## WORKIN' JOE

### Blue Collar Guy

**Description** Riding the bus home, he hangs off the strap with the droop-shouldered slouch of a guy coming off a twelve-hour shift. He can't wait to kick off his steel-toed boots, grab a quick shower, and collapse into his recliner with a beer and a steak. It's a hard life, but he's got a loving wife, a great kid, and a big-screen TV. It's not perfect, but it'll do.

**Motivation** He's still believes in the American Dream, he's just a little more realistic about it these days. He may not get the high-paying job and the house in the suburbs, but his daughter will. Every late night, every double shift adds that much more to the college fund. She's not gonna end up like her old man. Not if he's got something to say about it.

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d4 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8

**Init** d6 + d4 **LP** 14

**Traits** Addiction (alcohol) d4, Duty (Protestant work ethic) d4, Faith d2, Gear Head d4, Good-Natured d2

**Skills** Athletics d2, Craft d6, Discipline d2, Guns d2, Influence d4, Mechanic d6, Unarmed Combat d2

## Locations

Bad stuff happens everywhere, and that's a lot of scenery to worry about. There are some locations that are particularly common in *Supernatural* stories, or that just work better with how things roll. A diner, a cemetery, a



two-level house in Lawrence, Kansas ... you want places to go? Here's your laundry list. You'll notice that each entry has a description, a guide to what's going on during the day and during the night, some Skills that might come into play, and a sample history. If you're short on time, these locations should provide you with essential backdrops for the hunters' activities.

## ABANDONED COAL MINE

Located somewhere in the hills near town, the abandoned coal mine is a tunnel opening flanked by wooden support beams and a cluster of miner's huts. It's overgrown, and bushes might even cover the entrance. The tunnel goes back a fair way, leading to a mineshaft and a rickety elevator that's seen better days. Side-tunnels lead off the main one, filled with coal dust. Metal rails run along the floor of the tunnel, once used to push the mine carts along. The carts themselves are either long gone or in need of repair, but there's usually one somewhere that can be quickly re-purposed.

**By Day** The mine is truly deserted, but an official from one of the big mining companies could be out here setting up equipment. Alternately, it's a good place for smugglers, drug dealers, or shifty corporate stooges to meet away from the townsfolk's suspicious eyes.

**By Night** The main tunnel, open to the outdoors, sees occasional use at night by wildlife such as coyotes or mountain lions. During the summer, a gang of high school kids from town meets here to drink beer, tell scary stories, and engage in the usual teenage indiscretions. This tapers off after Halloween when it just gets too cold.

**Useful Skills** Athletics/Climbing, Mechanic/Construction, Science/Earth Sciences, Survival/Underground

**Sample Background** This coal mine was one of several in the county that provided stable work for locals until the early '70s. The mine companies lost money during the energy crisis and considered retiring the mine, especially when the main seam had failed to provide enough of the black stuff to keep it in business. A tunnel collapse in 1983, leaving three miners trapped, sealed the deal. These days it's a popular haunt for local teens that ignore warning signs posted all around the entrance.

## ART GALLERY

This is an art gallery that caters to a rich crowd. It's located on the corner of a city block, with large glass windows and tasteful signage. Inside, the walls are clean and white and the floors are hardwood. A big desk and an even bigger bronze sculpture of some kind of animal welcome everyone who passes through the swinging doors. There are two floors—downstairs is a public gallery filled with mixed media art, and upstairs are two private galleries for art shows, VIP clients, and investors.

**By Day** The gallery is open to the public. Two staff members are on site—one is the gallery's art director, the other a combination receptionist and sales clerk. At any point in the afternoon, an artist might be meeting with the director to discuss the sale of new pieces or to complain about lack of it.

**By Night** Most of the windows and doors are locked at night, and a security guard onsite. Occasionally, the art director is here well into the small hours, fretting about meetings with artists.

**Useful Skills** Artist/Appraisal, Covert/Streetwise/Stealth, Knowledge/History

**Sample Background** This building was built in 1978 as part of urban renewal. It was sold in 1994 to private developers and was closed for two years while it was remodeled and repurposed. During the remodeling, workers complained of mysterious sounds and missing tools during the night. The building also stands on the site of a firehouse that burned down in 1899, with eight firefighters killed. The current owners are in debt, and the art director is struggling to bring in more revenue.

## BASEBALL FIELD

This is a full-size baseball field, the kind that gets used by high school or college teams. It shares land with a woody park, and rows of bleachers look down on the grassy pitch. Chicken wire fences keep stray balls from landing in the street. A small building housing the lockers and restrooms also doubles as the clubhouse.

**By Day** During the summer, the baseball field is always being used in the afternoons and on weekends. Varsity baseball teams practice for the big game a month away, and local teams compete in front of a modest crowd of cheering parents and friends. As winter approaches, the pitch is taken over by autumn fairs and festivals, and the crowds move on to the football field across town.

**By Night** Apart from the occasional night game in the middle of summer, the baseball field is relatively quiet. The clubhouse is locked up, but the pitch itself is as open as it always is. Couples might be seen sitting in the bleachers, enjoying the evening. Gangs might be decorating the clubhouse walls with spray paint. The bleachers offer an excellent view of the houses and businesses across the street, and they're a good place to run to if something's chasing you through the park.

**Useful Skills** Athletics/Baseball, Discipline/Morale, Knowledge/Sports, Performance/Cheerleading

**Sample Background** The field was named after a local sports hero back in the '30s, but in the modern era, it has been renamed for a prominent financial institution or insurance agency. It was one of the first of its kind in the area, and local attachment to the park saved it three times from greedy developers. Its proximity to the woods, to

the school, and to the business district make it very appealing to wealthy investors. Gossip at the diner down the street has it that the financial institution it's now named after has ties to property moguls.

## BIKER BAR

It isn't much more than a prefab building with aluminum siding and a row of small windows in front, but this place really isn't about looks. On the inside, a long bar faces a room lined with booths, two pool tables, a jukebox, a stuffed deer head, and plenty of biker paraphernalia. Anybody who wants to get drunk quickly sits at a bar stool, while the rest of the place is a smoky den for rowdy talk and classic rock.

**By Day** During the afternoon, when the bar officially opens, it's home to bikers cruising through town and looking for a place to grab a burger and beer. The owner sits at a booth, figuring out the takings and making sense of the accounts. His wife and son clean the place, and the perpetually late bartender shows up to complain about hours.

**By Night** After dark, when the neon lights up, the bar is jumping. It's always crowded, especially on Fridays and Saturdays. The beer isn't bad, but the whiskey is better. There's a game on the TV over the bar, somebody's shooting 8-ball, and the patrons are on the verge of a brawl. If tensions rise, it spills outside to the rows of motorcycles. When the loser picks himself up from the gravel, he'll be replaced by a new pack of bikers spoiling for a fight.

**Useful Skills** Covert/Streetwise, Drive/Motorcycle, Influence/Intimidation, Mechanic/Auto Repairs, Unarmed Combat/Brawling

**Sample Background** The bar was lost in a bet three years ago to a married biker couple that needed to put their roots down. The bar's patrons barely noticed the change—they'd been coming here for over a decade, helping it turn a hefty profit. So what if the cops show up every night? Some of them are patrons, too. The interstate that went in during the 90s didn't really affect the bar, but it kicked off a not-so-friendly rivalry with another joint over by the interstate exit.

## CABIN IN THE WOODS

This log cabin has a stone hearth and chimney. Along one side of the place is a stack of firewood, a metal trashcan, and the sort of tools you'd expect in a tool shed if one were around. Out in front, a section of packed earth and loose gravel acts as a single parking space. Inside, the furniture is classic log-cabin style—rustic, solid, and covered in quilts and cushions. There's a rocking chair, a bed, a table, and a very basic kitchen area. One door, two windows—one by the door, and one over the sink.

**By Day** The woods are very close, and trees shade the cabin from sunlight at all hours apart from first thing in the morning. If the cabin has any occupants, they're off doing their thing after breakfast and coffee.





