# HERO SYSTEM

## FIFTH EDITION

THE ULTIMATE GAMER'S TOOLKIT



STEVEN S. LONG

HERO GAMES

# HERO SYSTEM

## FIFTH EDITION REVISED



Steven S. Long

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**HERO SYSTEM RULEBOOK — *Fifth Edition, Revised***

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You're all Heroes!

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"Let this be said of me — that heroes call me friend."

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# AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

It's not every game that gets to have a Fifth Edition. There are a lot of games on the market. Some are good, some are bad, but none of them are perfect. The bad ones usually wither and die. The good ones, if they're lucky, generate enough interest to make it profitable for the publisher to keep producing supplements for them. More than a few are good enough to inspire a second edition to file off the rough edges and add some new rules.

But almost none of them are long-lived enough, or create enough enthusiasm, to generate such a stream of suggestions and ideas that multiple editions become necessary. While some see this as a sign of weakness — a flawed design requiring multiple corrections — I don't believe that's necessarily the case. It's certainly not the case in a game such as the *HERO System,* where the changes from edition to edition are so slight that characters created using the first edition rules are easily adaptable to the fourth or fifth generation of those rules. Rather, these multiple editions are the sign of the gradual improvements that come from experience with the game system.

I'm particularly pleased that the *HERO System* has made it to this lofty plateau. From the instant I started playing it in its original form, *Champions,* back in 1982, it's been my favorite roleplaying game system. No other game system ever created comes close to matching its depth and flexibility. Those qualities have inspired legions of devoted players — and their interest has, in turn, given the *HERO System* reason to expand and adapt to the point where this Fifth Edition is needed.

It's been my privilege over the past several years to produce supplements for the *HERO System.* Whenever I sit down to write a book for this, or any other, game system, I always stop and remind myself: people are going to use this to have fun. It's up to me to produce something they'll enjoy and be inspired by.

That's a heavy burden (though certainly no heavier, in many ways, than the burden every GM takes on whenever he runs a game). I've never felt it more than I did while I wrote this book, because this — *this* — is the Best Game System There Is. It's the system all of the friends I know best and love most in the world think the highest of. Revising it is like lining up the blade to cut a diamond, knowing that if you miss, a beautiful thing is ruined.

But, fortunately, I don't think the diamond's been ruined at all. Instead, I'd say a few new facets have been brought out, adding to the stone's already brilliant luster. I'm fully aware that neither I nor any other game designer can please all of the *HERO System* gamers all the time, but I hope you'll agree with me that this particular jewel is now better than ever.

## A FEW WORDS MORE

The nearly three years since I became *HERO System* Line Developer have been among the most exciting, productive, and fun of my life! I'm absolutely thrilled to be part of the team that's brought Hero Games and the *HERO System* back to the forefront of the gaming world.

The renewed interest in the *HERO System* rules on the part of gamers everywhere, not to mention the production of dozens of new Hero books, has inevitably led to questions about how the rules work, ideas for new or expanded rules, and the like. This Revised version of the *5th Edition* rules addresses those issues, providing new options for *HERO System* gamers and making the system easier than ever to use. I hope you enjoy it as much as I've enjoyed creating it.

As always — Be A Hero!
Steven S. Long
August, 2004



# INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the *HERO System,* a complete set of universal roleplaying rules that lets you create characters for *any* setting or background, from Fantasy, to modern-day action heroes, to Science Fiction, to comic book superheroes. Using the *HERO System* rules, you can create any spell, technology, power, weapon, ability, or other effect you can imagine. This volume provides you with all the rules you need to create characters and campaigns set in any time, place, or genre. Even if you don't want to use the *HERO System* rules to run your games, you can still use them to create things for use in other RPGs.

Many of you are already familiar with the *HERO System*; after all, it was first published as *Champions* in 1981, and the seminal Fourth Edition was released in 1989. The Fifth Edition was published in April, 2002. This Revised version of the Fifth Edition further expands, revises, and clarifies the *HERO System* rules to create a game system that's more fun and flexible than ever.

If you're new to the *HERO System,* after this section you should read *Basic Rules And Concepts* beginning on the next page. It provides a brief glimpse of what the *HERO System* is and does, and shows how you can use it to create some of the most enjoyable roleplaying games you'll ever play. After that you can dive into character creation or whatever other subject catches your fancy. If you get confused by any of the terms (like all game systems, this one has a lot of its own "gamespeak"), look them up in the Glossary (page 16) or in the Index.

If you've used the *HERO System* before, skip on down to *If You're Familiar With The HERO System* on page 11. That will serve as a good introduction to the Fifth Edition for you.

## Other Resources

If the *HERO System 5th Edition, Revised* rulebook doesn't answer your questions about the rules, or if you still find some part of the rules difficult to work with, there are several other resources you can turn to for help. The first is the message boards at the Hero Games website, www.herogames.com. The boards have thousands of registered fans, many of whom post every day. It's one of the friendliest, most enthusiastic communities in gaming, and the fans usually answer questions quickly.

Second, you can contact Hero Games directly by e-mail at *info@herogames.com.* We're glad to answer questions from the fans about Hero's rules or products.

### WHAT ELSE IS OUT THERE?

Hero Games and the *HERO System* have been around for about 25 years, so there are lots of resources you can use with the *HERO System* rules. Since releasing the *5th Edition* in mid-2002, Hero Games has published dozens of books — several thousand pages' worth of *HERO System* characters, gadgets, vehicles, powers, weapons, and information — along with an electronic magazine, *Digital Hero.* Pre-*5th Edition* products are also easy to use with the *5th Edition, Revised* rules.

Buying books isn't the only way to get into the game (though it's one we hope you'll try eventually!). In addition to all the free game aids, example characters, and other things you'll find on the *Free Stuff* page at www.herogames.com, there are hundreds (if not thousands) of fan-created websites containing *HERO System* characters, campaign settings, house rules, and just about anything else you can think of.

### HERO DESIGNER CHARACTER CREATION SOFTWARE

If you like to use your computer to improve your gaming, check out the *Hero Designer* character creation software available from Hero Games. It simplifies the process of creating a character by automating everything and doing the math for you — it turns the task of creating a *HERO System* player character into a matter of a few keystrokes and mouse clicks. You can find out more at www.herogames.com.

# BASIC RULES AND CONCEPTS



The *HERO System* seems complex at first glance, but don't worry — it's easier than it looks. Unlike many game systems, which have different types of rules for different parts of their games (combat, magic, character creation, or what have you), the *HERO System* has a lot of consistency and internal logic. Once you learn the important parts, it becomes easy to figure out how other parts of the system work. You can always refer to the Glossary (page 16) or the Index if you can't remember what a particular term means or how to do something in the system.

## Dice And Dice Rolling

The *HERO System* uses six-sided dice (d6) to resolve combat, the use of Skills, and similar situations. The number before the "d6" notation indicates how many dice to roll. For example, 12d6 means 12 dice; 2d6+1 means roll two dice and add one point to the total.

Most dice-rolling in the *HERO System* requires you to roll 3d6 and get a result equal to or less than some number. This is written in the text by a minus sign (-) following the number. For example, a Skill your character can perform successfully on an 11 or less roll is written 11-.

Whenever you attempt any 3d6 roll — whether an Attack Roll, Skill Roll, Characteristic Roll, Perception Roll, or other roll — a result of 3 (three ones) always hits or succeeds; a result of 18 (three sixes) always misses or fails. The Gamemaster (GM) should consider giving a character some advantage when his player rolls a 3 (perhaps some extra dice of damage), and some disadvantage for rolling an 18 (perhaps reducing the character's DCV for a Segment or two).

## Scale And Movement

Movement and maps in the *HERO System* use hex-shaped *inches* which, despite their name, are 2 meters (approximately 6.5 feet) wide. The text often refers to "hexes" or "inches" interchangeably. Inches are written 1", 2", and so forth.

## Character Points And Rounding

In the *HERO System,* you use *Character Points* (see below) to purchase all of your character's abilities and powers. Sometimes this requires calculations involving division or multiplication. Examples include determining the Active Point cost of a power to which you apply an Advantage, the Real Point cost of a power to which you apply a Limitation, a character's Combat Value (CV), and the Endurance (END) cost of a power.

When you calculate the cost of something using division or multiplication, always round off to the next whole number in favor of the player character (unless a specific rule indicates otherwise). Numbers from .1 to .4 round down; numbers from .6 to .9 round up; and .5 rounds up or down depending upon what's best for the character. You only have to use one decimal place to round (unless the GM requires more precise rounding).

One exception to the rounding rule is calculating Speed (SPD) — SPD *always* rounds down. A SPD of 2.9 is still a SPD of 2, not a SPD of 3.

If a calculation involves two or more separate parts or stages, round at each separate step of the calculation.

Example: *Recovery (REC) is calculated as Strength/5 plus Constitution/5. You should round at each step of the calculation. Thus, a character with BODY 10, STR 15, and CON 15 has a STUN of 26 (BODY 10; plus STR/2 = 7.5, rounds to 8; plus CON/2 = 7.5, rounds to 8; 10+8+8 = 26).*

Example: *Carl creates an* Iridescent Flames *spell for his character. He builds it as an Energy Blast 7d6 (base cost of 35 points) with the Advantage* Reduced Endurance *(½ END; +¼). That gives the spell an Active Point cost of (35 x (1 + .25) =) 43.75 points. According to the rounding rules, that rounds up to 44 Active Points. Carl now applies the Limitations* OAF *(wizard's staff; -1) and* Gestures *(-¼). That yields a Real Point cost of (44/(1 + 1 + .25) =) 19.5 points, which rounds down to 19 points. Carl's character must pay 19 Character Points for the Iridescent Flames spell.*

The rounding rules only apply to division and multiplication. If a character buys something that costs a half point (such as a single point of Endurance or Comeliness), he does not get to round that down to zero — he has to round it up to 1 point, because there's no division or multiplication involved and he's not allowed to get something "for free." The minimum cost of anything in the *HERO System,* no matter how the cost is calculated, is 1 Character Point.

**Rounding Fractions**

Sometimes the rules require the character to halve the value of an Advantage or Limitation, which is expressed as a fraction. In that case, the rounding is in favor of the character, as usual. For example, +¾ rounds to +¼ (since it's best for the character), while -¾ rounds to -½; +1¼ rounds to +½, -1¼ rounds to -¾.

### STANDARD HEIGHT, WEIGHT, AND LIFESPAN

For *HERO System* purposes, all characters are considered to be 1" (2 meters) tall and weigh 100 kilograms (220 pounds). Powers, Disadvantages, or other abilities they buy may change this, but that's the defined "norm" for the game. Obviously characters can vary tremendously in height — a Special Forces soldier, a mountain dwarf, and a Japanese schoolgirl who's secretly a master of the martial arts are very different in size and weight. But for game purposes, they're all treated the same, unless they buy some sort of ability that represents being a different size (such as bonuses to Defensive Combat Value [DCV] to represent being significantly smaller than normal).

For *HERO System* purposes, all characters are considered to have a lifespan of 100 years. You can vary this by buying the *Longevity* form of Life Support (page 198) for the character.



# CHARACTER CREATION

The heart of the *HERO System* is its rules for character creation. Using them, you can create any type of character, power, gadget, or ability you want, subject to the GM's campaign restrictions.

You build *HERO System* characters with *Character Points.* You purchase everything a character can do — from his ability to lift heavy objects, to his skill with weapons, to his ability to use magic or superpowers — with Character Points.

Your GM will tell you how many points you have to build your character with — the more points, the more powerful the character, generally. Some of your Character Points are "free" (given to you by the GM); you acquire others by taking *Disadvantages,* or complications, for your character. The main purpose of Disadvantages is to simulate character conception, but they're also worth extra Character Points. For example, your character might be Hunted by an old enemy, or adhere to a Code Of Honor, or be missing one eye. Each of these Disadvantages gives you extra Character Points to build your character with. (See page 326 for more information about Disadvantages.)

There are five things a character can buy with Character Points: *Characteristics, Skills, Perks, Talents,* and *Powers.*

## CHARACTERISTICS (PAGE 32)

All characters have eight *Primary Characteristics* (such as Strength and Intelligence), which represent physical and mental capabilities; and six *Figured Characteristics* (such as Physical Defense and Stun), which are mainly used in combat. The text beginning on page 32 defines these Characteristics for you. An average human has Primary Characteristics of about 6-10.

Primary Characteristics all have *Characteristic Rolls* equal to *9 + (Characteristic/5) or less.* For example, a character with a DEX of 20 has a DEX Roll of 13- (9 + (20/5) = 13). When the GM asks you to make a Characteristic Roll (such as a DEX Roll to walk along a narrow beam), you roll 3d6 like normal. The more you make (or fail) the roll by, the greater your degree of success (or failure). The GM imposes negative modifiers on the Characteristic Roll when you attempt particularly difficult feats, making it harder to succeed.

## SKILLS (PAGE 42)

A character's Skills represent specialized knowledge or training he possesses. This includes such things as knowing how to fly a plane, investigate a crime scene, or fire a blaster pistol, or the character's in-depth knowledge about any subject you can think of (physics, Fire Demons, Great Britain, alien races...). Skills are listed and described beginning on page 47.

A character can try to get information, perform a task, or gain other benefits from knowing a Skill by making a *Skill Roll.* Most Skills have a Characteristic-based Skill Roll, typically between 8- and 18- (the higher, the better), and are rolled the same way: roll 3d6; if the total on the dice is less

than or equal to your character's Skill Roll, he succeeds; if it's higher than the Skill Roll, he fails.

**PERKS (PAGE 78)**

Perks are special resources a character has access to — money or property (like a really fast car or a headquarters), contacts, permits or licenses, and the like. See pages 78-85 for descriptions of the Perks a character can purchase.

**TALENTS (PAGE 86)**

Talents are unusual abilities or attributes a character possesses. They're usually better than Skills, but not quite as powerful as Powers — in fact, they're sort of a cross or "middle ground" between the two. They include things like a natural sense of direction, a "sixth sense" for danger, having extremely fast reflexes, or being able to speed read. Some of them involve rolls similar to Skill Rolls; others function automatically.

**POWERS (PAGE 93)**

Powers are abilities possessed by some characters. Typically they are abilities "beyond those of normal men," though Powers can also be used to create many abilities and devices which are perfectly appropriate for characters who are "normal men." Each Power costs a certain amount of Character Points, depending upon how powerful or useful it tends to be. Some Powers have an incremental cost, such as 5 Character Points per d6 of effect.

You can create any ability you can think of — flying, becoming invisible or intangible, changing shape, firing energy bolts or mental blasts — using Powers. They can simulate a superhero's powers, a wizard's spells, or a vigilante's super-skills, just to name a few. You also use Powers to construct equipment and weapons.

**Advantages And Limitations**

Characters can build many abilities using Powers alone. But sometimes a character wants a power that's better than normal. For that, he needs to apply a *Power Advantage* to his power. This makes the power more effective, but also more expensive. See page 244 for more information about Advantages.

Similarly, sometimes a character wants an ability that doesn't always work properly. For example, maybe his powers only work at night. To represent that, he applies a *Power Limitation* to the ability. This makes the power less effective, but also less expensive. See page 280 for more information about Limitations.

**Power Frameworks (Page 310)**

Sometimes characters buy Powers through *Power Frameworks* — ways to group abilities so they cost fewer points. However, this savings entails some restrictions on when and how the character can use the powers in his Framework. There are three types of Frameworks — Elemental Controls, Multipowers, and Variable Power Pools — which are explained in detail on pages 310-25.

# COMBAT

The *HERO System* combat and adventuring rules allow your character to do just about anything you can think of. The rules provide lots of options, but you don't have to learn them all at once. Instead, start out with the basics, and learn the details as you play. The basics are:

**INITIATIVE (PAGE 356)**

Two of a character's Characteristics — Dexterity (DEX) and Speed (SPD) — determine when he acts in combat, and how often. The rules divide combat time into 12-second *Turns,* with each second referred to as a *Segment.* The character's SPD indicates which Segments he can take an Action in; these Segments are his *Phases.* Thus, a character with 5 SPD has five Phases — five times each Turn when he can act. The *Speed Chart* (page 357) indicates the Phases for each SPD.

In each Segment, several characters may have a Phase — for example, characters with SPD 3 and SPD 6 both have a Phase in Segment 4. All characters who can act in a Phase act in order of DEX, from highest to lowest. Thus, a character with DEX 20 acts before one with DEX 18. However, a character may *Hold* his Action and act later in the Phase if he wants.

**ACTIONS (PAGE 357)**

A character may take an Action in each of his Phases. His Actions may include *Full Phase Actions* (which require his entire Phase) or *Half Phase Actions,* which require only half of his Phase (in other words, he can perform two Half Phase Actions per Phase). Full Phase Actions include using more than half of your inches of movement or recovering from being Stunned. Half Phase Actions include using up to half your inches of movement.

Attacks are a special type of Action. A character may make a Half Phase Action and then attack; in that case, the attack is considered a Half Phase Action, too. But if a character makes an attack before making any Half Phase Actions, the attack is considered a Full Phase Action. In other words, once a character makes an attack, that's all he can do that Phase — making the attack ends his Phase.

Some Actions take so little time to perform that they are *Zero Phase Actions.* Characters can perform Zero Phase Actions at the beginning of a Phase or after making a Half Phase Action, but not after making an attack. Zero Phase Actions include turning a Power on or off.

Some Actions take no time at all — a character can perform them whenever he wishes, even if he doesn't have a Phase or has already acted in a Phase. No time Actions include making a Presence Attack, speaking, or making a roll when the GM asks you to.

**ATTACKS (PAGE 370)**

A character's *Combat Value,* or CV, determines his chance to hit targets in combat, and to avoid being hit. A character's CV equals his (DEX/3). Thus, a character with DEX 20 has a CV of 7 (20/3=7).

**HOW YOU WANT TO ROLL THE DICE**

Here's a quick summary of the core resolution mechanics in *HERO System* combat — in other words, how you want to roll the dice when fighting.

Skill Rolls, Characteristic Rolls, and Perception Rolls: You want to roll *low* on 3d6; the lower the roll, the more likely you are to succeed.

Attack Rolls: You want to roll *low* on 3d6 to hit; the lower you roll, the more likely you are to hit your target. This applies to physical combat, mental combat, and any other type of combat.

However, when you're rolling the dice of damage or effect for your attack, you want to roll *high.* The higher you roll, the more damage you do to the target, or the greater the effect your attack has.

### HERO SYSTEM QUICK REFERENCE

Here's a quick summary of some basic *HERO System* facts and formulae:

Attack Roll = (11 + Attacker's OCV - Target's DCV) or less

Characteristic Roll = 9 + (Characteristic/5) or less

Skill Roll = 9 + (Characteristic/5) or less

Active Cost of a power = Base Cost x (1 + total value of all Advantages)

Real Cost of a power = Active Cost/(1 + total value of all Limitations)

1" = 1 hex = 2 meters = approximately 6.5 feet

CV is divided into two subcategories, *Offensive Combat Value* (OCV) and *Defensive Combat Value* (DCV). OCV and DCV are both equal to CV. Thus, a character with a CV of 7 has OCV 7, DCV 7. Various Combat Maneuvers, Combat Skill Levels, and other factors may modify a character's OCV or DCV.

To attack, roll 3d6. To hit, you need to roll less than or equal to a number calculated with this formula: *11 + Attacker's OCV - Defender's DCV.* For example, if the attacker has OCV 6, and the defender has DCV 4, the attacker must roll (11+6-4=13) 13 or less to hit.

Mental Attacks are slightly different. They use *Ego Combat Value* (ECV), equal to (EGO/3). Otherwise, making a Mental Attack is basically the same as making any other kind of attack.

See pages 370-402 for more information.

#### DOING AND TAKING DAMAGE (PAGE 403)

If a character hits his target with an attack, the attack does damage. There are two basic types of damage in the *HERO System:* STUN damage and BODY damage. Taking STUN damage decreases a character's STUN and can knock him out; taking BODY damage decreases his BODY, which causes injuries and can kill him. Most types of attacks cause one or both types of damage. Some, such as Ego Attacks, only cause STUN damage. Most, such as Energy Blasts, punches, guns, and knives, cause both STUN and BODY.

Another important distinction is between *Normal Damage* attacks and *Killing Damage* attacks. Most attacks do Normal Damage, but Killing Attacks do Killing Damage (which, as its name implies, is deadlier). Normal Damage and Killing Damage are calculated differently and applied to defenses differently. See pages 404-05 for more information.

Characters have defenses that protect them against damage. All characters have *Physical Defense,* or PD (which protects against physical attacks like punches and clubs) and *Energy Defense,* or ED (which protects against energy attacks like energy bolts or fire). PD and ED are *Normal Defenses;* they protect against Normal Damage. The character subtracts his defenses from the STUN and BODY damage done to him, and applies the remainder (if any) to his STUN and BODY. If a character hit with a 22 STUN, 6 BODY physical attack has 10 PD, he takes 12 STUN (22-10) and 0 BODY (6-10). But Normal Defenses offer no protection against Killing Damage; for that, characters need *Resistant Defenses,* such as Armor or a Force Field. See pages 409-10 for more information.

#### THE EFFECTS OF DAMAGE (PAGE 410)

If a character loses more STUN from a single attack than he has points of CON, he becomes *Stunned* (dazed and unable to act). In the above example, if the character has a CON of 12 or higher, he won't be Stunned by that attack; if his CON is 11 or less, he's Stunned. A Stunned character must spend a Phase to recover from being Stunned before he can act again.

If a character loses all of his STUN from one or more attacks, he's Knocked Out (unconscious) and completely unable to act. However, he wakes up when he regains STUN. Characters regain lost STUN by taking *Recoveries.* For each Recovery taken, the character gets back his Recovery Characteristic (REC) worth of STUN and END.

If a character loses BODY, he's injured — he suffers burns, cuts, bleeding wounds, broken bones, and so forth. If he loses all of his BODY (down to 0 BODY), he begins to bleed to death. When he reaches his negative BODY (for example, -10 BODY for someone who normally has 10 BODY), he dies. Characters heal BODY damage at the rate of REC in BODY per month.

See pages 410-13 for more information.

## WHAT ELSE YOU NEED TO PLAY

The *HERO System 5th Edition, Revised* contains everything you need to create characters and settings for a roleplaying campaign. All you need is paper to write your character down on and some dice. If you're the GM, you'll either have to create a setting and adventures for your campaign, or use published ones.

#### THE ULTIMATE GAMER'S TOOLKIT

Maybe you're used to playing other roleplaying game systems. We hope you'll switch over to using the *HERO System*, but even if you don't want to do that, you can still use the *HERO System* to improve your other game.

The *HERO System* is the ultimate gamer's toolkit. You can use it to build *anything,* from characters, to weapons, to spells, to vehicles, to whatever else you can think of. Because of the system's internal rules and logic, characters, powers, and other game elements which have the same or similar point cost have the same or similar effectiveness or power, all other things being equal. This makes it easy to determine whether a new item, spell, or power is unusually powerful and effective before you use it in game play. Few game systems provide this sort of resource. Gamemasters and players using other game systems who want to create something new typically have to "guesstimate" whether it will be effective and balanced, or unusually powerful (and thus unbalancing within the campaign).

With the *HERO System,* you can be more precise. Figure out how to create your new item or spell using the *HERO System,* then create a similar item or spell from the other game and compare the two. That gives you a good idea of whether your new creation works well as-is or needs some adjustment. Once your new creation is effective and balanced, simply convert it over to the other rule system, and you're set!

#### GO OUT AND BE A HERO!

Those are the basics. Now you can start designing your first character and get ready to play your first game!

# IF YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH THE HERO SYSTEM

You've waited for it a long time, and here it is: the Fifth Edition. You've been helping us playtest it for ten years, and it's taken months to pull together our notes and your suggestions and write it. It reflects more than an additional decade's worth of experience with the system, and incorporates new rules from many products published since the Fourth Edition debuted. We think the new *HERO System* rules are at once the most comprehensive and streamlined ever — the best we've yet produced — and we hope you'll agree.

### WHERE'D IT GO?

You'll find that some Skills, Talents, Powers, or rules have moved. For example, Fast Draw is now a Skill, Find Weakness and Luck are Powers, and Instant Change has been eliminated as a separate Power (it's now a type of Transform). If you have trouble finding something, just consult the Index.

### CONVERTING FOURTH EDITION CHARACTERS

Many of you have run or played in *HERO System* games for so long that you've got dozens, maybe even hundreds, of characters. You'll probably want to convert them over to the Fifth Edition. In most cases, no substantial changes are needed. That was our intention; we didn't want to make changes which were marginally useful but would require the revision of thousands of characters.

If the cost or nature of some of a character's abilities has changed, the GM can use several approaches to resolve the situation. He should make his decision based on what the player wants to do, what's most appropriate for the character, and what fits the character's concept the best.

In some cases, such as Flash, the change is really only cosmetic. In that case, you simply double the number of dice of Flash you have, since the cost has been changed, but so has the way the Power works — you don't have to buy more, or fewer, dice to achieve the effect you were already achieving. Just change the number on the character sheet and move on.

However, there are cases, such as Aid, where the cost of a Power has increased, but the effectiveness has stayed the same. In short, a Fourth Edition character with, say, an 8d6 Aid now can only buy a 4d6 Aid for the same points. Several options are available. The fairest one is for the GM to "grandfather" the character, giving him the additional Character Points he needs to keep the character at the same level of power for free. It's not very equitable to cut a character's power in half just because the rules have changed; if the character was doing 8d6 Aid before, he probably ought to continue doing 8d6 Aid. Penalizing the character because of a change in the game system isn't just. Sidebars throughout this book provide specific notes on grandfathering characters.

However, in some situations, many GMs would rather not "grandfather" characters this way for reasons of campaign balance or fairness between characters. In that case, players will just have to reduce their characters' level of power. At his option, the GM might give them some free Character Points to buy some other abilities or powers to make up for the loss, or eliminate a Disadvantage or two.

Sometimes the Fifth Edition rules provide a way to do something easily which was difficult under the Fourth Edition rules. For example, a character might have bought Summon with a Linked Mind Control effect to guarantee that his summoned creatures would obey him. Now Summon can do that by itself. The character should reconfigure his power according to the new rules. If the new power costs more, the GM should consider "grandfathering" him, as discussed above.

In any case where a change in the *HERO System* rules saves your character points, congratulations! You have some additional points you can spend (perhaps on new abilities from this book). GMs should not deprive characters of saved points just because a change in the rules makes something cheaper.



# CHARACTER SHEET



Many gamers who play in *HERO System* games like to use the official character sheet to keep track of their characters. At the back of this book you'll find a character sheet for *HERO System* characters. (You can also download a copy of the character sheet at www.herogames.com.) Here's an example of what a filled-out sheet looks like; it depicts Firebrand, a superhero.

## Front Side

### 1. BASIC CHARACTER INFORMATION

The first part of the character sheet contains basic information about the character — his name (and alternate identities, if any) and the name of the player. This part of the character sheet continues onto the back, where there's room to note the character's vital statistics (height, hair color, and so on) and information about the campaign the character plays in.

### 2. CHARACTERISTICS BLOCK

The next part of the character sheet lets you write down your character's Characteristics. You put the value (the character's rating in each Characteristic, such as 50 STR or 18 INT) in the "Val" column, and how many Character Points you spent on each Characteristic in the "Points" column. The "Base" column lists the rating the character starts with for free, and the "Cost" column summarizes how much additional points of each Characteristic cost. For example, Firebrand has a 23 CON — 13 points above his base 10 CON. The cost for CON is x2 (*i.e.,* 2 Character Points per point), so Jason (Firebrand's player) writes down 26 in the Points column. You can read more about Characteristics and their costs on pages 32.

Primary Characteristics also have a "Roll" column. You calculate each Characteristic's roll as 9 + (CHAR/5) or less; see page 34.

**Notes**

The "Notes" section of the Characteristics Block summarizes some of the crucial information you derive from each Characteristic. Next to STR you list the damage your character can do in Hand-To-Hand Combat, how much he can lift (see page 34), and the Endurance (END) cost of his STR (1 END per 10 STR).

Next to DEX, list the character's base OCV and DCV (each DEX/3; see page 36). For example, Firebrand has DEX 23, so his OCV and DCV are both 8.

Next to INT, list the character's PER Roll, which you calculate as 9 + (INT/5) or less (see page 348).

Next to EGO, list the character's base ECV (EGO/3; see page 374).

Next to PRE, list the character's dice in Presence Attacks — 1d6 for every 5 points of PRE, as explained on page 428.

Next to PD and ED, there are spaces to list the character's Resistant defenses, and his total PD and ED. See page 409 for more about Resistant defenses and applying them to damage.

Next to SPD is a list of numbers, 1 to 12, representing the twelve Segments in a Turn. Circle the Segments in which your character has a Phase (see page 356) so you don't forget them. For example, Firebrand has SPD 6, so he's circled 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12.

At the bottom of the Notes section is a space where you can write in the total amount of Character Points you spent on Characteristics. That way you know how much you have left to spend on Skills, Powers, and the like.

### 3. ATTACKS BLOCK

The Attacks Block lets you summarize the powers or weapons you consider to be the character's main forms of attack, so you can reference them quickly without having to look at the back of your sheet. You can also list the attacks' special effects ("SFX"), if appropriate. For example, Firebrand has fire powers, so he writes "Fire" as his attacks' SFX.

### 4. DEFENSES BLOCK

You also need to keep track of your character's defenses, and the Defenses Block lets you do that. In addition to listing total PD and ED and Resistant PD and ED (the same as you wrote in the Characteristics Block), it has space for more exotic defenses like Mental Defense and Power Defense. There's also a column for special effects ("SFX"), so that you don't forget the source/nature of your character's defense powers.

### 5. MOVEMENT BLOCK

In this section you write down how your character moves so you can easily calculate Half Moves and things like that. "Type" lists the form of movement, including the inches the character gets for free for Running, Swimming, and his horizontal and vertical Leap. The "Combat" column is for the character's inches of Combat Movement, while "NonCom" is for his Noncombat Movement (usually two times the inches of movement he paid for, but sometimes more). See page 363 regarding movement. There's also room to list movement special effects ("SFX"), if appropriate. Firebrand writes "Fire," since his fire powers allow him to fly; if he had wings, he'd write down "Wings" instead.

### 6. DAMAGE AND CHARGES TRACKER

To help you keep track of the STUN and BODY your character loses and Endurance (END) he uses in combat, this section has rows of checkboxes you can mark off during combat (and unmark as your character regains lost STUN, BODY, and END).

If your character has powers with Charges (page 284) — that he can only use a certain number of times per day — use this section to keep track of that, too. For example, if your character has a gun with six bullets, you could use six boxes in one of the "Charges" sections — just X out all the boxes beyond six so you don't accidentally think you have more bullets than you really do.

### 7. EXPERIENCE POINTS

As the campaign progresses, your character earns Experience Points (page 555) he can spend to improve his abilities and learn new ones. Write them down here, including not just the total but how many are spent and unspent.

Additionally, this section is where you should make note of your Base Points (the points the GM gives you for free to start the campaign) and points obtained from taking Disadvantages (page 326). At the start of the game, the Total Characteristics Points (1), Total Skills, Perks, & Talents Cost (10), and Total Powers/Equipment Cost (11), added together, should be equal to or less than the Base Points plus Disadvantage points. After you earn and spend Experience Points, the total points spent on the character should be equal to or less than Base Points + Disadvantages + Experience Points.

### 8. COMBAT BLOCK

The right-hand column of the front of the character sheet contains useful combat information in quick-reference form. At the top of the block, write down your character's Base OCV and Base DCV (which are also listed in the Characteristics Block (2)). Right below that, make note of any standard adjustments to OCV or DCV, such as Combat Skill Levels (page 53) the character has. There's also space to list the Total OCV and DCV — the base plus all relevant adjustments.

Below the "Combat Information" section is a summary chart listing the Combat Maneuvers. It has room to write in any additional Maneuvers the character knows, such as Martial Maneuvers he's paid Character Points for. Right below this section there's a quick-reference table for the Range Modifier and targeting.

### 9. HIT LOCATION CHART

Here's a copy of the Hit Location Chart, if your campaign makes use of that. It tells you what location corresponds to each roll, and how to modify the damage done for that location (see page 414 for more information). It's also got space to list the Defense the character has protecting each Hit Location, and how much it weighs (if it's armor or the like).

## Back Side

### 10. SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS BLOCK

If your character has purchased any Skills (page 42), Perks (page 78), or Talents (page 86), write them down here. The first column lists the Cost in Character Points, and the second the Name of the ability. If the ability has a roll (like most Skills), write it down in the third column.

For example, Firebrand knows Combat Piloting. He paid 3 Character Points for the Skill. That gives him a DEX-based roll, and since his DEX is 23, that means he has a 14- roll.

At the bottom of this block, make note of the total Character Points you've spent on Skills, Perks, and Talents.

### 11. POWERS AND EQUIPMENT BLOCK

If your character has abilities built with Powers (page 93) — spells, superpowers, psionic abilities, or the like — write them down here. If he carries equipment (weapons, armor, and so on), write that down here, too.

The first column, "Cost," is where you note the Character Point cost of the ability. (If it's something the character gets for free, like equipment in Heroic games, just leave this column blank.) The second column is the Name of the ability, if you want to give it one.

The "Power/Equipment" column is where you write down the game notation for the ability — the Powers, Advantages, and Limitations it's built with. Some complex powers may need more space; use multiple lines if necessary. If the ability costs Endurance (END), list it in the "END" column. (For guns and other equipment with Charges [page 284], you can list that here instead — just put a parentheses or brackets around the number to distinguish it from a normal END cost.)

For example, Firebrand has an ability called *Eyes Of Fire.* It costs 5 Character Points, so he puts "5" in the Cost column. He writes down "Eyes Of Fire" in the Name column. He built this power using Infrared Perception, so that's what he writes under "Power/Equipment." Since Infrared Perception does not cost END, he writes "0" in the END column.

At the bottom of this block, make note of the total Character Points you've spent on Powers and/or Equipment.

### 12. DISADVANTAGES BLOCK

Lastly, you have to make note of the Disadvantages (page 326) your character has. The Value column contains the number of points you get from the Disadvantage. Under "Disadvantage," list the Disadvantage itself by name and description, including any other information you consider relevant. If the Disadvantage requires a roll of some sort, you can note that in the "Roll" column. At the bottom of this block, make note of how many Character Points you get from Disadvantages.

**Character Name:** FIREBRAND

Alternate Identities: MARK MUNROE ❶

Player Name: JASON WALTERS

## CHARACTERISTICS

| Val | Char | Base | Cost | Points | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | STR | 10 | x1 | 5 | 12- | HTH damage 3 d6 Lift 200 END (1) |
| 23 | DEX | 10 | x3 | 39 | 14- | OCV 8 DCV 8 |
| 23 | CON | 10 | x2 | 26 | 14- | |
| 10 | BODY | 10 | x2 | 0 | 11- | ❷ |
| 15 | INT | 10 | x1 | 5 | 12- | Perception Roll 12- |
| 10 | EGO | 10 | x2 | 0 | 11- | Base ECV 3 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | x1 | 10 | 13- | Base Presence Attack 4 d6 |
| 14 | COM | 10 | x1/2 | 2 | 12- | |
| 6 | PD | (STR/5) | x1 | 3 | | Resistant PD 20 Total PD 23 |
| 10 | ED | (CON/5) | x1 | 5 | | Resistant ED 20 Total ED 30 |
| 6 | SPD | 1+ (DEX/10) | x10 | 27 | | Phases: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 |
| 8 | REC | (STR/5)+(CON/5) | x2 | 0 | | |
| 46 | END | (CON x 2) | x1/2 | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | BODY+(STR/2)+(CON/2) | x1 | 0 | 122 | **Total Characteristics Points** |

## ATTACKS

Primary attack power ENERGY BLAST 12 d6

Secondary attack power RKA 2 d6

Tertiary attack power EB - EXPLOSION 8 d6

**Attack SFX** FIRE ❸

**Other attack SFX** _____

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

**Total earned** _____

Spent ❼ _____

Unspent _____

Base points 200

Disad points 150

## DEFENSES

| | Amount | Defense SFX |
|---|---|---|
| Physical Defense | 23 | FIRE |
| Resistant Physical Defense | 20 | FIRE |
| Energy Defense | 30 | FIRE |
| Resistant Energy Defense | 20 | FIRE |
| Mental Defense | | |
| Flash Defense (_____) | ❹ | |
| Power Defense | | |
| Other: _____ | | |
| Other: _____ | | |

## MOVEMENT

| Type | Combat | NonCom |
|---|---|---|
| Run (6") ❺ | 6" | 12" |
| Swim (2") | 2" | 4" |
| H. Leap (3") | 3" | 6" |
| V. Leap (2") | 2" | 4" |
| FLIGHT | 20" | 40" |
| | | |
| | | |

**Movement SFX** _____

**Movement SFX** FIRE

## DAMAGE AND CHARGE TRACKER

**STUN** ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
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**END** ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
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## COMBAT INFORMATION

Base OCV 8 Base DCV 8

Adjustments +/- Adjustment +/-

_____ _____ ____

_____ ❽ _____ ____

**Total OCV** ____ **Total DCV** ____

Combat Skill Levels _____

_____

_____

## COMBAT MANEUVERS

| Maneuver | Phase | OCV | DCV | Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Block | 1/2 | +0 | +0 | Block, abort |
| Brace | 0 | +2 | 1/2 | +2 vs. Range Mod. |
| Disarm | 1/2 | -2 | +0 | Can disarm |
| Dodge | 1/2 | — | +3 | Abort, vs. all attacks |
| Grab | 1/2 | -1 | -2 | Grab two limbs |
| Grab By | 1/2 | -3 | -4 | Move and Grab |
| Haymaker | 1/2* | +0 | -5 | +4 Damage Classes |
| Move By | 1/2 | -2 | -2 | STR/2 + v/5 |
| Move Through | 1/2 | -v/5 | -3 | STR + v/3 |
| Set | 1 | +1 | +0 | Ranged attacks only |
| Strike | 1/2 | +0 | +0 | STR or weapon |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |

## COMBAT MODIFIERS

| Range | 0-4 | 5-8 | 9-16 | 17-32 | 33-64 | 65-128 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| RMOD | 0 | -2 | -4 | -6 | -8 | -10 |

| Targeting Shot | OCV | Hit Location |
|---|---|---|
| Head shot (Head to Shoulders) | -4 | 1d6+3 |
| High shot (Head to Vitals) | -2 | 2d6+1 |
| Body shot (Hands to Legs) | -1 | 2d6+4 |
| Low shot (Shoulders to Feet) | -2 | 2d6+7 |
| Leg shot (Vitals to Feet) | -4 | 1d6+12 |

## HIT LOCATION CHART

| Roll | Location | STUN X | NOR STUN | BODY X | To Hit | Defense Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3-5 | Head | x5 | x2 | x2 | -8 | __ / __ |
| 6 | Hands | x1 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -6 | __ / __ |
| 7-8 | Arms | x2 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -5 | __ / __ |
| 9 | Shoulders | x3 | x1 | x1 | -5 | __ / __ |
| 10-11 | Chest | x3 | ❾ | x1 | -3 | __ / __ |
| 12 | Stomach | x4 | x1.5 | x1 | -7 | __ / __ |
| 13 | Vitals | x4 | x1.5 | x2 | -8 | __ / __ |
| 14 | Thighs | x2 | x1 | x1 | -4 | __ / __ |
| 15-16 | Legs | x2 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -6 | __ / __ |
| 17-18 | Feet | x1 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -8 | __ / __ |

**Average Def** _____

DCV Modifier _____ **Total Weight** _____

## CHARACTER INFORMATION

**Character name** FIREBRAND

Height 6'1" (1) Weight 200 LBS.

Hair color BLACK Eye color BROWN

HERO SYSTEM FIFTH EDITION

## CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

**Campaign name** DEFENDER OF JUSTICE

Genre CHAMPIONS (SUPERHEROES) (1)

Gamemaster DARREN WATTS

## SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

| Cost | Name | Roll |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | CONTACT: HIGH-RANKING U.S. AIR FORCE OFFICER | 11- |
| 9 | +3 W/ FIERY BLADE, FIERY ARROW AND FIREBALL | |
| 3 | COMBAT PILOTING | 14- |
| 1 | COMPUTER PROGRAMMING | 8- |
| 3 | DEDUCTION | 12- |
| 1 | ELECTRONICS | 8- |
| 3 | KS: THE U.S. AIR FORCE | 12- |
| 1 | LS: GERMAN (BASIC CONVERSATION; ENGLISH IS NATIVE) | |
| 3 | NAVIGATION (AIR, LAND) | 12- |
| 3 | PARAMEDICS | 12- |
| 3 | POWER: FIRE POWER TRICKS | 14- |
| 3 | STEALTH | 14- |
| 3 | SYSTEMS OPERATION | 12- |
| 3 | TACTICS | 12- |
| 2 | TF: AIR VEHICLES | |
| | (10) | |
| 43 | **Total Skills, Perks & Talents Cost** | |

## POWERS AND EQUIPMENT

| Cost | Name | Power/Equipment | END |
|---|---|---|---|
| 30 | *FIRE POWERS* | ELEMENTAL CONTROL, 60-POINT POWERS | |
| 30 | 1) *FIERY BLADE* | HKA 2D6 (2D6+1 W/ STR), ARMOR PIERCING (+1/2), REDUCED ENDURANCE (0 END; +1/2) | 0 |
| 30 | 2) *FIERY ARROWS* | ENERGY BLAST 12D6 | 6 |
| 30 | 3) *FIREBALL* | ENERGY BLAST 8D6, EXPLOSION (+1/2) | 6 |
| 30 | 4) *FIRE AURA* | FORCE FIELD (20 PD/ED), REDUCED ENDURANCE (0 END; +1/2) | 0 |
| 30 | 5) *FIERY FLIGHT* | FLIGHT 20", REDUCED ENDURANCE (0 END; +1/2) | 0 |
| 5 | *EYES OF FIRE* | INFRARED VISION | 0 |
| | | (11) | |
| 185 | **Total Powers/Equipment Cost** | | |

## DISADVANTAGES

| Cost | Disadvantage | Roll | Cost | Disadvantage | Roll |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | DNPC: JENNY BURDETTE (GIRLFRIEND, NORMAL) | 8- | 10 | PSY LIM: RELUCTANT TO USE POWERS (12) | |
| 20 | HUNTED: AVADYNE, INC. (MO POW, NCI, CAPTURE/KILL) | 8- | 15 | REP: MURDEROUS SUPERVILLAIN | 11- |
| 20 | HUNTED: USAF (MO POW, NCI, CAPTURE) | 8- | 15 | SOC LIM: SECRET ID (MARK MUNROE) | |
| 20 | PSY LIM: CODE VS. KILLING | | 20 | VUL: X2 STUN/BODY FROM ICE/COLD | |
| | | | 20 | VUL: X2 STUN/BODY FROM WATER | |
| | | | 150 | **Total Disadvantages Cost** | |

# GLOSSARY



**Action**: Any act a character can perform during a Phase (*q.v.*).

**Active Points**: The total cost of a power after all Adders and Advantages are applied (without reducing the cost via Limitations or other modifiers). For example, an Energy Blast 8d6 has 40 Active Points (8 x (5 points per d6)); an Energy Blast 8d6, AP has 60 Active Points ((8 x (5 points per d6)) x1.5). Also referred to as *Active Cost.*

**Adder**: An improvement to a Power which costs a flat amount of points, rather than multiplying the cost like an Advantage does. For example, an Entangle which *Stops A Given Sense* costs +5 or +10 Character Points.

**Advantage**: See *Power Advantage.*

**AK**: Area Knowledge, a type of Knowledge Skill.

**AP**: Armor Piercing, an Advantage.

**Attack Action**: An Action requiring or involving an Attack Roll (*q.v.*). Performing an Attack Action ends a character's Phase. See page 358.

**Attack Roll**: The roll made to determine if an attack hits the target. The player rolls 3d6 and must get a number less than or equal to *11 + Attacker's OCV - Defender's DCV* to hit. Alternately, *OCV +11 - 3d6* is the DCV you hit. See page 371.

**Automaton**: A character (usually an NPC) which, although active, is not alive. Robots and zombies are examples of Automata. There are special rules for constructing and applying damage to Automata; see page 457.

**AVLD**: Attack Versus Limited Defenses; an attack with that Advantage applied to it (see page 251).

**Base**:

(1) Refers to a Characteristic, Skill, or Power at its lowest or most primary level, without any additional modifiers, bonuses, Adders, Advantages, and so forth. For example, "base CV" means CV calculated by dividing DEX by 3, without adding any bonuses from Combat Skill Levels or other sources. "Base Points" means the Character Points each character receives "for free" at the beginning of the game, which he supplements by taking Disadvantages.

(2) A Perk representing the fact that the character owns a headquarters, home base, or similar facility.

**BODY**:

(1) A Characteristic representing how much injury a character can withstand before dying.

(2) See *Count The BODY.*

**BOECV**: Based On Ego Combat Value, an Advantage.

**Breakout Roll**: The roll made by the victim of certain Mental Powers to resist or break free from the effects of those Powers. See *Mental Powers,* pages 116-21.

**Brick**: Slang term for a character whose main attribute is high STR (usually coupled with a high degree of resistance to injury).

**Called Shot**: A Placed Shot (*q.v.*).

**Casual STR**: Half of the character's STR. A character can use Casual STR to push aside or break through objects or Grabs as a Zero Phase Action.

**Caution Sign**: An indication that a Power (or other game element) may be particularly effective in some situations.

**CE**: Change Environment, a Power.

***Champions:*** See *Genre.*

**Character**: A person in the game setting — a being constructed by a player or GM and roleplayed by the person who constructed it. The GM's characters are usually villains or nonplayer characters (NPCs); the players' characters (PCs) are usually the heroes or protagonists of the campaign.

**Characteristic**: One of a character's innate physical or mental capabilities, such as Strength, Intelligence, or Speed. See page 32.

**Characteristic Roll**: A roll, similar to a Skill Roll, derived from a Characteristic using the formula (9+(CHAR/5)). Characters use Characteristic Rolls to determine whether they can accomplish certain tasks.

**Character Points**: The points used to create a character by purchasing Characteristics, Skills, Perks, Talents, and Powers.

**CK**: City Knowledge, a type of Knowledge Skill.

**COM**: Comeliness, a Characteristic.

**Combat Movement**: Moving while trying to present a difficult target and seeking out targets to attack. A character using Combat Movement gets his full OCV and DCV, but moves more slowly than one using Noncombat Movement (*q.v.*).

**Combat Value**: See *CV.*

**Complementary Skill**: A Skill used to make another Skill Roll easier. See page 44.

**Compound Power**: An ability or power constructed by using two or more Powers or other game elements. Typically it involves the *Linked* Limitation (page 299) or a partially-Limited power (page 282). For example, a "Flare Blast" that combines an Energy Blast 8d6 with a Sight Group Flash 4d6 is a compound power.

**CON**: Constitution, a Characteristic.

**Count The BODY:** Determine the number of BODY rolled on the dice as if Normal Damage were done by the attack. This is referred to in the text as "count the Normal Damage BODY." See page 404.

**Count The Total:** Determine the total rolled on the dice by adding them together. For example, the total of a 5d6 roll of 6, 5, 4, 3, and 1 would be 19.

**CSL:** Combat Skill Level (see page 53).

**CuK:** Culture Knowledge, a type of Knowledge Skill.

**CV:** Combat Value, determined by dividing your DEX by 3 and applying any modifiers from Combat Maneuvers, equipment, surprise, and the like. For Mental Powers, use Ego Combat Value (ECV), calculated by dividing your EGO by 3 and applying any modifiers.

CV is divided into Offensive Combat Value (OCV) and Defensive Combat Value (DCV). OCV and DCV both equal CV, but modifiers may affect them differently. Similarly, ECV is divided into Offensive ECV (OECV) and Defensive ECV (DECV), which equal ECV.

For more information on calculating CVs, see *Fighting,* page 371.

**d6:** A six-sided die.

**DCV:** Defensive Combat Value. See *CV.*

**Damage Class:** An incremental measurement of the amount of damage an attack does. See *Determining Damage,* pages 403-13

***Dark Champions:*** See *Genre.*

**DECV:** Defensive Ego Combat Value. See *CV.*

**DEF:** Defense, meaning both Physical Defense (PD) and Energy Defense (ED). Commonly used to refer to the Defense value of things like walls, vehicles, Entangles, inanimate objects in general, and the like. DEF is Resistant.

**Defensive Action:** An Action which characters can Abort to, or which automatically goes first if attempted by a character with a Held Action (*q.v.*) simultaneously with a non-defensive Action by another character. See pages 361-62.

**Delayed An Action:** See *Held Action.*

**DEX:** Dexterity, a Characteristic.

**DI:**

1. An abbreviation for the Power *Density Increase.*

2. An abbreviation for *Danger International* (see *Genre*).

**Disadvantage:** A drawback, complication, or ongoing problem a character suffers from. Taking Disadvantages (such as having a Social Limitation or a DNPC) limits a character, but also fleshes him out and makes him more fun to play. Furthermore, Disadvantages provide more Character Points to build the character with.

**DNPC:** Dependent Non-Player Character, a *Disadvantage.*

**EB:** Energy Blast.





EC: Elemental Control. See *Power Framework*.

ECV: Ego Combat Value. See *CV*.

ECV Attack Roll: The roll made to determine if a mental attack hits the target. The player rolls 3d6 and must get a number less than or equal to *11 + Attacker's OECV - Defender's DECV* to hit. Alternately, *OECV +11 - 3d6* is the DECV you hit. See page 374.

ED: Energy Defense, a Characteristic.

Effect Roll: The roll made to determine the effect of a Mental Power on a target. See page 117. In a more generic sense, it can also mean the roll made to determine the effect of any Power.

EGO: Ego, a Characteristic.

Elemental Control: A type of Power Framework (*q.v.*) through which several Powers with common special effects are bought. See page 312.

END: Endurance, a Characteristic.

Energy Projector: Slang term for a character whose primary defining ability is to project bolts of energy as an attack. Also known as an "EP."

Experience Points: Character Points awarded during a campaign to reflect characters' accomplishments and players' roleplaying skills. Experience Points are spent to improve existing abilities and learn new ones.

FF: Force Field.

Figured Characteristics: See *Characteristics*

Framework: See *Power Framework*.

Full Move: An Action a character takes in which he moves more than half of his inches of movement.

Full Phase: An Action which requires a character's entire Phase to perform. The character may take no other Actions that Phase. Examples of Full Phase Actions include using more than half of your inches of movement (*i.e.,* a Full Move), taking a Recovery, recovering from being Stunned, changing a Clip, or attacking before making a Half Phase Action.

FW: Force Wall (sometimes also used for Find Weakness).

Gadgeteer: Slang term for a character whose main attributes are his technical skills and equipment.

Genre: The type of campaign being played. Different genres may use the *HERO System* a little differently; each will involve slight additions or changes to the rules to simulate how that genre works. Some of the genre books published by Hero Games include:

*Champions:* Comic book superhero roleplaying

*Cyber Hero:* Cyberpunk science fiction roleplaying

*Danger International:* A subgenre of *Dark Champions* that refers to espionage roleplaying

*Dark Champions:* Modern-day action-adventure roleplaying, including vigilantes, spies, cops, and the like

*Fantasy Hero:* Fantasy roleplaying

*Pulp Hero:* Pulp-era (1920s-30s) roleplaying

*Star Hero:* Science fiction roleplaying

*Western Hero:* Wild West roleplaying

GM: Game Master — the originator, narrator, "director," referee, and arbiter of a roleplaying game session.

HA: Hand-To-Hand Attack (a Power).

Half Move: An Action a character takes in which he moves up to half of his inches of movement.

Half Phase, Half Phase Action: An Action which only requires half a Phase to perform (in other words, a character can perform two Half Phase Actions per Phase). Half Phase Actions include using up to half of your inches of movement, opening a door, or using the Power *Find Weakness*. Attacks only take a Half Phase if made after performing any other type of Half Phase Action.

Hand-To-Hand Combat (HTH): Combat between characters who are standing in the same or adjacent hexes. Usually HTH Combat involves punching or melee weapons such as swords, not attacks which work at range (such as guns or energy blasts).

Held Action: An Action not taken on the character's DEX in a Phase, but instead "held" or delayed until a later DEX or Segment for some reason. See page 360.

Heroic: General term for campaigns in which the PCs are primarily normal, having Skills, Perks, and possibly Talents or minor special abilities built with Powers, but few or no overt superhuman powers.

Hex: A standard unit of measurement in the game — a six-sided area one inch (25mm) across on a map, representing an area 2 meters across (approximately 6.5 feet) in the game setting. Hexes are used to measure range, movement, and areas in the *HERO System*. (Solely for purposes of calculating the square footage of a building or the like, consider hexes to be measured from corner to corner.) See *Inch.*

HKA: Hand-To-Hand Killing Attack (a Power).

Holding An Action: See *Held Action.*

HRRP: High Range Radio Perception (see page 163).

HTH: Hand-To-Hand Combat (*q.v.*)

Human Height: The height of a standard person in the game. For game purposes, the average person is considered to be about 6 feet tall (roughly, one game inch [1"]).

Human Lifespan: The lifespan of a standard person in the game. For game purposes, the average person is considered to live to age 100.

Human Mass: The weight of a standard person in the game. For game purposes, the average person is considered to weigh 100 kg (220 pounds).

IAF: Inobvious Accessible Focus, a type of Limitation.

IIF: Inobvious Inaccessible Focus, a type of Limitation.

Inch: A standard unit of measurement in the game, also called a Hex (*q.v.*).

INT: Intelligence, a Characteristic.

IPE: Invisible Power Effects, an Advantage.

IR: Infrared (usually referring to Infrared Perception, an Enhanced Sense).

KA: Killing Attack.

Killing Damage: The damage done by Killing Attacks, such as bullets, knives, claws, and the like. To determine it, roll the dice. The total on the dice is the amount of BODY the target takes. To determine the STUN damage done, roll 1d6-1 (minimum of 1) and multiply the BODY done by the number rolled. Only Resistant Defense protects against Killing Damage. For complete information, see *Determining Damage,* pages 403-13.

Knockback (KB): Being knocked backward by the force of an attack, a possible effect of being hit in combat. See page 418.

Knocked Out: Unconscious. A character is Knocked Out when he loses all of his STUN due to damage from attacks. See *Effects Of Damage,* pages 410-13.

KS: Knowledge Skill.

Limitation: See *Power Limitation.*

Limited: Bought with, or subject to, a Power Limitation.

Line Of Sight: The method by which characters target Mental Powers. See *Mental Powers,* page 116.

LOS: Line Of Sight (*q.v.*).

LS: Life Support (a Power).

m:

1. When used in conjunction with a measurement, m is an abbreviation for "meter".

2. When written next to the cost of a slot in a Multipower, m stands for a "multi," or Flexible, slot.

Martial Artist: A character whose main attribute is skill at HTH Combat without having a high STR.

Mentalist: Slang term for a character whose main attribute is mental powers. Also called a Psionic or a Psychic.

MP: Multipower. See *Power Framework.*

Multiple-Power Attack: An attack made using two or more abilities at once. See page 358.

Mystic: A character whose main attribute is powers deriving from magic or magical phenomena or devices. This includes spellcasters, characters whose powers derive from blessings or curses, characters who possess enchanted items, and so forth.

Naked Advantage (Adder): An Advantage (or Adder) that's not attached to a power. See page 244.

NCI: Noncombat Influence. See *Hunted,* page 335.

NCM: Normal Characteristic Maxima (*q.v.*) (sometimes also used for Noncombat Movement).

NND: A No Normal Defense attack; an attack with that Advantage (see page 265).

Noncombat Movement: Moving without trying to present a difficult target or seeking targets to attack so as to achieve higher speeds. Characters using Noncombat Movement are at ½ DCV, 0 OCV.

Nonplayer Character: See *Character.*

Nonresistant: Normal Defenses (*q.v.*) — defenses which do not protect against Killing Damage.

Nontargeting Sense: A Sense which a character cannot use to locate targets in combat. For normal

humans, Nontargeting Senses include Hearing, Smell, and Taste. See *Targeting Sense.*

**Normal Characteristic Maxima:** An upper limit on the Characteristics of normal humans. Beyond this limit they must pay double to increase their Characteristics. See pages 32, 329.

**Normal Damage:** The damage done by most attacks, including Energy Blasts, fists, clubs, and the like. To determine it, roll the dice. The total on the dice is the amount of STUN the target takes. The BODY is determined by looking at the numbers rolled: every 1 rolled does 0 BODY, every 2-5 rolled does 1 BODY, and every 6 rolled does 2 BODY. (Thus, the number of BODY done is usually close to the number of dice rolled.) Normal Damage is affected by both Normal and Resistant Defenses. For complete information, see *Determining Damage,* pages 403-13.

**Normal Defenses:** Defenses which protect against Normal Damage, but not against Killing Damage. See pages 409-10 for more information.

**NPC:** Nonplayer Character. See *Character.*

**OAF:** Obvious Accessible Focus, a type of Limitation.

**OCV:** Offensive Combat Value. See *CV.*

**OECV:** Offensive Ego Combat Value. See *CV.*

**OIF:** Obvious Inaccessible Focus, a type of Limitation.

**OIHID:** Only In Heroic Identity, a Limitation representing a Power that only works when the character is in a specific identity or form.

**PC:** Player Character; a character whose actions are controlled by one of the players. See *Character.*

**PD:** Physical Defense, a Characteristic.

**Penalty Skill Level:** A type of Skill Level which can only be used to offset a specific type of negative modifier to a character's OCV. Examples include Range Skill Levels (RSLs) and Targeting Skill Levels.

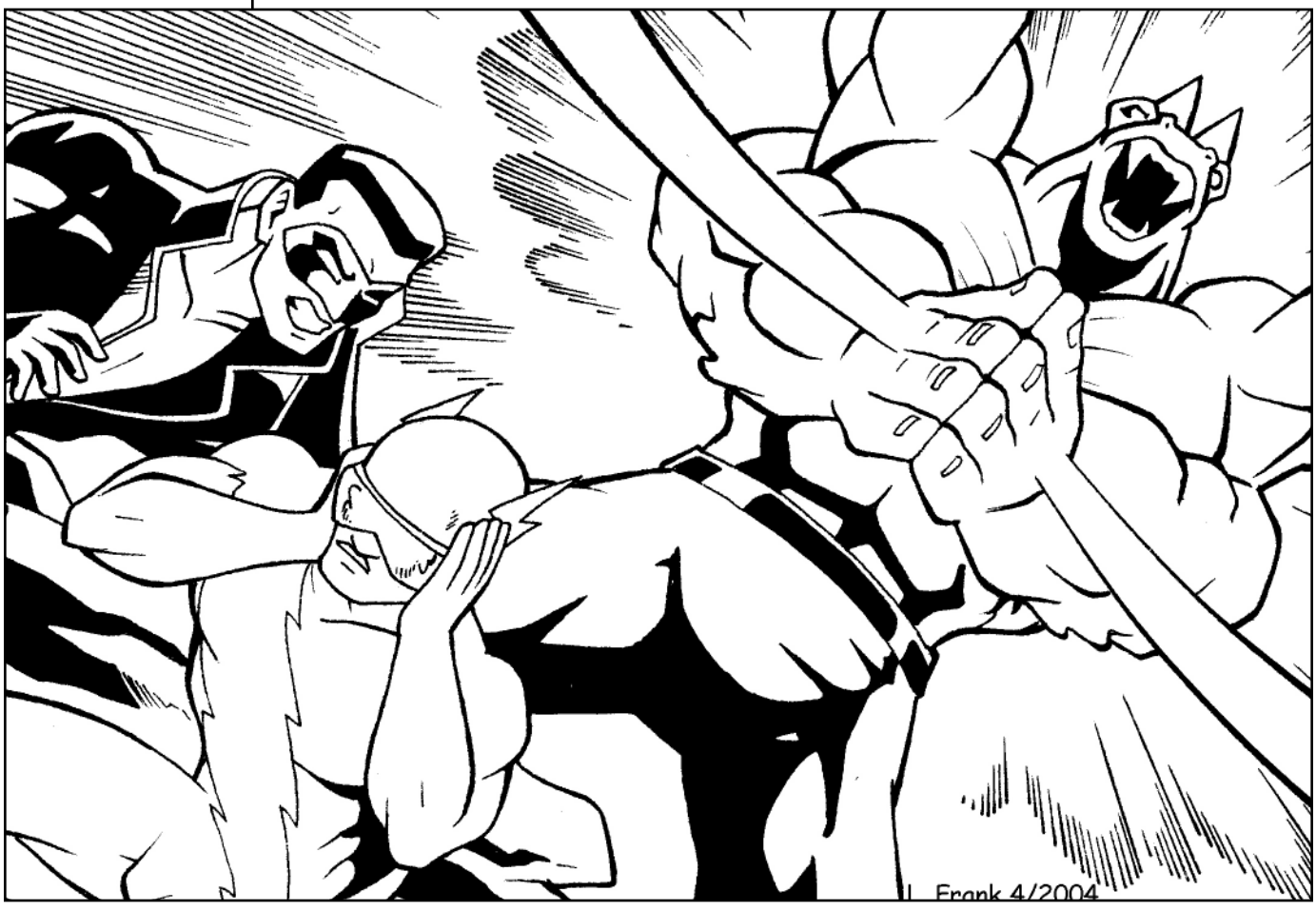
**PER Roll:** Perception Roll, a roll made to see if a character perceives something with one of his Senses. A character's base PER Roll is (9+(INT/5)) or less.

**Phase:** A Segment (*q.v.*) on which a character can perform an Action. A character's SPD determines his Phases. See also *Full Phase, Half Phase,* and *Zero Phase Action.*

**Placed Shot:** An attack made with the intention of hitting a particular part of the target's body, such as the head or hands. This involves a negative OCV modifier. See page 415.

**Post-Segment 12:** A period between Turns which takes no time. After each Segment 12, a Turn ends, and in the Post-Segment 12 period before the next Turn begins, characters automatically get to take a Recovery.

**Power:** When capitalized (Power), this term signifies a game element typically used to build the



unusual or superhuman abilities characters have in some campaigns (such as the spells of a wizard or the superpowers of a superhero). Characters also use Powers to build many types of equipment. Powers are purchased with Character Points.

When not capitalized (power), this term signifies any unusual or superhuman ability a character may possess. Typically players create these abilities with Powers.

Power Advantage: A Power Modifier applied to a Power to make that Power more useful or effective. This increases the cost of the Power.

Powered Armor: Slang term for a character whose main attribute is a suit of high-tech armor. Also called a Battlesuit.

Power Framework: Power Modifiers which change the way a character's Powers are grouped, structured, and/or bought. The Power Frameworks are Elemental Controls (ECs), Multipowers (MPs), and Variable Power Pools (VPPs). See pages 310-25.

Power Limitation: A Power Modifier applied to a Power which makes that Power less useful, or restricts its use in some way. This reduces the cost of the Power.

Power Modifier: A Power Advantage, Power Limitation, or Power Framework (*q.v.*).

PRE: Presence, a Characteristic.

Primary Characteristics: See *Characteristics.*

PS: Professional Skill.

Psionic, Psychic: See *Mentalist.*

PSL: Penalty Skill Level (*q.v.*)

Ranged Combat: Combat which takes place at any distance beyond HTH Combat range and involves the use of ranged attacks such as firearms, energy bolts, arrows, or thrown knives.

Range Modifier: A penalty to an Attack Roll which represents how much more difficult it is to hit targets far away from you. The further away you are from a target, the greater the Range Modifier (and thus the worse the penalty). The Range Modifier also applies to PER Rolls.

Real Points: The final cost of a power after all Advantages and Limitations are applied — the actual number of points the character spends to buy the power. For example, an Energy Blast 8d6 bought with the Limitation *OAF* costs 20 Real Points (a base of 40 Active Points, subject to a -1 Limitation). Also referred to as *Real Cost.*

REC: Recovery, a Characteristic.

Recovery:

1. A Characteristic (REC) which measures how fast a character Recovers from taking damage.

2. An Action in which a character gets back his REC worth of STUN and END. All characters get an automatic Recovery in Post-Segment 12. This is also called "taking a Recovery."

Reserved Action: See *Held Action.*

Resistant Defenses: Defenses which protect against Killing Damage. See *Killing Damage, Normal Defenses.*

RKA: Ranged Killing Attack.

RSL: Ranged Skill Level, a type of Penalty Skill Level (*q.v.*).

Segment: The smallest unit of time in the game, equal to 1 second. There are 12 Segments in a Turn. A Segment on which a character can act is one of that character's *Phases* (*q.v.*).

Sell Back: Reduce a character's natural abilities. The character gains more Character Points to spend on other things when he does this; hence he is "selling back" something to buy something else. For example, all characters start with DEX 10 and 6" of Running. If a character starts the game with DEX 8 and 4" Running, he gains 10 Character Points (6 from reducing his DEX by 2 points, 4 from reducing his Running by 2").

SER: The Standard Effect Rule (see page 104).

Simulated Sense Group Rule: Senses that belong to the Unusual Sense Group are usually also grouped according to how they work and/or how the character uses them. For example, Detect Gold bought to simulate the ability to smell gold would become part of the Smell/Taste Group, and could be affected by Sense-Affecting Powers which affect the Smell/Taste Sense Group. See pages 160, 349.

Skill: A learned ability or body of knowledge the character possesses. Examples include the ability to pick locks, drive a car, or know all about literature. Characters purchase Skills with Character Points.

Skill Versus Skill Contest: A method for resolving competing actions. The character taking action makes a Skill Roll, and if he succeeds, the character opposing him has a -1 to his Skill Roll for every 1 point the first character made his roll by.

Slot: One of the powers within a Power Framework. For example, a Multipower with Energy Blast, Killing Attack, Flight, and Force Field has four slots, one with each power.

SPD: Speed, a Characteristic.

Special Effects: The defining features of a power or maneuver, chosen by the player. Special effects determine how a power or maneuver is used, what Advantages and Limitations it has, and so forth. Examples of special effects include Fire, Weather, Sound, Gadget, Mutant Powers, Cosmic Energy, or Electricity. An Energy Blast defined as projecting a bolt of flame at the target would have a Fire special effect. See page 96.

SS: Science Skill.

Standard Effect Rule: A rule which allows a character to establish a set effect for a Power which involves rolling dice to determine its effect, thus creating predictability in exchange for not being able to achieve the spectacular results of a high roll. See page 104.

Stop Sign: An indication that a Power (or other game element) can alter a GM's storyline substantially, or cause similar problems.



STR: Strength, a Characteristic.

STUN: Stun, a Characteristic.

Stunned: A character becomes Stunned when he takes more STUN damage from a single attack than he has points of CON. See *Effects Of Damage,* pages 410-13.

Superheroic: General term for campaigns in which the player characters are primarily superhuman, having not only Skills, Perks, and Talents, but overt unusual or superhuman abilities created with Powers.

Taking A Recovery: See *Recovery.*

Talents: Weird and unusual abilities some characters possess. Examples include Ambidexterity, Eidetic Memory, and Lightning Reflexes.

Targeting Sense: A Sense a character can use to determine the exact location of targets in combat (and therefore attack them at no penalty). For normal humans, Sight is the only Targeting Sense. See *Senses In The HERO System,* pages 348-55.

TF: Transport Familiarity, the Skill of knowing how to drive or pilot various types of vehicles. See page 73.

Time Chart: A chart in the game used to determine the effects of powers and abilities which work over long periods of time. See page 45.

TK: Telekinesis, a Power which allows characters to manipulate objects at a distance.

Turn: A unit of time in the game equal to 12 seconds. Each second is called a Segment.

u: When written next to the cost of a slot in a Multipower, u stands for an "ultra," or Fixed, slot.

UOO: Usable On Others (an Advantage). Usable As Attack ("UAA") powers are a form of UOO.

UV: Ultraviolet (usually referring to Ultraviolet Perception, an Enhanced Sense).

Value: The number defining a Characteristic or Advantage.

Velocity-Based DCV: An optional method of calculating a character's DCV based on how fast he's moving; see page 364.

VPP: Variable Power Pool. See *Power Framework.*

WF: Weapon Familiarity, the Skill of using various types of weapons. See page 75.

Zero Phase Action: An Action which takes so little time that it can be performed at the beginning a Phase or after a character makes a Half Phase Action, but not after performing a Full Phase Action or making an attack. Zero Phase Actions include turning a Power on or off or switching slots in a Multipower.

chapter one:



# CHARACTER CREATION

# CHARACTER CREATION BASICS



The primary focus of any roleplaying game is the player characters (PCs): the heroes of the story, the characters around whom the game's main action revolves. Therefore players should create intriguing, interesting, well-developed characters — the sort of characters who *contribute* to the story, rather than simply taking part in it. This section of the *HERO System 5th Edition, Revised* shows you how to create just that sort of character.

## CHARACTER POINTS

The *HERO System* allows you to create precisely the types of characters you want to play. You construct your character with *Character Points,* which you use to "purchase" abilities and attributes for him. Character Points come from two sources.

The first is *Base Points.* These are Character Points you get for free from the GM when you start to design a character.

The second is *points from Disadvantages.* If the Base Points aren't enough for you to create the character you have in mind, you can take Disadvantages for him. Disadvantages are complications, hindrances, hardships, or flaws your character suffers from (see page 326). They help to simulate character conception and build flaws into a character for him to overcome. A character who does this — who's well-rounded, with flaws as well as good qualities — receives additional points with which to buy abilities. Each Disadvantage a character takes is worth a certain number of additional Character Points — the more severe the Disadvantage, the more Character Points it's worth to your character (but the more it handicaps him). The GM will tell you how many Character Points your character can acquire by taking Disadvantages.

### SPENDING CHARACTER POINTS

Creating a character involves choosing the abilities, personality, and other qualities you want for him, and then figuring out how to create and buy them using the *HERO System* rules. Doing this from scratch takes a fair amount of time, especially the first few times you do it. Don't worry, it becomes much faster as you familiarize yourself with the rules.

For game purposes, numerous attributes (each of which is described in its own section later in this rulebook) define characters:

Characteristics: The character's natural physical and mental abilities. Examples of Characteristics include Dexterity, Comeliness, and Physical Defense. See pages 32-41.