**By Night** The cabin's occupants, if it has any, spend the early evening by the fire, drinking, eating, and talking. After midnight, the woods around the cabin become oppressively dark, and there are sounds without positive identifiers. Could be animals, could be tree limbs creaking, could be something else.

**Useful Skills** Covert/Stealth, Craft/Carpentry, Perception/Tracking, Survival/Woodcraft

**Sample Background** The cabin belongs to a hunter and his family, who use it during deer season. It has passed from owner to owner over the years, and not all of them were right in the head. Not too far off, behind the cabin and in the thick of the trees, three unmarked graves sit. The current owner's 20-year-old son discovered them, but has not told his father yet. An amateur detective, he is keen to research the history of the cabin and uncover the truth himself.

## CROSSROADS

This is a place where two roads cross, hence the name. They could be country roads, or streets in a small town, or even two highways. The classic crossroads, however, is just outside of town, with a signpost that points in all four directions and a derelict building or two nearby.

**By Day** A car drives through the crossroads every five or ten minutes, but not much happens here. The sky's usually overcast and gloomy. A hitchhiker might be here trying to thumb his way into town (or out of it), and one or more local kids might pass by on their way to or from school.

**By Night** Things get more sinister when night falls, but only because the streetlamp's been burned out for a week, and the only light comes from headlamps. It's harder to tell what's going on. If the moon is out, the crossroads is awash with silver. If the clouds are hiding the light, it's just gloomy and quiet.

**Useful Skills** Drive/Car, Knowledge/Geography/History, Perception/Search

**Sample Background** At the intersection of State Highway 67 and County Road H, accidents are more common than they ought to be. Nothing but a stop sign coming along H to control traffic. Despite years of requests for a traffic signal, the local council's decided Highway 67's far too busy to have County Road H blocking it off. There's a horse farm nearby and the paddock comes right up to the road, with only a small fence keeping them apart. Across the street, a row of white crosses in front of tall woody bushes serve as a constant reminder that the crossroads is the last place many folks'll see before they pass violently from this earth.



## DISCOUNT SUPER-MART

There's nothing truly remarkable about this place, although the signs posted in the large glass windows along the front try to convince shoppers otherwise. Easily twice the size of every other store or building in the area, the discount super-mart also has the largest parking lot and the most employees. You can buy everything here, from alcohol and firearms to kid's toys and computers. Open 24 hours, it's a convenient location to grab what you need and go, assuming quality isn't as important as low prices.

**By Day** Daytime brings in most of the super-mart's customers, especially in the afternoon. All of the registers are open, the aisles are full of discounted goods, and loudspeakers announce sales and lost children every five minutes. On weekends, enthusiastic women in aprons serve samples of food or hand out trial packages of the latest cleaning product.

**By Night** Because the super-mart is open all through the night, there're always people in the building. After the peak evening hours, however, the number drops to a handful. One register is open, and the shoppers are night owls who wouldn't otherwise get the chance to score some cut-priced goods. Around 2 am, stockmen wheel out huge pallets of stuff to replace what sold the day before, creating a stark contrast to the bustling shopper-friendly atmosphere only hours earlier.

**Useful Skills** Craft/Architecture, Influence/Administration, Knowledge/Business, Knowledge/History

**Sample Background** When word of the discount super-mart reached the locals, there was an outcry. The developers faced months of town hall meetings, angry residents, complaints of zoning, fair business practice, and environmental impact. When it was finally opened, it seemed as if the majority of the locals forgot all about that and charged in to buy things for cheap and in bulk. A hard-core group of opponents still picket daily along the county road that runs beside the parking lot. Newspaper records from the first decade of the 20th Century reveal a string of mysterious fires, injuries, and threats cropping up whenever anybody tried to build on the land, and the super-mart is the first to be spared these events. What's changed?

## DECREPIT FARMHOUSE

The farmhouse sits at the end of a long and potholed gravel driveway. The lone structure on twelve acres of dirt and weeds, this place has seen better days. A traditional Cape Cod with a clapboard workshop Frankensteined onto the north end, the whole place looks ready to tip over. It's more termite than wood at this point, and the

paint is peeling off in strips. Considering the broken windows, the interior is in surprisingly good shape.

Three bedrooms, a kitchen, and a common room, sparse but nicely furnished. Apart from the

dust and rat turds, the furniture is in excellent condition. A potbelly stove in the corner looks like it might be in working condition, but you'd have to be crazy to light it up in this firetrap. Locals say there used to be a barn out back, but all that's there now is bare ground and charred wood.

**By Day** Nobody's home, and they're not expected back anytime soon. Every couple of months the Sheriff stops by to check for squatters, but that's tapered off as the house grows less and less livable. This far back, can't hear much road noise. There's nothing to drown out the rustling of wind blowing through the overgrown fields, and the constant drone of cicadas.

**By Night** You forget how dark the night can get. There's no city light washing out the sky, and the stars shine by the thousands. Nightfall brings out wildlife, and the coyotes in the area haven't figured out that the chicken coops aren't getting refilled. Their howls echo across the property, answered by the wails of distant freight trains.

**Useful Skills** Animals/Farming, Covert/Stealth, Discipline/Morale, Knowledge/Agriculture, Survival/Foraging

**Sample Background** No one's sure what happened to the family that used to live here. Some say they pulled up stakes when the crops dried up. Others say they're buried in the root cellar. The fact is, no one really knew them when they were here, and no one really missed them when they were gone. The property is paid in full, so until someone reports them dead, the house'll sit there, empty and deteriorating.

## DILAPIDATED AMUSEMENT PARK

It's been decades since the park was open for business. Since then, Mother Nature's been hard at work taking back what's hers. Vines and creepers are crawling all over the funhouse, and a massive sycamore has pushed its way through the roof of the carousel. Horse heads jut out of the trunk where the tree has grown around them. The rickety wooden coaster leans at a precarious angle, threatening to topple over onto the bumper car pavilion. Spray paint covers every flat surface, proclaiming love for girls and bands and various graduating classes. Despite the broken windows in the gift shop and concession stands, the mirror maze in the funhouse is oddly untouched. Although the reflections do seem ... off ... somehow.

**By Day** The security guard at the front gate isn't exactly menacing. For twenty bucks or a bottle of Jack, he'll let you have a look around. If you're looking to save some money, you can climb, or cut, the chain link.

**By Night** The night guard takes his job more seriously, but he's still an underpaid rent-a-cop armed with a flashlight and a cell phone. It'll take a lot of noise to get him off of his chair in the guardhouse. During the winter months, the park stays pretty deserted at night, apart from the occasional drifter. As the weather warms, groups of teenagers find their way into the park.



**Useful Skills** Covert/Stealth, Knowledge/Culture, Mechanic/Construction, Tech/Repair Electrical Systems

**Sample Background** Back in '82, the Sidewinder jumped its tracks and plowed into the Corndog Shack. Twelve dead kids. All the PR in the world can't cover that up. The deed to the park has passed from holding company to developer, but nothing's ever come of it. The gates stay closed, but the park doesn't necessarily stay empty. Sneaking into the old park has become a rite of passage in the area. The midway is littered with beer cans and cigarette butts, and the less said about the Tunnel of Love, the better.

## GAS STATION AND MECHANIC

Far from the interstate, on a stretch of lonely asphalt, sits this tiny service station. Twin pumps serve up gas and diesel fuel to the truckers and tourists who choose the scenic route. The tow truck parked out back needs some body work, but it runs like a dream, and that comes in handy this far out in the sticks. The cashier sits in a small office attached to the well-equipped service bay. It's mostly used for fixing flats and changing oil, but it can handle bigger jobs, from thrown tie rods to dropped transmissions. The restrooms in back are in reasonably good shape, but it's probably better to let your hands air-dry than to take a chance on the cloth roller towel.

**By Day** There's not a lot of traffic in these parts, and the attendant is happy for the company. He greets customers with a squeegee and a smile, and loves to make small talk while the tank fills. Between customers, he and the mechanic cheat at dominoes, and argue about baseball.