Skills: Abilities an individual can learn from study. Anyone can learn Skills; there's nothing especially mysterious or unusual about them. Examples of Skills include Computer Programming, Oratory, and Martial Arts. See pages 42-77.

Perks: Useful resources and privileges a character has access to. Perks are not innate; a character can lose, gain, or alter them over time. Examples of Perks include Money, Diplomatic Immunity, and Followers. See pages 78-85.

Disadvantages: Personal complications, hindrances, drawbacks, and difficulties that affect a character. Examples of Disadvantages include following a "code of honor" (Psychological Limitation), having a deadly enemy or arch-nemesis (Hunted), or being blind (Physical Limitation). See pages 326-41.

In some campaigns, characters can also have

Talents: Weird and unusual abilities some characters possess. Unlike Skills, a character typically can't just learn Talents the way he does Skills — he must have them as innate abilities, magical gifts, or the like. Talents are a half-way step between Powers and Skills — they exist in the real world, but are extremely rare and/or inexplicable. Examples of Talents include Eidetic Memory, Speed Reading, and Ambidexterity. See pages 86-92.

Powers: The amazing and unnatural abilities possessed by characters in genres such as comic book superheroes, Fantasy, and Science Fiction. Characters in Superheroic games (see below) can buy Powers as innate abilities; characters in Heroic games use Powers to construct various types of abilities or equipment which are not "superpowers" *per se*. Examples of Powers include Invisibility, Flight, and Telepathy. See pages 93-242.

# HEROIC VERSUS SUPERHEROIC

One of the most important distinctions the GM must make concerns the type of campaign he will run. All games which use the *HERO System* fall into one of two categories: Heroic and Superheroic.

The most obvious difference between characters in Heroic and Superheroic campaigns is the amount of points characters are built on — Superheroic characters are typically built on a lot more, often hundreds more. However, this distinction is irrelevant: the amount of points a character is built on does *not* define whether he's Heroic or Superheroic. It's possible to build Heroic characters on 1,500 points, or Superheroic characters on 150. What characters spend their points on, not how many points they have, defines the type of campaign.

## HEROIC CAMPAIGNS

In a Heroic campaign, the characters are extremely skilled individuals, but "normal" humans nonetheless. Some examples of Heroic campaigns include sword and sorcery Fantasy, modern espionage adventures, swashbuckling pirates, star-spanning Science Fiction epics, and post-holocaust exploration.

Characters in Heroic campaigns can always buy Characteristics, Skills, and Perks. They can ordinarily buy Talents, and can usually buy Powers to simulate some of the things they can do (such as the ability to run faster, leap further, or punch harder). They can also use Powers to represent certain types of racial abilities, advanced training, or the like. For example, a bat-like alien could have Sonar, or a street vigilante might buy his ability to hide in the shadows as a Limited form of Invisibility. But normally they cannot buy overt superhuman abilities, like the power to walk through walls or teleport. One exception: in some campaigns, such as Fantasy, Heroic characters can buy the ability to cast spells, use psionic powers, and so forth. The important thing to remember is that in a Heroic campaign, Powers aren't the focus of the game — most adventurers rely on their Skills. Powers are something wondrous, unusual, and (often) unreliable.

Heroic characters are typically subject to the *Normal Characteristic Maxima* rules, which restrict their ability to buy Characteristics: beyond a certain point, they have to pay *double cost* to improve their Characteristics. They do not receive Disadvantage points for this. See page 32 for more information.

On the other hand, Heroic characters do *not* have to pay Character Points for ordinary equipment like cameras, handguns, radios, gas masks, swords, and the like. They get that sort of gear by paying money in the context of the game, having it issued to them by their superiors, building it using their own Skills, and so forth. A Superheroic character who needs a flashlight has to pay Character Points for it; a Heroic character just has to run down to the corner store and spend $5. (The GM determines how much money your character has, unless the character's bought the *Money* Perk.)

## SUPERHEROIC CAMPAIGNS

Superheroic campaigns include any campaign in which the majority of the characters have unusual or superhuman abilities and tend to rely on them more than on Skills. This includes comic book superhero campaigns, high-powered Fantasy games, some anime-influenced campaigns, and the like. Superheroic characters are usually built on many more points than Heroic characters.

Superheroic characters can buy Characteristics, Skills, Perks, Talents, Powers, or anything else they want (subject to the GM's permission, of course). Depending on the type of campaign, they may be able to do things like teleport, fire bolts of energy from their hands, survive the impact of tank shells or dragons' breath, and so on. However, they must pay Character Points for *everything* they want to have or be able to do. This includes mundane equipment like cameras, handguns, radios, gas masks, and the like. They don't get any abilities or equipment "for free." This doesn't mean your character can't grab an enemy's weapon in combat and use it briefly — no mystical force prevents him from acquiring equipment. But if he wants to continue using that piece of equipment game after game, he has to pay Character Points for it.



Why is this? Why can't a character in a Superheroic campaign go to a store and buy a radio, a gun, or an enchanted sword? The reasons are twofold. The first involves fairness to all characters. A character who can naturally hear radio must spend his precious Character Points for the ability. It's unfair to this character for other characters to simply buy a radio with money, thus acquiring the same ability without spending any Character Points. The same holds true for guns, body armor, and life support devices. By requiring characters to pay Character Points for all equipment and abilities, the *HERO System* enforces game balance.

Second, making characters pay Character Points helps GMs enforce the Superheroic genres' conventions. In comic books, high-powered Fantasy novels, and other source literature, heroes and villains don't usually buy radios or magic swords, even when it would make sense for them to do so. Similarly, many a superhero would be better off if he had a gun — even if he never used it on a living opponent. So why doesn't he get one? Because he's a *superhero,* and superheroes generally don't use guns. That's why characters in Superheroic campaigns can't just go out and stock up on merchandise — they have to pay Character Points first. In short, it's a genre thing.

There are other minor differences between Superheroic campaigns and Heroic campaigns, which the text mentions. Because Superheroic campaigns are often much more high-powered than Heroic ones, the text also include recommendations about how the GM should use optional rules with each category of campaign. As with all other parts of the *HERO System*, the GM should pick and choose from among these rules as he sees fit. For example, if a GM wants to run a Heroic campaign featuring comic book superhero characters, he can; it will just feel a little different from the standard comic book fare.

# RESTRICTIONS ON SPENDING POINTS

The *HERO System* doesn't establish any restrictions on what you can spend Character Points on. If you want to spend most of them on Characteristics and just a few on Skills, you can; if you want to buy a lot of Powers for your character but leave him with more or less ordinary Characteristics, you can. Establishing artificial restrictions would make it harder for you to build the character *you* want, and that's contrary to the spirit of the *HERO System.*

To guide your decisionmaking and help you create a fun, balanced character, the Character Ability Guidelines Table (page 28) indicates the "average" ranges of characters' abilities in most games. Additionally, some GMs establish limits or guidelines for spending points to ensure you create characters appropriate for their campaigns — so check with your GM before you start building a character for his game.

Although there are a lot of different game elements you can spend points on when building a character — Skills, Powers, Talents, and so on — it's not difficult to gain enough familiarity with the *HERO System* to start the character creation process. Just skim over pages 42-242 to learn what the different game elements and options are, then come up with an idea for a character and focus in on the elements most appropriate for it. For example, if you want to create a burly warrior character, you need to pay close attention to things like Characteristics and weapon Skills, but you can ignore most of the Powers and Skills. As you expand your character concept and create other characters, you can study other game elements more closely and learn about them.

It's your responsibility to spend your points fairly and properly to create a character who contributes to the campaign. The rules make note of Powers and other game elements that can cause problems if you're not careful, but ultimately it's up to you to create and play your character in the proper spirit. The freedom the *HERO System* offers requires players to use it maturely and reasonably, and GMs to oversee their use of it responsibly, or else everyone's enjoyment of the game suffers.

To put it another way: when you're creating characters and playing the game, use your common sense, your dramatic sense (your sense of what's "dramatically appropriate" for the campaign or the adventure), and your understanding of game balance considerations to do what's best for everyone involved.

# CHARACTER CONCEPTION





To create a character, you need a character conception. This is your initial idea of what the character does, how he reacts to different situations, his background, and so forth. You may wish to play a steely-eyed space smuggler, an immensely strong superhero, a confident femme fatale, a mysterious wizard, or any of a vast number of characters appropriate to a given campaign. The sharper your mental picture, the easier it will be for you to create the character.

Character conception is also the most important thing to remember when actually playing the character. The all-important basis of *roleplaying* games is that players role-play. In other words, players put together their characters according to their character conceptions, and in all adventures react to situations as their characters would. If you've designed a character who's a reckless, overconfident hero of heroes, the character should act fearless, even if you, the player, would rather flee. On the other hand, you may wish to portray a nearsighted coward who would respond to most threats by running away. Both of these are acceptable character conceptions offering rich opportunities for roleplaying.

In short, try to develop a character conception you'll enjoy roleplaying. Ideally, this character will also contribute to the other players' enjoyment of the game, and offer the GM ideas for adventures. To design the most suitable character, you should:

1. Talk to the GM and learn about the nature and scope of the campaign. Make an effort to create a character who fits in comfortably. You should also find out whether to build your character for a Heroic or Superheroic campaign, and any other guidelines the GM may have for characters or the rules.

2. Become familiar with the genre. You don't have to read reams of Fantasy literature or every comic book ever published, but you should at least understand what the campaign tries to simulate. This helps you create a character appropriate to the stories you play in. Chapter Five has some basic information about the most popular genres.

3. Lastly, get inside the character's head. How does he respond to danger? To prolonged stress? Is he bitter or romantic? Curious or indifferent? Outgoing or introverted? Absentminded or fiercely intent? Comprehending the character lets you design him to fill out this conception.

## TYPES OF CHARACTERS

You can divide the people who populate any *HERO System* campaign world into three categories, which break down into numerous subcategories. These are:

Normals — the everyday inhabitants of the world;

Heroes — the best people a typical society can produce; and

Superheroes — immensely powerful individuals the likes of which don't exist in the real world.

Player Characters (PCs) can fit into any category, although characters in Heroic campaigns are usually "heroes," and characters in Superheroic campaigns are usually "superheroes."

The GM determines which category the PCs belong to. This establishes how many Character Points the PCs begin with and the maximum number of Disadvantages a character can have, as shown in the Character Types Guidelines Table and Character Ability Guidelines Table. As the tables' names indicate, their numbers are *guidelines;* the GM can alter them as he sees fit. For example, if a GM wants to run a Fantasy campaign with characters who have a high level of skill in many areas, he might give players a Superheroic number of points to build characters with, but impose restrictions that limit the amount of points they can spend on any one Skill, spell, or ability.

Every character has a base number of Character Points, as indicated in the Character Types Guidelines Table. These Base Points are "free"; the character gets them from the GM at the start of the campaign. A character can also take Disadvantages, up to the maximum point value listed, to get extra Character Points and develop his background. A character doesn't have to take the maximum number of Disadvantage Points — he could, for example, take none at all. What characters can spend their Character Points on depends on the type of campaign and the GM.

By adventuring, characters accumulate *Experience Points* (page 555). Experience Points are identical to Character Points. Characters use them to purchase new Skills (or improve ones they already know), improve Characteristics, diminish or even eliminate Disadvantages, and so on.

### SIX SOURCES OF INSPIRATION FOR CHARACTERS

Having trouble coming up with a good idea for a character? Here are some possible sources of inspiration.

1. Abilities Or Profession: Sometimes it's easiest to decide what you want your character to do, instead of creating his personality and background first. As you buy the paladin abilities, superpowers, or technological skills you want to use during the game, you'll probably come up with a few ideas about the character himself. Where did he learn or develop his skills and abilities? Why did he enter the profession he's now in?

2. Clothing And Equipment: How does the character dress? What equipment (including weapons) does he carry? Think of some gear and garb that appeals to you, then decide why the character uses or favors them. This, in turn, should give you ideas about his background and personality.

3. Name: Sometimes the right name can act as a springboard for all sorts of ideas about your character (particularly names with an appended nickname or sobriquet, like Eric the Red, Drago One-Ear, or Ivan the Terrible).

4. Source Material: Pick a character you like from a book, movie,

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television show, or other form of source material, then duplicate him for the campaign. But try to incorporate at least a *few* changes to individualize the character and make him your own. That way you can say, "He's like Indiana Jones, but he uses kung fu instead of a whip" or "He's like Gandalf, but friendlier, and he mainly uses weather magic."

5. Visual Appearance: Find a miniature or picture in a magazine which appeals to your imagination, then create a character and personality to fit it.

6. Yourself: Some players enjoy playing fantasized versions of themselves (with the good qualities exaggerated and bad habits downplayed, of course!). Think about what you might be like if you lived in the campaign's setting, then extrapolate from there to create a character whose personality you should find very easy to play.

**NORMALS, HEROES, AND SUPERHEROES**

*Normals* range from characters so Incompetent they actually start the game with negative points (meaning they must reduce some Characteristics) to Competent (or Talented) Normals who are just shy of being heroes. Incompetent Normals include feeble informers, small children, old or infirm people, and the like. Competent Normals include Olympic or professional athletes, Nobel Prize-winning scientists, and other such high achievers. Normals and Skilled Normals fall everywhere between these two extremes. Most of the time, Normals are NPCs; PCs are almost always at least Hero-level. See pages 344-46 for example character sheets for Normals, and pages 40-41 for the Characteristics Comparison and Benchmark Tables.

*Heroes* can accomplish feats that impress Competent Normals. They get involved in the most rigorous and dangerous of all escapades in their society. The Hero has the competence level of most characters in TV shows, movies, and books. Very Powerful Heroes are probably the highest level of character in a Heroic campaign.

*Superheroes* are the most powerful of characters — the amazing paranormals of comic books and myths. Even the lowest-powered Superheroes begin with 150 Character Points and up to 100 points of Disadvantages; high-powered superheroes can have any amount of points. Superheroes are much more powerful than the other inhabitants of the campaign universe. The point base and maximum number of Disadvantages for superheroes

## CHARACTER TYPES GUIDELINES TABLE

| Character Type | Base Points | Maximum Points from Disadvantages | Maximum Points From Any One Type Of Disadvantage | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Normal | | | | |
| Incompetent Normal | -25 | 25 | 25 (or less) | 0 (or less) |
| Standard Normal | 0 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Skilled Normal | 25 | 25 | 25 | 50 |
| Competent Normal | 50 | 50 | 25 | 100 |
| Heroic | | | | |
| Standard | 75 | 75 | 25 | 150 |
| Powerful | 100 | 100 | 25 | 200 |
| Very Powerful | 125 | 125 | 40 | 250 |
| Superheroic | | | | |
| Low-Powered | 150 | 100 | 50 | 250 |
| Standard | 200 | 150 | 50 | 350 |
| High-Powered | 300 | 150 | 60 | 450 |
| Very High-Powered | 400 | 200 | 75 | 600 |
| Cosmically Powerful | 500+ | 200+ | 75+ | 700+ |

## CHARACTER ABILITY GUIDELINES TABLE

| Character Type | Char | SPD | CV | DC | Active Points | Skill Points | Skill Roll | Def/rDef |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Normal | | | | | | | | |
| Incompetent Normal | 5-8 | 1-2 | 0-3 | 0-5 | 0-30 | 0-10 | 0-11- | 2/1 |
| Standard Normal | 5-10 | 1-2 | 1-4 | 1-6 | 5-35 | 5-20 | 8-11- | 4/2 |
| Skilled Normal | 8-13 | 1-3 | 1-5 | 1-6 | 5-40 | 5-25 | 8-12- | 6/3 |
| Competent Normal | 8-15 | 2-3 | 2-6 | 2-8 | 10-45 | 10-50 | 8-12- | 8/4 |
| Heroic | | | | | | | | |
| Standard | 10-20 | 2-4 | 3-7 | 3-8 | 15-50 | 30-75 | 8-13- | 10/5 |
| Powerful | 10-20 | 2-4 | 4-8 | 4-9 | 20-60 | 60-120 | 8-13- | 10/5 |
| Very Powerful | 10-23 | 2-5 | 5-9 | 5-10 | 25-70 | 90-150 | 8-14- | 12/6 |
| Superheroic | | | | | | | | |
| Low-Powered | 10-30 | 3-8 | 6-11 | 6-12 | 40-75 | 25-80 | 8-14- | 12/6 |
| Standard | 10-40 | 3-10 | 7-13 | 6-14 | 40-80 | 25-80 | 11-15- | 20/10 |
| High-Powered | 15-60 | 4-12 | 8-14 | 10-16 | 50-90 | 30-90 | 11-16- | 25/15 |
| Very High-Powered | 20-80 | 5-12 | 10-16 | 12-20 | 60-120 | 40-110 | 12-17- | 35/25 |
| Cosmically Powerful | 30-120 | 6-12 | 12+ | 14+ | 75+ | 50+ | 13-+ | 40+/30+ |

Notes

Char: The typical range of characters' Primary Characteristics. Some Characteristics tend to be on the higher end of (or even outside) the range (STR for "brick" characters, for example), and some (such as EGO) are typically on the low end of the range.

SPD: The typical range of characters' SPDs.

CV: The typical range of characters' base Combat Values.

DC: The typical range of the Damage Classes in characters' attacks.

Active Points: The typical range of Active Points in characters' Powers.

Skill Points: The typical range of Character Points characters spend on Skills.

Skill Roll: The typical range of Skill Rolls in characters' Skills.

Def/rDef: The typical level of the characters' Normal and Resistant Defenses.

varies according to the actual power level the GM wants in the campaign.

The more points a character has, the more his perception of the "real world" tends to change. To a Normal, or even a Hero, thugs with guns and knives are usually dangerous opponents, and other real-world conditions can easily affect what characters do and how they do them. Superheroes, on the other hand, laugh at much of what the real world throws at them — they bounce bullets off their chests, fly around obstacles, and bend the world itself to their will. The GM must remember this when deciding how many points to build PCs on; if he wants the PCs to feel threatened when thugs with guns show up and begin shooting, he needs to assign a low number of points, or put some restrictions on the amount of Resistant Defense a character can have.

Choosing the right amount of Disadvantages is also important. Too few, and the characters have unfettered power; too many, and they're helpless cripples. About half to two-thirds of characters' points should be Base Points; the remaining one-third to half should derive from Disadvantages. Since there's a practical limit on how many points a character can obtain through Disadvantages, you usually build Superheroic characters on a larger number of Base Points.

# PACKAGE DEALS

A Package Deal is a framework for building a character. It contains the set of Skills, Disadvantages, restrictions, and bonuses a character would acquire from, or the minimum requirements for, membership in an organization, profession, or race.

Package Deals have advantages for both the player and the GM. For the player, they make it easier to build characters, since Package Deals provide guidelines for the abilities and Disadvantages certain types of characters should have. The GM, in turn, gets a better idea of the character's background and more information about where he comes from. He can also create Package Deals specifically for his campaign so that players design appropriate characters for the game.

## Creating Package Deals

The GM should create (or carefully scrutinize) all Package Deals. Since Package Deals relate to important organizations in the GM's campaign, he controls them.

When constructing Package Deals, you should first decide what benefits the Package provides. Do members of the organization all have a certain skill, or knowledge of a certain subject? If so, the Package should include the appropriate Skill(s). For example, all members of a Thieves' Guild might know how to pick pockets, so the Guild Package would have the *Sleight Of Hand* Skill. Similarly, are any Disadvantages associated with the job? Hunteds and Reputations are common Package Disadvantages, as are Distinctive Features (uniforms and the like).

You shouldn't include too many Skills and Perks in a Package, since this diminishes character individuality. Don't include Powers and Talents in Packages except in special cases. Most Package Deals should cost the character between 3 and 10 points, with 15 being the usual maximum (though some highly-trained types of characters, such as elite soldiers, may have much more expensive Package Deals). Package Deals should just provide a basic framework for character development; they don't need to encompass everything a member of that group can do.

In addition, each Package Deal should include Skills that round characters out but aren't necessarily useful in combat, such as Knowledge Skills, Professional Skills, and Sciences. The GM should disallow Packages that simply include combat skills the character would buy anyway.

When you note a Package Deal on your character sheet, put any points from Disadvantages in

# OPTIONAL CHARACTER DESIGN GUIDELINES

The "free-form" nature of the *HERO System* character creation sometimes confuses new gamers and gamers used to more "structured" systems that restrict how players create characters. The *HERO System* offers a lot of possibilities, and it may take you a little while to learn them! If you'd like some guidance to help get you started, use the following guidelines for the amount of Character Points you should spend on each game element:

| Superheroic Characters | Characteristic-Oriented | Skill-Oriented | Power-Oriented |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics | 230 | 125 | 120 |
| Skills, Perks, and Talents | 50 | 125 | 40 |
| Powers/Equipment | 70 | 100 | 190 |
| **Total** | **350** | **350** | **350** |

| Heroic Characters | Characteristic-Oriented | Skill-Oriented | Power-Oriented |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics | 90 | 60 | 50 |
| Skills, Perks, and Talents | 40 | 75 | 50 |
| Powers/Equipment | 20 | 15 | 50 |
| **Total** | **150** | **150** | **150** |

Characteristic-Oriented: A character whose abilities are mainly represented by high Characteristics, such as a strongman.
Skill-Oriented: A character whose abilities are mainly represented by having lots of Skills, or fewer Skills with high Skill Rolls, such as a martial artist or a thief.
Power-Oriented: A character whose abilities are mainly built with Powers (whether they're innate powers or equipment), such as a wizard, a psychic, or an energy projector. This also includes gadget- or weapon-oriented characters.



the Disadvantage section (they count against your character's overall Disadvantage total), and write down the Skills in the Skills section. You should also write down the name(s) of the Package(s) your character has.

## Racial Package Deals

You can use Package Deals to ensure that characters belonging to exotic races (such as elves, dwarves, Alpha Centaurians, or heavy-worlders) have all the necessary attributes and abilities for members of their race. When designing a Racial Package, you should only include those abilities and Disadvantages *all* members of the race possess. Common Disadvantages include Distinctive Features and Physical Limitations. You should avoid putting Psychological Limitations into a Racial Package Deal, because it will make all the members of the race seem too alike; instead, each one should be a unique individual.

Racial Packages can include Powers that represent racial abilities: bird-men have Flight, pixies have Invisibility. Many racial Powers have the Advantages *Persistent* and *Inherent* and the Limitation *Always On.*

When designing a Racial Package Deal, you should remember the distinction between racial abilities (which everyone born into the race has) and racial Skills, which individual members of that race learn while growing up. For example, all dwarves have greater natural toughness and hardiness than humans, and the Dwarf Package Deal should reflect this with bonuses to CON and BODY. However, a dwarf only learns blacksmithing from growing up in dwarven society; if a human family raised him, he might become a farmer or a goatherd. Thus, the Dwarf Package Deal shouldn't include blacksmithing.

## Obtaining A Package Deal

To acquire a Package Deal for your character, you should decide which Package(s) fit your character's conception, then simply buy the Package(s) with Character Points. Characters should not have inappropriate Package Deals — the Green Berets would never accept a 12- year-old child into their ranks, for example. When your character buys a Package Deal, he has all the Skills and Disadvantages listed in the Package. The Package Disadvantages count against the character's overall Disadvantage total.

### SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL PACKAGE DEALS

#### POLICEMAN PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

| Cost | Ability |
|---|---|
| 2 | CK: City of Operation 11- |
| 2 | KS: Criminal Law 11- |
| 2 | WF: Small Arms |
| 2 | Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers |
| 9 | 9 points' worth of Skills from the following list: Bureaucratics, Combat Driving, Concealment, Conversation, Criminology, Persuasion, Shadowing, Streetwise, any Background Skill |

**Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 17**

Disadvantages

| Value | Disadvantage |
|---|---|
| 5 | Distinctive Features (Policeman's Uniform) (Easily Concealed) |
| 10 | Hunted: Police Department 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching) |

**Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 15**

#### ROGUE PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

| Cost | Ability |
|---|---|
| 2 | CK: City of Operation 11- |
| 2 | KS: City Guards 11- |
| 2 | Language: Thieves' Argot |

2 PS: Type of Crime 11-
3 Stealth
2 WF: Common Melee Weapons
4 Perk: Contact (fence) 13-
10 10 points' worth of Skills from the following list: Acrobatics, Breakfall, Bribery, Climbing, Concealment, Disguise, Forgery, Gambling, Interrogation, Lockpicking, Security Systems, Shadowing, Sleight Of Hand, Weapon Familiarity, any Background Skill

**Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 27**

Disadvantages

**Value Disadvantage**

20 Hunted: City Militia 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
5 Hunted: fellow rogues 11- (As Pow, Watched)

**Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 25**

### SAMPLE RACIAL PACKAGE DEALS

#### DWARF PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

**Cost Ability**

6 +3 CON
4 +2 BODY
3 Bump Of Direction
2 LS: Longevity (x4 lifespan)
5 Infrared Perception (Sight)

**Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 20**

Disadvantages

**Value Disadvantage**

-2 Running -1"
10 Distinctive Features (Dwarf) (Concealable With Difficulty)

**Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 12**

#### WOOD ELF PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

**Cost Ability**

6 +2 DEX
2 +2 INT
3 Lightsleep
5 Ultraviolet Perception (Sight)
4 LS: Longevity (x16 lifespan)
4 Running +2"

**Total Cost Of Package Abilities And Equipment: 24**

Disadvantages

**Value Disadvantage**

10 Distinctive Features (Elf) (Concealable With Difficulty)

**Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 10**

## CHECKLIST FOR CHARACTER CREATION

Here's a summary of the steps you go through when creating a character.

1. Character Conception: See above.

2. Package Deals: If the character's conception includes membership in some group or race, a Package Deal may be appropriate.

3. Characteristics: Buy Characteristics to match the character's conception. If you want your character to be immensely strong, improve his STR; a character needs a high DEX to be an agile acrobat. After you've bought some Skills for your character, check them; if he has a lot of Skills based on the same Characteristic, you should consider raising that Characteristic or buying Skill Levels. If your character is particularly poor at something, he may want to sell back some Characteristics below their starting values.

4. Abilities: Choose the most important abilities for the character. In Heroic campaigns, this includes Skills, Perks, and perhaps some Talents and Powers. For Superheroic campaigns, the character can usually buy all of these. The character should also choose a few Professional or Knowledge Skills that make him unique, such as Wine Connoisseur, Old Earth Weapons, or Singing. These Skills make the character more fun to play, and may even prove useful in adventures from time to time.

5. Disadvantages: What imperfections does your character possess? Does he have an old enemy, a police record, or chronic bad luck? Disadvantages help define the character, and provide plot hooks and story ideas for the GM. In exchange for this, the character receives more Character Points to buy Skills, Characteristics, and Powers. The character can buy Disadvantages up to the maximum allowed by the campaign.

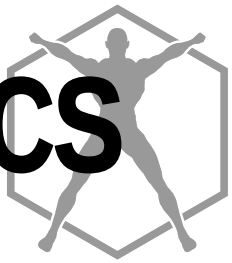
6. Balancing: If, after you've bought everything you wanted for your character, he costs more than his Base Points plus points from Disadvantages, you have to balance him. You can reduce Characteristics, downgrade his less important Skills, and so on. You can use earned Experience Points to improve him later on.

Alternately, your character may have points left over. In this case, you can buy additional Skills for him, or improve his Characteristics. Reconsider his Disadvantages, and eliminate any inappropriate ones or ones you'll find too restrictive. If you don't want to spend them now, save the points and spend them when you think of something appropriate for him; treat the saved points like Experience Points.

7. Equipment: Determine what devices and equipment the character owns. This is especially important in Heroic campaigns, where characters equip themselves by spending money in the game. Characters in Superheroic campaigns have to spend Character Points for their equipment, so they always know what equipment they have when the game begins.

8. GM Approval: Make sure the GM reviews and approves of your character. Since the *HERO System* rules are so flexible, it's possible to build characters who can unbalance the campaign — making the game less enjoyable for other players. Gamemasters should disallow such characters and request that the player build a well-rounded character who'll contribute to everyone's fun.

# CHARACTERISTICS



A set of *Characteristics* representing natural attributes (such as physical strength, intellect, and willpower) describes every character. Each Characteristic has a numerical value — a rating indicating how the character compares to other characters, whether he's better or worse. The higher a Characteristic, the better a character is at whatever that Characteristic represents. For example, a character with Strength 20 is stronger than one with Strength 15.

*HERO System* characters have two types of Characteristics: Primary and Figured.

## PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS TABLE

| Base Value | Primary Characteristic | Cost Per Point | Maximum Value |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | Strength (STR) | 1 | 20 |
| 10 | Dexterity (DEX) | 3 | 20 |
| 10 | Constitution (CON) | 2 | 20 |
| 10 | Body (BODY) | 2 | 20 |
| 10 | Intelligence (INT) | 1 | 20 |
| 10 | Ego (EGO) | 2 | 20 |
| 10 | Presence (PRE) | 1 | 20 |
| 10 | Comeliness (COM) | ½ | 20 |

## Primary Characteristics

Primary Characteristics represent a character's physical and mental capabilities. All PCs and important NPCs start with a value of 10 in each of their Primary Characteristics; less important or skilled NPCs may start with lower values (typically 5-8). The accompanying table lists the Primary Characteristics and how many Character Points it costs to raise each one's value by 1.

Sometimes a character wants to have a negative Primary Characteristic. For example, many small animals and feeble characters have a negative STR. A negative Primary Characteristic does not reduce a character's related Figured Characteristics — it simply adds zero to them. For example, a creature with STR -20 and CON 10 has 0 PD and 2 REC, not -4 PD and -2 REC.

## FIGURED CHARACTERISTICS TABLE

| Base Value | Primary Characteristic | Formula | Cost Per Point | Maximum Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (2) | Physical Defense (PD) | STR/5 | 1 | 8 |
| (2) | Energy Defense (ED) | CON/5 | 1 | 8 |
| (2) | Speed (SPD) | 1 + (DEX/10) | 10 | 4 |
| (4) | Recovery (REC) | (STR/5) + (CON/5) | 2 | 10 |
| (20) | Endurance (END) | 2 x CON | ½ | 50 |
| (20) | Stun (STUN) | BODY+(STR/2)+(CON/2) | 1 | 50 |

## Figured Characteristics

The second type of Characteristic is Figured Characteristics, so called because you derive their values from a character's Primary Characteristics. Figured Characteristics mainly represent various combat capabilities. You can raise or lower Figured Characteristics independently of the Primary Characteristics by spending Character Points.

The numbers may not come out evenly when you use these formulae. When a number has a fractional remainder, you apply the rounding rules: numbers from .1 to .4 round down; numbers from .6 to .9 round up; and .5 rounds up or down depending upon what's best for the character. The only exception to this rule is calculating SPD — SPD *always* rounds down. A SPD of 2.9 is still a SPD of 2, not a SPD of 3.

Example: *Dave wants to build a character who's much stronger and tougher than a normal person. He decides to purchase a STR of 20 (costs 10 Character Points), a CON of 15 (costs 10 Character Points), and a BODY of 15 (costs 10 Character Points). With a 20 STR and 15 CON, his character has 4 PD (20/5), 3 ED (15/5), 7 REC ((20/5)+(15/5)), and 30 END.*

*When Dave calculates his character's STUN, CON/2 comes to 7.5. This rounds up to 8, since it's in the character's favor to have more STUN. Thus, his total STUN is 33 (15+10+8). If the character's STR was also 15, his STUN would be 31 (15+8+8).*

### NORMAL CHARACTERISTIC MAXIMA

The two Characteristics Tables list "Maximum Values" for each Characteristic. This restriction, known as *Normal Characteristic Maxima,* applies only to Heroic campaigns; usually it acts as a "default" for the campaign and does not count as a Disadvantage. Superheroic campaigns have no such limits (unless the GM imposes them, or they voluntarily choose them as a Disadvantage [see page 329]). Characters subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima must pay double to buy Characteristics higher than the Maximum Value.

Normal Characteristic Maxima rules do not apply to equipment defined with Characteristics (such as Automata, Bases, Computers, and Vehicles; see Chapter Four).

# Movement

Every character can run and swim at a certain velocity, and leap a certain distance. These forms of movement are not Characteristics, but are listed here for convenience.

A character's ability to move is measured in inches (also called hexes; see page 356). All characters can Run up to 6" in a Phase, Swim up to 2," and Leap up to 2" forward. Characters can increase these rates of movement by buying the appropriate Movement Power (Running, Swimming, or Leaping). The Movement Table lists the costs of those Movement Powers for easy reference.

Using a character's natural modes of movement costs END. Determine the END cost as if the character had paid Character Points for the movement. For example, Running 6" would cost 12 Character Points if bought as a Power; therefore a character must spend 1 END to use his natural 6" of Running.

If circumstances reduce one of a character's modes of movement to 0" or below, he may no longer use it. If that's his only mode of movement, he's essentially paralyzed, unable to move (though he could still swing his arms, attack, use weapons, and so forth). Negative movement values have no other effect.

## MOVEMENT TABLE

| Base Value | Movement Mode | Cost Per +1" | Maximum Value |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6" | Running | 2 | 10 |
| 2" | Swimming | 1 | 5 |
| 2" | Leaping | 1 | 5 |

**Movement Maximum Values**

As indicated in the table, if the campaign uses the Normal Characteristic Maxima rules, those rules apply to Running, Swimming, and Leaping. Characters subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima must pay double to buy a mode of movement higher than the Maximum Value (however, if a character's STR naturally gives him more than 5" of Leaping, he doesn't have to pay anything extra for his Leaping, nor is he restricted to 5" worth).

The GM can waive this rule in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance. This is particularly appropriate when characters buy any of the following: (a) Advantaged, Limited, or restricted bonuses to those Movement Powers intended to represent special abilities or the like (rather than general increases in the character's ability to move); and (b) bonuses to those Movement Powers bought as Foci (gadgets, devices, or the like). For example, if a wizard in a *Fantasy Hero* campaign creates a set of enchanted boots that provide Running +10" and Leaping +6", the GM should charge only the standard cost, not the doubled cost.



## Characteristic Rolls

In some situations, it may not be clear whether a character can perform a particular action. For example, Andarra falls out of a building and tries to grab a ledge as she passes it — will she succeed? In this sort of situation, where no Skill applies, the GM can ask a character to make a *Characteristic Roll* based on the most relevant Characteristic (DEX, in this case). Characteristic Rolls equal 9 plus the Characteristic divided by 5:

**9 + (CHAR/5)**

Thus, a DEX Roll is 9 + (DEX/5) or less. Andarra (DEX 15) has a DEX Roll of 12- (9+(15/5)). She grabs the ledge if she rolls 12 or less on 3d6.

If a character suffers from the effects of a negative Characteristic, his Characteristic Roll becomes 9 *minus* CHAR/5. Thus, a character with -10 INT has an INT Roll of 7 (9-(10/5)).