**By Night** Nighttime is strictly self-service. The cashier'll turn the pumps on for you, after you wake him up with three or four knocks on the window. If you need a tow, you can ask him to wake the mechanic, but he's never too happy to get that call.

**Useful Skills** Drive/Car, Influence/Conversation, Mechanic/Repair Auto

**Sample Background** Hard to believe a place like this still exists—a service station with actual service. These country roads can be hell on a vehicle, but Phil's there to take care of you. He'll top you off, check your fluids, and send you on your way with a smile. With the only tow truck in three counties,

Phil can help you out with the bigger problems too.

There's not a machine made that Phil can't fix, although it might take a couple days to order parts for those foreign cars.

## GRAVEYARD

Located on 20 acres at the edge of town, the cemetery has been in operation for over a century. A tasteful, wrought iron fence surrounds the property, with rolling ornamental gates that close off the driveway at night. A wide, paved road winds through the graveyard, with a small parking lot near the front for funeral services. The main building was recently renovated, and houses the on-site chapel, crematorium, caretaker's office, and maintenance storage shed. The front of the property, nearest the street, contains the oldest graves with elaborate upright gravestones, all cracked and weathered. Further in, the standing stones give way to modern grave markers, flush to the ground. The land behind the graveyard was recently purchased for expansion, and a large backhoe is currently parked there.

**By Day** The gates are open from dawn to dusk, and the average day sees 50 to 100 visitors—more if there's a funeral that day. Family and friends of the departed have full access to the grounds, and the chapel. The groundskeepers work throughout the day, mowing the lawns and tending to the flowering shrubs that dot the landscape. In the rear of the property, the construction crew is hard at work, and the rumble of heavy machinery fills the air.



**By Night** The night watchman walks the perimeter every hour or so, keeping a lookout for vandals. The spear points on the wrought iron fence ward off all but the most determined trespassers. Anyone sneaking around at midnight is in for a surprise when the automatic sprinklers kick on.

**Useful Skills** Athletics/Digging, Covert/Stealth, Knowledge/History, Knowledge/Religion

**Sample Background** The graveyard's been here longer than the town. What started as a simple family plot eventually took over the farmland it sat on. Years passed, people died, and they got buried. The graveyard's been closed for the past six months, ever since the incident with the last caretaker. One of the big mortuary chains just bought the place, and it's back in business. They've got big plans for expansion. After all, death is a growth industry.

## JUNKYARD

Located just across the county line, the junkyard lives up to its name. Razor wire fences line the perimeter, with a rolling gate that closes off the dirt access road after hours. Inside, row after row of slowly rusting cars and trucks are parked on the sun-baked dirt, stacked three or four cars high in some places and leaking various fluids into the groundwater. Further in, the junk gets more eclectic—mountains of salvaged building materials, moldy hotel mattresses, and other miscellaneous crap dotting the landscape. More common items (appliances, water heaters, toilets) are stored together in heaps. Near the front entrance, where most of a school bus props up the refrigerator pile, a tin-roofed shack houses the owner's office. The futon, mini-fridge, and TV inside have all clearly been salvaged from the yard. A moneybox sits on a section of diamond-plate truck bumper bolted to the wall, currently serving as a shelf. It's padlocked shut, and a length of heavy chain welded to its lid connects it to a loop of rebar embedded in the cement floor. Behind the shack, a chain-link pen houses three large and angry-looking dogs.

**By Day** If you're looking for spare parts of questionable quality, you've come to the right place. As hard as it might be to believe, the owner has an almost encyclopedic knowledge of his inventory. Whatever you need, he knows if he's got it, where it is, and how much he plans on overcharging you for it.

**By Night** Once the gate rolls shut, the dogs come out of their cage. The motion sensor lights mounted along the fence are extremely sensitive, guaranteeing that the slightest movement brings the dogs running.

**Useful Skills** Athletics/Climbing, Covert/Stealth, Craft/Metalworking, Knowledge/Appraisal, Mechanic/Construction

**Sample Background** The current owner inherited the junkyard from his father. If it didn't predate the zoning laws, no way this place would still be open. Despite the ongoing ecological

damage, it serves a valuable service in the community. Instead of rotting in a landfill, the junk has a chance of getting reused. The old junkers and unsold cars from police auctions get parted out to keep other cars running. Not that the owner cares about any of that. All that matters is the markup.

## MID-TOWN BANK

From the outside, the bank hasn't changed much since it was built in the '30s. Its timeless, art-deco architecture is unmarred, except for the addition of two ATMs next to the night deposit slot. Inside is a different story. The mahogany and brass teller windows have been replaced with stainless steel and bulletproof polycarbonate. Behind the counters, the bank manager's office is located next to the original vault, which is now used only for safe-deposit boxes. A new, high-tech vault, requiring retinal verification, has been installed in what used to be additional office space. The security offices are in back, with a bank of monitors displaying camera feeds that cover every inch of the interior.

**By Day** The bank is closed on weekends and holidays. Also before 8 am and after 6 pm. Pretty much any time that would be convenient. Customers who manage to sneak in are greeted by the armed security guards flanking the doorway. There're usually more windows than tellers, and velvet ropes are set up on stanchions to keep the lines manageable.

**By Night** The guards go home at night, but the security is substantially beefed up. The doors and windows are all alarmed, as are the laser tripwires in the hallway leading to the vault. Average police response time is an impressive five minutes.

**Useful Skills** Covert/Safecracking, Influence/Persuasion, Knowledge/Finance, Perception/Investigation, Tech/Security Systems

**Sample Background** Since the day it first opened, the bank has prided itself on its customer service. The name over the door may have changed, through various buyouts, mergers, and hostile takeovers, but it hasn't affected the way they run things inside. Friendly, efficient, and well-trained tellers greet customers by name and are ready to assist with anything they might need. It's a small thing, in these days of online banking and ATMs, but its importance is evident in the bank's unmatched customer retention rates.

## OLD CHURCH

This grey stone building, with its towering spire, marks the center of town. Inside, twelve rows of well-worn pews face a simple altar beneath an unadorned wooden cross. The pulpit sits slightly to the left of the altar, in front of the altar rail. The choir loft on the second level houses a massive pipe organ. Across from the organ, a locked door



leads to the bell tower. The bell is a source of pride in the church, being over 200 years old. It was originally hung in a church in England, and was salvaged after a fire. The church's first pastor arranged for the bell to be shipped to America and placed in the newly built tower. Attached to the main building, a smaller, later addition houses the church offices and Sunday school classrooms, as well as a community hall and kitchen. Used to be a small private graveyard behind the church, dating to the church's founding, but the bodies were moved to the city cemetery early in the 20th century. The parsonage, a small '20s bungalow, now occupies that piece of land.

**By Day** The church is largely empty for most of the week. The pastor and church secretary can usually be found in the office, and an Al-Anon meeting gathers every Thursday, but otherwise the place is deserted until the weekend. Saturdays are usually work days, and a small group of parishioners spend the day making much-needed repairs and renovations to the aging building. Sunday is the busy day, with two services and a potluck lunch that can sometimes stretch to three or four in the afternoon.

**By Night** A rare service these days, the main church building is open to the public 24 hours a day. It's less for the parishioners at this point than the local homeless, who can often be found sleeping in the pews, especially during the harsh winter months. A small pile of blankets is kept by the door for them. The doors to the offices and classrooms are kept locked and deadbolted during the night. The pastor and his family sleep in the parsonage behind the church.

**Useful Skills** Artistry/Appraisal, Influence/Conversation, Knowledge/Religion, Performance/Oratory

**Sample Background** The town grew up around the church. Generations of families have been baptized, married, and buried by a long line of pastors. Nearly every person in town has passed through those doors, struggled in vain to get comfortable in the pews, and listened to the word of the Lord. Times are a little tougher than they used to be. The young people are moving away more, and the old folks are dying off at the usual rate. It seems like each week the offering baskets get a little lighter. Still, the church goes on, and the bell tolls out across the town every week, calling the congregation to worship.

## PLAYGROUND

They don't make them like this anymore. Can't—the lawsuits'd kill them. There's no recycled plastic or impact-cushioning rubber on this playground, nothing but sand and steel. The centerpiece of the park is the slide—a two-story spiral of sun-baked metal. Its blue enamel coating has long since chipped away. A rusty merry-go-round spins lazily between the swing set and seesaws. At the rear of the playground, a stack of tractor tires forms a makeshift jungle gym. Behind the playground is a grassy field that acts as a football, soccer, or baseball field, depending on the

season. A towering oak tree shades a picnic area near the parking lot. Four wooden picnic tables sit beneath the tree, next to pair of iron barbecues cemented to the ground. An overflowing steel drum next to the drinking fountain serves as a trashcan.

**By Day** During the week, the playground is pretty quiet until school gets out. A few parents can usually be found chatting on the benches, watching their toddlers play in the sand. Once the school bells ring at 3 pm, the place really comes alive. The shouting, laughing, and occasionally crying children almost drown out the squeaks and squeals of the rusty equipment. The weekend usually sees the playground filled to capacity, with barbecues and ball games from morning to night.

**By Night** There's nothing creepier than a playground at night. The streetlights shining into the park cast bizarre, angular shadows across the sand. Swings twist lazily in the breeze, creaking softly, and an owl hoots from the treetops as it flies off to hunt. A family of raccoons shuffles out of their den in the base of the oak tree to rummage through the trash. In the colder months, the tractor tires often serve as makeshift shelter for the homeless.

**Useful Skills** Athletics/Climbing, Influence/Conversation, Knowledge/Education, Medicine/First Aid

**Sample Background** The playground was built in the mid-seventies, to boost the property values of the new tract homes in the area. The baby boomers were starting to have children of their own, and a new playground within walking distance was a big selling point. These days, those children are bringing their own children to the park. The equipment has seen better days, but it's still a great place for the kids to play. The playground made the news back in the early eighties, when a young boy died in a fall from the top of the slide. The park was shut down for months after the incident, only reopening after a new, fully enclosed slide was installed.

## ROADSIDE MOTEL

The big chains haven't quite driven this place out of business yet, but they're working on it. Not that it should be too hard. It's the sort of motel that still advertises in-room HBO like it's a selling point. All in all, it's just a small office and ten identical rooms with a view of the parking lot. In the cramped office, a rack of brochures advertises local points of interest. For those looking to check in, the bell on the counter might eventually summon the manager. In the rooms, a double bed, complete with faintly stained bedspread, takes up most of the available space, flanked by a pair of pressed-garbage "oak" nightstands. A peek in the drawer shows the ever-present Gideons. Across from the bed is a cheap particleboard dresser. The television bolted to the top is the only thing in the room that doesn't predate the Reagan administration. A bathroom is

hidden around the corner, with a sink, shower, and toilet crammed into a space only big enough for two of those things. A coffee pot sits on the counter, next to the tiny bottles of shampoo.

**By Day** This isn't exactly a vacation spot. Most of the guests are checked out by noon, and the new ones don't show up till dusk. Until then, the housekeeping staff makes their rounds and the manager takes a nap in front of the television in the back office. He's got a tough job.

**By Night** A normal night sees about half the available rooms filled. As the sun sets, the road trippers and long-haul truckers start pulling in to get some rest. Good luck with that. The mattress sags, the walls are paper-thin, and every passing big-rig shakes the building. The air conditioner/heater under the window is apparently just for show. No matter how it's set, the temperature in the room never changes. Sleep tight!

**Useful Skills** Drive/Car, Knowledge/History, Mechanic/Plumbing, Perception/Hearing, Tech/Repair Electronics

**Sample Background** Since the motel opened in the late seventies, five suicides and two murders have been committed there. Something about a seedy motel in the middle of nowhere must bring out the depressed and unhinged. The most recent was a couple years ago, when the housekeeping staff found the guest in Room 8 drowned in his bathtub. The local sheriff ruled out foul play when the coroner found half a bottle of sleeping pills in the guy's stomach. He'd paid cash for the room, and didn't have any

sort of identification. With no one to claim the body, he was buried in a pauper's grave in the local cemetery. He wasn't the first lonely traveler to meet his end at the motel, and chances are he won't be the last.

## RAILWAY STATION

The train tracks mark the border of downtown, and the station sits right on the edge. It's a massive, gray stone building, built back when people actually rode trains. The tall glass doors open into a marble-floored waiting room. Sunlight streams in through the domed skylight overhead. Rows of padded wooden benches line the room beneath tile mosaics illustrating the history of rail travel. Near the door, a small newsstand sells magazines, newspapers, and an assortment of snack food. Opposite the newsstand, velvet ropes snake toward the ticket window. A bored clerk sits inside, selling tickets and checking oversized luggage when he isn't watching the portable TV sitting beneath the counter. An electronic notice board over his booth lists train arrival and departure times, almost all delayed. Through the automatic doors at the far end of the room, the covered train platform edges up against the tracks. Signposts indicate separate waiting areas for coach and sleeper car passengers.

**By Day** Footsteps echo through the cavernous space as travelers hurry towards their trains. A confused bird flaps against the skylight, trying in vain to escape. There's a train scheduled to depart every two hours, but it's been decades since the rails ran with that sort of efficiency. Delayed





passengers spread out across the benches, waiting for their trains. The distant blaring horn of an approaching train signals the crowd to collect their backpacks and suitcases and shuffle out to the platform to board.

**By Night** Fewer people travel at night, which is good news for the folks in the waiting room. There's plenty of space on the benches for them to stretch out and grab a quick nap, jackets folded under their heads as pillows. The janitor pushes a floor buffer up and down the room, the marble floor shining in his wake. The newsstand is closed for the night, so the vending machines by the restrooms are the only source of food.

**Useful Skills** Covert/Pickpocketing, Influence/Conversation, Knowledge/History, Perception/Investigation

**Sample Background** Time was this station formed the transportation hub of the region. Trains rushed in and out on a timetable so exact you could set your watch to it. Sometimes they rushed a little too fast. A passenger train jumped the tracks back in 1951 and plowed into the station. Amazingly, only three people died, but a lot more were injured. You can still see where the back wall had to be rebuilt. Then came the airports, and the freeways. The trains got less crowded, and fewer moved through the station each day. Amtrak came along in the '70s, built from the remains of the multiple competing railroads that had gone out of business. Since then, passenger rail has continued to limp along on government funding, fighting for more riders as the timetables get thrown further and further off by higher priority freight trains. Real shame—it's a great way to see the country.

## RURAL SCHOOLHOUSE

If it weren't for the historical society, the schoolhouse would have been torn down years ago. Surrounded by newer buildings on all sides, it's clearly out of place, but at one time, this red-paneled, one-room building was the only school in the county. The school bell in the cupola on the roof is still rung every morning, although these days a hydraulic piston on an automatic timer does the work. A relatively new iron fence surrounds the overgrown schoolyard. Inside, four rows of splintered wooden desks face a scratched and dirty blackboard. The teacher's desk sits to one side, a wax apple and wooden pointer resting on the blotter. In one corner of the schoolhouse, near the doors, an empty coal bucket sits next to a pot-bellied stove. A tall stool stands in the opposite corner, a conical dunce cap balanced on its seat. In the interest of safety, the oil lamps that used to line the room have been replaced with electric lights. The room is staged to appear as if the school is still in use, with sentence diagrams chalked across the board and books open at the children's seats. The dust and cobwebs coating every surface dull the effect.

**By Day** The schoolhouse isn't much of a tourist destination. Most days it sits locked and empty. A couple times a year, the head of the historical society drives over

and opens the place up for a busload of kids on a field trip. Dressed in period clothing, she gives the stock lecture on local history to the disinterested pre-teens before sneaking behind the building for a smoke while the kids go inside and touch things they were told not to touch.

**By Night** This area isn't the busiest part of town or the most deserted. The road in front of the school sees a fairly steady stream of traffic. Once the bar down the block shuts down for the night, wandering drunks sometimes stop and relieve themselves through the fence. Inside, a nest of mice living in the teacher's desk spends the evening gnawing on the contents of a small bookcase near the dunce stool.