## STRENGTH TABLE

| Strength | Lift (kg) | Damage | Leap (hexes) | Example |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -25 | 0.8 | — | — | Dagger, javelin, grenade |
| -23 | 1.0 | — | — | Pistol, laser pistol |
| -20 | 1.6 | — | — | Pineapple, binoculars, longsword |
| -18 | 2.0 | — | — | Clay brick |
| -15 | 3.2 | — | — | Submachine gun, helmet |
| -13 | 4.0 | — | — | Rifle, VCR, small metal shield |
| -10 | 6.4 | — | — | Assault rifle, heavy crossbow |
| -8 | 8.0 | — | — | Shotput, greatsword |
| -5 | 12.5 | — | — | Machine gun, chainmail hauberk |
| -3 | 16.0 | — | — | Tavern bench |
| 0 | 25.0 | — | — | Full suitcase, TV set, bicycle |
| 3 | 37.0 | ½d6 | ½" | Small refrigerator, plate armor |
| 5 | 50.0 | 1d6 | 1" | Adolescent human, recliner |
| 8 | 75.0 | 1½d6 | 1½" | Brass bed, washing machine |
| 10 | 100.0 | 2d6 | 2" | Adult human |
| 13 | 150.0 | 2½d6 | 2½" | Refrigerator |
| 15 | 200.0 | 3d6 | 3" | Two men, piano, motorcycle, boar |
| 18 | 300.0 | 3½d6 | 3½" | Medium floor safe |
| 20 | 400.0 | 4d6 | 4" | Chariot, grizzly bear |
| 23 | 600.0 | 4½d6 | 4½" | Sailboat, cow, horse |
| 25 | 800.00 | 5d6 | 5" | Sportscar, horse and rider |
| 28 | 1,200.0 | 5½d6 | 5½" | Medium missile |
| 30 | 1,600.0 | 6d6 | 6" | Small car, large missile |
| 35 | 3,200.0 | 7d6 | 7" | Truck, limousine |
| 40 | 6,400.0 | 8d6 | 8" | Small jet, large elephant |
| 45 | 12.5 tons | 9d6 | 9" | Jetfighter, subway car |
| 50 | 25.0 tons | 10d6 | 10" | Frigate, small standing stone |
| 55 | 50.0 tons | 11d6 | 11" | Bulldozer, main battle tank |
| 60 | 100.0 tons | 12d6 | 12" | Space Shuttle, blue whale |
| 65 | 200.0 tons | 13d6 | 13" | Statue of Liberty |
| 70 | 400.0 tons | 14d6 | 14" | Trawler, large starship |
| 75 | 800.0 tons | 15d6 | 15" | Drilling rig |
| 80 | 1.6 ktons | 16d6 | 16" | Small bridge, freighter (unloaded) |
| 85 | 3.2 ktons | 17d6 | 17" | Freighter (loaded) |
| 90 | 6.4 ktons | 18d6 | 18" | Destroyer (unloaded) |
| 95 | 12.5 ktons | 19d6 | 19" | Temple |
| 100 | 25.0 ktons | 20d6 | 20" | Large bridge, castle |

Lift: The maximum amount of weight the character can usually just manage to lift off the ground, stagger with for a step or two, then drop, in kilograms (1 kg = 2.2 pounds). This assumes a solid lifting surface.

Damage: Normal Damage in HTH Combat

Leap: Running broad jump forward, distance in hexes. Running jumps upward and standing jumps are half this distance; standing jumps upward are one-fourth this distance.

The text below describes the effects of different Characteristic Rolls. Don't use Characteristic Rolls too much, since they can slow down play and may rob the player of control over his character.

# EXPLANATION OF CHARACTERISTICS

The following descriptions give some idea of the use and effects of each Characteristic in the game.

## Primary Characteristics

### STRENGTH (STR)

Strength represents the character's raw physical power: how much damage he does in HTH Combat; how much he can lift, carry, and throw; and so forth. STR also adds to the base values of PD, REC, and STUN. One point of STR costs 1 Character Point; every +5 Character Points represents +1d6 damage and a doubling of the character's lifting capacity.

A character's lifting capacity, as indicated in the Strength Table, represents the maximum amount of weight he can just manage to lift off the ground, stagger with for a step or two, then drop. He can easily carry or lift the weight which he can pick up with his Casual STR (see below). Regardless of his carrying capacity, carrying more than a certain amount of weight may encumber him (see page 379). In some cases, a character can Push his STR and lift even more for brief periods (see page 427). If a character lifts with one hand (or half or less of his manipulatory limbs), he's at -5 STR for lifting purposes.

Every character has a *Casual STR* equal to half of his STR. Casual STR is the STR the character can exert without conscious effort or taking an Action — in other words, when using it as a Zero Phase Action. Characters use Casual STR to barge through crowds, smash through minor obstacles, carry things, and so on. They can also use Casual STR to shrug off Entangles and Grabs without wasting an Action (see page 423). Using Casual STR costs END, although a character only has to pay the END cost for his STR once per Phase (regardless of how many different ways he uses it in a single Phase).

**STR Rolls**

Normally, when you want to find out the effect of exerting STR, you roll the character's damage dice from STR (see the Strength Table) and count the Normal Damage BODY. If two characters compete in a test of STR, each rolls his STR dice, and the character with the most BODY (or a predefined number of BODY) succeeds. In some cases, it may be quicker to ask for a STR Roll (9+(STR/5) or less) instead; the character who makes his roll by the most wins the contest.

**The Strength Table**

The Strength Table indicates how much a character can lift, how much damage he does in HTH Combat, and how far he can leap, based on his STR.

**Leaping**

The leaping distances listed in the Strength Table are based on a running broad jump — the character takes a step or two and leaps. He may leap for a Full Move or Half Move. The table indicates forward leaping distance; a character may leap upward half the distance which he can leap forward (this distance defines how far off the ground the character's shoulders are at the uppermost point of the leap). Without a running start, a character can only leap half as far.

In Heroic campaigns, fast-moving characters can leap further: for every +1" of Running a character has above the normal Running of 6", add +1 meter (½") to the jump distance when he makes a Running Leap. Characters in any campaign may also leap further if they buy the Power *Leaping*.

**Throwing Things**

Characters often throw things. Fantasy characters throw beer mugs in barroom brawls just as superheroes throw cars up and down the street. When they're not hurling grenades and rocks at each other, they throw each other off cliffs or toss car keys across a yawning chasm. Sometimes an improvised thrown weapon is the only way a character can attack an opponent at range.

Throwing Distance: To determine how far a character can throw something, the GM should consider three factors: how strong the character is; how heavy the object is; and how the character throws the object.

Compare the character's STR to the STR necessary for the character to pick up the object. Subtract the latter from the former; the result is the "Extra Strength" used with the Throwing Table. Just cross-reference the extra STR with the type of throw the character uses to find out how far he throws the object. (This "extra STR" only determines how far the character can throw an object; use his full STR to determine damage from the throw, if applicable.)

A Prone Throw is any throw made when the character is not standing (sitting, lying down, on his knees, and so forth). A Standing Throw is any throw made when the character is standing but not moving. A Running Throw is any throw made when the character is standing and moving, using his momentum to improve the length of his throw. The character must make at least a full Half Move to make a Running Throw (unless the GM rules otherwise). A character typically makes a Running Throw while Running, Flying, Gliding, or Swinging; at the GM's option, a Running Throw can be made with other Movement Powers as well (but not Teleportation or Extra-Dimensional Movement, which involve no momentum).

The Range Modifier applies to attacks made by throwing an object. An object's shape affects the Range Modifier, as indicated by the Thrown Objects Range Modifier Table. The GM determines whether a particular object is balanced and/or aerodynamic.

## THROWING TABLE

| Extra Strength | Running Throw | Standing Throw | Prone Throw |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0" | 0" | 0" |
| 3 | 2" | 1" | ½" |
| 5 | 4" | 2" | 1" |
| 8 | 6" | 3" | 1½" |
| 10 | 8" | 4" | 2" |
| 13 | 10" | 5" | 2½" |
| 15 | 12" | 6" | 3" |
| 18 | 14" | 7" | 3½" |
| 20 | 16" | 8" | 4" |
| 23 | 18" | 9" | 4½" |
| 25 | 20" | 10" | 5" |
| 28 | 22" | 11" | 5½" |
| 30 | 24" | 12" | 6" |
| 35 | 28" | 14" | 7" |
| 40 | 32" | 16" | 8" |
| 45 | 36" | 18" | 9" |
| 50 | 40" | 20" | 10" |
| 55 | 44" | 22" | 11" |
| 60 | 48" | 24" | 12" |
| 65 | 52" | 26" | 13" |
| 70 | 56" | 28" | 14" |
| 75 | 60" | 30" | 15" |
| 80 | 64" | 32" | 16" |
| 85 | 68" | 34" | 17" |
| 90 | 72" | 36" | 18" |
| 95 | 76" | 38" | 19" |
| 100 | 80" | 40" | 20" |

Example: *Sgt. Barnes (STR 15) throws a grenade. He needs a STR of -25 to pick a grenade up. Therefore, Barnes has 40 STR more than he needs to lift it. As indicated on the Throwing Table, if he performs a Running Throw* (i.e., *he runs half his inches of movement and then lobs the grenade), he can toss the grenade 32", or 64 meters. If he merely stands and throws it, he can lob it 16", or 32 meters. If he's lying on his stomach, he obviously can't throw at optimum performance — he can only heave the thing 8", or 16 meters.*

Throwing Damage: Characters often want to throw objects not for distance, but as a form of attack. This requires a standard Attack Roll, which is subject to the Range Modifier (see above). The damage done by throwing an object is the same as that for using an object to hit someone with in HTH Combat: the thrower's STR damage, up to the DEF+BODY of the object in dice.

## THROWN OBJECTS RANGE MODIFIER TABLE

| Range Modifier | Object is |
|---|---|
| Normal | Balanced and aerodynamic (a boomerang, a spear) |
| -2 | Balanced but not aerodynamic (a tomahawk, a grenade, most rocks) |
| -2 | Aerodynamic but not balanced (a jetpack) |
| -4 | Neither balanced nor aerodynamic (another character, a bale of hay) |

### SIZE, MASS, AND LEAPING

As an optional rule, the GM may base a character's total leaping distance on his mass — after all, heavier characters have more to lift when they jump. To determine the leaping distance for characters who are heavier than normal, move down the Strength Chart 5 STR for every 2x mass; for characters who are lighter than normal, move up 5 STR for every x½ mass. Thus, characters with Growth or Density Increase cannot intrinsically leap further than characters of normal size and weight just because they gain some STR from those Powers. Characters with Shrinking can leap further than normal (+3" for every level of Shrinking) unless they buy down their STR.

Example: *A puppy isn't very strong (STR -15). This would normally mean it couldn't jump. However, it only weighs 6.25 kg (1/16 normal human mass). Therefore it gets +20 STR for determining Jumping distance, meaning it can jump 1" with a running start.*

*Now it's Leadboy's turn. He weighs 25 tons due to Density Increase. He has a 60 STR, but all of it except 10 STR is from DI. He can only jump 2" with a running start.*

### COMBAT VALUE TABLE

Here's a quick-reference table to help you calculate your character's CV. Substitute "EGO" for "DEX" and it tells you your character's ECV, too.

| DEX | CV |
|---|---|
| 0, 1 | 0 |
| 2, 3, 4 | 1 |
| 5, 6, 7 | 2 |
| 8, 9, 10 | 3 |
| 11, 12, 13 | 4 |
| 14, 15, 16 | 5 |
| 17, 18, 19 | 6 |
| 20, 21, 22 | 7 |
| 23, 24, 25 | 8 |
| 26, 27, 28 | 9 |
| 29, 30, 31 | 10 |
| ...and so on | |

Example: *The Visigoth has STR 60, meaning he can do up to 12d6 damage. If he throws a boulder at someone (DEF 5, BODY 13), he does his usual 12d6 of damage. If he threw a lamppost (DEF 5, BODY 3), he could only do 8d6 damage, since the maximum damage he can do is his STR damage or the DEF+BODY of the thrown object, whichever is less.*

If a character picks up another character and throws him into something — the ground, a wall, a vehicle, or the like — the victim takes the character's full STR damage (or as much of his STR damage as the character cares to use).

**Negative Strength**

The Strength Table describes the lifting capacity and other effects of negative STR. Some additional considerations and rules apply.

Characters with 0 STR or a negative STR do no STR damage when they strike without a weapon, unless they use a Maneuver that adds damage (such as a Martial Strike). If they try to wield a weapon in a campaign that uses the STR Minima rules, those rules apply normally (making it unlikely they can do much damage with most weapons). If a character has 0 or negative STR, a Combat/Martial Maneuver lets him do 1d6 STR damage, add +1 DC to a Normal Damage weapon, or add +0 DC to a Killing Damage weapon. If a character has 1 or higher STR, a Combat/Martial Maneuver lets him double the damage he'd do with STR or a weapon, per the normal rules (again subject to STR Minimum and other such rules). Other exceptions, such as for adding Normal Damage in Superheroic campaigns, may also apply.

Negative STR prevents a character from Leaping, as indicated on the Strength Table. It also impairs a character's STR-based movement. Typically this includes Running, Swimming, Swinging, Tunneling, and Flight or Gliding based on muscle power (such as most types of wings). At STR 0, halve the character's STR-based movement; halve it again for every -10 points of STR (rounding down). The GM may choose to allow a character a minimum of 1" full move (a crawl) until he reaches -30 (or minus his initial STR value, whichever is better for him). A character with a STR of 15 and a ground movement of 6" would have 3" of movement at STR 0, 1" of movement at STR -10, and 0" of movement at -20 STR (or perhaps a minimum of 1" in a crawl). The GM may waive this rule for characters that have a natural negative STR (such as many small animals).

Negative STR affects DCV the same way it affects movement: halve DCV at STR 0 and again at every -10 STR thereafter. At -30 STR (or the negative of his initial STR value, whichever is better for the character), he has DCV 0.

For every 2x mass a character has above the standard human mass of 100 kg, the effects of negative STR on movement and DCV occur 5 points of STR sooner, while for every x½ mass they occur 5 points of STR later. Other aspects of negative STR (the need to make STR Rolls to perform Actions, and the like) are not affected by the character's mass. (Example: Moth Girl has x¼ mass due to her Shrinking, so her movement and DCV aren't affected until -10 STR.)

If a character with negative STR wishes to use STR to perform an Action, he must make a STR Roll. This includes Actions such as aiming an attack, pulling a trigger, or changing a clip. Using a Power doesn't require a STR Roll *per se;* but while a character may be able to trigger his Energy Blast without a STR Roll, he'll need to make a STR Roll to aim his attack at his target. If a character has bought a power with the *Gestures* Limitation, he must make a STR Roll to use that power. When a character has less than -30 STR (or the negative of his initial STR value, whichever is better for him), he cannot move at all (but may still trigger Powers that don't require motion).

A character with negative STR can Push his STR in an attempt to overcome its effects temporarily. Getting to STR 0 via a Push means he no longer has to make STR Rolls to perform most common actions.

## DEXTERITY (DEX)

Dexterity represents a character's agility and reaction time. It also represents accuracy; a character's Combat Value (CV) is his DEX/3. Many important Skills are DEX-based, as is SPD. One point of DEX costs 3 Character Points.

**DEX Rolls**

You should use DEX Rolls when a character wants to perform a major feat of physical agility or a task that requires a fine touch or steady hand. However, you shouldn't let DEX Rolls substitute for Agility Skills; if players know their characters can drive in combat by making DEX Rolls, they won't buy Combat Driving. The results of a successful DEX Roll should never be as good as those obtained by successfully using an appropriate Agility Skill. Encumbrance affects DEX Rolls.

**Negative Dexterity**

At DEX 1 or less, a character is CV 0. A character with negative DEX loses control over his reactions, and must succeed with DEX Rolls to perform any Actions requiring physical movement (even just aiming at a target, or making Gestures). If he fails the DEX Roll, he cannot perform the Action that Phase. Characters with a DEX of -30 (or minus their initial DEX value, whichever is better for the character) or less may take no physical actions.

## CONSTITUTION (CON)

Constitution represents a character's health and hardiness. A character's CON determines how easily he's Stunned in combat; CON adds to the base value of ED, REC, END, and STUN. One point of CON costs 2 Character Points.

**CON Rolls**

Use a CON Roll whenever a character has to perform a feat of physical hardiness or endurance. This might include resisting poisons or diseases, accomplishing physically arduous tasks, and so forth.

**Negative Constitution**

At CON 0 or below, a character must succeed with a CON Roll to expend END in any way. Any Action that costs END requires a CON Roll, with separate rolls for each Action if the character performs multiple Actions in a Phase. Characters with a CON of -30 (or minus their initial CON value, whichever is better for the character) or less may take no Actions that cost END.

## BODY (BODY)

Body represents how much damage a character can take before dying. BODY adds to the base value of a character's STUN. One point of BODY costs 2 Character Points.

For information on negative BODY, see *Effects Of Damage,* page 410.

## INTELLIGENCE (INT)

Intelligence represents a character's ability to take in and process information quickly. It does not necessarily reflect knowledge or lack thereof (a character could be ignorant or a genius, but still have an INT of 10). INT has more to do with processing and reacting to information than with raw learning. INT serves as the basis for Perception Rolls and many important Skills. One point of INT costs 1 Character Point.

**INT Rolls**

Use INT Rolls when a character tries to employ knowledge not specifically represented by a Skill, or when he attempts to remember something or figure something out (particularly when the player is stuck on a problem and his substantially smarter character might be able to figure it out).

**Negative Intelligence**

At INT 0 or below a character must succeed with an INT Roll to make any decision or else continue doing what he was doing. Performing any sort of Action at all requires an INT Roll. A character with an INT of -30 (or minus his initial INT value, whichever is better for the character) or less (or who fails an INT Roll) may take no new Actions (he continues doing what he was doing last).

## EGO (EGO)

Ego represents a character's mental strength and strength of will. EGO helps a character when he undergoes a test of willpower, becomes wounded, resists interrogation or Mental Powers, or tries to overcome his Psychological Limitations (see page 336). One point of EGO costs 2 Character Points.

**EGO Rolls**

Use EGO Rolls when a character must succeed in a test of willpower. This includes things like resisting temptation or attempts by others to intimidate him, overcoming the effects of a Psychological Limitation, or to keep going against the odds.

**Negative Ego**

At EGO 0 or below a character must succeed with an EGO Roll to act each Phase. The character follows all orders given to him from any source unless he succeeds with an EGO Roll. Characters who fail the EGO Roll may initiate no Actions of their own. Characters with an EGO of -30 (or minus their initial EGO value, whichever is better for the character) or less may take no Actions unless ordered to do so.

If a character makes the EGO Roll, not only can he reject an order given to him, but he's free to do something of his own choice that Phase without making a second EGO Roll. In the absence of instructions, characters with a negative EGO tend to follow the dictates of any applicable Psychological Limitations they have. Treat such Psychological Limitations as if they were an order from someone. In the event the character receives multiple orders in the same Phase, if he fails an EGO Roll he attempts to carry out all orders. If the orders contradict in some fashion, the character does nothing.

## PRESENCE (PRE)

Presence represents the character's forcefulness, charisma, bravery, confidence, bearing, and leadership qualities — in short, his impressiveness. PRE allows characters to impress or awe others and



to resist the effects of another character's high PRE. One point of PRE costs 1 Character Point.

**PRE Rolls**

PRE Rolls are rarely used, since Presence Attacks (see page 428) simulate the effects of trying to impress or frighten someone, and they're resisted with straight PRE, not a PRE Roll. Still, you can use PRE Rolls to determine just how impressed a character is by something (the more he fails the roll by, the more impressed he is) and for similar effects.

**Negative Presence**

A character with negative PRE must make a PRE Roll each Phase to act offensively or remain in the face of anything even remotely threatening. If he fails the roll, he runs away. Characters with a PRE of -30 (or minus their initial PRE value, whichever is better for the character) or less run away or cower in fear unless absolutely nothing is happening around them.

### COMELINESS (COM)

Comeliness reflects the character's beauty or handsomeness. This may effect the use of some Skills or Presence Attacks. One point of COM costs ½ Character Point (though the minimum cost of a single point of COM is 1 point; a character can't buy COM 11 for 0 points, or COM 17 for 3 points — those values cost 1 and 4 points, respectively).

**COM Rolls**

COM Rolls are sometimes used as Complementary Rolls to some Interaction Skills in situations where a character's appearance (good or bad) might influence what happens.

**Negative Comeliness**

The character is so ugly he may add half the absolute value of his negative COM to his PRE for the purposes of making Presence Attacks based on fear. Also, a character who has suddenly become ugly will be self-conscious and less effective in certain situations (*i.e.,* dealing with people), unless the character can succeed with an EGO Roll to avoid self-consciousness. The character suffers a -1 to all Interaction Skills at COM 0 and additional -1 for every -5 COM thereafter unless he succeeds with an EGO Roll.

Because negative COM is useful in some situations (for example, scaring people), characters have to pay for it. Of course, a character receives 5 points when he "sells back" his base 10 COM to 0, so that gives him 5 points to buy up to -10 COM; any further COM must be paid for with other Character Points at the standard COM cost. Yes, you have to pay to be ugly all the time.

## Figured Characteristics

### PHYSICAL DEFENSE (PD)

Physical Defense represents a character's ability to withstand damage from physical attacks, such as punches. Characters subtract their PD from the STUN and BODY damage done by Normal Damage physical attacks. PD has a base value of (STR/5); increasing it costs 1 Character Point per 1 point.

A negative PD has no effect on a character, except that it takes him longer to return to his normal PD value.

### ENERGY DEFENSE (ED)

Energy Defense represents a character's ability to withstand damage from energy attacks, such as electricity or fire. Characters subtract their ED from the STUN and BODY damage done by Normal Damage energy attacks. ED has a base value of (CON/5); increasing it costs 1 Character Point per 1 point.

A negative ED has no effect on a character, except that it takes him longer to return to his normal ED value.

### SPEED (SPD)

Speed represents how many Phases a character has in a Turn, and when they occur (see *Combat Time,* pages 356-47). Speed has a base value of 1 + (DEX/10). Each additional 1 point of SPD costs 10 Character Points.

SPD is the only Figured Characteristic that doesn't round in favor of the character. Thus, if a character has a value of DEX that doesn't calculate an even point of SPD – in other words, any DEX that doesn't end in 0 (10, 20, 30, or the like) — he ends up with a "fractional SPD" remainder. He can't sell this off (see below), but if he wants to buy up his SPD to the next point, he only has to pay the difference between the fractional SPD and the next full point of SPD. In other words, to increase SPD after rounding off, characters must buy the remaining fraction of a SPD point. Each 1/10 of a SPD point costs 1 Character Point.

Example: *A character with a DEX of 18 has a base speed of 1 + (18/10) = 2.8, which rounds down to 2, so the character is SPD 2. If the character wanted to be SPD 3, it would cost 2 Character Points. If the character wanted to be SPD 4, it would cost 12 Character Points.*

Characters may *not* sell back their unused fractional SPD. For example, suppose a character has DEX 24, yielding a base SPD calculation of 3.4. He may not sell back the .4 for 4 Character Points — not even if he sells his SPD all the way back to the next lowest number (*e.g.,* to SPD 2 from SPD 3.4). The character doesn't have a "SPD 3.4" — he has SPD 3, and thus nothing to sell back. A "fractional result" for SPD only comes into play, and only benefits the character, if he chooses to buy his SPD up to the next whole number (see above).

Generally, SPD is limited to a maximum of 12 (the number of Segments in a Turn). SPD above 12 only serves to help the character resist Drain SPDs and similar attacks; it doesn't allow a character to have more than 12 Phases or take more Actions in a Turn.

**Negative Speed**

A character with SPD 0 cannot move; he is frozen in place. He has DCV 0, and Hit Location modifiers for Placed Shots made against him are halved. He can only take Post-Segment 12 Recoveries, and drowns as if he had SPD 2. His Persistent Powers, such as many defenses, remain in effect. Persistent Attack Powers don't shut off, but they can't hurt anyone because the character cannot take any Actions. (The GM could make an exception for, say, a Persistent Damage Shield if he wanted to.) Constant Attack Powers shut off; the character cannot maintain them. Negative SPD has no further effect except that it takes the character longer to return to his normal SPD value.

**RECOVERY (REC)**

Recovery represents how fast a character recovers from being exhausted or knocked out; it also allows the character to heal more quickly. Recovery has a base value of (STR/5) + (CON/5). Each point of REC allows the character to regain one point of lost STUN and one point of spent END each Post-Segment 12 Recovery and each Phase in which the character takes a Recovery. Each additional 1 point of REC costs 2 Character Points.

A negative REC has no effect on a character, except that it takes him longer to return to his normal REC value.

**ENDURANCE (END)**

Endurance represents the energy a character expends to act, exert himself, and use his powers — the more END he has, the longer he can keep doing things. A character who uses a Power, moves, or uses STR expends END. END has a base value of 2 x CON. Each additional 1 point of END costs ½ Character Point (to buy 2 END only costs 1 Character Point). (However, the minimum cost of a single point of END is 1 point; a character can't increase his standard 20 END to 21 for 0 points, or to 27 END for 3 points — those values cost 1 and 4 points, respectively.)

**Negative Endurance**

A character who has 0 or less END can still act. However, lacking END, he must use STUN in its place — he takes 1d6 STUN damage for every 2 END (or fraction thereof) he would normally use. No defense applies against this damage. This means heroes sometimes knock themselves out to make sure the job gets done.

**STUN (STUN)**

Stun represents how much damage a character can take before being Knocked Out. STUN has a base value of BODY + (STR/2) + (CON/2). Each additional 1 point of STUN costs 1 Character Point.

A character with 0 or less STUN is Knocked Out. See *Effects Of Damage,* pages 410-13.

**DEFENSE (DEF)**

"Characters" like vehicles, bases, and inanimate objects use this Characteristic. DEF represents an object's protection against damage (both physical and energy). DEF is Resistant. One point of DEF costs 3 Character Points.

# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The following additional rules and guidelines apply to Characteristics.

## Characteristic Maxima

In Heroic campaigns that impose a Maximum Value on Characteristics, it costs double to raise Characteristics above that level (for example, it would cost 2 Character Points to raise STR 20 to STR 21 in a Heroic campaign).

The GM may, if he wishes, change the Maxima for Characteristics. Higher values may be appropriate for more "cinematic," higher-powered Heroic campaigns, reduced values for campaigns which are particularly "realistic" or low-powered.

## Reducing Characteristics

Characters may reduce (or "sell back") Characteristics below beginning values. The points gained are the same as the price for raising the Characteristic by a corresponding amount.

Example: *Nate wants his character to be less healthy than normal — in game terms, to start the campaign with a Constitution of 7 instead of 10. If he decides to do this, he gains the Character Points appropriate to the loss. Since his character lost 3 points of CON, and CON is worth 2 Character Points per point, the character gains 6 Character Points to buy other Characteristics or Skills. However, the loss of CON affects the character's ED, REC, END, and STUN. Moreover, he's rather frail.*

A character may sell back each and every Primary Characteristic below the listed value, but only one Figured Characteristic, and may not reduce any Primary Characteristic below 5 without the GM's permission. In any case, the minimum value of a Characteristic is always 1, except in situations where the GM allows characters to buy negative Characteristics (such as negative COM).

A character in a game with automatic Normal Characteristic Maxima may have Primary Characteristics bought to the point where his Figured Characteristics exceed the Maximum Value limits. In that case, if he sells back a Figured Characteristic he only gets the standard cost for the Characteristic, not the "doubled" cost. For example, a character with PD 12 who sells off 4 points of PD only gets back 4 Character Points, not 8.

Characters may also sell back their starting movement (Running 6", Swimming 2", and Leaping derived from STR). This might represent a lame



## CHARACTERISTICS COMPARISON TABLE

| Char | Weak | Challenged | Average | Skilled | Competent | Legendary | Superhuman |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| STR | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-30 | 31+ |
| DEX | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-30 | 31+ |
| CON | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-30 | 31+ |
| BODY | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-30 | 31+ |
| INT | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-50 | 51+ |
| EGO | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-50 | 51+ |
| PRE | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-50 | 51+ |
| COM | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-20 | 21-30 | 31+ |
| PD, ED | 0-1 | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5-6 | 7-10 | 11-15 | 16+ |
| SPD | 1 | 1-2 | 1-2 | 2-3 | 4-5 | 6-7 | 8+ |
| REC | 1 | 1-2 | 2-4 | 5-6 | 7-10 | 11-13 | 14+ |
| END | 2-4 | 6-10 | 11-20 | 21-26 | 27-40 | 41-60 | 61+ |
| STUN | 3-4 | 7-11 | 12-20 | 21-27 | 28-40 | 41-60 | 61+ |
| | | | | | | | |
| Running | 1" | 2-3" | 4-6" | 7-8" | 9-10" | 11-13" | 14"+ |
| Leaping | 0" | 1" | 2" | 3" | 4-5" | 6-11" | 12"+ |
| Swimming | 0" | 1" | 2" | 3" | 4-5" | 6-9" | 10"+ |

person who can't run quickly, a desert nomad who's never learned how to swim, or the like.

Points received from selling back Characteristics, movement, or the like do not count as Disadvantages, nor do they reduce the number of points a character can obtain from Disadvantages. They subtract directly from the overall total points the character spends on other Characteristics and abilities.

## Limited Characteristics

You can Limit Characteristics (or apply Advantages to them) using the *Characteristics* Power (or, in some cases, a naked Advantage). See page 139 for details.

The GM should examine any Limited Characteristics carefully to make sure they don't unbalance or adversely affect the game. Limited SPD, in particular, can cause problems because it allows a character to act (typically, to attack) far more frequently than other characters. Be very cautious about allowing such an ability into your game.

### INCREMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Sometimes a character wants to buy a Primary Characteristic in increments — perhaps because it's Partially Limited. In this case, to calculate Figured Characteristics, you divide each increment separately (applying the rounding rules each time) and then add the results together. For example, if a character has CON 12, and buys +12 CON through a Focus, he has ED 4 ((12/5 = 2.4, rounds down to 2) + (12/5 = 2.4, rounds down to 2)). The GM may, if he wishes, change this rule in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, simplicity, or maintaining game balance.

## CHARACTERISTICS COMPARISONS

For purposes of analyzing characters and their Characteristics, many *HERO System* campaigns use seven categories: Weak, Challenged, Average, Skilled, Competent, Legendary, and Superhuman.

Characteristics in the *Weak* range usually represent infants, extremely aged people, persons afflicted with terrible diseases, and the like. *Challenged* is one step up from that; it represents some children and elderly people, persons suffering from illness or handicaps, and so on.

*Average* is just that — the range of Characteristics for the typical people encountered during the game, from active children to healthy senior citizens. The normal people characters interact with during the game tend to have Primary Characteristics of about 6-8; heroes start with 10s because they're exceptional persons, destined for greatness.

One step up from Average is *Skilled.* Characteristics within the Skilled range can still represent more or less normal persons without any special training or benefits. For example, many ordinary people have Skilled-range STR from exercising, INT, EGO, or PRE due to genetics and personality, and so forth. But the Skilled level also represents

the average athlete, police officer, or soldier who has some specialized training.

Once you get into the *Competent* range, things become a little different. Normal people can sometimes edge into Competent, but usually Competent-level Characteristics result from intensive training, truly rare genetic gifts, or the like. This would include many Olympic athletes, elite soldiers and law enforcement officers, and so forth. Many player characters have a majority of their Characteristics in this range or higher — that's one of the things that makes them heroes.

Beyond Competent is *Legendary.* Few humans reach this lofty plateau; generally speaking, ordinary people can *never* attain it. Only truly exceptional individuals — heroes and superheroes, plus the best of the best in fields such as athletics — have Legendary Characteristics. The upper limit of Legendary is the upper limit of normal human attainment.

At the pinnacle is *Superhuman.* A character cannot have even a single Characteristic in this range unless he's not human or some superhuman phenomenon — superpowers, magic, mutation, super-technology, or the like — exists. However, a character doesn't have to have Superhuman-range Characteristics to be considered a "superhuman." The Superhuman label is simply a convenient one for defining a specific threshold. Being a superhuman depends primarily on having superhuman abilities of some sort, or an appropriately superhuman origin. For example, look at Firebrand on page 14. None of his Primary Characteristics fall into the range for "Superhuman" on the Characteristics Comparison Table. And yet, he's clearly superhuman — he can fly, fire energy bolts, and so forth.

Each GM determines for his own campaign what numbers fall within these seven categories. In one game, an Average person might have Primary Characteristics in the 6-10 range, and Superhuman ones in the 31+ range. In another game, Average might be 10-15, and Superhuman 51+. It all depends on GM and player preference, the nature of the campaign, and other such factors. The accompanying Characteristics Comparison Table lists some *suggested guidelines* that should apply well to most campaigns, but the GM can change the ranges listed for each category if he wants.

## CHARACTERISTICS BENCHMARKS TABLE

This table providesa few suggestions about the types of characters that fit into each category for each Characteristic. Once again, these are only *guidelines;* some GMs may prefer to use other benchmarks for their games.

| Char | Weak | Challenged | Average | Skilled | Competent | Legendary | Superhuman |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| STR | Infant | Child, elderly person | Average person | Typical weightlifter | Olympic weightlifter | Gorilla<br>Horse | Hercules<br>Thor |
| DEX | Infant | Child, elderly person | Average person | Cop<br>Pickpocket<br>Soldier | Sleight of hand artist<br>Elite soldier | Elite martial artist | Hermes |
| CON | Infant | Child, elderly person | Average person | Soldier | Elite soldier<br>Horse<br>Wolf | Rasputin<br>Elephant<br>Ox | Hercules<br>Thor<br>Whale |
| BODY | Infant | Child, elderly person | Average person | Pro football player | Rasputin<br>Horse | Elephant<br>Rhinoceros | Hercules<br>Thor<br>Whale |
| INT | Infant | Imbecile | Average person | Elite soldier | Einstein<br>Edison<br>Tesla | Sherlock Holmes | Super-computer |
| EGO | Infant | Weak-willed person, many insane people | Average person | Elite soldier | Person with psychic powers<br>Sorcerer | Psionic superhero<br>Powerful sorcerer | Zeus<br>Odin |
| PRE | Infant | Coward | Average person | Televangelist<br>Wolf | Julius Caesar<br>Vampire | Vampire lord | Zeus<br>Odin |
| COM | Horrific facial scarring | Ugly person | Average person | Model | Supermodel | Elite supermodel | Helen of Troy |

# SKILLS



## SKILL COST STRUCTURES

The *HERO System* has five cost structures for Skills. The most common is the standard Characteristic-based Skill model: for 3 Character points, a character gets a base roll of (9+(CHAR/5)) or less; +1 to the roll costs +2 Character Points.

Characters buy some types of Characteristic-based Skills, such as Forgery, Gambling, and Survival, by limited categories. These Skills cost 2 Character points for a base roll of (9+(CHAR/5)) or less with one category, or 1 Character Point for that roll with a specific subcategory (subsequent categories and subcategories also cost 2 Character Points and 1 Character Point, respectively). Improving the roll by +1 with all categories costs +2 Character Points. Animal Handler, Navigation, and Weaponsmith differ slightly because they don't have subcategories — the first category costs 2 Character Points, and each subsequent category costs 1 Character Point.

Background Skills such as Knowledge Skill, Professional Skill, and Science Skill cost 2 Character Points for a base 11- roll. Characters can "upgrade" the base roll to a Characteristic Roll (typically an INT-Based roll) for +1 Character Point. Improving the roll by +1 costs +1 Character Point.

Continued on next page

Skills are abilities characters have learned or were trained to perform; in some cases, they may represent a character's innate "knack" or talent for something, or an ability he's born with. Examples of Skills include lockpicking, spaceship piloting, knowing all about politics, and fencing. This section describes the different Skills available in the *HERO System,* their point costs, and how Skills affect the game.

All characters have a basic knowledge of the world around them: they can speak their native language, do simple arithmetic, and so forth. These standard abilities vary according to the campaign — in a medieval setting most people are illiterate, while in a high-tech environment, everyone might be proficient in several languages and know how to operate a simple computer. See *Everyman Skills,* page 46, for more information.

### BUYING SKILLS

Not all characters possess Skills like the ability to pick a lock or fire a gun. They must purchase them with Character Points — the same Character Points used to buy Characteristics and Powers.

A character may obtain a Skill by paying the Character Point cost listed (usually 3 points). Once a character has bought a Skill, he may use that Skill over and over without paying any more Character Points. However, improving the character's ability with the Skill costs more points.

The *HERO System* groups Skills into five categories for ease of reference: Agility Skills; Background Skills; Combat Skills; Intellect Skills; and Interaction Skills. Characters may have Skills from any or all categories. Skill Enhancers (page 77) lower the cost of certain Skills.

#### Skills As Powers

In appropriate circumstances, characters can buy Skills as part of a device or a weapon (*i.e.,* combined with Powers and Power Modifiers). For instance, a character could purchase Combat Skill Levels with a rifle, subject to certain Limitations such as *Focus.* For further information, refer to *Skills,* page 220.

### SKILL ROLLS

Most Skills are rated with a number that indicates how well the character knows them — the higher the number, the better he is at the Skill. In general, a character with an 11- is fairly good at a Skill, while any Skill over 14- is remarkable. See the Skill Roll Table for more information.

In ordinary situations, when a character is under no stress or pressure and has sufficient time to perform a task correctly, he doesn't have to make a Skill Roll (or Perception Roll) — the GM can assume success for ease of game play. Characters must make Skill Rolls whenever they attempt to use a Skill in difficult or dangerous situations, when under pressure, when success is crucial or unlikely, or when in combat. To use a Skill successfully, a character must roll less than or equal to his Skill Roll on 3 six-sided dice (3d6). If the roll exceeds his Skill Roll, he has failed.

Typically, making a Skill Roll constitutes a Half Phase Action, but this can vary depending on the Skill used, the task attempted, and the circumstances. Sometimes making a Skill Roll requires hours of effort... or no time at all.

#### Standard Skill Rolls

The base Skill Roll for most Intellect, Agility, or Interaction Skills (also called *Characteristic-Based* Skills), and some Background Skills, is calculated by the following formula:

**Base Skill Roll = 9 + (Characteristic/5) or less**

Thus, the base Skill Roll for an Intellect Skill is 9 + (INT/5) or less (standard rounding rules apply). Most Background Skills have a base 11- roll.

Improving the Skill Roll for standard Characteristic-Based Skills by +1 costs 2 Character Points. Background and Combat Skills, and a few special Skills, have different costs, explained in their individual descriptions. Characters may apply Limitations to these straightforward improvements to individual Skill Rolls, unless the GM rules otherwise. For example, a sneaky wilderness scout might buy +4 to his Stealth roll with the -½ Limitation *Only In Wilderness Environments.*

Characters can also improve Skill Rolls by purchasing Skill Levels. Every Skill Level adds +1 to the base roll of the Skills it applies to. The cost of a Skill Level depends on the number of different Skills to which it applies (see *Skill Levels,* page 70).

## SKILL ROLL TABLE

| Characteristic Value | Skill Roll | Description |
|---|---|---|
| N/A | 8- | A Familiarity — a very basic knowledge. See main text. |
| 2 or less | 9- | |
| 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 | 10- | |
| 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 | 11- | Competent: The character can perform routine tasks easily, and difficult tasks with a little effort. He's qualified to get a job using the Skill. |
| 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 | 12- | Skilled: The character is well-versed in the Skill. Routine tasks are easy, and more difficult tasks are well within his abilities. He's qualified to manage or assist less-skilled workers as they use the Skill. |
| 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 | 13- | |
| 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 | 14- | Very Skilled: The character is a master with the Skill. Easy tasks are a breeze, and he can perform more difficult or unusual tasks without too much trouble. |
| 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 | 15- | |
| 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 | 16- | Highly Skilled: The character is one of the very best people in the world with that Skill. Unusual or difficult tasks which give lesser masters pause are matters of routine. He often works on cutting-edge applications of the Skill. |
| 38, 39, 40, 41, 42 | 17- | |
| 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 | 18- | Extremely Skilled: The character is one of the greatest masters of the Skill in history. He develops new uses for the Skill and "pushes the envelope" of what it can do. |
| 48, 49, 50, 51, 52 | 19- | |
| 53, 54, 55, 56, 57 | 20- | Incredibly Skilled: The character amazes even other skilled practitioners. He's perhaps the greatest master of the Skill in history. This is the realm of superheroes, gods, heroes of myth, and supergeniuses. |

...and so on.

Characters can also improve Skill Rolls by paying more Character Points for the Skill, as listed in the text. Having a high Characteristic isn't the only way to get a high Skill roll.

**Familiarity**

A character may buy *Familiarity* with any Characteristic-Based, Knowledge, Science, or Professional Skill. Familiarity with a Skill costs 1 Character Point and gives the character a basic knowledge of the ability described. The Skill Roll is an 8- for any Skill with which the character has a Familiarity, whether or not the Skill is Characteristic-Based.

The 1 point spent for the Familiarity counts toward the cost of the Skill if the character later buys the full 3 point Skill. Thus, if Andarra buys Familiarity with Contortionist for 1 point and later decides to buy Contortionist, which costs 3 points, she need only spend 2 additional Character Points.

No Skill Levels (not even Overall Skill Levels) add to the 8- chance to perform a Skill with which a character is Familiar, since the character doesn't understand the Skill well enough to use his expertise. However, the GM may assign Skill Modifiers to make performing a Familiar Skill easier — for example, taking several Turns should make many tasks easier. A Familiarity can serve as a Complementary Skill (see below).

**Successful Skill Rolls**

If the character rolls less than or equal to his Skill Roll, taking all modifiers into account, he has succeeded. The more he makes the roll by, the greater his degree of success.

Example: *Two characters — Garrett Starbow, with Computer Programming 14-, and Alacar West, with Computer Programming 12- — both try to reprogram an enemy computer system to open a door. Garrett rolls a 12, and Alacar rolls a 7. Even though Alacar knows less about computers in general than Garrett does, he did much better at this task than Garrett did — he made his roll by 5, whereas Garrett only made his roll by 2. Apparently Alacar knows something about automatic door programming that Garrett doesn't... or maybe he just got lucky.*

**Failed Skill Rolls**

If the character rolls greater than his Skill Roll, taking all modifiers into account, he has failed. A failed Skill Roll means the character can't perform the chosen action (such as picking a particular lock) or receives no benefit from the Skill until the situation changes in the character's favor — in other words, until he somehow gets at least a +1 modifier to the Skill Roll. Obtaining a +1 to a Skill Roll can be as simple as taking more time (see *Skill Modifiers*).

A character who fails his Skill Roll is still more proficient at a given Skill than a character without the Skill — GMs shouldn't assume that failing a Skill Roll is worse than not having the Skill at all. (However, with certain Skills, such as Demolitions, characters are better off not trying to use the Skill unless they're reasonably proficient.)

The GM may want to make some Skill Rolls himself, just to keep the characters guessing. In this case, he can tell them "You *think* the bomb is rigged properly" or "You're not sure they believed your disguise," according to the roll. If the roll fails by a significant amount, the GM can tell the player it seemed successful even though it wasn't (leading to complications).

Continued from last page

Weapon Familiarity and Transport Familiarity have slightly different cost structures. The ability to use one subcategory (such as Blades or Camels) costs 1 Character Point. Knowing how to use an entire category of weapons or vehicles (such as Common Melee Weapons or Riding Animals), if purchasable at all, costs 2 Character Points.

Lastly, some Skills, such as Combat Skill Levels, Cramming, or Two-Weapon Fighting, have a set cost.

## Skill Versus Skill Contests

Sometimes characters use their Skills in opposition, such as when one character tries to conceal something while another character tries to find it. In such cases, use the following rules.

In any Skill Versus Skill situation, the character taking action makes his roll first. If he succeeds, the character who reacts takes a negative modifier based on the first character's degree of success (see below). For example, the character setting a bomb makes a Demolitions roll. The character trying to defuse the bomb suffers a modifier based on how well the first character made his Demolitions roll.

If the first character fails his Skill Roll, the opposing character doesn't have to make a Skill Roll to undo the first character's efforts — he can undo them automatically. If the first character succeeds with his Skill Roll, the opposing character must (a) have the appropriate Skill and (b) succeed with a Skill Roll at -1 for every 1 point by which the first character makes his Skill Roll. In other words, the second character must succeed by the same or a greater margin as the first.

Example: *Andarra has Computer Programming on a 12-. She knows a hacker plans to steal valuable information from her computer. She decides to set up defensive programs, and rolls a 14 (failing her roll by 2). Andarra has not set up a valid program. She tries again, taking more time in this attempt, so the GM gives her a +1 modifier to her Skill Roll. Andarra now needs to roll a 13 or less. She rolls a 9, succeeding by 4. Her data is now protected from casual access. Anyone trying to get to the data must make a Computer Programming roll at a -4 penalty.*



Resist the temptation to overuse the Skill Versus Skill system — in obvious situations, there's no need to make Skill Rolls. For instance, if the first character conceals an object in a drawer, and the opposing character searches that very drawer, he'll find the object. Roleplaying these situations reduces the need to make die rolls.

Most Skills work directly against the same Skill. However, some Skills, such as Stealth, work against a Perception (PER) Roll: the first character makes a Stealth Roll, and characters attempting to spot him make PER Rolls.

## Complementary Skills

Sometimes a character has two (or more) Skills that apply to the problem at hand. In such situations, the GM determines which Skill is the primary Skill, and then decides what other Skill(s) are *Complementary* to the problem at hand. The character then attempts a Skill Roll for the Complementary Skill(s). For every 2 points by which the character makes his Complementary Skill Roll(s), he adds +1 to his chance to perform the primary Skill. For example, if a character makes a Complementary Skill Roll by 0, 1, or 2, he gets a +1 to the primary Skill Roll; if he makes the roll by 3 or 4, he gets +2 to the primary Skill Roll; and so forth.

The Complementary Skill rule also applies if another character helps the character perform the Skill. For example, two characters with Electronics could team up to build a gadget. The one with the lower roll makes his Skill Roll as Complementary to the other character, thus increasing their overall chance of success.

Gamemasters who want to improve characters' chances of success should allow many Complementary Skills; GMs who want to make things difficult should permit only one. In appropriate circumstances, Characteristic Rolls or PER Rolls can act as Complementary Skill Rolls.

Example: *Randall Irons tries to get some information from a young woman; he believes she knows the whereabouts of the Aztec artifact stolen from his hotel room. Randall has both Conversation 12- and Seduction 13-. Since Randall wants to gain information, the GM rules that Conversation is the primary Skill, and Seduction is Complementary. Randall rolls a 10 on his Seduction roll, making it by 3. The charming Randall gets a +2 to his Conversation roll for this conversation, which improves his chance to find out any useful information the woman knows.*

**Specializing Skills**

The Complementary Skill rules allow characters to "specialize" their Skills by buying related Background Skills. For example, a character with Forgery (Art Objects) might want to have a special talent for forging Rembrandt paintings. He could buy KS: Rembrandt or PS: Forge Rembrandts, and use those as Complementary Skills for his Forgery rolls.

This system also allows GMs to individualize certain Skills for specific campaigns by requiring characters to buy particular Background Skills when they buy those Skills. For example, in a Science Fiction campaign where the characters all serve the Galactic Federation, when they buy Computer Programming the GM could require them to also buy a related Background Skill, PS: Use Galactic Federation Computers, to reflect their more advanced training with that type of computer.

## Skill Modifiers

The GM should apply modifiers to Skill Rolls depending on the circumstances. All Skill Modifiers change the number the character needs to roll, not the dice roll itself (thus, a positive modifier, like +2, is good because it increases a character's Skill Roll; a negative modifier, like -3, is bad because it reduces the roll). This also applies to the character's Skill Levels and any Complementary Skills.

Example: *Andarra attempts to conceal an illegal mind control helmet in her spaceship. The GM rules that since Andarra has a small spaceship, this attempt suffers a -2 modifier to Andarra's Concealment roll. Andarra has Concealment 12-. With the -2 modifier, Andarra needs to roll a 10- to successfully hide the device.*

The GM should provide modifiers to deal with each situation that comes up in the course of the game. Skills are very general; they cover a variety of situations, and circumstances can modify the chance of success tremendously. Modifiers help describe the situation to the players in a very concrete fashion, making the game more visual and exciting. Positive modifiers also promote player cleverness and creativity, and that's when players have the most fun.

The accompanying table provides a general list of modifiers that apply to most of the Skills. The GM should use this list as a guideline when determining modifiers — remember, circumstances alter modifiers. Also, certain Skills may not use some of these modifiers.

Equipment modifiers only apply to Skills that require or can be performed with equipment. If the Skill *requires* equipment (Lockpicking, for example), then lack of proper equipment means the character cannot use the Skill at all (unless, perhaps, he can substitute appropriate Powers for equipment). Unless noted otherwise in a Skill's description, a character who buys a Skill that requires equipment does not automatically have that equipment; he has to acquire it as part of his background or during the game (but he doesn't have to pay Character Points for it).

## SKILL MODIFIERS

| Modifier | Circumstance |
|---|---|
| +3 to +5 | Routine |
| +1 to +3 | Easy |
| -1 to -3 | Difficult |
| -3 to -5 | Extremely Difficult |
| -5 or more | Sheer Folly |
| See text | Preparing for extra time |
| +1 to +3 | Character has extensive knowledge of the object of the Skill Roll |
| +1 to +3 | Character roleplays the use of the Skill well |
| +1 to +3 | Character uses good equipment in connection with the Skill Roll |
| +1 to +3 | Excellent conditions for performing the Skill |
| -1 to -5 | Poor conditions for performing the Skill |
| -1 to -5 | Extremely strange or weird object to perform the Skill on |
| -1 to -5 | Character uses poor equipment, or lacks the proper equipment (if appropriate) |
| -1 to -3 | Combat conditions, for Skills not normally used in combat |

### THE TIME CHART

Sometimes characters receive a positive modifier to a Skill Roll if they take extra time to perform a Skill. The GM should determine the minimum amount of time it takes to complete a task (from 1 Phase to days or weeks). If the character takes additional time beyond that minimum, he receives a +1 for each level down on the Time Chart.

Example: *Chiron tries to pick a lock. The GM determines this would normally take 1 Turn (12 seconds). Success is crucial, so Chiron spends 1 Hour picking the lock. This moves down the Time Chart by 4 levels, so Chiron receives a +4.*

Alternately, if a character has to perform a task in less time than it normally takes, he suffers a -3 penalty for each level up the Time Chart. For example, to perform a task that normally takes five minutes in 12 seconds (one Turn), a character must make his Skill Roll with a -6 penalty to his Skill.

### SKILL PERIOD

The GM should decide which Skills characters in his campaign can buy. Not all Skills are appropriate for all genres (genre books published by Hero Games provide suggestions regarding Skill availability). For example, characters in most Fantasy campaigns can't learn Computer Programming; that Skill depends upon modern electronics and other technologies not available in pre-industrial or early industrial settings. The GM can also alter the names of Skills to match the campaign. For instance, in a Fantasy campaign Paramedics becomes *Healing* or *Chirurgy,* and High Society becomes *Courtier.*

The Skill Table, below, assigns all Skills to one or more of three time periods: Fantasy, Modern, or Future. "Fantasy" includes most pre-industrial societies, such as found in the typical Fantasy campaign. They usually involve little or no use of technology, and often little or no understanding of

**TIME CHART**

| Time Period/Duration |
|---|
| 1 Segment |
| 1 Phase |
| 1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) |
| 1 Minute |
| 5 Minutes |
| 20 Minutes |
| 1 Hour |
| 6 Hours |
| 1 Day |
| 1 Week |
| 1 Month |
| 1 Season (3 months) |
| 1 Year |
| 5 Years |
| 25 Years |
| 1 Century |

### GRANDFATHERING SKILLS

The Fifth Edition eliminates General Skills — Skills (other than Background Skills) with a base 11- roll and no related Characteristic. When you convert Fourth Edition characters, this may save you some Character Points. If so, you can use those points to improve your roll with that Skill, buy a related Skill, or save the points for anything else the GM allows.

basic principles or science behind the Skill (if any). A Fantasy-era character who has the opportunity to use Skills from later periods often suffers a Skill Roll penalty of -3 to -5 for dealing with Modern situations, -5 to -8 for Future.

"Modern" signifies Skills appropriate for campaigns set circa the year 2000 on Earth. In many respects, the Modern period also includes near-future times, and even some prior industrial periods (such as the Pulp or Victorian eras). A Modern character trying to use his Skills in Fantasy era situations (for example, to use Security Systems, which he learned to defeat electronic burglar alarms, to neutralize a trapdoor), or in Future eras where he may not completely understand what's going on, suffers Skill Roll penalties of -2 to -4.

"Future" includes far-future settings such as those featured in most Science Fiction campaigns. Future characters trying to apply their Skills to Modern settings or technologies may suffer Skill Roll penalties of -2 to -4; the penalty increases to -5 or greater in Fantasy eras.

These periods serve as guidelines for which Skills are appropriate for which types of campaigns. The GM may alter the list, create more complex period lists, or allow exemptions for specific characters based on conception. For example, a time-traveling wizard from a Fantasy campaign might learn Electronics, or a Science Fiction campaign featuring lots of strange alien creatures might use Riding.

Gamemasters should remember that Skill capabilities vary from period to period and genre to genre. For example, characters from any time period can purchase Criminology, but not until the early Modern period can they take advantage of fingerprinting techniques. Genre books from Hero Games describe Skill applications appropriate for specific periods and genres.

## Everyman Skills

All characters have some ability in a few Skills to reflect the fact that everybody knows how to do these things to some extent. The actual "Everyman" Skills vary according to the genre and the campaign setting. In modern campaigns, the Everyman Skills include Acting, Climbing, Concealment, Conversation, Deduction, Paramedics, Persuasion, Shadowing, Stealth, and Transport Familiarity. All characters have Familiarity (an 8- roll) with these Skills. (If the character comes from an extremely unusual culture, he might have different Everyman Skills.) You should note them on your character's sheet, but since they're free, you shouldn't include the cost in the character's total cost. A character can purchase and improve these Skills just like any other Skills, but he must pay the full cost — the Everyman Familiarity doesn't reduce the cost.

In some cases, a character may not know all the Everyman Skills he should — for example, a modern-day character who's spent all his life in a big city with easily-accessed mass transportation may never learn how to drive a car. If so, he may sell back any Everyman Skills he doesn't know for 1 point each.

## DETERMINING EVERYMAN SKILLS

When creating a campaign, the GM must decide what Everyman Skills characters have. This depends on the environment the characters grew up in; Everyman Skills reflect the basic abilities individual characters learn while growing up. Hence, if the characters came from a high-tech information-based society, they might all know how to operate computers. Conversely, characters who come from a Phoenician trading society may all know how to sail. Characters in the same campaign may have different Everyman Skills if they come from radically different backgrounds (for example, Viking-type characters and horse nomad-type characters in a large Fantasy setting).

#### SAMPLE EVERYMAN SKILL LISTS

**VIKING FANTASY**
Acting
Climbing
Concealment
Conversation
Deduction
Native Language (4 points' worth, no literacy)
Paramedics (Healing)
Persuasion
One PS at 11- (a character's job, hobby, or the like)
Shadowing
Stealth
TF: Small Wind-Powered Boats
AK: Home country or region 8-

**MODERN**
Acting
Climbing
Concealment
Conversation
Deduction
Native Language (4 points' worth, includes literacy)
Paramedics
Persuasion
One PS at 11- (a character's job, hobby, or the like)
Shadowing
Stealth
TF: Small Motorized Ground Vehicles
AK: Home country or region 8-

**SCIENCE FICTION**
Acting
Climbing
Computer Programming
Concealment
Conversation
Deduction
Native Language (4 points' worth, includes literacy)
Paramedics
Persuasion
One PS at 11- (a character's job, hobby, or the like)
Shadowing
Stealth
TF: Personal-Use Spacecraft
AK: Home country or region 8-

Despite the name, Everyman Skills are really Every*character* Skills. Not every single person in a given society has these Skills, but every PC and prominent NPC does. Heroes, after all, generally tend to be more competent at a wide variety of abilities than the average person.

**Untrained Skills**

Sometimes a character wants to attempt an action for which he doesn't know the appropriate Skill — not even as an Everyman Skill. For example, he might want to bribe a guard even though he doesn't have the *Bribery* Skill, defuse a bomb even though he knows nothing about Demolitions, or find his way through the wilderness even though he lacks the *Navigation* Skill. At the GM's option, a character in this situation can use the Skill *untrained.* A character's roll with an untrained Skill is a flat 6-, and he cannot apply any type of Skill Levels to improve this roll. The GM may choose to allow Skill Modifiers (both positive and negative) or Complementary Characteristic Rolls to apply (but if so, he may wish to cap Untrained Skill rolls at 8-, regardless of bonuses, so that characters have a reason to buy Familiarities). The GM may rule that characters cannot use some Skills, such as obscure KSs, untrained.

## Extraordinary Skills

As an optional rule, a character can attempt an incredible feat with a Skill if he has a Skill Roll of 18- or better. Any incredible feat takes a -10 penalty or more to begin with, and the GM can assign other modifiers as he sees fit. For example, a character could use Breakfall to land on his feet and take no damage after a fall from an airplane, or a character with Persuasion could convince a target of a patent untruth ("Are you going to believe me or your own eyes?"). This optional rule allows a GM to run a more fantastic campaign with amazing feats not possible in the real world or even most adventure fiction.

## THE SKILL LIST

All Skills are listed in the accompanying table alphabetically, with the Type of Skill, the Base Roll on 3d6, the Base Cost in Character Points, the cost of a +1 to the Skill Roll, and the appropriate Period(s) for the Skill. This list is not exhaustive; the GM can create other Skills or let characters buy Skills not on the list. General categories such as Professional Skills and Knowledge Skills cover Skills not listed; refer to the text for further information.

## THE SKILL LIST

| Skill | Type | Base Roll | Base/+1 Cost | Period |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Acrobatics | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Acting | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Analyze | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Animal Handler | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 2/2 | All |
| Autofire Skills | Combat | — | Varies | Modern, Future |
| Breakfall | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Bribery | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Bugging | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Bureaucratics | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Climbing | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Combat Driving | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Combat Piloting | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Combat Skill Levels | Combat | — | Varies | All |
| Computer Programming | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Concealment | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Contortionist | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Conversation | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Cramming | Intellect | — | 5/— | All |
| Criminology | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Cryptography | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Deduction | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Defense Maneuver | Combat | — | Varies | All |
| Demolitions | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Disguise | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Electronics | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Fast Draw | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Forensic Medicine | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Forgery | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 2/2 | All |
| Gambling | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 2/2 | All |
| High Society | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Interrogation | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Inventor | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Knowledge Skill | Background | 11* | 2/1* | All |
| Language | Background | — | 1/1 | All |
| Lipreading | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Lockpicking | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Martial Arts | Combat | Varies | Varies | All |
| Mechanics | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Mimicry | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Navigation | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 2/2 | All |
| Oratory | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Paramedics | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Penalty Skill Levels | Combat | — | Varies | All |
| Persuasion | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Power | Varies | 9+(CHAR/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Professional Skill | Background | 11* | 2/1* | All |
| Rapid Attack | Combat | — | 5/— | All |
| Riding | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | Fantasy, Modern |
| Science Skill | Background | 11* | 2/1* | All |
| Security Systems | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Seduction | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Shadowing | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Skill Levels | — | — | Varies | All |
| Sleight Of Hand | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Stealth | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Streetwise | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Survival | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 2/2 | All |
| Systems Operation | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | Modern, Future |
| Tactics | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Teamwork | Agility | 9+(DEX/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Tracking | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Trading | Interaction | 9+(PRE/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Transport Familiarity | Background | — | Varies | All |
| Two-Weapon Fighting | Combat | — | 10/— | All |
| Ventriloquism | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 3/2 | All |
| Weapon Familiarity | Combat | — | Varies | All |
| Weaponsmith | Intellect | 9+(INT/5) | 2/2 | All |

*: Characters can base these Skills on a Characteristic (usually INT).

# Skill Types

The *HERO System* groups Skills into five categories: Agility Skills, Background Skills, Combat Skills, Intellect Skills, and Interaction Skills. The only Skill that doesn't fall into one of those categories is Skill Levels, which lets you improve your Skill Roll with several Skills. (The *Power* Skill falls into whatever category uses the Characteristic its roll depends on.) Characters may have Skills from any or all categories.

## AGILITY SKILLS

Agility Skills are based on DEX. They cost 3 Character Points for a base (9 + DEX/5) or less roll; a +1 to any Agility Skill costs 2 Character Points. Agility Skills suffer penalties when a character is Encumbered (see page 379). Agility Skills include:

Acrobatics
Breakfall
Climbing
Combat Driving
Combat Piloting
Contortionist
Fast Draw
Lockpicking
Riding
Sleight Of Hand
Stealth
Teamwork

## BACKGROUND SKILLS

Background Skills represent different kinds of information or knowledge a character possesses. Typically, characters acquire them by growing up in a certain society, studying under a teacher, or through their life experiences. Background Skills help flesh out a character and may prove crucial in non-combat situations. The cost for Background Skills varies according to type. They include:

Knowledge Skill
Language
Professional Skill
Science Skill
Transport Familiarity

## COMBAT SKILLS

Combat Skills help the character fight effectively. Typically they do not require a Skill Roll. They include:

Autofire Skills
Combat Skill Levels
Defense Maneuver
Martial Arts
Penalty Skill Levels
Rapid Attack
Two-Weapon Fighting
Weapon Familiarity

## INTELLECT SKILLS

Intellect Skills are based on INT. Most cost 3 Character Points for a base (9 + INT/5) or less roll; a +1 to the roll of most Intellect Skills costs 2 Character Points (a few, such as Cramming, Forgery, and Survival, have different cost structures). Intellect Skills include:

Analyze
Bugging
Computer Programming
Concealment
Cramming
Criminology
Cryptography
Deduction
Demolitions
Disguise
Electronics
Forensic Medicine
Forgery
Gambling
Inventor
Lipreading
Mechanics
Mimicry
Navigation
Paramedics
Security Systems
Shadowing
Survival
Systems Operation
Tactics
Tracking
Ventriloquism
Weaponsmith

## INTERACTION SKILLS

Interaction Skills are based on PRE. Most cost 3 Character Points for a base (9 + PRE/5) or less roll. A +1 to most Interaction Skills costs 2 Character Points.

A COM Roll may sometimes act as a Complementary Skill for many Interaction Skills. Of course, beauty's in the eye of the beholder, so this tactic may backfire....

Interaction Skills include:

Acting
Animal Handler
Bribery
Bureaucratics
Conversation
High Society
Interrogation
Oratory
Persuasion
Seduction
Streetwise
Trading

# SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

Here are the descriptions of and rules for the Skills. The header for each one lists its type, how to calculate its roll (if appropriate), and its cost in Character Points.

## ACROBATICS

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Agility Skill allows a character to perform flips, jumps, and rolls like a circus acrobat. Acrobatics lets the character jump from one moving vehicle to another safely, swing from flagpoles, bounce off awnings, and execute other tricky moves. A character with Acrobatics could jump and flip over an obstacle, then land on his feet ready to fight.

Acrobatics doesn't just impress bystanders — it's useful in combat. An acrobat can often gain +1 to +3 to his OCV by surprising his opponent with an acrobatic maneuver (the GM determines this bonus; see *Surprise Move,* page 381). Typically this is a Zero Phase Action, or an Action that takes no time. If a bonus is appropriate, a good rule of thumb is +1 OCV for every 3 full points by which the character succeeds with his Acrobatics roll (*i.e.,* if the character makes the roll by 3-5, he gets +1; by 6-8, he gets +2, and so on.

A character with Acrobatics can also retain his balance when walking on narrow or difficult surfaces, such as tiny mountain ledges, the edges of buildings, or tightropes. The GM should assign modifiers according to the difficulty of the situation. The character can perform easy feats of balance (like walking on a balance beam) with no chance of falling.

## ACTING

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Interaction Skill can alter his physical mannerisms and speech patterns to seem to be another person, to fool someone, or to fake moods and emotions. A character can use it to hide his true identity or to impersonate another individual.

To detect an acting character, use Acting versus an INT Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. It's more difficult to impersonate a specific person (-1 to -3) or to maintain an impersonation over a long time (-1 to -3). The character may receive bonuses (+1 to +3) if he's had a chance to study the individual or if the viewers don't know the individual well. Acting does not impart any skill with disguises; if the character wants to look like a specific person, he either must know Disguise or have help from someone who does. Area Knowledge, Mimicry, and Disguise can all help the character impersonate someone, or even act as Complementary Skills for Acting, depending on the circumstances.

Failing an Acting Roll usually means the acting was not convincing and the viewers saw through the impersonation. However, in some cases, it may just make the viewers suspicious or distrustful of the character.

## ANALYZE

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill allows a character to analyze another character's abilities or skills to determine the other character's level of power or degree of competence. The character must specify what he can analyze using this Skill when he buys it; examples include Analyze Style (martial arts styles), Analyze Combat Technique (fighting skills and tactics), Analyze Magic (magical styles and training), and Analyze Agility Skills (competence at Skills based on DEX).

If a character makes his Analyze roll exactly, he has a general idea of how skilled the target is in comparison to him ("He's better than me," "I could do better than him easily"). If he makes his Analyze roll by 1 or 2, he knows where, how, and by whom the target was trained (if applicable). If he makes his Analyze roll by 3 or more, he can discover distinctive mannerisms about the target that grant him +1 DCV against any attacks (or -1 on Skill Versus Skill rolls) made by the target. If the character makes his Analyze roll by half or more (for example, by rolling a 6 or less on a 12- roll), he gains +2 for all relevant rolls against the target (this bonus is equivalent to two Overall Skill Levels; the character may assign the bonus as he sees fit from Phase to Phase).

A character cannot make successive Analyze rolls against the same character in the same encounter — he only gets one try. The knowledge and bonuses gained through use of Analyze last for that encounter only; they do not "carry over" to future encounters. The character may retain the rough knowledge — "I'm better than him" — but not the bonuses. However, at the GM's option, the character may receive a positive Skill Modifier to reflect his past familiarity with the target's techniques.

The GM can expand Analyze to allow a character to analyze and evaluate just about anything — buildings, technology (or specific types of technology, like computers), you name it — to determine how well-built they are, and their capabilities, in relation to similar items he knows about. In this case, Analyze acts as a particularly useful Complementary Skill — it grants a +1 bonus to related Skill Rolls (including Find Weakness rolls) for every *1* point by which the character makes his Analyze roll.

## ANIMAL HANDLER

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 2 Character Points for a category, +1 point for each additional category; +1 to roll with all categories per +2 points

This Interaction Skill lets a character train animals to do his bidding. Characters purchase the ability to handle one category of animals for 2 points for a (9+(PRE/5)) or less roll. Additional categories of animals cost 1 point each; the character may increase his Skill Roll with all categories purchased at a cost of 2 points per +1 to the roll.

The chance to train an animal depends on the handler's Skill Roll; the GM should modify it depending on the length of time the handler has to



### CONCENTRATED SPRAYFIRE EXAMPLE

Renegade (CV 7) wants to use his H&K MP5 submachine gun (5-shot Autofire) to shoot three thugs standing in adjacent hexes. Using normal Autofire, he could only hit each thug once. However, using Concentrated Sprayfire, he fires all 5 shots and hits Thug #1 twice, Thug #2 twice, and Thug #3 once. He suffers a -3 OCV penalty for firing Autofire into 3 hexes, plus another -1 OCV for Concentrated Sprayfire, giving him OCV 3. He'd better hit them, since using Concentrated Sprayfire reduces his DCV to 4.

## ANIMAL HANDLER CATEGORIES

| Animal Categories | Examples |
|---|---|
| Aquatic Animals | Fish, whales, octopi, jellyfish |
| Birds | All birds other than Raptors |
| Bovines | Cattle, bison |
| Camels | |
| Canines | Dogs, foxes, wolves |
| Dragons | Dragons, wyverns |
| Elephants | Elephants, mammoths |
| Equines | Horses, donkeys, unicorns |
| Felines | Housecats, tigers, lions |
| Insects & Arthropods | Insects, spiders, scorpions |
| Raptors | Falcons, hawks, eagles |
| Reptiles & Amphibians | Snakes, lizards, frogs |
| Ursines | Bears |

The GM may create other categories, depending upon the campaign setting and character conception.

work with the beast, the animal's intelligence, the difficulty of the "trick" the character wants to teach the animal, and the handler's familiarity with the species. The temperament of the animal also makes a difference — it's much easier to train a beagle than a camel or griffon. Training usually takes weeks, but a skillful animal handler can do it much more quickly.

A character should make an Animal Handler roll whenever he wants an animal to do something unusual or out of the ordinary. For example, a trained attack dog could attack an enemy in combat without a roll. However, if the handler wants the dog to attack one man out of a crowd, the character must make an Animal Handler roll (with a penalty if the crowd is large). A failed roll means the dog's too confused to attack, or attacks the wrong person.

Characters can also use Animal Handler to calm down wild animals and ferocious beasts. This usually requires them to succeed with a roll at a -2 to -5 penalty, depending upon the type of animal and its intent (getting a stubborn wildebeest to move out of the road is easier than preventing a charging guard dog from attacking). In this sense characters can even use Animal Handler to represent a quasi-mystic "rapport" between a character and all wild creatures.

Characters do not have to use this Skill on animals bought with Character Points (as Followers; see page 81). Such creatures are automatically friendly to the character.

### AUTOFIRE SKILLS

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 5 Character Points for each Autofire Skill

These four Combat Skills let characters use Autofire attacks more efficiently. Characters can "stack" them together to, for example, execute Accurate, Concentrated, Skipover Sprayfire. When "stacking" in this fashion, a character takes the total of all the OCV penalties for the Skills used. Except as noted under each Skill, standard Autofire rules apply.

Each Autofire Skill costs 5 Character Points. Using any of them takes a Full Phase and halves a character's DCV (this penalty is not cumulative if he uses two or more Autofire Skills at once). An Autofire Skill applies to any and all Autofire attacks a character has or uses.

**Accurate Sprayfire**

The character can use Autofire against multiple targets with great accuracy. He suffers only a flat -1 OCV penalty (instead of the usual -1 OCV per hex fired into penalty). Accurate Sprayfire bonuses also apply when characters use Suppression Fire against multiple hex lines.

**Concentrated Sprayfire**

When using Autofire against multiple targets, the character can concentrate his attack to fire multiple shots at a particular target, instead of the standard one shot per target. He incurs a -1 OCV penalty (in addition to standard Autofire modifiers).