**Useful Skills** Artistry/Writing, Discipline/Concentration, Knowledge/Education, Perception/Search

**Sample Background** Built in 1882, the schoolhouse operated for almost fifty years. The local children would walk into town each morning and spend the day learning the "Three Rs." They'd grow up, marry each other, take over the family farm, and eventually their own children would come to the schoolhouse to learn. Once the county bought its first school bus in the late twenties, the place was shut down, and the children were bussed over to the big schools in the neighboring town. The schoolhouse sat empty for years, its wooden frame rotting, the cupola tilting further to the left each year. Finally, during the '70s, a developer attempted to purchase the land to build a new shopping center. The town historical society successfully petitioned the mayor to have the schoolhouse declared a historic landmark. The developer went ahead with his plans anyway, wrapping the shopping center around the schoolhouse, which was renovated and converted into a museum.

## SEEDY DINER

The tables are sticky, the service lousy, and you'll never have a better burger in your life. The diner, its chrome siding shining through a layer of dirt and grime, sits on a busy street in a shady part of town. A flickering neon lie in the front window advertises the best berry pie in the state—it's really not that good. Inside, a Formica-topped lunch counter stretches the length of the building, its interlocking boomerang pattern marred by coffee rings and scorch marks. Across the counter from the barstools is the waitresses' station, with a soda fountain and malt mixer beneath the window to the kitchen. A cash register sits at the end, near the door. Opposite the counter, cramped booths line the wall along the windows. A set of swinging vinyl doors at the back leads to the kitchen. With an industrial dishwasher, twin Sub-Zero fridges, and a giant deep fryer vat, the room is extremely cramped. There's barely enough space for the griddle—an eight foot slab

of blazing hot cast iron, greased with lard and seasoned with a decade of fried meats. A steel security door at the rear of the kitchen, next to the walk-in freezer, leads to the dumpster in the alley.

**By Day** From the moment the flapjacks hit the griddle in the morning, the diner stays pretty busy. The lunch rush is the worst. The wire-order carousel filling fast as one waitress works the counter, and another the booths. In the kitchen, the air is thick with the smell of hot grease. The kitchen staff runs back and forth between the stations, prepping the food and shoving it through the window at an incredible pace.

**By Night** The diner closes at 11 pm, and the staff isn't big on after-hours cleanup. The place is empty by 11:15. The only ones left are the cockroaches. So many cockroaches. Don't turn on the lights.

**Useful Skills** Covert/Streetwise, Craft/Cooking, Influence/Conversation, Perception/Taste

**Sample Background** The diner was built back in the fifties to serve the workers in the auto plant across the street. The plant closed a long time ago, but by then the diner had built up enough of a reputation in the community to stay in business. For a time in the early '80s, the place found itself struggling after the owner, and head cook, dropped dead of a heart attack in the kitchen during the lunch rush. His son took over, and soon came into his own in the kitchen. No one's quite sure how the diner passes the health inspections, but it's better not to think about that sort of thing. Just enjoy the food.

## SMALL TOWN SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Doesn't take much to keep the peace in a town this size. When they're not out on patrol, the sheriff and his deputies work out of this small brick building near the city limits. A stack of outdated magazines and anti-drug pamphlets is piled on the table in the small waiting area. The front desk is staffed around the clock, and the receptionist doubles as radio dispatcher. There's rarely more than three or four deputies in the building at any one time, so communal workstations are situated around the main room. The sheriff works from a private office off to one side, the transom over the door propped open for ventilation. Not much inside—a desk, two guest chairs, and a coat rack by the door. A stuffed and mounted bass hangs behind the desk. For bigger meetings, the sheriff'll use the conference room down the hall. At the rear of the main room is the door to the lock-up. Inside, steel bars mark off eight individual cells, each with a simple bunk and stainless steel commode. Behind the building, a garage and service bay are set up to keep the patrol cars running.

**By Day** The office is never empty. The deputies work on rotating shifts of desk work, patrol, and off duty. The sheriff isn't a big fan of riding a desk, and

frequently puts himself into the rotation. Still, not much in the way of daytime crime in a town this small—mostly traffic violations. The deputies spend the afternoon catching up on paperwork.

**By Night** The calls really start coming in as the sun sets. Domestic disturbances, drunk and disorderlies, DUIs—the usual small-town suspects. The sheriff doubles the patrol cars on duty at night, so the office is more deserted than usual. The night dispatcher and a lone deputy are the only ones left in the building. The front doors are locked after 7 pm, but the intercom mounted next to the door can be used to speak to the officers inside. Patrol cars pull around back periodically to drop off miscreants for processing. The deputy on duty gets them fingerprinted and photographed before locking them up.

**Useful Skills** Discipline/Interrogation, Guns/Rifle, Influence/Administration, Knowledge/Law

**Sample Background** The sheriff's office used to be housed in a storefront along Main Street. The sheriff worked on the main floor, with the single holding cell, and the deputies worked upstairs. That setup might have worked back in the '50s, but there wasn't enough parking for the cruisers. The new office was opened about ten years ago. It's still not huge, but it's a big—and welcome—step up. The sheriff became somewhat of a minor celebrity in the region a couple years back, when he and his deputies captured the Potter's Creek Strangler. The Strangler swore revenge, but his execution last year puts any fear of that to rest.

## SUBURBAN TWO-LEVEL HOUSE

Ah, suburbia! There's nothing distinctive about the place. Your typical single-family tract home squeezed onto a lot just slightly larger than the house itself. There's one exactly like it three doors down, and two more on the next block. A small, but well-manicured lawn stretches in front of the beige stuccoed building. A bent-rimmed basketball hoop hangs over the garage door at the end of the cement driveway. The path to the front door is lined with freshly planted flowerbeds. The front door opens into a large, rarely used living room, its furniture arranged in a conversational manner around the marble-fronted fireplace. A staircase along the wall leads to the second floor. A formal dining room is just around the corner, leading to a good-sized kitchen, built around a central island that doubles as a breakfast bar. The kitchen connects to the family room, with its comfy furniture and big-screen TV. A sliding glass door opens on the fenced-in patch of grass the realtor called a backyard. There's barely room for the barbecue on the small cement patio. Back inside, a short hallway leads to a half-bathroom, and the laundry room, with its door to the garage. The kids' rooms are



upstairs, with a messy shared bathroom between them. At the other end of the upstairs hallway, just past the home office/guest room, is the master suite, with a private bathroom and walk-in closet.

**By Day** You can't afford to live in this neighborhood on a single salary. Everyone but the dog is gone by 8 am, and they won't be back for hours. The dog, one of those ridiculous vanity breeds, spends the day in the backyard, digging up the lawn and yipping at every sound. They tried leaving him inside, but he kept setting off the alarm system. The neighbors on this block are pretty nosy, especially the creepy old lady across the street, and new people tend to draw attention.

**By Night** The family starts trickling in around 6 pm, as work and ballet class and soccer practice all end. After eating dinner and helping the kids with their homework, it's TV time until the kids go to bed at 10. Mom and Dad usually manage to stay awake through Letterman. After that, it's time to set the alarm, put the dog out, and head to bed.

**Useful Skills** Covert/Stealth, Perception/Search, Performance/Impersonation, Tech/Security Systems

**Sample Background** This whole area used to be orange groves. The former owner of the property was forced into foreclosure when his crops mysteriously died off all at once. A local developer purchased the land from the bank for pennies on the dollar, and the development was born—*Citrus Grove Estates: Come Plant Your Family Tree*. The real estate boom was in full swing, and the family

managed to snatch up one of the first completed houses in the neighborhood. They moved in just before their daughter was born. Now she's seven years old, their son is twelve, and their lives have never been busier.