**Rapid Autofire**

A character with this Skill may use Autofire attacks with the Combat Maneuver *Rapid Fire* (see page 396). He must fire the same number of shots in each burst of Rapid Autofire (*i.e.,* if he fires 3 shots at his first target, he must fire 3 shots at all targets, even if his Autofire could fire up to 5 shots). He suffers Rapid Fire's cumulative -2 OCV penalty for each burst of Autofire fired after the first, in addition to any standard Autofire penalties.

**Skipover Sprayfire**

When firing at multiple targets, a character with Skipover Sprayfire can fire Autofire attacks in small bursts at nonadjacent hexes, so he doesn't waste Charges or energy firing into empty hexes. He only has to fire into the hexes he wants to fire into (*i.e.,* those with targets in them), instead of into each hex counted in the hex line between targets. He incurs

the standard -1 OCV penalty for each hex he tracks his attack across (even if he doesn't fire an attack into that hex), and can track his attack across a number of hexes no greater than the number of shots he can fire. Skipover Sprayfire attacks are at -1 OCV (in addition to Autofire penalties).

### BREAKFALL

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Agility Skill can perform many tasks related to keeping his footing and protecting himself from falls and related situations.

First, a character can use Breakfall to stand up from falling, being prone, lying down, or otherwise being on the ground without taking a Half Phase. If the roll succeeds, the character gets to his feet as a Zero Phase Action.

Second, characters can use Breakfall to take only half damage from a fall. Each 2" the character falls imposes a -1 penalty on the roll. If the character succeeds with his Breakfall roll by half (after applying the height modifier), he takes no damage at all; if he makes an Extraordinary Skill Roll, he can survive (albeit barely) a fall from just about any height regardless of the height modifier. (See page 434 for details on falling damage.) The GM should assign modifiers of -1 to -5 if the character is wounded, Encumbered, or landing on an extremely hard surface. For example, a roll to prevent damage from landing on a carpeted floor or loose earth might be at -1; from a fall onto a wooden floor or packed earth, -2; from a fall onto cement or asphalt, -3. If the surface is uneven, cluttered, or sloped, an additional -1 might be appropriate; a slippery surface might add an additional -1 to -2 penalty. Landing on a soft surface (such as water, a cushion or mat, or a featherbed) would make the roll easier (+1 to +3).

Third, characters can use Breakfall to resist damage from Throws (see page 400). A successful roll (at -1 for every 2d6 in the Throw attack) halves the damage taken.

Fourth, a character can use Breakfall to land on his feet if he suffers Knockback or Knockdown. Each +2" of Knockback imposes a -1 on the Breakfall Roll (there's no penalty for Knockdown or a single inch of Knockback). If the roll succeeds, he takes no damage and doesn't have to spend a Half Phase standing up. Characters who are Knocked Back into something (like a wall or a vehicle) cannot use Breakfall to lessen the effects of Knockback.

Fifth, characters can use Breakfall to stay on their feet when walking on soft or slippery surfaces, such as ice, wet stone, mud, or shallow water. The GM should assign modifiers according to the difficulty of the situation (see *Environmental Conditions,* page 379).

Except where indicated otherwise, a single Breakfall roll can only accomplish one of the tasks described above; to do more than one at once requires two rolls. For example, a character who wanted to both resist damage from a Throw and get back on his feet immediately would have to make two rolls.

### BRIBERY

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Interaction Skill knows when to bribe someone, how to approach him, and how much to offer. The proper bribe can vary greatly from place to place; usually it's money, but sometimes things such as food or cigarettes work best. Characters should roleplay bribery attempts as much as possible, with the GM allowing a character to make Bribery rolls at crucial points in the bargaining to determine how much to offer, how subtle to be, and so on.

If the Bribery attempt fails badly, or if the character attempts to bribe an incorruptible target, the potential bribee may call his superior or the police, arrest the character, or threaten him with a weapon. Also, just because a character has bribed someone doesn't mean he'll *stay* bribed. Complementary Skills can include Persuasion, Seduction, and Area or Culture Knowledges. The right language also helps immensely.

### BUGGING

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can plant and operate listening, visual, or other sensing devices ("bugs") and wiretaps properly. He can also "sweep" (search physically or with detectors) for bugs and wiretaps. He can follow a properly bugged vehicle with a successful Bugging roll and a tracking device (though he may need Shadowing to keep the target from perceiving him).

A successful Bugging roll lets a character find an existing bug, or correctly place microphones or cameras and get good sound or video reception from them. (This doesn't necessarily mean the bug's well-hidden; that requires a Concealment roll, with Bugging acting as a Complementary Skill.) A failed Bugging roll can mean the character used the wrong bug for the job, the equipment broke, bad sound or false noises make the bug useless, and so forth.

Generally, the GM can assume that characters with Bugging have access to a small supply of bugs and bugging equipment of average quality. If not, or if they want better equipment, they can obtain it by building the devices with Character Points (typically using Clairsentience)... or, in Heroic campaigns, buying them with money.

Since Bugging generally requires sophisticated electronic equipment, it's usually only bought in Modern or Future campaigns. However, at the GM's option, in Fantasy periods it might become *Eavesdropping,* the ability to find the best places from which to spy on and overhear people. In this case, Eavesdropping acts as a Complementary Skill for the character's PER Roll when he attempts to overhear or spy on someone.

### RAPID AUTOFIRE EXAMPLE

Magnum (OCV 10) carries a fully-loaded Uzi submachine gun (5-shot Autofire). He attacks three ninja (DCV 5) armed with swords. Since he'd rather not be filleted, he uses Rapid Autofire to shoot each of them once with a three-round burst (thus expending a total of nine bullets). He suffers a -4 OCV to all shots he takes, so he needs a 12- to hit. He rolls an 8 against the first ninja, hitting him three times. Then he rolls a 13 against the second ninja and misses. Since he missed Ninja #2, he automatically misses Ninja #3.

### SKIPOVER SPRAYFIRE EXAMPLE

Renegade (CV 7) attacks four thugs who've spread themselves out so that there's an empty hex between them (thus, they occupy a total of seven hexes). Unfortunately for them, Renegade has Skipover Sprayfire, so he won't waste any bullets on the empty hexes. Since Renegade's gun has an Autofire rate of 5, he can track his attack across 5 hexes — so he can't attack all four thugs. He attacks the first three on his left. Using Skipover Sprayfire and Concentrated Sprayfire, he fires two shots at Thug #1, two at Thug #2, and one at Thug #3. He suffers a -5 OCV for tracking Autofire across five hexes, -1 OCV for Concentrated Sprayfire, and -1 OCV for Skipover Sprayfire, making his OCV 0. Good luck.

## BUREAUCRATICS

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Interaction Skill can deal with bureaucrats, cut through red tape, and extract information from bureaucracies. He also knows the right people to talk to (for just about anything) and how to reach them. Bureaucratics comes in handy when characters need travel papers in a foreign country, must go through Customs, have to arrange an appointment, and so on.

Bureaucratic procedures usually take time, from several hours to several days. The character can get quicker action with a better Bureaucratics roll. Complementary Skills for Bureaucratics include Knowledge Skill (of the locale or culture), Seduction, Bribery, and Persuasion. If the character has some sort of technical request, the relevant Science Skill would be Complementary. Failed Bureaucratics rolls can result in the character's request being turned down — or worse, stalled forever in red tape.

Bureaucratics proves most useful in Modern or Future campaigns, where large bureaucratic organizations are commonplace. However, it's also appropriate for some Fantasy-era campaigns — many medieval-era kingdoms had byzantine courts and bureaucracies.

## CLIMBING

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Agility Skill allows a character to climb unusually difficult walls, trees, and buildings, as long as handholds exist. Most characters can climb ordinary things (like ladders) without a Skill. A character with Climbing may climb difficult surfaces with a successful Skill Roll. STR Rolls sometimes act as Complementary Rolls. Climbing speed varies according to the structure being climbed, but the base speed is 1" per Phase (at most). Climbing equipment (such as rope, grapnels, pitons, or special shoes) may provide bonuses to the roll or speed the pace of climbing.

A climbing character's OCV and DCV are halved, and may be 0 if the character is in a really difficult position (see page 379). A failed Climbing roll usually means the character cannot climb that area, but sometimes means a fall if the roll was spectacularly bad.

## COMBAT DRIVING

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Agility Skill can drive and control a ground or water vehicle in difficult situations. It applies to all vehicles that operate in two dimensions, from carts and chariots, to automobiles, to surface boats and ships.

To use Combat Driving, the character must know how to operate the vehicle (see *Transport Familiarity,* page 73). Characters with this Skill automatically have Familiarity with one 1-point class of vehicles which operate in two dimensions. Characters who want to know how to operate more than one class of vehicle should purchase Transport Familiarity.

Characters use Combat Driving for driving during combat. They don't need to make Combat Driving rolls while driving normally on the road (or other surface) unless something unusual happens, such as someone attacking the vehicle. In combat, this Skill allows the character to drive the vehicle with up to its full DCV, making it much harder to hit (see page 471).

Although most appropriate for Modern and Future societies, Combat Driving has uses in some Fantasy settings under such names as *Charioteering, Teamster, Sailing,* or *Sledding.* Characters use it the same way; it just applies to a more limited class of vehicles.

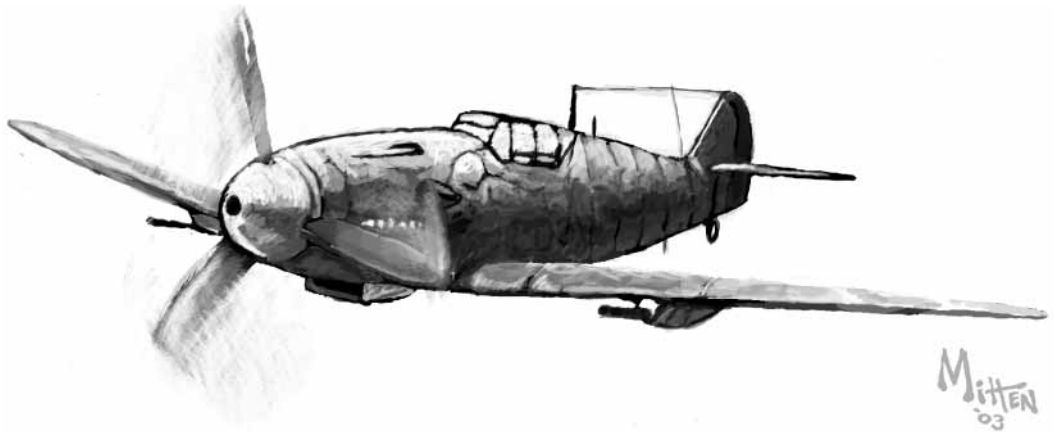
## COMBAT PILOTING

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Agility Skill can pilot and control vehicles that operate in three dimensions (everything from airplanes, to submarines, to spaceships) in difficult situations (primarily combat).

To use Combat Piloting, the character must know how to operate the vehicle (see *Transport Familiarity,* page 73). Characters with this Skill automatically have Familiarity with one 1-point class of vehicles that operate in three dimensions. Characters who want to know how to operate more than one class of vehicle should purchase Transport Familiarity.

Characters use Combat Piloting when landing, taking off, and piloting during combat (or other stressful situations, such as storms). Characters don't need to make Combat Piloting rolls while



landing normally (at an airport) unless something unusual happens (such as someone attacking the vehicle). In combat this Skill allows a pilot to fly the vehicle at its full DCV, making it much harder to hit (see page 471).

Characters with this Skill know how to read a map, but would have difficulty determining their location in unfamiliar territory, or after becoming lost (that requires Navigation).

Combat Piloting is usually only available in Modern and Future cultures. However, in some unusual Fantasy settings, characters might use it for magical wind-riding ships and similar vehicles.

## COMBAT SKILL LEVELS

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 2-8 Character Points per Level (see text)

Once a character knows how to use an attack, he can improve his skill with it by buying Combat Skill Levels. Combat Skill Levels (CSLs) have several potential uses, though a character can only use a CSL for one thing at a time. Characters can use Overall Levels as CSLs, but if so, cannot use the Overall Level for anything else that Phase (see *Skill Levels,* page 70).

### ASSIGNING COMBAT SKILL LEVELS

A character can change the assignment of his CSLs as a Zero Phase Action. However, unless the GM permits otherwise, a character may not change the assignment of his CSLs more than once in a Phase. After he attacks or takes some other action, his CSLs stay as they are until he chooses to re-allocate them in a later Phase (or when he Aborts to a defensive Action and assigns them to DCV).

Example: *Renegade has four 8-point CSLs with All Combat. When his turn comes to act in Phase 8 (he is DEX 25), he assigns 2 Levels to OCV and 2 to DCV. His CSLs stay that way until he acts in Phase 10 (again, on DEX 25), at which point he can decide to leave them as they are or rearrange them.*

Unless the GM permits otherwise, a character can only allocate a CSL on a Phase when he uses an attack/power that CSL applies to. For example, if a character has a 3-point Combat Skill Level with his Energy Blast, he can only assign that Level (for any purpose) on Phases when he uses his EB.

### USES OF COMBAT SKILL LEVELS

There are four different uses of Combat Skill Levels:

1) Accuracy: Characters can use one CSL as +1 OCV with any attack which the CSL applies to. This is the only way to use a 2-point CSL; 2-point CSLs cannot apply to DCV or increase damage.

2) Defense: Characters can use one CSL costing 3 or more points as a +1 DCV against the same types of attacks (HTH or Ranged) for which the CSL could increase OCV. For example, a CSL with a sword-fighting martial art could increase DCV in HTH Combat (against any type of HTH attack), but not in Ranged Combat. Characters can buy CSLs costing 5 points to add +1 DCV against all types of attacks. A CSL (of any cost) applied to DCV is not Persistent (and cannot be made so except by buying the Skill *Defense Maneuver* at level IV; see page 57); instead, the character must specify when he's using the CSL (he cannot specify that he uses it "at all times"). However, see *Optional Rules,* below.

3) Damage, Heroic Campaigns: Heroic characters can use two CSLs to increase the damage done by a HTH or Ranged attack by one Damage Class (up to a maximum of twice its original DCs) (see page 405 for more information). For instance, a 1d6+1 Killing Damage weapon does 1½d6 if a character uses two CSLs to increase its damage; four CSLs would raise its damage to 2d6, and so on. Similarly, a 4d6 Normal Damage club would do 6d6 if a character used four CSLs to increase the damage. Only Heroic campaigns use this rule.

4) Damage, Superheroic Campaigns: Superheroic characters can use two CSLs to add +1 BODY to the damage done by a Killing Damage attack, or +3 STUN to the damage done by a Normal Damage attack. (This bonus adds to the overall damage, before the STUN Multiplier, if any, is applied; it doesn't add to each die of damage.) This applies to both HTH and Ranged attacks. However, this added damage cannot make the attack or weapon exceed the normal maximum damage it can do. Only Superheroic campaigns use this rule.

Example: *If a character has a KA 1d6 weapon and uses two CSLs to add +1 BODY to the damage, the possible damages rolled on the d6 would be 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 6 (that's 1d6+1 with a maximum of 6 BODY).*

As noted below, some types of Levels can be bought to affect Mental Powers (OECV, DECV, and so forth) instead of CV-based abilities. Levels bought to provide CV bonuses do not work with Mental Powers, even if (for example) the Levels are with "all Ranged attacks" and the Mental Powers work at Range. If a character wants CSLs that apply to his Mental Powers, he has to buy them specifically for that.

### TYPES OF COMBAT SKILL LEVELS

The Combat Skill Level Table lists the several types of CSLs.

2-point CSLs: The 2-point CSL applies to a single weapon or attack. A character could buy this to help him with, for example, his broadsword, his Energy Blast, or the *Move Through* Combat Maneuver. The weapon or attack is defined generically. For example, a 2-point CSL with "Broadswords" applies to *all* broadswords, not just one broadsword the character owns, and it applies to any form of attack made with that weapon or ability (such as a Strike, Haymaker, or Sweep with the sword's blade, an attempt to Disarm or Move By a foe, and so forth). A 2-point Combat Skill Level can only increase the attacker's OCV (or OECV); it cannot increase his DCV or the damage caused by an attack.

If a character buys 2-point CSLs with Strike, he must define the type of Strike — Punch, Sword Slash, or whatever. He cannot apply the Level to any type of Strike (but at the GM's option, a character could buy 3-point CSLs that apply to all HTH Strikes, or all Ranged Strikes).

If a character buys 2-point CSLs to improve his OCV with a Combat Maneuver that can be used with multiple powers or other Maneuvers (such as Haymaker, Rapid Fire, or Sweep), those CSLs increase his OCV with the Maneuver regardless of what attacks he makes with it or uses it with.

3-point CSLs: The 3-point CSL applies to any group of three related maneuvers or attacks (with the GM's permission the group can include both HTH and Ranged attacks, or both standard and Mental attacks, but the GM may wish to restrict this for simplicity or to preserve game balance). This could apply to any three Combat Maneuvers, to a single martial arts style (regardless of how many maneuvers that style has, and whether they're used armed or unarmed), to a tight group of weapons (like "all pistols" or "all swords"), or to all the abilities in a single Power Framework (regardless of how many slots the Framework has). Three-point CSLs can apply to OCV, DCV, or damage as outlined above; except for the fact that they can increase DCV and damage, they generally function like 2-point CSLs.

5-point CSLs: Characters can buy the 5-point CSL as any of the following:

*+1 OCV, +1 DCV, or increased damage with all HTH Combat*

*+1 OCV, +1 DCV, or increased damage with all Ranged Combat (not including Mental Combat)*

*+1 OECV or +1 DECV with Mental Combat*

*+1 OCV, +1 DCV, or increased damage with a related group of HTH and Ranged attacks (such as "U.S. Army Infantry Weapons" or "All Martial Arts Weapons")*

*+1 DCV against all attacks (HTH and Ranged) — no matter how many opponents attack a character in a given Segment, or with how many different attacks, a 5-point DCV CSL provides +1 DCV versus all of them.*

*+1 DECV against all Mental attacks*

8-point CSLs: The 8-point CSL applies to any type of combat whatsoever — HTH, Ranged, or Mental, OCV/DCV or OECV/DECV.

When you buy CSLs for a character, think of the kind of combat or weapon skills the character should have. The more CSLs the character buys, the more choices he has during combat.

Example: *Randall Irons has a 3-point CSL with Pistols, a 3-point CSL with Knives, and an 8-point CSL with All Combat. Irons, armed with his trusty revolver, fights a Nazi death-ray robot. He puts his 3-point CSL with Pistols into +1 OCV and his 8-point Level into +1 OCV. He now has a bonus of +2 OCV. His CSL with Knives doesn't apply because he's fighting with a pistol; however, if someone attacked him with a knife he could use that CSL to improve his DCV against the knife attack (assuming he's somehow using his knife).*

**COMBAT SKILL LEVELS WITH LIMITATIONS**

The 5-point CSL is the smallest CSL characters can buy with Limitations. For example, if a character wants to build a weapon that's more accurate than normal (*i.e.,* that provides a bonus to the user's OCV), he would buy 5-point CSLs with the Limitation *Focus.* Combat Skill Levels bought with Limitations can only increase the user's OCV, unless the GM gives special permission otherwise.

Example: *Harbinger wants to create a rifle that has gyroscopic balancers and a laser sight so that he can hit small targets at long range. He buys the attack as an RKA on an Obvious Accessible Focus. He then adds +4 OCV to the gun. Since the smallest CSL a character can Limit is the 5-point CSL, this costs him 20 points (reduced to 10 by the OAF Limitation). Whenever Harbinger uses the gun, he receives a +4 to his OCV.*

## COMBAT SKILL LEVEL TABLE

| Cost | Application |
|---|---|
| 2 | +1 OCV (*or OECV) with any single type of attack |
| 3 | +1 with any three maneuvers or a tight group of attacks (*e.g.,* +1 with Pistols, +1 with Karate) |
| 5 | +1 with HTH Combat, +1 with Ranged Combat, +1 with Mental Combat, +1 with a related group of attacks, or +1 DCV against all attacks |
| 8 | +1 with All Combat |

**OPTIONAL RULES**

Here are two optional rules the GM can use with Combat Skill Levels.

DCV Levels: As an optional rule, the GM can distinguish between a character's DCV against HTH attacks and his DCV against Ranged attacks. In this case, a character cannot use a CSL to provide a DCV bonus against Ranged attacks unless the CSL applies to All Combat (an 8-point Level). Moreover, a character with a CSL that applies specifically to a Ranged attack or class of Ranged attacks can never use the Level to improve his DCV.

This optional rule reflects the fact that it's difficult to dodge a bullet or arrow, regardless of your expertise at shooting bullets or arrows. The GM should always use it when characters buy CSLs with Limitations (an accurate gun doesn't make its user harder to hit, for instance).

Negative Combat Skill Levels: Certain powers or abilities, such as some curses in Fantasy games, involve making a character less capable in combat — in short, they apply negative CSLs to him. At the GM's discretion, a character may impose a -1 on another character's OCV or DCV for 5 Character Points. (The character must choose whether his NCSL power reduces OCV or DCV when he buys it, and and cannot change this thereafter.) This reduction in CV applies for all purposes, not just for a single attack or versus the character who imposes the NCSL. This "Power" is No Range, Constant, and costs END; using it to affect the target requires an

Attack Roll. Each point of Power Defense the target has negates one NCSL.

## COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can program and operate computers. This includes knowledge of, and the ability to use, hardware, software, operating systems, and the like.

Computer Programming also allows characters to penetrate computer systems electronically (commonly known as "hacking" or "cracking") and to create security for computers. The character may attempt to discover access codes, gain information, conceal tampering, extract information from data banks, defeat computer-assisted Security Systems, falsify records or other data, and so on. A character may have to make separate Computer Programming rolls to perform each task. Cryptography often acts as a Complementary Skill. Of course, a character can only "crack" computers he has access to (either directly, or via a modem or some other remote means). Target computers may have sophisticated security programs, resulting in a -1 to -5 (or greater) modifier. If the character does not know the proper passwords, similar modifiers may result, or perhaps he can't crack the computer at all.

Computer Programming usually takes a fair amount of time, from several minutes to many hours or days, depending on the complexity and difficulty of the task. If the computer has unfamiliar software or hardware, the character may suffer a -1 to -5 modifier. Unsuccessful Computer Programming rolls may set off alarms or cause a system to crash, but usually the character simply fails to program the computer properly.

Characters from Fantasy settings and other pre-industrial campaigns cannot buy Computer Programming, since those eras lack computers.

## CONCEALMENT

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill represents a character's ability to hide things and to find things others have hidden — important papers, weapons, jewels, artifacts, drugs, and so forth. Concealment is a lot more fun if the GM actually describes the situation, and the character then describes exactly where he hides the object. Characters can also use Concealment to hide and find traps, security devices, bugging devices, and the like.

A character may hide himself from a search using Concealment (for example, Andarra could wedge herself behind a console to hide from the Denebian Secret Police search team). A character should use Stealth for any active or short-term concealment, such as when he tries to move silently; only use Concealment when nonmoving persons try to hide themselves for a long period of time. Use the character's Concealment against the searcher's Concealment or PER Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. Areas crowded with junk make better places to hide things (+1 to +3); conversely, characters have difficulty hiding things in barren areas (-1 to -3).

Any Skill directly connected with the object being hidden (like Demolitions when hiding a bomb) acts as a Complementary Skill. Stealth and Contortionist may be Complementary Skills when a character tries to conceal himself.

Failing a Concealment Roll may mean the object isn't really hidden properly, or that it's in a location a searcher can easily check. But just because an object's in an open, obvious place doesn't mean someone will find it — remember Poe's story *The Purloined Letter?*

## CONTORTIONIST

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Agility Skill gives a character the ability to manipulate his body so as to get out of ropes and other bonds (including some forms of Entangle). An attempt to escape from normal ropes would incur a -0 or -1 modifier, wires would be -2 or -3, and handcuffs would be -3 or -4. Escaping from an Entangle depends on its special effect (a net requires a normal Contortionist roll, a sticky web would impose a big penalty, and a block of ice would be impossible). The character may also contort his



body so he can work on normally inaccessible locks (though he must use Lockpicking to unlock them) or other equipment. Contortionist isn't a mystical way to escape bonds — some reasonable way for the character to escape must exist.

A character with Contortionist can also try to escape constraints in a combat situation. Any Phase after an opponent Grabs a character with this Skill (see page 386), the character can use Contortionist to help break out. When he tries to break free, he should make a Contortionist roll. If he succeeds, he can add +1d6 to his STR dice for every 1 point by which the roll succeeds (if the character makes the roll exactly, he still may add 1d6 to his STR). Thus a character who makes his Contortionist roll by 4 gets to add 4d6 to his STR dice, only for the purpose of escaping the Grab. Using Contortionist this way takes no time (the character may take more time to improve his chances), but the character may only attempt it once per Phase.

Example: *Ogre Grabs Zigzag during a battle. Knowing his puny 15 STR will never overcome Ogre's might, Zigzag uses his Contortionist skill. He rolls a 9, making the roll by 6. He can now roll 3d6 (for STR) + 6d6 (for Contortionist) = 9d6. Ogre, with a 60 STR, rolls 12d6. They roll their dice; Zigzag gets 8 BODY and Ogre gets 11. Pity.*

Lastly, Contortionist allows a character to contort his body so he can fit into tiny spaces which he's normally too big for. This is ideal for escaping from collapsed mine shafts, hiding in small cupboards, and so forth.

## CONVERSATION

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Interaction Skill allows a character to extract information from people with careful conversation, and/or to be an entertaining conversationalist. Use of this Skill takes time, and if the character fails the roll, the subject typically realizes he's being subtly "pumped" and stops talking. However, if Conversation is performed correctly, the victim won't even know he's divulged anything. Sometimes the target of Conversation is using his own Conversation to get information, too.

To use Conversation properly, the character must know the language being spoken. If he doesn't know the language well, the GM should apply a -1 to -3 modifier. If the desired information is closely linked with another Skill, that Skill is Complementary — it helps to know what to ask. Seduction, High Society, and Persuasion can also act as Complementary Skills for Conversation.

Although successful Conversation rolls indicate that a character is a witty and intriguing conversationalist, in general you shouldn't substitute this Skill for roleplaying. If a character makes clever or stupid statements, the GM should apply modifiers to the roll. You should roleplay most conversations without using Conversation rolls.

## CRAMMING

Intellect: No roll required
Cost: 5 Character Points

Cramming, which is an Intellect Skill although it involves no roll, allows a character to acquire a basic understanding of a non-combat Skill quickly. The character needs several hours to study the Skill, and must have access to learning resources, like a teacher or library. (With the GM's permission, a character may begin a game session with a Skill already Crammed, or he may be able to reduce the necessary Cramming time by having lots of really good teachers, using Eidetic Memory and/or Speed Reading, and so forth.) After studying the subject, the character acquires a Familiarity (an 8- roll) with the Skill, basic conversation (1 point) in a language, or any 1-point Skill (such as a TF or WF) that he can use for the duration of the adventure. He cannot increase or improve this roll in any way (including Skill Levels or Skill Enhancers), and he forgets what he's learned once the adventure ends. (Characters who wish to acquire the learned Skill permanently may spend Experience Points to do so.) If the GM permits and circumstances allow, a character can change his Crammed Skill in mid-adventure by taking the time to study some other subject (in the process forgetting whatever he had first Crammed). Characters can purchase Cramming multiple times, allowing them to Cram for more than one Skill per adventure.

## CRIMINOLOGY

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill knows how to look for clues, dust for fingerprints, analyze evidence, examine criminal records and files, do ballistics tests, and perform other criminalistic tasks. These procedures can tell the character which gun fired the bullet that killed someone, where dirt on a tire came from, and who touched the murder weapon. The character can discern many other details of a person's identity, origin, habits, and recent whereabouts.

Criminology tests often require a great deal of time, but characters can tell a lot from a quick examination of a crime scene. Extensive use of Criminology requires some equipment (microscopes, a chemistry lab, fingerprinting materials, and other tools are necessary for certain tests), access to information files, and sometimes Bureaucratics. Area or City Knowledge and some Sciences (such as Pharmacology) act as Complementary Skills for certain facts.

Characters with Criminology also know something about the behavior patterns and *modus operandi* of criminals, criminal psychology, and so forth. Streetwise and Science Skills like Psychology may be Complementary when characters use Criminology to find out such facts.

Failing a Criminology Roll can result in improper conclusions or results. However, it generally means "no conclusive result."

Criminology is most appropriate for Modern (including near-modern) and Future settings. For example, the authorities have used fingerprinting and other scientific techniques in crimefighting for only about a century. However, it does have some applications in Fantasy settings and similar genres, where it's sometimes renamed *Inquisition.* It serves as more of an observational Skill, akin to Deduction and Interrogation, but includes knowledge of criminal behavior and the ability to skillfully interview witnesses and gather whatever clues the society has the technological capability to analyze.

### CRYPTOGRAPHY

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill allows a character to solve ciphers and codes, encrypt or encode messages, and hide messages in ordinary text. Ciphers, which involve replacing letters and numbers in a message with other letters and numbers, range from the simple (alphabet-number substitutions) to the very complex (involving nulls [meaningless characters] or multiple substitutions). Codes, which involve substituting one word or phrase for another one, are very difficult to break unless there have been many messages or the codebook has been discovered. Science Skills (like Mathematics) and Computer Programming are usually Complementary to Cryptography.

The main use of Cryptography is to decode and decipher messages. This can take a long time — sometimes years — unless the character has some clues to the nature of the code or cipher. Modern computer-generated codes and ciphers are virtually impossible to break without the aid of other computers (and sometimes not even then). A failed roll may mean an inability to decode the message, or an incorrect translation of the message.

A character with Cryptography may also encode and hide messages. This may involve invisible inks and other techniques for hiding data; it can take a long time unless the character has devices to help him. Secret messages may be imprinted on paper in ultraviolet, grown into crystal structures, or hidden until looked at through certain optic fibers. A failed roll may indicate improper encoding or a garbled message.

In some campaigns, Cryptography can also represent a character's knowledge of ancient, obscure, and dead languages. While the character cannot speak these languages, or read them easily, he can, given sufficient time and reference materials, translate them — thus providing a means to read the grimoires of long-dead wizards, the instructions on treasure maps from empires that fell millennia ago, and so forth. If a character can only use Cryptography this way (*i.e.,* he cannot decode and encode messages), he can buy it with a -½ Limitation.

### DEDUCTION

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Deduction, an Intellect Skill, represents the ability to take several facts and leap to an inobvious conclusion — the classic detective's skill. Complementary Skills include any Skill directly connected with the problem confronting the character (such as Bureaucratics for a paperwork mystery). A failed Deduction roll usually indicates the character can't think of an answer, but it may mean an incorrect deduction.

You should use Deduction sparingly. It's useful when the character should be able to figure out what's going on (even though the player is stumped) and/or the GM wants to move the scenario along. The GM should try to help the character out, but not reveal everything — it's usually more fun for players to solve mysteries on their own. The GM should use successful Deduction rolls as a reason to provide tips or point out overlooked clues instead of just handing the characters all the answers on a silver platter.

### DEFENSE MANEUVER

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 3-10 Character Points (see text)

A character with this Combat Skill is an expert at moving while in combat. He never allows an attacker a clear shot at his back. This Skill requires a Half Phase Action to use; the character can also make a Half Move or attack, for instance. When performed, Defense Maneuver offers several benefits, depending upon how many points the character spent on it:

Defense Maneuver I: No attacker is considered to be attacking "from behind": 3 points.

Defense Maneuver II: Eliminates Multiple Attacker Bonuses as to attackers the character can perceive: +2 points.

Defense Maneuver III: Eliminates Multiple Attacker Bonuses to all attackers, even those which the character cannot perceive: +3 points. (This does not allow him to perceive said attackers — it simply means that the way he moves in combat, no one can get a clear shot at his back, regardless of whether he knows they're there. For example, he'd still suffer the reduced DCV that comes from being attacked by a foe he couldn't perceive with a Targeting Sense, but that foe wouldn't get a Multiple Attackers Bonus or bonus for attacking him "from behind.")

Defense Maneuver IV: Acts as a "sense," *i.e.,* the character need not spend a Half Phase to use his Defense Maneuver (using it takes no time); any Combat Skill Levels that improve the character's DCV are considered Persistent for this purpose: +2 points.

Characters must buy the levels of Defense Maneuver in order; they cannot, for example, buy Defense Maneuver III without first buying levels I and II. Thus, full Defense Maneuver costs 10 Character Points.

## DEMOLITIONS

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can use explosives properly. He knows about different types of explosives, how to handle and set off explosives, where to plant explosives for maximum effect, how to estimate the amount of explosives necessary to destroy structures, and which types of explosives are best for which jobs. He may also defuse explosive devices, find a bomb's fusing mechanism, and discover any booby traps in an explosive device (disarming such traps may require Security Systems, though).

Mechanics or Chemistry may be Complementary to Demolitions, depending on what the character tries to do. Knowledge Skill: Explosives helps in most situations; Security Systems would be Complementary if the character wants to blow up security devices. It's a good idea to increase the character's roll with Demolitions, because if he fails the roll badly enough....

Demolitions has no applicability in pre-gunpowder societies, such as most Fantasy games. In games set in the early gunpowder era, this Skill is often renamed *Sapper,* to highlight the Skill's primary use (in siege warfare), or *Gunsmith* (in conjunction with the appropriate *Weaponsmith* Skill).




## DISGUISE

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill allows a character to change his appearance with makeup, costumes, body language, and facial expression. He can, with a successful roll, alter his appearance to make himself unrecognizable, or disguise himself to look like a specific person (though this usually involves a -1 to -3 penalty). A character with this Skill can also disguise other characters.

Disguises can be spur-of-the-moment things, like putting on a fake moustache, but the best ones require hours of preparation. It's more difficult to maintain a disguise over a long time (-1 to -3), and a character incurs penalties if he tries to disguise himself as someone from a race or species that looks *extremely* different from his own (-2 to -5). Good makeup and the right props add +1 to +3 to the Disguise Roll.

To spot someone wearing a disguise, an onlooker must make a PER Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest against the character's Disguise.

Just because a character can Disguise himself doesn't mean he has the ability to effectively impersonate his subject — that requires Acting. Disguise enables a character to look like someone specific, while Acting lets him act like someone specific. Area Knowledges, Acting, Mimicry, and various KSs and PSs may all be Complementary to Disguise. Failing a Disguise roll means the disguise, if closely inspected, is obviously false.

## ELECTRONICS

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill allows a character to identify, understand, build, repair, and rewire electronic devices. "Electronic devices" includes a wide range of technology, from simple radios to interplanetary teleporters. The character needs tools to perform these procedures, and, for intricate procedures, a lot of time as well. Electronics also helps characters determine the purpose of electronic devices they may discover (and disable them, if necessary).

Skills such as Bugging, Security Systems, Systems Operations, and some Sciences may be Complementary Skills, depending on the exact function of the particular device examined or built. Unsuccessful Electronics rolls indicate failure or that the character's latest electronic creation will malfunction.

Electronics has no applicability in pre-electricity societies, such as most Fantasy campaigns.