## Where to Next?

You probably noticed that this chapter didn't tell you everything there is to know about the mundane world, but come on. Have you been living under a rock? Still, it does give you a whole bunch of game stats, ideas, and references to get freaky with. Go back to **Chapter Eight: The Supernatural** for ways to creep-out your locations, power up your animals or bad guys, or get all monstrous. **Chapter Seven: The Game Master** is still around to lay it all out on the presentation front. If you wanna mess with the ordinary folks in this chapter, head back to **Chapter Four: The Trait & Skills**. That, and pay more attention to the supporting characters and sets when you're watching TV or movies. Otherwise, we got nothing more for you. Get playing already!

# APPENDIX

## Appendix

**R**eady to hit the road? Sure you are, but if you want to sound like a hunter you'll need the lingo and the right tunes. Read the sections below and you'll be ready for both.

### Hunter's Jargon

If you wanna take a deep breath and jumps into the deep end of the world of *Supernatural*, you better know the lingo. Most of it's common knowledge to your average paranormal expert or tinfoil-hat guy. If you're a student of the occult or a big fan of grindhouse horror flicks, you're probably just as well informed. For everybody else, though, here's a big list of terms and definitions to liberally apply in between kicking ass and taking names.

**Word of warning.** This stuff draws on folklore, rumor, and word of mouth. A lot of it might not be true. If your hunter runs into a vampire and wonders why it's not turning into a bat, it's because not everybody knows the Truth. That's also why a lot of this reads like a professor wrote it. It's useful information and gives you the background you need, but don't count on any of it as absolutely accurate.

**Acacia** - Parts of this shrub have medicinal, ornamental, culinary, or pharmacological uses. It is also useful for summoning and binding certain powerful demons.

**Acheri** - In Indian folklore, an acheri is the ghost of a young girl, whose nocturnal visits bring illness to children. An acheri is vulnerable to iron.

**Amulet** - An amulet is an object worn, typically around one's neck, to ward off evil or prevent injury. Many traditions have their own versions, symbols, and purposes.

**Angelica Root** - This plant part is believed to be a very powerful guardian and healer, particularly effective for women. Used by many to ward off evil and bring good luck to health and family, some keep the root near their baby in a white flannel bag. If put in a blue flannel bag with lavender, this root is thought to bring peace to a marriage. In America, it is commonly found in African-American mojo bags prepared for protection from evil, for uncrossing, and to break a jinx. In powdered form, it promotes healing and blessing. It may also be dusted on magic candles burned to enhance matters of spiritual peace and blessing.

**Angels** - These ethereal creatures assist and serve God or the gods of many religious traditions. In the Christian bible, angels are portrayed as powerful and dreadful, endowed with wisdom, correct in their judgment, holy, but not infallible. When their duties are not punitive, angels are beneficent to man. When their duties are punitive, they are known as avenging angels and are mentioned in verses such as Samuel 24:15, in which an angel annihilates thousands on God's command. Avenging angels punish men for their sins.

**Banshee (also Banshi and Benshee)** - A female spirit that manifests to herald approaching death with wailing. The word is derived from the Old Irish ben sidhe, a woman of the fairy mound, but it is translated in a variety of ways, including female fairy, angel of death, lady of death, woman of peace, white lady of sorrow, nymph of the air, and spirit of the air.

**Binsfield's Classification of Demons** - This list of associations was catalogued by the 16th century demonologist and Jesuit priest Peter Binsfeld. The author of *The Confession of Warlocks and Witches*, Binsfield assigned the names of demons to the seven deadly sins, as well as several other mortal traits.

**Black Dog (also Hellhound)** - A ghostly presence found primarily in British folklore, often associated with electrical storms, crossroads, places of execution and ancient pathways. The black dog is a nocturnal being, and its appearance is regarded as foreshadowing death. It is larger than a physical dog, and often has large, glowing eyes. In Norfolk legend, the creature is supposed to be amphibious, coming out of the sea at night and travelling the lonely roads.

**Bloody Mary** - An urban legend claiming that anyone who chants the words Bloody Mary three times in front of a mirror will summon a vengeful spirit. This spirit is not kind its summoners, killing them, scratching their eyes out, driving them mad, or pulling them into the mirror with the spirit.

**Changeling** - From European folklore, this offspring of a fairy or elf is left in the place of a human child. The human child is taken off to the land of Fairy while the changeling makes life miserable for the family. Often, the changeling grows sick and dies, further upsetting the parents.

**Conjuration** - The act of summoning one or more spirits with a predetermined purpose. The conjurer performs some type of ritual to call upon the spirit. This



often includes certain magic symbols drawn on the floor and/or altar, and a performance at a certain time (day/night or according to the alignment of the planets). Incense, candles and potions are also commonly used.

**Crocotta** - A mythical beast of India and Ethiopia, also known as a leucotta. Pliny, the Roman naturalist, describes it as “an animal which looks as though it had been produced by the coupling of the wolf and the dog, for it can break anything with its teeth, and instantly on swallowing it digest it with the stomach. ...” It lures victims by calling their name, drawing them deeper into the forest until the crocotta devours them.

**Crossroads** - Widely linked to magic, crossroads are said to be haunted by various entities who take joy in confusing travelers. Visited by ghosts, demons, the Devil, witches and fairies, the meeting and parting of ways can also be used to conjure those monsters who appear there. Spirits appear at crossroads on All Hallow’s Eve and at other times, and can be conjured up to appear there. The shape of the crossroads can also be used to protect against such terrors.

**Crucifix** - A representation of the cross on which Jesus was crucified, signifying the goodness of Christ and God and the power of good over evil. Crosses are used to ward off vampires, demons, and other creatures associated with Satan. Much vampire lore insists that the one holding the cross must have faith if it is to work properly as a deterrent.

**Curse Box** - A container, often the size of a tool chest or trunk, into which an evil or dangerous magical artifact or object may be placed. Protective signs and wards cover the outside and inside of the box. Pandora’s box, which housed all of the evils of the world, may have been the inspiration for curse boxes.

**Daeva** - In the Zoroastrian religion, a daeva is a demonic and destructive being. Daevas are combated by the ahuras who uphold moral law.

**Djinni (plural Djinn)** - More commonly known as a genie, djinn are a race of supernatural creatures dating back to Arabian mythology. The focus in Western culture has been on the djinni’s or genie’s ability to grant wishes, which originated in the tales from *The Book of One Thousand and One Nights*. The Koran states that the djinn may be good or evil, possessing free will and normally invisible to humans. Evil djinn are known to cause mischief and to mislead humanity.

**Doppelganger** - The ghostly double of a living person, adapted from the German word *Doppelgänger* (look-alike; literally “double goer”). The term refers to any double of a person, most commonly in reference to a so-called evil twin. The word is also used to describe a phenomenon in which you catch your own image out of the corner of your eye. In some mythologies, seeing one’s own doppelganger is a death omen. A doppelganger seen by friends or relatives of a person may bring bad luck or indicate approaching illness.

**EMF** - A field produced by electrically charged objects which affects the behavior of charged objects in the vicinity. EMF is also connected to paranormal activity, such as the presence of a ghost or other supernatural creature.

**Enochian** - An occult or angelic language recorded in the private journals of Dr. John Dee and his seer Edward Kelley in the late 16th century. The men claimed that it was revealed to them by angels; some contemporary scholars of magic consider it a constructed language.

**ESP (Extra-Sensory Perception)** - ESP is information received beyond the five senses. The notion of extra-sensory perception is a very old one; in many ancient cultures, it was taken for granted that certain people had such powers of perception. It can provide the individual with information about the present, past, and future. Medium-hood séancing or spirit walking is used to communicate with those beyond the grave. Telepathy allows connects to people far away.

**EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomenon)** - Spirits, demons, or other entities can sometimes be heard on recordings—everything from answering machine messages to tape recordings to online podcasts. The messages are usually short phrases or even just one word or name.

**Exorcism** - The act of driving out or warding off demons from possessed persons, places, or things. During the exorcism ritual, a solemn and authoritative adjuration of the demon is applied in the name of God or any of the higher powers to which the demon is subject.

**Faust** - The protagonist of a classic German legend in which a medieval scholar makes a pact with the Devil. Numerous versions of the story have been written and published, including one by Christopher Marlowe, a contemporary of Shakespeare.