## FAST DRAW

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Agility Skill represents the ability to ready and use a weapon (or, at the GM's discretion, any sort of attack) quickly. A character with Fast Draw can draw a weapon as a Zero Phase Action instead of the usual Half Phase Action (see page 363). Characters must buy Fast Draw separately for each type of weapon (defined by Weapon Familiarity groups) they wish to use the Skill with — for example, Fast Draw: Common Melee Weapons, Fast Draw: Small Arms, or Fast Draw: Bows. (With the GM's permission, a character could instead define his Fast Draw as working with a small group of specific weapons, such as "all the weapons in my Multipower.")

If a character uses a weapon that has Charges bought with Clips (such as most firearms), a successful Fast Draw roll also allows him to change Clips as a Half Phase Action. A character may change two Clips in a Full Phase using this rule; he only has to make his roll once to change both Clips.

If two characters simultaneously use Held Actions, a character who succeeds with a Fast Draw roll (instead of a DEX Roll) acts first. Fast Draw has no effect in this situation unless both characters use a Held Action — it does *not* allow a character to act before his DEX (to do this, buy Lightning Reflexes, or use the Combat Maneuvers *Hipshot* or *Hurry*).

## FORENSIC MEDICINE

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Intellect Skill can make inferences from a corpse about the cause of death, how long the individual has been dead, if someone moved the corpse after death, and so forth. The character can also perform autopsies (though possessing this Skill does not make him a licensed physician). He may spot obvious data about the corpse with just a cursory glance; a full autopsy takes several hours.

Complementary Skills may include Criminology and the Science Skills *Medicine, Biology,* and *Anatomy.* An unsuccessful Forensic Medicine roll usually means failure to gain information, but may mean incorrect information.

In Fantasy campaigns, Forensic Medicine often becomes *Embalming;* priests, necromancers, and others who need to preserve dead bodies know it. In such situations, the ability to determine the cause of death is limited, at best; the character can identify obvious causes (like sword wounds), but probably not more subtle causes (like a heart attack or some diseases or poisons).

## FORGERY

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 2 Character Points for a category, or 1 Character Point for a subcategory; +1 to roll with all categories and subcategories per +2 points

This Intellect Skill represents the ability to duplicate documents, objects, and money. Characters buy Forgery by categories. Each category costs 2 points; individual subcategories (such as Paintings) cost 1 point each. The base roll with all categories and subcategories the character knows is (9+(INT/5)) or less; +1 to the roll for all categories costs +2 Character Points.

In most cases, forging any type of item requires time and specialized equipment, especially for highly technical forgeries. Simply duplicating a signature by hand only takes a few seconds, though.

The more a character makes his Forgery roll by, the more time it takes to discover the forged item is fake — it may take years or decades in some cases. To uncover a successful use of Forgery, the character investigating the forged item must know Forgery himself, conduct a detailed examination of the object, and make his Forgery roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest against the forger's original Forgery roll.

A failed Forgery roll doesn't necessarily mean the forged item is obviously fake. The examiner must make a successful INT Roll (or Forgery, if he has it, with an INT Roll as a Complementary Skill) to determine that. A character who fails a Forgery roll doesn't always know it, even after examining the forged item.

### FORGERY TABLE

**Documents**
Papers (official documents, signatures, seals, magnetic codes, and so forth)
Identity Cards (passports, drivers' licenses, Social Security cards, badges)

**Money (Counterfeiting)**
Coins
Paper Money

**Art Objects**
Paintings
Sculpture
Metalwork
Jewelry
Vehicle License Plates

**Commercial Goods**
Clothing
Credit Cards
Machine/Vehicle Parts
Medicines

GMs should create new or different categories to suit their campaigns, if necessary.

## GAMBLING

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 2 Character Points for a category, or 1 Character Point for a subcategory; +1 to roll with all categories and subcategories per +2 points

This Intellect Skill represents a character's ability to win gambling games that require some skill, such as blackjack, poker, and more exotic games. Characters may also use Gambling to cheat, unless the cheating involves sleight of hand (which requires Sleight Of Hand).

Characters buy Gambling in categories. Each category costs 2 points; individual subcategories (such as Poker) may be bought for 1 point each. The base roll with all categories and subcategories the character knows is (9+(INT/5)) or less; +1 to the roll for all categories costs +2 Character Points. The Gambling Table lists some common categories and subcategories; GMs and players may create others as appropriate.

If the character plays a game which has a large "house advantage" or which he's never played before, apply a negative modifier to the Gambling roll (-1 to -3).

If characters engage in games of skill, ordinarily the GM should determine the winner randomly. However, a character with Gambling can use his abilities to tilt the odds in his favor. A successful

### GAMBLING TABLE

**Card Games**
Baccarat
Blackjack
Bridge
Faro
Poker

**Dice Games**
Craps

**Board Games**
Backgammon
Chess
Dominoes

**Roulette**

**Sports Betting**
Baseball
Basketball
Dog Racing
Football
Horse Racing

GMs should create new or different categories to suit their campaigns, if necessary.

Gambling roll means the character won the game (or cheated successfully) — the more he makes the roll by, the more he wins. (If two or more characters try to use Gambling at once, it becomes a Skill Versus Skill Contest.) Failing the roll means he lost, or that his cheating didn't succeed. Anyone with a PER Roll can spot unsuccessful cheating, but only someone else with Gambling can spot a successful cheat. A successful PER Roll may be a Complementary Skill to spotting a cheater; Acting may serve as a Complementary Skill when the Gambling roll involves bluffing.

A character can use Gambling to bet more wisely in random games (craps, roulette, and the like), so that it takes him longer to lose his money. If he's willing to cheat, he can actually win at such games. The GM usually should not let Gambling give the character very large wins or losses unless that helps advance the storyline of the game.

### HIGH SOCIETY

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Interaction Skill know about upper-class culture and how to interact with it: what clothes to wear, what are considered "sophisticated" drinks, which fork to use for shrimp, how to mingle with royalty. They also know who's who among VIPs (the fabulously wealthy, nobility, business executives, politicians, and so on), who likes who, the gossip and "court politics" applicable to the situation, and so forth. High Society is very useful for the character who wants to get into those special parties (and get invited back).

Characters typically learn High Society for their native culture. High Society varies from culture to culture (and even within some large cultures), so Area and Culture Knowledges are important Complementary Skills. Some cultures, especially alien ones, may be so strange that the GM imposes minuses (-1 to -3) to High Society rolls. (Andarra can't even eat Denebian Grub flambé, much less do it elegantly.) A character may even be more familiar with a particular foreign culture than with his own (a Westerner raised in China, for example). High Society makes some disguises or uses of Acting very effective.

A badly failed High Society roll usually means the character makes a terrible mistake at a social function. However, at the GM's option, it may simply mean he forgot something; he can make an INT Roll to remember the proper thing to do.

In Fantasy campaigns, this Skill is often renamed *Courtier.* Courtier not only provides the standard benefits of High Society, but gives the character knowledge of, and insight into, court intrigues, politics, and personalities.

### INTERROGATION

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Interaction Skill can extract information from people, either forcibly or through psychological manipulation. He knows how to avoid leaving marks, can judge how close a victim is to death or breaking, and is an expert at manipulating subjects into revealing the desired information. Interrogation works against an EGO Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest; the Talent *Resistance* helps victims resist Interrogation. Many uses of this Skill aren't very heroic; Interrogation is most often bought by villains in many campaigns.

Depending on his background and/or the campaign setting, a character with Interrogation may also have technical knowledge of mind control drugs, mind control devices, hypnosis, or the like. Interrogation need not always be violent; sometimes subtle "brainwashing" or persuasive techniques work just as well. Some Sciences or other technical Skills can be Complementary to this form of Interrogation.

In Fantasy settings, Interrogation is usually known by the less euphemistic name *Torture.* As that name implies, it concentrates almost wholly on forcing a subject to talk by causing him physical pain.

### INVENTOR

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill allows a character to design and construct new devices. It represents that spark of genius, creativity, or perhaps madness that leads to new discoveries. Inventor does not grant a character any scientific or technical knowledge; to use it, he needs related Skills (for instance, Weaponsmith to invent new weapons, or Electronics and SS: Physics to design a satellite). An inventor may design devices that require several Skills, as long as he has each of those particular Skills.

Designing gadgets requires considerable time in the laboratory; the GM should decide on a reasonable time (usually one week or more). However, the GM may allow characters with Inventor to modify equipment or gadgets in combat, as long as the modifications are fairly minor and well justified by the character. The time required varies based on the complexity of the modification and the equipment available to the character. A negative modifier (-1 to -3) may be appropriate for using the Skill in combat conditions. An unsuccessful Inventor roll may mean the character doesn't know how to make the device, or it could mean a laboratory accident (though those should be rare).

Although Inventor has more applications in Modern or Future campaigns, it is quite appropriate for characters in other periods, such as Fantasy. However, the GM should not allow characters to revolutionize society with an incredible invention (like gunpowder in a Fantasy game), unless that's exactly the kind of game the GM wants. In Fantasy settings, the GM can rename Inventor *Spell Research* for use by wizards who want to research and devise new spells.






## KNOWLEDGE SKILL

Background: See text
Cost: 2 Character Points for an 11- roll, or 3 Character Points for an INT-based Roll; +1 to roll per +1 point

This very general and flexible Background Skill includes knowledge of certain groups, places, people, and things — any subject the character wishes to have knowledge of. The character must define the subject when he purchases the Skill.

Two Character Points in a Knowledge Skill (KS) gives the character an 11- roll to know a fact about the subject. Alternatively, a character can base a KS on INT for 3 Character Points, giving a base (9 + (INT/5) or less) roll. In either case, each +1 to the Skill Roll costs 1 Character Point.

Characters define how specific their KSs are. The more general the KS, the less the character knows about specific aspects of the subject. For example, a character with KS: African Cultures has a wide overview of that subject — he knows a lot of general information about Africans and could roughly describe them, but wouldn't know details. If he'd chosen a KS of one particular African culture (such as KS: Zulu Culture), he would know many details about that one culture, but not much about other African cultures. KS: African Culture gives him general information about Zulu culture, but not much more unless he makes an incredible Skill Roll; even then he knows less information than he would with KS: Zulu Culture.

Even with a specialized Knowledge Skill, some facts are more obscure than others. The GM should apply appropriate modifiers for difficulty based upon the obscurity or rarity of the information the character needs to know. For example, a character with KS: Zulu Culture could probably make an unmodified roll to know the major Zulu holidays or festivals. But knowledge of the secret rituals of ancient Zulu sorcerers might require him to make the roll at a -3 penalty.

There are four general categories of Knowledge Skills: Groups, People, Places, and Things. These categories help you determine what KSs a character should buy.

Knowledge Skill — Groups: Knowledge of different organizations or cultures, like KS: Confederation Of Planets, KS: The Martial World, or KS: Boston Police Department. This gives the character thorough knowledge of a culture or organization, including such things as its structure, members, duties, customs, taboos, requirements, and protocols. A KS of a group is sometimes known as a *Culture Knowledge* (CuK).

Knowledge Skill — People: Knowledge of a type of person, or even a single person. For instance, a character could have KS: Spellcasters, KS: Wizards, KS: Necromancers, or KS: Karna Doom the Dark Necromancer. Such Knowledge would tell the character about individuals or (more generally) how such people react to specific situations (like being asked questions or offered money).

Knowledge Skill — Places (Area Knowledge, City Knowledge): Thorough knowledge of an area, rang-

ing from an individual street in a city to an entire continent or planet. For large areas, this KS gives a character knowledge of the area's geography, major cities, politics, economy, and so forth. A relevant and accurate map or reference book, should a character have one, adds +1 to +3 to the roll, depending on what he wants to know (inaccurate sources impose corresponding penalties). An unsuccessful Knowledge Roll usually means the character doesn't know the answer to the particular question, but may mean incorrect (and possibly dangerous) answers.

Applying this Skill to a city gives the character thorough knowledge of a city's layout, streets, transportation terminals, meeting places, taverns, fine restaurants, shortcuts, criminal areas, and important residents. Where Area Knowledge (AK) gives only general information about a city (where it is, how big it is, major landmarks), City Knowledge (CK) gives very specific information. CKs help during chases and can cut down travel time within the city.

Characters can also learn AKs of various terrain types (such as Plains, Forest, Desert, Caves, or Mountains), which are Complementary to Skills like Survival and Tracking. This could also include strange alien environments, such as planets covered in molten rock, with chlorine gas atmospheres, or with extremely high gravity. Of course, the Skill could be very specific (AK: Luray Caverns) or very general (AK: Underground Caverns).

Knowledge Skill — Things: Knowledge of anything that doesn't fall into the other categories. This category does not include sciences (see *Science Skill*). Examples include Alien Statues, Trees, Known Superhumans, History, Art History, Video Games, Philosophy, Religion, Skateboards, Horses, Thoroughbred Horses, Politics, Secret Societies, and Tax Evasion. The possibilities are infinite; talk to the GM about exactly what KSs would be most appropriate for a character.

When buying a KS, think about the character's background. Usually, a character's KSs help explain how he learned other Skills, and this in turn may suggest other KSs he should buy.

Players should differentiate between Knowledge Skills, Professional Skills (PSs), and Science Skills (SSs). Knowledge Skills provide a character with knowledge of what something is, how it works, who's involved with it, and related subjects. Professional Skills give the character the ability to do things or perform certain tasks — though a KS may be required for the character to have in-depth knowledge of how he's about to exercise those physical skills. To put it another way, a KS provides *theoretical* knowledge and a PS *practical* knowledge of a given subject. Science Skills are a sort of cross between KSs and PSs for certain scientific or technical fields of knowledge; they include both theoretical knowledge of the subject and the ability to perform experiments and use equipment associated with that subject.

For example, a character might have KS: Electrical Systems. This provides him with knowledge of how different electrical systems and devices work, the history of electrical systems, how (theoretically) to install them, who installs them, and so on. But it doesn't give him the physical skills to do the actual installation work himself; that requires PS: Electrician. A character with PS: Electrician may not be able to tell you all the theoretical and technical details about what he installs, but he knows how to install them, tune them, repair them, and replace them. He also knows how to use all the types of equipment associated with electricians' work. Neither of these characters can actually design an electrical system, though — that requires SS: Electronic Engineering.

## LANGUAGE

Background: No roll required
Cost: 1-5 Character Points (see table)

This Background Skill represents a level of fluency in, and knowledge of, a language. Each character knows his native language for free (at the 4-point level as described in the Fluency Table). Learning other languages costs Character Points; the point cost of each level of fluency in a language is shown by the Fluency Table.

A character without complete command of a language (*i.e.,* who knows it at less than the 5-point level) may sometimes have to make an INT Roll to understand phrases that are very rapid, slurred, or in obscure or strange accents or dialects. In campaigns where literacy is unusual (like most Fantasy settings), PCs must spend +1 point for Literacy with a given language (or, at the GM's option, with all languages the character knows).

## LANGUAGE FLUENCY TABLE

| Fluency | Character Points |
|---|---|
| Basic Conversation | 1 |
| Fluent Conversation | 2 |
| Completely Fluent, with accent | 3 |
| Idiomatic, native accent | 4 |
| Imitate dialects | 5 |
| Literacy (if not standard for society) | +1 point |

**Optional Language Table**

For additional realism, use the optional Language Table. With this table, a language's cost depends on how closely it relates to languages the character already knows.

Languages enclosed by a *thin box with rounded corners* have 4 points of similarity. These languages are so similar that they overlap — a character with points in one of the languages has half those points in all other languages in that group, up to a maximum of 2 points (halves round down). For instance, a character with 4 points of German has, effectively, 2 points of Yiddish.

Languages enclosed by a *thick box with rounded corners* have 3 points of similarity. Characters with 2 points in any language in that group may make an INT roll to understand phrases in other languages in that group. Also, other languages in that group cost -1 Character Point to learn (the minimum 1-point investment gets the character 2 points of effectiveness in the language).

Languages enclosed by a *thin box with square corners* have 2 points of similarity; characters may learn any other languages in such boxes at -1 Character Point cost.

Languages enclosed by a *thick box with square corners* have 1-point of similarity; there is no cost benefit or penalty for learning these languages.

At the GM's option, languages outside the thick box with square corners where the character's native language is located cost +1 point (one additional point) — Basic Conversation costs 2 Character Points, Fluent Conversation costs 3 Character Points, and so on. After buying that first language, the character can learn other languages related to it using the standard rules.

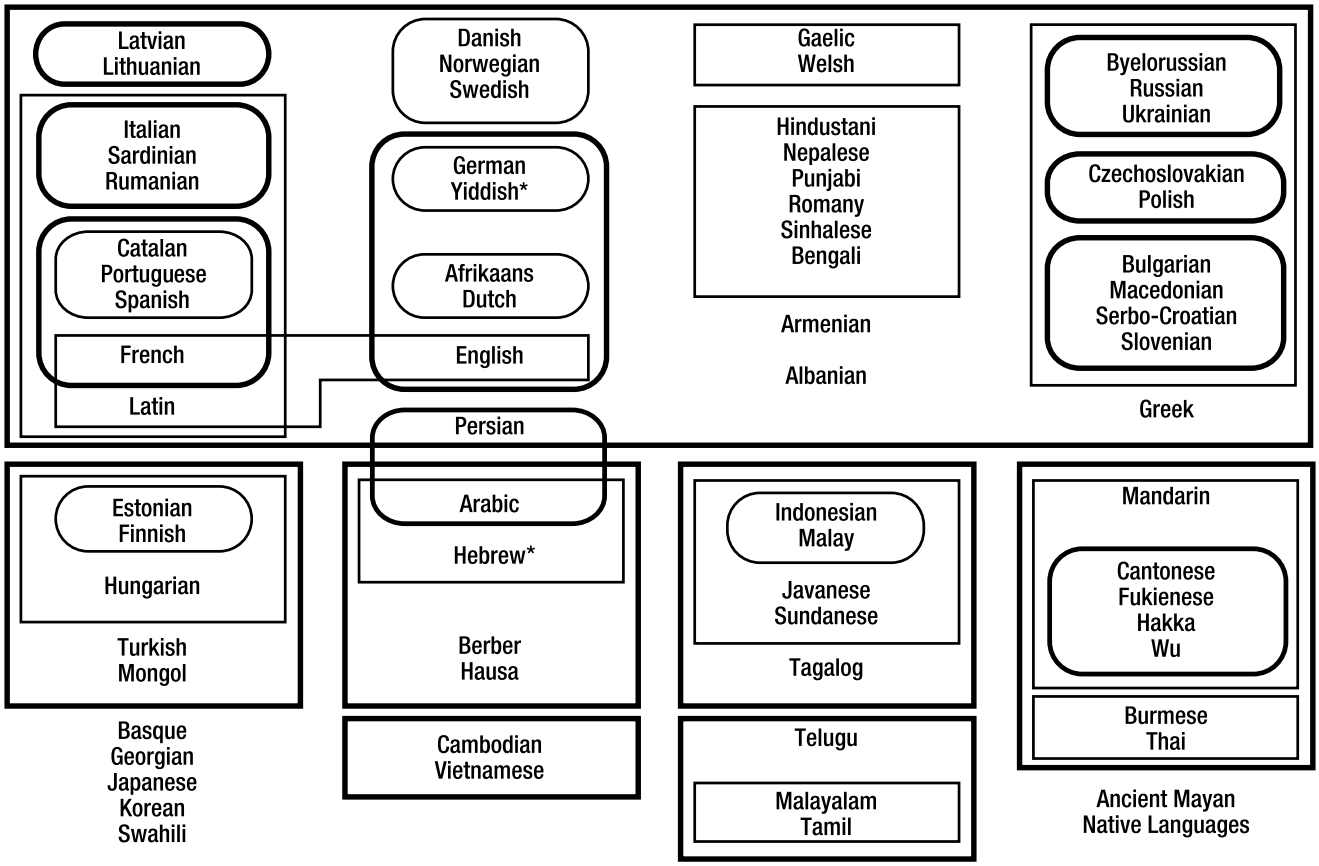
Example: *Fast Eddie knows English as his native language; he has it at the 4-point level. He can make INT Rolls to understand people speaking in German, Yiddish, Dutch, or Afrikaans. The length of the speech, how well he heard the speaker, and other factors modify this INT Roll. Eddie may learn German without too much trouble: for a 3 Character Point cost he could have 4 points of German. This automatically gives Eddie the ability to speak Yiddish at the 2-point level. Eddie also learns Mandarin Chinese. Since Mandarin has no similarity to English, the GM might rule that it costs him 3 points to earn 2 points of language ability. Now, however, Eddie can learn Cantonese for -1 Character Point cost, since he knows another language in that group.*

Even if a character already knows multiple languages that relate to another language, he can only get one cost reduction from the Language Table (the best of the ones available to him, naturally). However, the effects of the Language Table are cumulative with those of the *Linguist* Skill Enhancer. The character's native tongue, which he knows for free as an Everyman Skill, functions with the Language Table and can reduce the cost of related languages.

In campaigns where characters have to pay for Literacy, the use of the Language Table does not allow characters to obtain Literacy for free — that's something they always have to pay for. Nor do points spent on Literacy with a language affect how much fluency a character obtains in related languages; related language benefits depend solely on how many points a character spends on speaking a language.



## LANGUAGE FAMILIARITY TABLE




* Yiddish and Hebrew share 4 points of similarity

**MARTIAL MANEUVERS COSTS**

| Maneuver | Cost |
|---|---|
| Choke Hold | 4 |
| Defensive Strike | 5 |
| Killing Strike | 4 |
| Legsweep | 3 |
| Martial Block | 4 |
| Martial Disarm | 4 |
| Martial Dodge | 4 |
| Martial Escape | 4 |
| Martial Grab | 3 |
| Martial Strike | 4 |
| Martial Throw | 3 |
| Nerve Strike | 4 |
| Offensive Strike | 5 |
| Sacrifice Throw | 3 |
| +1 Damage Class | 4 |
| Weapon Element | 1 |

### LIPREADING

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill allows a character to read someone's lips to tell what he's saying. The character must know the language being spoken to lipread it successfully.

A PER Roll is necessary to see someone's lips properly. A large beard, moustache, or other facial obscurement can mean a -1 to -3 modifier to the roll, or even make Lipreading impossible. Failing a Lipreading roll usually means the conversation was not understood (possibly because the person turned or hid his mouth), but may mean a misinterpretation of what was said.

### LOCKPICKING

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Agility Skill allows a character to open key, combination, electronic, and magnetic locks using special tools instead of keys. It does not allow the character to find or bypass alarms, traps, and other security devices; that requires Security Systems (page 69). An expert can pick some locks in an amazingly short time — just as fast as using a key. Complementary Skills include Mechanics for picking key and combination locks and Electronics for picking electronic and magnetic locks.

Characters must have lockpicks or other equipment to use Lockpicking (or, at the GM's option, use an appropriate Power, such as Telekinesis). Sometimes characters can use objects like hairpins or credit cards as improvised lockpicks, but with minuses to the roll (-2 to -5). Of course, some locks are particularly tricky even if the character has the right tools. Difficult locks impose a -1 to -5 modifier to the Lockpicking roll.

A failed Lockpicking roll can mean a jammed lock, an alarm going off, or even a broken lockpick. But usually it just means the character cannot pick the lock.

In Fantasy settings, this Skill is in some ways easier, since usually only relatively primitive mechanical locks are available. However, characters may also have to contend with magical locks and warding spells. It's up to the GM whether Lockpicking can bypass such locks or countermagic is required.



### MARTIAL ARTS

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 3-5 Character Points per Martial Maneuver, with a minimum expenditure of 10 Character Points (see text)

Martial Arts represent any form of hand-to-hand combat that requires training (or innate ability or experience) and expertise, such as the precise movements and dodging of aikido, the hammer and tongs of boxing, the rough-and-tumble of dirty infighting, advanced weapon techniques like fencing, or the instinctive claw-fighting abilities of tigers and werewolves. The *Martial Arts* section of Chapter Two (page 398) discusses Martial arts in detail, including the effects of the Martial Maneuvers, how to construct a Martial Arts style (like Karate or Boxing), and ways to use Martial Maneuvers in combat.

The accompanying sidebar summarizes Martial Maneuvers' cost. Characters must buy a minimum of 10 Active Points' worth of Martial Maneuvers (even if it's just two 5-point maneuvers). Generally, characters may not put Limitations on Martial Maneuvers, but the GM can allow them to. Martial Maneuvers do not cost END to use.

### MECHANICS

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can repair, replace, and build mechanical devices. It also allows a character to modify mechanical devices — for example, to alter an automobile engine to power a boat.

Characters almost always need tools of some sort to perform Mechanics. A KS or SS relating to the particular mechanism the character's going to work on is a Complementary Skill.

An unsuccessful Mechanics roll usually means an inability to perform the task. However, it sometimes means the device fails later under stress.

Mechanics is less appropriate for genres such as Fantasy where mechanical devices are rare. However, in such settings characters can still use it to build and repair wagons, millwheels, winches, and the like.

## MIMICRY

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can imitate someone else's voice, or certain other sounds, perfectly. Other people can detect Mimicry with a Skill Versus Skill Contest pitting the listener's Hearing PER Roll against the Mimicry roll.

Some situations make Mimicry easier. It's especially useful for fooling someone over the radio or the telephone, since the poorer quality of the sound reproduction can add +1 or +2 to the Skill Roll. Noisy surroundings, short speeches, or whispers can also help Mimicry (+1 to +3).

However, some situations make Mimicry more difficult. Imitating the opposite sex or a radically different voice is -1 to -3 (or more) to the Mimicry roll. The longer a character speaks in a fake voice or makes a fake sound, the greater his chance of making a mistake (-1 to -3). Using Mimicry while speaking a foreign language is -1 to -3, unless the character has 4 or more points of fluency in that language. Failing a Mimicry roll means the deception is immediately obvious if the listeners know the voice (even if they don't, they usually become highly suspicious, at the very least).

## NAVIGATION

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 2 Character Points for a category, +1 point for each additional category; +1 to roll with all categories per +2 points

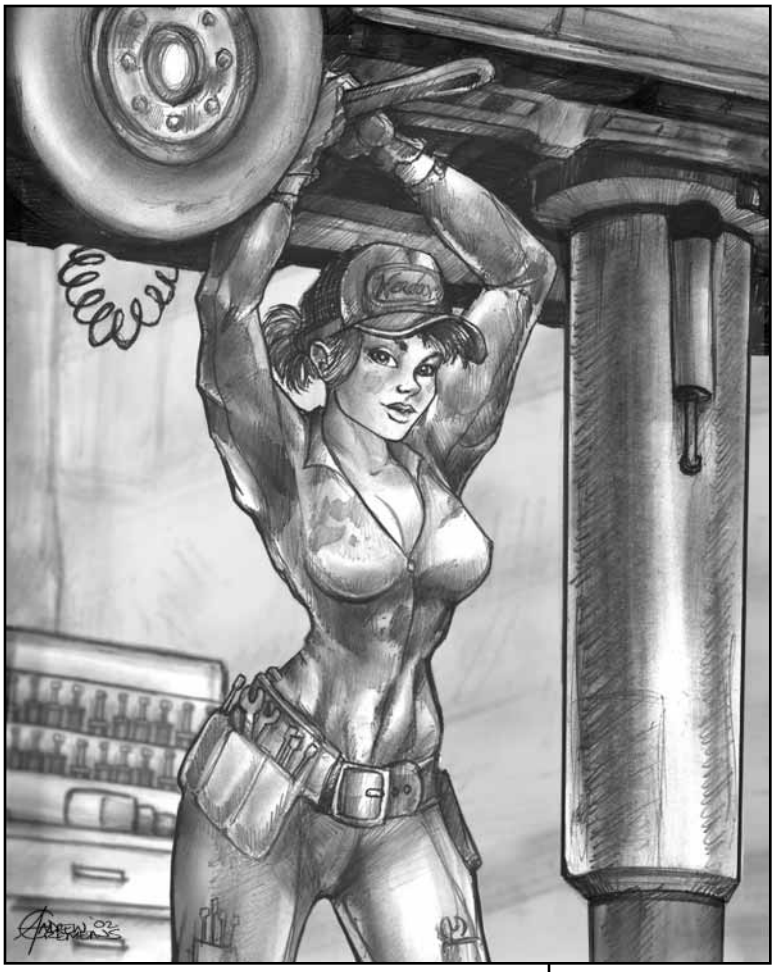
A character with this Intellect Skill can determine his location and plot an efficient course between two points. Navigation is extremely useful for characters who are charting unknown regions or want to find their way home when lost.

Navigation actually consists of several subskills: Land Navigation (or Orienteering); Marine Navigation; Air Navigation; and Space Navigation. A character who knows how to find his way across uncharted lands does not necessarily know how to steer a ship or plot the course of a starship. Some types of Navigation may not be available in some settings; for example, in Fantasy campaigns, it's unlikely anyone knows Space Navigation. The GM should create new Navigation categories if appropriate for his campaigns; for example, a dimension-hopping campaign might need Dimensional Navigation, a magic-oriented campaign Astral Navigation, and a time-travel campaign Temporal Navigation.

The first type of Navigation a character buys costs 2 Character Points for a (9+(INT/5)) or less roll; subsequent types cost 1 point each. To improve the roll for all types of Navigation the character knows costs 2 Character Points per +1 to the roll.

Characters can perform Navigation by a variety of methods, ranging from astronomical triangulation, to dead reckoning, to using the location of planets, stars, nebulae, and other astronomical objects — it all depends on which Navigation categories the character knows, where he tries to use them, and how he was trained. Characters with Bump Of Direction frequently gain bonuses of +2 or more to Navigation rolls, but this depends on the circumstances. Characters receive penalties for bad conditions like a cloudy night, lack of landmarks, unfamiliar stars, and so forth. Appropriate KSs and AKs are Complementary to the Navigation roll.

A successful Navigation roll means the character can determine his location as precisely as the circumstances and/or technology allow. A failed roll means the character cannot be sure of finding his way accurately or has gotten lost.



## ORATORY

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Interaction Skill represents the ability to speak to an audience and deliver a convincing presentation. A good orator knows how to modulate his voice, use body language, and speak to listeners so they're receptive to his message. He also knows if he's losing his audience and can extemporize well before a crowd. Oratory does not help characters argue — it's only useful when the audience isn't talking back. Characters who want to be able to lie convincingly or argue effectively should buy Persuasion.

Modifiers are important for Oratory. If the crowd is attentive, or if it wants to hear the speaker,

allow a positive modifier (+1 to +3). Conversely, if the crowd is skeptical or hostile, or if someone heckles the speaker, the GM should apply a negative modifier (-1 to -3).

A successful Oratory roll indicates the speaker has held the attention of the audience and convinced it to think about what he was saying. If he succeeds by 4 or more, the orator has swayed the crowd to his line of reasoning (a skilled speaker can be very convincing). A failed roll usually indicates the listeners simply ignore the speaker's message, but a spectacular failure may mean they start throwing things at or attacking him.

Oratory helps characters make effective Presence Attacks on large groups. If the character makes an Oratory roll, add +1d6 to a Presence Attack against three or more persons. If the character makes his roll by half, add +2d6.

### PARAMEDICS

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Intellect Skill can perform first aid, stop bleeding, treat injuries, and generally keep someone alive.

A character at zero BODY is dying (see *Death,* page 413). A character with Paramedics may keep an injured person alive with a Paramedics roll, or provide temporary relief for other health problems, such as broken bones. (Gamemasters who desire additional realism may require the character to make the roll at -1 for every 2 BODY the injured individual is below zero BODY or below his starting BODY.)

Stopping a character from bleeding requires just one Full Phase. Other uses of Paramedics take at least a full Turn, and often longer. The character may wish to take more time to get a bonus to the roll (see *Skill Modifiers*).

A character with Paramedics is not necessarily a doctor. To be a licensed doctor, the character must also buy SS: Medicine and Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Medicine. Furthermore, Paramedics only provides immediate, emergency care; it does not involve the long-term care and cures, intensive therapy, or invasive surgical procedures that doctors perform. Almost all medical doctors have Paramedics, but not every character who has Paramedics is a doctor.

When a character uses Paramedics on an unfamiliar species or race, he may incur a penalty of -1 to -3, depending on how different the being is. For example, if Chiron (a human thief in a Fantasy campaign) tried to save a dwarf from dying, the GM might impose a -1 on his roll. Characters with appropriate Background Skills (like SS: Dwarven Anatomy) don't suffer these penalties.

Unsuccessful Paramedics Rolls usually mean the character cannot stop the bleeding or temporarily alleviate the problem. However, badly failed rolls (by 4 or more) may indicate the character has actually made the situation worse, inflicting another point or two of BODY damage.

In Fantasy campaigns, this Skill is often known as *Healing* or *Chirurgeon.* In many Fantasy societies, there's no formal training for doctors, so a character with this Skill *is,* in effect, a doctor — someone the community looks to for healing and medicines. In some settings, this Skill may also involve the use of healing spells and similar magic. In Future settings, advanced medical technology, operable by anyone, may make this Skill obsolete.

### PENALTY SKILL LEVELS

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 1½-3 Character Points per Level (see text)

Penalty Skill Levels (PSLs) are a type of Skill Level that only reduce or counteract a specific type of negative OCV modifier for making particular types of attacks. Examples include:

—Range Skill Levels (RSLs), which offset the Range Modifier (they have no value at point-blank range)

—Targeting Skill Levels, which offset the penalty for targeting any and all Hit Locations

—Throwing Skill Levels, which offset the penalties for throwing unbalanced or unaerodynamic objects

To determine the cost of a Penalty Skill Level, consult the Penalty Skill Level Table.

A character cannot use PSLs to increase OCV generally, to increase the damage an attack does, or to increase DCV (but see below). He can only use them to reduce or counteract a specific type of negative OCV modifier. A character cannot buy "generic" PSLs that apply to more than one negative OCV modifier; he must specify which penalty a PSL applies against when he buys it. Nor can he buy Penalty Skill Levels to counteract the standard OCV penalty imposed by a Combat Maneuver (such as the -3 OCV for a Grab By), or to counteract the Unfamiliar Weapon penalty (page 382).

Example: *Randall Irons wants to be exceptionally good at shooting distant targets with pistols (to reflect his steady hand). He buys some Range Skill Levels. The cost for a +1 RSL with Pistols is 2 points. Randall spends 6 Character Points and receives a +3 to his OCV when using Pistols — only to offset Range Modifiers.*

*Later, Randall's in a gunfight at a range of 9". This would normally be a -2 to his OCV, but because he has the RSLs, Randall suffers no penalty. However, he receives no direct bonus to his OCV, regardless of how close his opponent gets.*

A character can change how his PSLs are assigned as a Zero Phase Action. However, unless the GM permits otherwise, he may not change the assignment of his PSLs more than once in a Phase.

The smallest PSL that can have a Limitation is a 3-point Level. This corresponds to the 5-point CSL. Thus, if a character wants to create a gun that's accurate at great distances, he must pay for a 3-point Range Skill Level with the Limitation *Obvious Accessible Focus* (-1).

At the GM's option, characters might be allowed to buy PSLs to counteract DCV penalties in very

specific circumstances (for example, see *Environmental Movement,* page 89), or to counteract a specific type of penalty to the roll with a specific Skill. The player and GM should work together to determine which cost category of PSL is most appropriate.