**Goofer Dust** - Used in old voodoo practice, this mixture of natural ingredients can cause harm or trouble, or even kill. The word goofer comes from the Kikongo word *kufwa* which means “to die.” As late as the 1930s, “goofering” was a regional synonym for voodooing, and the meaning of the term was broadened beyond spells of damage, illness, and death to include love spells cast with a dominating intent.

**Hand of Glory** - The preserved hand of a murderer. When used with candles made from the fat of a murder victim, it renders people unable to move. It can also unlock any door, making it useful for thieves.

**Hex Bag** - A small pouch with any variety of ingredients, which can range from the simple (dried herbs) to the gruesome (the bones of an infant). They are put together for specific spells and rituals, and must be placed somewhere where the magic can target the intended target.

**Hoodoo** - A 200-year-old practice of magic based on elements of Voodoo, Appalachian folk lore, and related traditions. It is usually distinguished from other magical traditions by the use of a gris-gris bag (also known as a mojo bag, conjure hand, toby, trick bag, jomo, or nation sack) which acts as both charm and focus for the magic.

**Iron** - In theory, if ghosts use electromagnetic energy to manifest, then a conductor of electricity, such as iron, could drain the energy from the spirit. Thus, touching a grounded, iron object to the spirit itself would drain it of all usable energy. Many cemeteries are enclosed by iron fencing to keep the spirits in. Also, it has been said that an iron horseshoe placed at your front door brings good luck by keeping evil spirits out.

**Key of Solomon** - The most famous and important of all grimoires, or handbooks of Magic, this tome provides instructions for summoning and mastering spiritual powers. The Lesser Key of Legemeton is a 17th century tome inspired by or derived from this older book.

**Meadowsweet** - In pre-Christian Western cultures, this herb was used, among other things, to summon pagan gods to sacrifice. It is also the source of salicylic acid, popularly known as aspirin.

**Mirrors** - A great deal of folklore is associated with mirrors, including the belief that the soul projects out of the body and into mirrors in the form of reflection. Many cultures believe that breaking a mirror also breaks the soul. The soul, angered at being hurt, exacts seven years of bad luck in payment for such carelessness. The Romans attributed the bad luck to their belief that life renews itself every seven years. To break a mirror meant breaking one's health, and this could not be remedied for seven years. Mirrors have also been associated with death, especially among children, whose souls are trapped in mirrors when they are young; mirrors are covered in houses with infants and newborns to keep this from happening.

**Necromancy** - Summoning the spirits of the dead in order to gain knowledge of future events. The word necromancy derives from the Greek *nekros*, "dead", and *manteia*, "divination." Early necromancy is related to shamanism, which calls upon spirits such as the ghosts of ancestors. In the Middle Ages, necromancy came to be associated with black magic and demon-summoning in general, sometimes losing its earlier, more specialized meaning.

**OBE (Out-of-Body Experience)** - The sensation of floating outside one's body, or seeing one's body from a place outside of it. This usually occurs spontaneously and is linked to dangerous circumstances, a dream-like state, a near-death experience, or the use of psychedelic drugs.

**Pagan** - A person who follows an ancient polytheistic or pantheistic religion, and not one of the world's main religions. It comes from the Latin *pagani*, or country-dweller.

**Pentagram** - In its usual upright position (one point uppermost), the pentagram is an ancient symbol of protection. Also called the endless knot (in its interlaced form), the pentagram was displayed on doors, windows, and hearths of houses throughout pre-Christian Europe. It can be traced back to the Egyptian and Sumerian cultures, and has even been found on Native American medicine tools. Sometimes confused with the Star of David, or hexagram (a six-pointed star emblematic of Judaism), the pentagram is sometimes called the Star of Solomon, especially by ceremonial magicians.

**Phantom Attacker** - This being harasses its victims, taking away their sense of security. The victims describe these encounters as traumatic, because what assaulted them was strange, unusual, and obviously not human. Those who have been attacked live with a horrifying fear that cannot be explained. Famous phantom attackers include the Mothman, Shadow People, Springheeled Jack, and the Chupacabra.

**Phantom Traveler** - The ghosts of humans or animals who haunt particular roadways or modes of transportation—boats, planes, trains, and stations. Some phantom travelers even appear as hitchhikers on lonely back roads.

**Poltergeist** - A term used to describe a spirit or ghost that manifests by moving and influencing inanimate objects. Poltergeist activity typically involves raps, bumps, thumps, knocks, footsteps, and bed-shaking, all without a discernable point of origin or physical reason for occurring. Many accounts also detail objects being thrown about the room, furniture being moved, and even people being levitated.

**Poppet** - A doll used in European witchcraft for casting healing, fertility, or binding spells on a particular person. These dolls can be made from carved root, grain or corn shafts, fruit, paper, wax, a potato, clay, branches, or cloth stuffed with herbs. Whatever actions are performed upon the poppet also occur to the designated person. These dolls are often mistakenly called "voodoo dolls," but such tools were unheard of in Haiti, where Voodoo originated (although some are used in New Orleans voodoo, mostly to amuse tourists).

**Premonition** - Knowledge of future events that are typically tragic in nature. Premonitions commonly come as visions, often during dreams and even during states of total consciousness. A strong sense that something will occur also qualifies. Strong historical evidence exists of premonitions revealing visions and warnings of future happenings.

**Purple Nurple** - A cocktail of one ounce Malibu & coconut rum, one ounce triple sec, a half-ounce Blue Curacao liqueur, and two ounces cranberry juice. Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice, shake, strain into an old-fashioned glass, and serve.



**Pyre** - A structure, usually a mound of wood, used for burning a body as part of a funeral rite. The body is placed upon the pyre and the entire structure is set on fire. In a Viking funeral, the pyre was built on a ship, which was launched out to sea as it burned.

**Quincunx (Five-Spot)** - An arrangement of five units in the pattern corresponding to the five-spot on dice, playing cards, or dominoes. A quincunx is often used in Hoodoo as a sort of "artificial crossroad," and can be created inside a room. The five-spot is generally used for scaling and fixing spells in place.

**Rabbit's Foot** - Traditionally, this good luck charm is made from the foot of a rabbit. The creation of the charm may require all kinds of rituals, from something as simple as a blessing to something more complicated as cutting off the foot on Friday the 13th in a cemetery.

**Rakshasa** - A demon or unrighteous spirit in Hinduism that feeds on human flesh. Shapechangers and magicians, these beings often appear in the forms of humans, dogs, and large birds. They can make themselves invisible but cannot enter a home without being invited. According to the Ramayana, an ancient Sanskrit epic, they were created from the foot of Brahma, the Hindu God of Creation. Many rakshasas were particularly wicked humans in previous incarnations and are known to disturb sacrifices, desecrate graves, and possess human beings. Translated to English, the word means "injurer."

**Rawhead** - This Irish boogeyman drowns naughty children and rewards the good. Covered all over with matted hair, it has pale flat eyes, lives in pipes or dark cupboards, and is rumored to have a crouching form like a rock.

**Rituale Romanum** - One of the official books of the Roman Rite. The Rituale Romanum was first published in the 17th century by Pope Paul V and was left untouched until two minor revisions were added in 1952. The Rituale Romanum is the only formal exorcism rite sanctioned by the Roman Catholic Church.

**Rosary** - A string of prayer beads, most commonly used in the Catholic Church. A series of prayers is recited over the beads as a devotion to the Virgin Mary.

**Séance** - An attempt to communicate with the dead. The séance, or sitting, is led by a medium who goes into a trance. The dead communicate through the medium.

**Shapeshifting** - Also known as transformation or transmogrification, this change in the form or shape of a person often turns a human form into an animal form, or turns one person into another.

**Spirit Board** - Usually referred to as a Ouija board (which is trademarked by Parker Brothers), this tool is used to contact spirits. The fingers of the participants are placed on a planchette, a triangle or heart-shaped pointer, which then moves around a board covered with numbers, letters, and symbols to spell out messages.

**Spiritus Vitae** - Translated as "spirit of life" and taken from its original form Spiritus Mundi (spirit of the Universe), Spiritus Vitae refers to the interaction between the cosmic forces and the matter of the human body.

**Succubus (plural Succubi)** - In medieval legend, a succubus (from the Latin succubare meaning to lay under) is a female demon that comes to men in their dreams and seduces them for their energy. As the succubus draws energy from the victim, he dies and she is rejuvenated.

**Sulfur** - The presence, especially the smell, of sulfur is closely associated with the presence of demons. Tales speak of sulfur-breathing demons, and those who live in pits of sulfur and fire in hell.

**Telekinesis** - Also known as psychokinesis, those with this ability can mentally influence an object's movement or behavior.

**Telepathy** - The ability to exchange information from one mind to another, without speech or body language. Telepathy is often part of various paranormal phenomena, such as precognition, clairvoyance, and empathy.

**Undead** - Supernatural beings that are deceased yet behave as if alive. Undead can refer to the spiritual, as in ghosts, or the corporeal, as in animated corpses. Bram Stoker was the first to use the term "The Un-Dead" as the original title for his novel "Dracula."

**Vampires** - Folkloric creatures, described as the re-animated corpses of human beings that live on human or animal blood. They often have unnatural powers and the ability to shapeshift.

**Van Van** - An old Hoodoo formula for oil, incense, sachet powders, and washing products intended to get rid of evil, provide magical defense, change bad luck to good, and strengthen other charms. It is the most popular of the New Orleans Hoodoo recipes. As a good luck enhancer, it is closely associated with both the rabbit foot and the lodestone.

**Werewolves** - Originating in Greek mythology, a werewolf is a person who changes into a wolf by means of magic or as a result of a curse. Most of the time, this transformation is brought on by the full moon. It is believed that the only way to kill a werewolf is with a silver bullet.

**Woman in White** - An angry spirit of a woman who murdered her own children in a fit of despair after discovering her husband was unfaithful, and then took her own life. The Woman in White wanders roadsides near the site of her suicide, enticing an unfaithful man, and then killing him.

**Water Wraiths** - Originating in Scotland, a wraith is an apparition—a specter, a vision, or an unreal image. A water wraith preside over the waters. They supposedly take the form of skinny, old women with scowling features who dress in green. Water wraiths try to lure unsuspecting travelers to their death by drowning them.

## Music to Hunt By

Nothing gets the adrenaline pumping like cruising the state highways in your muscle car with your 8-track blaring Creedence or Cheap Trick. Okay, these days you're more likely to dial up your MP3 player and plug it into your hunter green SUV's audio system, but you get the point. *Supernatural's* all about the classic rock—the music that became grunge or alternative or whatever they're calling it now. Here's a big list of bands and tracks to get you in the mood. It's not exhaustive, but it should sound pretty damn familiar.

**AC/DC**, *Back In Black*, *Hells Bells*, *Highway To Hell*, *You Shook Me All Night Long*

**Alice in Chains**, *Rooster*

**The Allman Brothers Band**, *Ramblin' Man*

**The Animals**, *House of the Rising Sun*

**Asia**, *Heat of the Moment*

**Bachman-Turner Overdrive**, *Hey You*, *You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet*

**Bad Company**, *Bad Company*, *Crazy Circles*, *Movin' On*, *She Brings Me Love*

**Billy Squier**, *Lonely is the Night*, *Too Daze Gone*

**Black Sabbath**, *Paranoid*

**Blue Öyster Cult**, *Burnin' for You*, *Don't Fear the Reaper*, *Fire of Unknown Origin*

**Bob Dylan**, *Knocking on Heaven's Door*

**The Bob Seger System**, *Lucifer*, *Two Plus Two*

**Bon Jovi**, *Wanted Dead or Alive*

**Boston**, *Don't Look Back*, *Foreplay/Long Time*, *Peace Of Mind*

**The Chambers Brothers**, *Time Has Come Today*

**Cheap Trick**, *Surrender*

**Creedence Clearwater Revival**, *Bad Moon Rising*, *Lodi*, *Run Through The Jungle*

**Def Leppard**, *Rock of Ages*

**The Doobie Brothers**, *Long Train Runnin'*

**The Doors**, *The Crystal Ship*

**Filter**, *Hey Man, Nice Shot*

**Focus**, *Hocus Pocus*

**Foreigner**, *Cold as Ice*, *Hot Blooded*

**Free**, *All Right Now*

**Grand Funk Railroad**, *Bad Time*, *We're An American Band*

**Iron Butterfly**, *In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida*

**Jefferson Airplane**, *White Rabbit*

**Joe Walsh**, *Rocky Mountain Way*, *Turn To Stone*, *Walk Away Journey*, *Wheel in the Sky*

**Kansas**, *Carry on my Wayward Son*

**Kip Winger**, *Smoking Gun*

**Les Paul & Mary Ford**, *Vaya Con Dios*

**Lynyrd Skynyrd**, *Down South Jukin'*, *Poison Whiskey*, *Saturday Night Special*

**Metallica**, *Enter Sandman*, *One*

**Motorhead**, *Ace of Spades*

**Ozzy Osborne**, *Road to Nowhere*

**Poison**, *Every Rose Has Its Thorn*

**Queensryche**, *Silent Lucidity*

**Quiet Riot**, *Bang Your Head (Metal Health)*

**Ratt**, *Round And Round*

**REO Speedwagon**, *Back on the Road Again*, *Can't Fight This Feeling*

**The Rolling Stones**, *Laugh, I Nearly Died*

**Rush**, *Fly By Night*, *Working Man*

**The Scorpions**, *No One Like You*

**Screamin' Jay Hawkins**, *I Put A Spell On You*

**Screaming Trees**, *Look At You*

**Son House**, *Downhearted Blues*

**Soundgarden**, *Fell On Black Days*

**Spinal Tap**, *Stonehenge*

**Steve Carlson Band**, *If It Ain't Easy*, *Night Life*

**Steve Winwood**, *Can't Find My Way Home*

**Stevie Ray Vaughan**, *House is Rocking*

**The Stooges**, *Down in the Street*

**Styx**, *Renegade*

**Survivor**, *Eye of the Tiger*

**Ted Nugent**, *Stranglehold*

**Three Dog Night**, *Shambala*

**Tito and Tarantula**, *Strange Face of Love*

**Triumph**, *Fight The Good Fight*

**UFO**, *Rock Bottom*



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Stun

A diagram showing a 2x2 grid of white rounded rectangles. An arrow points from the top-left rectangle to the left, indicating a transition or relationship.

CONCEPT

1

## Derived Attributes

INITIATIVE:

**ENDURANCE:**

**LIFE POINTS:**

**RESISTANCE:**



## Advancement

1 Attribute Step 161 Skill Step 6DAMAGE:AMMO:DAMAGE:AMMO:COVERS:PENALTY:

## RANGED WEAPONS

SCIENCE\*SURVIVALTECH\*

**F**

UNARMED COMBAT

# I



# T



# T



III

T

Shock Points

Punch →

← Stun

Assets

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

Complications

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

Gear

History

Plot Points and Die Steps

Current  
Plot Points

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
d2	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12	d12+d2	d12+d4	d12+d6	d12+d8	d12+d10	d12+d12



# SUPERNATURAL™

## ROLE PLAYING GAME

Sorry to be the one to break it to you, but the truth hurts and there's no use sugarcoating it. Ghosts are real. Demons too, and the bumps in the night—maybe even the monster under your bed. The world's a scary place. If you're lucky, the nasties that creep around in the dark won't get hold of you.

'Cept maybe you're not so lucky. Maybe you've already lost something—or somebody—to the darkness. All the booze and therapy in the world can't put your life back the way it was. Once evil's had a taste of your blood, it's got a way of finding you again . . . and again.

In the Supernatural Role Playing Game, you and your friends play hunters from the world of the hit CW television series. Play characters from the show or use the Cortex System rules to create your own. You'll also find gory details on ghosts, demons, and other nasties for the Game Master to throw your way. All you need to start the hunt is this book, some friends, some dice, and some time to kill...

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