Negative Penalty Skill Levels: Certain powers or abilities, such as some curses in Fantasy games, involve making a character less capable in combat — in short, they apply negative PSLs to him. At the GM's discretion, a character may increase a specific negative OCV penalty a target suffers (for example, increase the Range Modifier for his attacks) for 3 points. This increase in the penalty applies for all purposes, not just for a single attack or against the character who imposes the NPSL. This "Power" is No Range, Constant, and costs END; using it to affect the target requires an Attack Roll. Each point of Power Defense the target has negates one NPSL.

## PENALTY SKILL LEVEL TABLE

| Cost | Application |
|---|---|
| 1½ | +1 to offset a specific negative OCV modifier with any single attack |
| 2 | +1 to offset a specific negative OCV modifier with any three maneuvers or tight group (*e.g.,* +1 vs. Range With Pistols) |
| 3 | +1 to offset a specific negative OCV modifier with all attacks |

### PERSUASION

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Interaction Skill can convince, persuade, or influence individuals, or tell believable lies. Typically characters only use Persuasion on NPCs; PCs are usually allowed more latitude with their decisions. However, a successful Persuasion roll should make a PC much more inclined to believe the speaker or do as he requests.

When a character succeeds with a Persuasion roll, typically the target gets to make an EGO Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest to resist the suggestion or see through the lie. The GM may modify the Persuasion roll based on the quality of the character's statements, the believability of what he's saying, the target's Psychological Limitations, and other factors. (Alternately, the GM can modify the EGO Roll instead.) Some possible modifiers include:

—the target wants to believe the character: +3 to the Persuasion roll (or -3 to the EGO Roll)

—the target is skeptical or suspicious: -1 to -5 to the Persuasion roll (or +1 to +5 to the EGO Roll)

—the target has a Psychological Limitation that agrees/disagrees with the character's statement: +1/-1 to the Persuasion roll for a Moderate Psychological Limitation, +2/-2 for Strong, +3/-3 for Very Strong (reverse the modifiers if they're applied to the EGO Roll)

—use appropriate modifiers listed under Presence Attacks (page 428) as a modifier to the Persuasion roll (for example, a +2d6 modifier would equal a +2 Persuasion roll modifier [or a -2 EGO Roll modifier]).

Other factors may also affect the roll. For example, in a *Star Hero* campaign, some alien species may be incapable of lying, and, believing others to be the same, be very gullible (thus granting a bonus to the Persuasion roll, or a penalty to the EGO Roll).

The more outrageous and unbelievable the lie or advocated position is, the more negative modifiers the GM should attach to the Persuasion roll (or bonuses to the EGO Roll). Remember, Persuasion isn't Mind Control — ridiculous suggestions entail enormous penalties to the roll, and the GM should always keep common sense and dramatic sense in mind when adjudicating the results.

### POWER

Varies See text
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Skill represents a character's ability to use one of his powers or abilities in creative or unusual ways. Its name varies from campaign to campaign, setting to setting, character to character. Characters can base Power on any one of several Characteristics, depending on the nature of the Skill as the character uses it. If based on INT, it's considered an Intellect Skill; if on DEX, an Agility Skill; and so forth.

Power serves two related functions. First, it may act as a Required Skill Roll (see page 304) for abilities the GM rules must have a Skill Roll to function. For example, in a Fantasy campaign, Power would be called *Magic* and all wizards would use it to cast spells. It could also be called *Prayer* when used by priests to call forth divine aid (*i.e.,* activate their gods-given holy powers).

Second, Power can simulate a character's level of skill with a particular power, ability, or attack. Characters who make appropriate Power rolls can perform "tricks" or do unusual things with their powers. For example, a super-strong character in a comic book superhero campaign might buy Power as *Brick Tricks* and use it to etch a message into hardened steel without breaking the steel or hurting himself.

The GM should control all uses of Power carefully. Power isn't a cheap substitute for a Variable Power Pool, and shouldn't be used as one. Characters shouldn't use Power to provide Advantages for their Powers or to overcome Limitations (except in rare circumstances), nor should it provide bonuses in combat. Characters who want to perform a particular "trick" or "power stunt" frequently should pay Character Points for it (especially if it has an effect on combat). For example, the GM might let a character with *Brick Tricks* make a roll and use his awesome STR to squeeze coal so hard it turns into diamond (a type of Transform) — once. If he wants to do it again, he should buy it as a separate ability.

### PROFESSIONAL SKILL

Background: See text
Cost: 2 Character Points for an 11- roll, or 3 Character Points for a Characteristic-based Roll (usually based on INT); +1 to roll per +1 point

This Background Skill gives a character the ability to perform certain professions, crafts, tasks, and the like. For 2 Character Points, the character has an 11- roll to perform a given Professional Skill (PS). Alternately, characters can base the Skill upon a Characteristic for 3 Character Points, giving a base (9 + (CHAR/5) or less) roll. In either case, each +1 to the Skill Roll costs 1 Character Point.

Whereas Knowledge Skills give a character knowledge of how or why something works, Professional Skills give a character the ability to perform some task or do some type of work. For example, a character with KS: Plumbing knows generally how plumbing works, the history of plumbing, how much plumbers earn on a yearly basis, and so forth. A character with PS: Plumbing might not understand the intricacies of water pressure and water flow friction, but he could fix a broken pipe and knows how to use plumbing tools. A character could (and often should) have a KS and a PS of the same subject to reflect both a theoretical and practical knowledge.

As the name indicates, Professional Skills are often used in a character's employment. However, they can also represent hobbies, interests, and other abilities which don't have much to do with earning a living. Play Piano, Flower Arranging, Play Chess, Sculptor, Singing, Singer, and Poet are all valid PSs.

The list of Professional Skills is limitless. Examples include: Accountant, Actor, Alchemist, Armorer, Artist, Blacksmith, Brain Surgeon, Butcher, Campaign Manager, Carpenter, Construction Worker, Cook, Dentist, Dogcatcher, Electrician, Explorer, Fisherman, Freelance Game Designer, Goldsmith, Gunslinger, Hockey Player, Innkeeper, Jester, Jeweler, Knight, Laborer, Lawyer, Mason, Messenger, Musician, Necromancer, Newscaster, Optometrist, Park Ranger, Photographer, Policeman, Priest, Queen, Reporter, Scientist, Secretary, Starship Captain, Student, Taxi Driver, Undertaker, Valet, Vigilante, Waiter, Wizard, X-ray Technician, Yeoman, and Zookeeper.

### RAPID ATTACK

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 5 Character Points (see text)

A character with this Combat Skill has a heightened ability to move in combat. Characters must purchase Rapid Attack separately for HTH Combat and Ranged Combat; either version costs 5 Character Points. Ranged Rapid Attack allows a character to make an attack with the *Rapid Fire* Combat Maneuver or Autofire Skills as a Half Phase Action (*i.e.,* after performing a Half Phase Action, such as making a Half Move). HTH Rapid Attack allows a character to make an attack with the *Sweep* Combat Maneuver as a Half Phase Action. (Rapid Attack applies to Rapid Fire and Sweep as used with the *Two-Weapon Fighting* Skill.) No roll is required in either case.

### RIDING

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Agility Skill can ride living creatures (such as horses, camels, rocs, and the like) under difficult circumstances. To use Riding, the character must know how to ride the animal (see *Transport Familiarity,* page 73). Characters with this Skill automatically have Familiarity with one 1-point class of riding animals. Characters who want to know how to ride more than one type of animal should purchase Transport Familiarity.



Under normal conditions, a character doesn't have to make rolls to ride a mount for which he has the appropriate Transport Familiarity. A character with Riding can ride his mount under rough conditions, and can fight mounted. He also knows how to take care of all riding animals he is familiar with. Characters should make Riding rolls whenever they attempt maneuvers such as jumps, trick moves, leaping onto a mount, or similar difficult tasks. A failed roll means the maneuver didn't succeed, with possible bad consequences for the rider (like falling off and getting hurt).

## SCIENCE SKILL

Background: See text
Cost: 2 Character Points for an 11- roll, or 3 Character Points for an IN-based Roll; +1 to roll per +1 point

This Background Skill gives a character a solid grasp of and working knowledge of a particular field of science (whether a physical science, like Chemistry, or a social science, like Anthropology). A Science Skill (SS) functions as a combination of a PS and a KS, since it provides both theoretical knowledge of the subject and the practical skills of working with the equipment associated with a Science.

Science Skills cost 2 points for a base roll of 11-. Alternately, characters can base the SS upon INT for 3 Character Points, giving a base (9 + (INT/5) or less) roll. In either case, each +1 to the Skill Roll costs 1 Character Point. Characters may not take a Science that exactly duplicates another Skill (like Computer Programming), although Skills often partly overlap.

Characters need equipment to perform some tests or procedures with an SS. If a character attempts to perform a Science Skill without adequate equipment or time, the GM may apply modifiers of -1 to -5 to the roll. The GM may give positive modifiers for excellent equipment. Usually, a character may carry a "field bag" with some basic equipment (enough to perform simple experiments without a penalty).

A character need not buy a general category of science before buying a specific science (for example, a character doesn't have to buy Chemistry before buying Biochemistry). A character with a specific science has a vague knowledge of the general science, and vice versa. For example, a character with Microbiology knows a lot about microscopic organisms, but only general facts about Biology as a whole.

Some examples of Science Skills include: Accounting, Anthropology, Archaeology, Astronomy, Bacteriology, Biochemistry, Biology, Biophysics, Botany, Chemistry, Ecology, Exobiology, Genetics, Geology, Hydrology, Inorganic Chemistry, Marine Biology, Mathematics, Medicine, Metallurgy, Microbiology, Molecular Biology, Nuclear Physics, Organic Chemistry, Paleontology, Pharmacology, Physics, Psychology, Robotics, Sociology, Statistics, Subatomic Physics, Surgery, Veterinary Medicine, and Zoology.

## SECURITY SYSTEMS

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can locate, recognize, evade, and build various types of alarms and traps. These alarms and traps include such things as deadfalls, electric eyes, motion detectors, poison needle traps, retina scanners, voiceprint analyzers, security cameras, trapdoors, tripwires, and pressure plates. The character needs equipment for dealing with many types of Security Systems; time (one Turn or longer) is often required as well.

Many security systems are very complicated, with multiple backup alarms, so a -1 to -5 modifier is not unreasonable in some situations. An unsuccessful roll may simply mean the character failed to disarm the device... but if he fails the roll badly, the alarm should go off. Complementary Skills could include Electronics, Mechanics, or Computer Programming, according to the type of alarm.

## SEDUCTION

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Interaction Skill is the ability to gain others' trust (and perhaps even friendship) by offering companionship or favors. Despite its name, it has less to do with sexuality than with making friends or getting on another character's good side. This Skill is normally only for use on NPCs; a player should have more control over his character's actions. The GM may rule that Seduction can be used on a PC when it fits his Disadvantages or personality.

A successful Seduction roll usually makes it easier to learn information or gain favors from the victim. An unsuccessful Seduction roll usually means the attempt failed, but an exceptionally bad roll could indicate the target finds the character vulgar or distasteful and becomes completely disinterested in him.

When a character succeeds with a Seduction roll, typically the target gets to make an EGO Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest to resist the proffered friendship or other offer/request. The GM may modify the Seduction roll based on the quality of the character's conduct, the receptivity of the target, the target's Psychological Limitations, and other factors. (Alternately, the GM can modify the EGO Roll instead.)

Circumstances have a great effect on this Skill. A COM Roll is Complementary to Seduction in some situations. Manner and personality are equally important, so a PRE Roll might be Complementary as well.

### SHADOWING

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Intellect Skill is the ability to follow or watch someone subtly. Characters can perform Shadowing on foot or in a vehicle.

Different circumstances modify Shadowing rolls tremendously. For example, following someone in a desert without being seen is very difficult, and would impose negative modifiers (-1 to -5). Conversely, it's easy to follow someone in a busy airport (+1 to +3). The person doing the Shadowing should make a new roll whenever the subject consciously or unconsciously does something to lose the tail — like changing taxicabs, entering a store and running out the back door, or turning around and walking back the way he came.

Failing a Shadowing roll typically means the shadower lost the subject, or must do something obvious to keep tailing. Badly failing the roll may mean the subject has somehow detected the shadower.

Shadowing also lets a character spot and lose a tail. If the tail failed his Shadowing roll, the subject only needs a successful PER Roll or Shadowing roll (whichever is higher) to spot the tail. If the tail made his Shadowing roll, the GM should perform a Skill Versus Skill Contest using the subject's Shadowing (or PER Roll) to oppose the tail's roll.

Shadowing also allows characters to set up and maintain static surveillance of someone without being detected. It doesn't allow a character to use sensing equipment such as bugs — that requires Bugging — but does cover the use of static listening devices such as parabolic microphones, telescopes, and binoculars to best effect. He also knows how to blend into the background so that it isn't obvious he's watching a particular person or location.

City Knowledge and Area Knowledge may be Complementary Skills to Shadowing.

### SKILL LEVELS

No type
Cost: Varies

Skill Levels provide bonuses to related Skills. (Skills may be related without being in the same category; the GM is the final judge of whether or not Skills are related.) The cost for Skill Levels is indicated on the accompanying table.

A character can only apply a Skill Level to one task at a time. He can change how his Skill Levels are assigned as a Zero Phase Action. However, unless the GM permits otherwise, he may not change the assignment of his Skill Levels more than once in a Phase.

The 10-point "Overall Level" can apply to any Skill Roll, Characteristic Roll, PER Roll, Contact roll, Find Weakness roll, or any other roll the GM approves. (Some GMs forbid characters to apply them to rolls they feel characters have no "control" over, such as some Activation Rolls or Required Skill Rolls.) Characters can also use Overall Levels as if they were Combat Skill Levels to improve CV, ECV, the damage done by an attack, or for any other use to which a CSL can be put. Except for Overall Levels, Skill Levels do not apply to Combat Skills.

## SKILL LEVELS TABLE

| Cost | Type of Level |
|---|---|
| 2 points | +1 with one Skill or Characteristic Roll |
| 3 points | +1 with any three related Skills (*e.g.,* +1 with Culture Knowledge, High Society, and Seduction; +1 with Mechanics, Security Systems, and Lockpicking) |
| 5 points | +1 with a group of similar Skills (*e.g.,* +1 with all Agility Skills) |
| 8 points | +1 with all non-combat Skills |
| 10 points | +1 Overall Level (see text) (*i.e.,* +1 with any Skill Roll or Characteristic Roll). Characters can also use Overall Levels as Combat Skill Levels. |

The smallest Skill Level on which a character can place a Limitation is a 3-point Level.

**Optional Rule: Negative Skill Levels**

Certain powers or abilities, such as some curses in a Fantasy game, involve making a character less capable — in short, they apply negative Skill Levels to another character. At the GM's discretion, a character may impose a -1 on any one Skill for 3 Character Points, a -1 to any Skill Roll with a group of similar Skills for 5 Character Points, or a -1 to any Skill Roll for 10 Character Points. Negative Skill Levels that apply to more than one Skill must be assigned to a single Skill in any given Phase by the character inflicting them (for example, a Negative Overall Level could decrease the target's Security Systems roll one Phase, and his PER Roll the next Phase; it doesn't decrease all of the target's Skills every Phase). Changing the allocation of a Negative Skill Level is a Half Phase Action. This "Power" is No Range, Constant, and costs END; using it to affect the target requires an Attack Roll. Each point of Power Defense the target has negates one Negative Skill Level.

### SLEIGHT OF HAND

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Agility Skill represents the ability to palm items, fool the eye, perform certain magic tricks, and so forth. It's useful when a character needs to get a weapon into his hand without anybody seeing him do it, or for subtly transferring objects to someone else. Large objects (anything bigger than a small pistol) are, of course, more difficult to palm (-1 to -5).

Characters can also use Sleight Of Hand to pick pockets. When picking pockets, use Sleight Of Hand versus a PER Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. An unsuccessful Sleight Of Hand roll doesn't necessarily mean the character's action was detected; other characters must make a PER Roll to perceive what's happening.

## STEALTH

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Agility Skill can hide in shadows, move silently, and/or avoid detection in combat conditions.

When a character wants to be stealthy, use his Stealth roll versus the PER Rolls of anyone attempting to find him (or who might perceive him even if not actively trying to) in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. If the character wants to hide himself for a long time while remaining motionless, use Concealment instead (perhaps with Stealth as a Complementary Skill). A failed Stealth roll doesn't necessarily mean the character was seen; see *Senses In The HERO System,* page 348.

An Encumbered character, or one who tries to move across an open or well-lit area, finds it harder to be stealthy (-1 to -3). Good conditions for Stealth include loud background noise and dark, crowded areas (+1 to +3).

Stealth typically applies to all Senses, including Combat Sense and Danger Sense, unless the GM rules otherwise in a particular situation based on considerations of game balance, common sense, and dramatic sense. For example, an ordinary human probably couldn't use Stealth to avoid the Normal Smell of a dog, since there's no real way to "hide" body scent. However, the GM might allow it if the character could, for example, rub himself with something to disguise or conceal his normal body scent.

Stealth applies equally to all forms of movement. No mode of movement is inherently "stealthier" than any other.

## STREETWISE

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Interaction Skill gives a character knowledge of the seamy side of civilization: he knows how to find the black market, talk to thugs and criminals, gain information, deal with organized (and not so organized) crime figures, and so on. He also knows who the main powers are on the street and in the underworld, and the location of their spheres of influence.

Streetwise is much more difficult if the character doesn't know the native language (-3 to -5 or more). Characters typically learn Streetwise for their native city or culture. Area, City, or Culture Knowledges are Complementary Skills, depending on the type of information the character is trying to find; KSs of various shady organizations are also helpful. Some cultures, especially alien ones, may be so strange as to give minuses (-1 to -3) to Streetwise rolls.

Success on a Streetwise roll usually means the character found someone who has the information or resources he's looking for. That doesn't mean he automatically learns the information, though; he may have to pay for it, or get it through force or threats. Nor does success guarantee he's safe; the tough people who run the streets often don't like it when characters ask questions. Failing a roll not only means the character didn't find what he was looking for, but is even more likely to alert unfriendlies that someone is snooping around.

Encourage players to roleplay this Skill as much as possible — it's a lot of fun.



## SURVIVAL

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 2 Character Points for a category, or 1 Character Point for a subcategory; +1 to roll with all categories and subcategories per +2 points

Characters with this Intellect Skill can live off the land, find food and water, hunt game, locate or build crude shelters, identify dangerous plants and animals, and so on. It's very popular among intrepid explorers and adventurers. It does not, however, include knowledge of tracks (that requires Tracking) or how to use weapons (that's Weapon Familiarity).

Characters purchase Survival by different types of environments — knowing how to survive in the desert doesn't guarantee you can survive in arctic conditions, for example. Each environment group (such as Arctic) costs 2 Character Points for a (9+(INT/5)) or less roll; subgroups (such as Arctic Plains) cost 1 Character Point apiece if characters wish to buy them separately. Improving the Skill Roll with all groups the character knows costs 2 Character Points for each +1 to the roll.

A character should make a Survival roll only when he's underequipped for a particular area (usually when he's marooned, or the like). The Survival roll should be made on a daily basis to see if he's found food, shelter, and other necessities. The GM

### SURVIVAL ENVIRONMENT GROUPS

**Arctic/Subarctic**
Arctic/Subarctic Coasts
Arctic/Subarctic Plains (Tundra)
Arctic/Subarctic Forest (Taiga)

**Mountains**

**Temperate/Subtropical**
Temperate/Subtropical Coasts
Temperate/Subtropical Forests
Temperate/Subtropical Plains

**Tropical**
Tropical Coasts/Pelagic Environments
Tropical Forests (Jungle)
Tropical Plains (Savannah)

**Deserts**

**Marine**
Surface
Underwater

**Urban**

**Note:** This list of environments applies primarily to Earth-like locales. GMs should create their own environment groups if their campaign settings are radically different from Earth.

might require rolls more often in a particularly harsh or dangerous environment (in an arctic area during a blizzard, for instance).

Lack of available resources like tools, gatherable or huntable food, potable water, and clothing imposes a -1 to -5 modifier to the Survival roll. Very benign conditions (good equipment, plentiful game, lots of water) could mean a +1 to +3 modifier.

To a certain extent Survival includes knowledge of what's edible and what's not. KSs relating to the creatures and plants in the area are Complementary to Survival. In particularly hazardous environs, the GM might *require* characters to have appropriate KSs to use Survival (it doesn't matter how many fish you catch if you don't know which ones are poisonous). At the GM's option, a character in an unfamiliar environment may be able to use his Survival for some tasks at a -3 to -5 penalty (for example, hunting in the mountains may not differ much from hunting in temperate forests, but skill at identifying edible plants might not carry over to other environments).

A successful Survival roll usually means the character has found enough food, shelter, and other necessities to keep himself alive and moving for the day (though maybe just barely). Failure can be damaging to the character; failing the roll several days in a row could be fatal (see *Environmental Effects,* page 438).

### SYSTEMS OPERATION

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Intellect Skill understand how to operate sensing and communication devices properly. This includes radios, radar systems, air traffic control devices, sonar, electronic countermeasures (ECM), and many similar pieces of equipment. It does not cover navigational equipment (that's Navigation) or encoding transmissions (that's Cryptography), but it does allow characters to send or intercept navigational or encoded data. Characters also use Systems Operation to operate many advanced weapons systems, such as missile batteries or satellite-based weapons; see *Weapon Familiarity,* below.

In addition to sending messages and operating sensors, characters with Systems Operation can attempt to locate weak transmissions, jam enemy transmissions, and so forth (assuming they have the proper equipment). The GM may assign modifiers of -1 to -5 to simulate poor or damaged equipment, the weakness of signals, jamming, poor positioning, countermeasures, and similar circumstances.

Systems Operation varies tremendously according to the genre. In a Modern campaign, it allows characters to operate radar screens and monitor radio transmissions. In a Future campaign, it lets them use high-tech sensors to sweep for ships, planets, and stars. Characters could examine a planet for cities, radioactivity, life forms, or metals, and then communicate their findings back to headquarters via hyperspace radio. Systems Operation generally has no applicability in pre-industrial settings, such as Fantasy campaigns, though it might allow characters to develop and use low-tech signaling systems.

### TACTICS

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

Characters with this Intellect Skill know how to fight effectively and efficiently. Generally Tactics only applies to discrete battles and small units (squads, platoons, or companies at the most), not to overall strategic or theater planning (which requires a host of Knowledge Skills in addition to Tactics).

A character with Tactics is an expert at individual and small-unit combat. He usually knows what must be done to win a battle or conflict, or at least the best thing to do given the resources available to him (such as choosing the best position to set up his forces, or ways to use his platoon's scarce ammunition to best effect). He's got sound tactical judgment, allowing him to direct the tactics of small units, know when the situation is hopeless and he should retreat, and so forth.

You should use Tactics sparingly; it's most useful if a character should be able to figure out how to deal with a combat situation, but the player cannot. In this case, the GM should require a Skill Roll. If the roll succeeds, the GM should give the player hints about what his opponent intends to do next, and ways the character could counteract his foe's maneuvers. A failed Tactics roll usually means the character can't think of a way to beat the enemy, but it may mean an incorrect tactic.

### TEAMWORK

Agility: 9 + (DEX/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Agility Skill reflects a character's ability to fight well with others in combat. Use it when characters try to Coordinate attacks (see page 378). Characters do not have to buy Teamwork separately for each person or group they want to Coordinate with; it simulates a character's general ability to work as a "team" with any other character in combat. However, a character's Teamwork applies only to himself; he cannot use his Skill to improve other characters' chance to Coordinate.

### TRACKING

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can follow a trail by observing tracks, marks, broken twigs, and the like. He also knows how to hide tracks. He can derive a great deal of information from tracks, such as the weight of the travelers (or how much weight they're carrying), their number, how long ago they passed by, what they were doing, and so forth.

The GM should require a character to make a Tracking roll if the person or creature being tracked does something unusual to throw off the pursuit, or when he passes over difficult terrain (like bare stone). Successful rolls indicate the character keeps following the trail. A failed roll indicates the character has lost the trail (or, in cases of extreme failure, has gone in the wrong direction). If the character knows he's lost the trail, he can

stop, take extra time to examine the surroundings carefully, and make another roll (with appropriate bonuses for taking more time).

The GM may impose penalties (-1 to -3) if the person or creature being tracked knows about it and tries to conceal his trail, doubles back, attempts to throw off pursuit, and so forth. If the person being trailed knows Tracking too, have the two characters engage in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. The GM can also impose penalties if weather or other conditions obliterate or mar the tracks.

Area Knowledges (of both regions and specific types of terrain) are Complementary to Tracking; so is Survival in some situations.

### TRADING

Interaction: 9 + (PRE/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

This Interaction Skill gives a character the ability to strike a good bargain with a merchant or customer. Prices often aren't fixed, especially in noncontemporary genres, so a character with Trading can save (or make) considerable money.

A successful Skill Versus Skill Contest (versus the other character's Trading or an INT Roll) means the character gets a bargain price — the better the roll, the better the bargain. A failed roll usually just means further haggling (or a refusal to buy if he can't get the price down to where he wants it) — but if he fails the roll badly, he'll cheerfully pay too much under the impression he's getting a bargain. It helps if the GM makes some of these rolls instead of the player, so the player can't see the results.

### TRANSPORT FAMILIARITY

Background: No roll required
Cost: 1 Character Point per TF, or 2 Character Points for a category (if purchasable)

This Background Skill allows characters to drive or pilot specific types of vehicles, or ride a living mount, under routine conditions. It does not include combat maneuvering (that requires Combat Driving, Combat Piloting, or Riding). However, a character with a TF does have an 8- roll for performing dangerous maneuvers (jumps, screeching turns, and so forth). Characters don't have to make rolls to operate vehicles normally.

Each Transport Familiarity (TF) costs 1 Character Point, or 2 Character Points for an entire category (if characters can purchase the category as a group).

Example: *Fast Eddie pays 2 points for Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, 1 point for Small Wind-Powered Boats, and 1 point for Snowmobiles. Eddie now has an 8 or less roll with all of these vehicle types.*

See page 74 for a list of TF categories.

### TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 10 Character Points (see text)

A character with this Combat Skill has been trained to fight with two weapons, one in each hand. Two-Weapon Fighting (either Ranged or HTH) costs 10 Character Points.

Two-Weapon Fighting is the ability to use the Combat Maneuvers *Rapid Fire* or *Sweep* (see pages 396, 397), combined with a limited form of the Talent *Ambidexterity,* in an improved manner. It provides the following benefits:

—even in campaigns that don't use the Rapid Fire and/or Sweep Optional Combat Maneuvers, GMs should allow characters to use those Maneuvers when they use Two-Weapon Fighting

—in campaigns that allow all characters to use the Rapid Fire and/or Sweep Optional Combat Maneuvers, a character using Two-Weapon Fighting only suffers a -2 DCV, instead of the standard halving of DCV. If a -2 DCV penalty would constitute halving the character's DCV (or




### TWO WEAPON FIGHTING EXAMPLE

Example: Swordsinger, DEX 27, uses twin katanas and knows the Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) Skill. He also knows some Martial Arts Maneuvers (Kenjutsu). He gets into a fight against two bank robbers and decides to use Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) to Sweep them. He suffers no penalties for using a sword in his "off hand," and as long as he makes no more than two attacks will suffer no OCV penalty. He will be at -2 DCV, and performing the attack requires a Full Phase.

He decides to use a Lightning Stroke (+2 OCV, +0 DCV, +2 DC) to attack Robber #1, and a Slashing Stroke (-2 OCV, +1 DCV, +4 DC) against the other. His first attack is at +2 OCV (Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) cancels the Sweep penalty, and the maneuver grants a +2 OCV). His second attack is at -2 OCV (the Slashing Stroke maneuver subtracts 2 from his OCV; Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) cancels the Sweep penalty). He is at 7 DCV (base of 9 [the worse of the two DCV bonuses applies], -2). Because any OCV penalty applies to all rolls, while OCV bonuses do not, Swordsinger will be at +0 OCV with his Lightning Stroke and -2 OCV with his Slashing Stroke.

Example: Renegade, who knows Rapid Autofire, attacks six bank robbers using his Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged) Skill with his twin Mini-Uzi submachine guns. He uses Concentrated Sprayfire and Skipover Sprayfire with each Mini-Uzi against the robbers, who have conveniently

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# TRANSPORT FAMILIARITY CATEGORIES

| Category | Examples |
|---|---|
| **Riding Animals (A)** [includes use of animals in teams, if applicable] | |
| Camels | |
| Dogs | |
| Equines | Horses, donkeys, mules, unicorns |
| Flying Beasts | Griffins, pegasi, rocs, giant dragonflies |
| Huge Beasts | Elephants |
| Swimming Beasts | Whales, sharks, giant fish |
| Other (purchased by animal type) | |
| **Muscle-Powered Ground Vehicles (B)** | |
| One-Wheeled Muscle-Powered Ground Vehicles | Unicycles |
| Two-Wheeled Muscle-Powered Ground Vehicles | Bicycles, velocipedes |
| Carts & Carriages [also requires TF: appropriate riding animal] | |
| Chariots [also requires TF: appropriate riding animal] | |
| **Common Motorized Ground Vehicles (A)** | |
| Small Motorized Ground Vehicles | Cars, pickups, jeeps, ambulances |
| Large Motorized Ground Vehicles | Trucks, tractor-trailers, buses |
| **Uncommon Motorized Ground Vehicles (B)** | |
| Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles | Motorcycles, motoscooters |
| Construction & Agricultural Vehicles | Bulldozers, steamrollers, tractors, combines |
| Tracked Military Vehicles | Tanks, IFVs, some APCs |
| Wheeled Military Vehicles | Reconnaissance vehicles, some APCs |
| Railed Vehicles | Trains, cablecars, maglev trains, subways |
| **Air Vehicles (B)** | |
| Balloons & Zeppelins | Hot air balloons, zeppelins, blimps |
| Small Planes | Propeller planes, autogyros, gliders, volantors |
| Large Planes | Jumbo jets, C130 transports |
| Combat Aircraft | F15s, F117As, B2s |
| Helicopters | |
| **Cold-Weather Vehicles (B)** | |
| Bobsleds | Bobsleds, luge |
| Sleds [also requires TF: Dogs] | Sleds, sledges, sleighs, dogsleds |
| Snowmobiles | |
| **Water Vehicles (B)** | |
| Rafts | |
| Small Rowed Boats | Canoes, rowboats, kayaks |
| Large Rowed Boats | Biremes, triremes, Fantasy slave ships |
| Small Wind-Powered Boats | Sailboats, longboats, yachts |
| Large Wind-Powered Boats | Clipper ships, galleons |
| Small Motorized Boats | Speedboats, CRRCs/Zodiacs |
| Large Motorized Boats | Pleasure yachts, tugboats, barges, tankers |
| Small Military Ships | Cutters, PT boats |
| Large Military Ships | Destroyers, frigates, aircraft carriers |
| Submarines | |

| Category | Examples |
|---|---|
| **Recreational Vehicles (B)** | |
| Hanggliding | |
| Jetskis | |
| Parachuting, Basic | |
| Parachuting, Advanced [requires Basic Parachuting] | |
| SCUBA | |
| Skateboarding | |
| Skating [iceskating and rollerskating] | |
| Skiing, Snow | |
| Skiing, Water | |
| Snowboarding | |
| Surfing | |
| Windsurfing | |
| **Science Fiction & Space Vehicles (A)** [includes FTL travel, if any] | |
| Early Spacecraft | Apollo, Mercury, Gemini projects |
| Spaceplanes | Space Shuttle |
| Grav Vehicles/Hovercraft | |
| Personal-Use Spacecraft | Consumers' spacecraft |
| Commercial Spacecraft & Space Yachts | |
| Industrial & Exploratory Spacecraft | |
| Military Spacecraft | |
| Mobile Space Stations | |
| **Mecha (A)** | |
| Anthropomorphic Mecha | |
| Beast-Shaped Mecha | |
| Hybrid/Shapeshifting Mecha | |

**Notes**

A: Can be purchased as a group

B: Must be purchased separately

1. *Riding Animals:* In a Fantasy campaign, where Riding Animals is the prominent TF group, GMs may wish to forbid characters to purchase it as a group.

2. *Parachuting, Basic and Advanced:* Basic Parachuting allows the character to make basic use of a parachute safely, and assumes the character is performing typical MAMO (Medium Altitude, Medium Opening) jumps. Advanced Parachuting (which can only be bought by characters who know Basic Parachuting) allows the character to perform more difficult jumps or aerial stunts; it includes military parachute training and LALO, HALO, and HAHO jumps.

3. *Science Fiction & Space Vehicles:* This TF category encompasses the largest number and variety of vehicles. Gamemasters running Future-era campaigns should consider expanding this category extensively to suit their campaigns. For example, different spacefaring species's ships might require different TFs (one species's controls and methods of construction may differ greatly from another's; a species's arrangement of manipulatory limbs may lead to vastly different controls), by planet or sector of space, by government, and so forth. Science Fiction vehicles include FTL travel if available.

At the GM's option, Grav Vehicles/Hovercraft may be placed under the "Uncommon Motorized Ground Vehicles" or "Air Vehicles" categories instead.

close to it), the GM may consider reducing the penalty to -1 DCV.

—it allows the character to ignore the -3 penalty for using his off hand to attack

—it allows character to ignore the first -2 OCV modifier when making his two attacks. (In other words, the character's first two Attack Rolls are at no OCV penalty; any Attack Rolls thereafter in the same Phase are at a cumulative -2 OCV per Attack Roll.)

Weapons used when Two-Weapon Fighting must be usable in one hand. A character with WF: Off Hand who uses Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) gets the standard +1 DCV from that WF.

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bunched up into two groups of three robbers each. Group #1 is spread out over four hexes, Group #2 over five hexes. His DCV is -2 for using Two-Weapon Fighting, then halved for using Autofire Skills. Because of his Two-Weapon Fighting, he suffers no OCV penalty for using two weapons; each burst of Autofire counts as one attack. The OCV penalties are -6 for attacking Group #1 (-4 for hexes, -2 for the Skills) and -7 for attacking Group #2 (-5 for hexes, -2 for the Skills), and these add together for a total -13 OCV on both attacks.



Characters must purchase Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) separately from Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged); the cost and rules are the same. When using Two-Weapon Fighting with HKA or HA weapons, a character's STR Bonus adds to both attacks. At the GM's option, a character may use Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) with unarmed HTH attacks, such as punches or Martial Strikes, as well as with armed attacks. Even if a character has both forms of Two-Weapon Fighting, he cannot combine a HTH and Ranged attack into a single use of Two-Weapon Fighting.

A character may not use Two-Weapon Fighting with an Autofire attack unless he has the *Rapid Autofire* Skill (see above), but may use it with Autofire Skills (such as Accurate Sprayfire).

Characters using Two-Weapon Fighting may attack the same or different characters with each attack. Of course, with Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH), if the character wishes to attack multiple targets with his two attacks, both must be within HTH Combat range.

Characters using Two-Weapon Fighting are subject to all rules for Rapid Fire or Sweep (pages 396, 397) regarding the Maneuvers they can use, CV modifiers, time required, END cost, number of targets, and so forth. Characters can combine Two-Weapon Fighting with Rapid Attack to perform the two-weapon attack as a Half Phase Action.

Characters with more than two manipulatory limbs do not automatically get to make a normal attack with each limb just because they know Two-Weapon Fighting. This Skill only removes the OCV penalty for one Rapid Fire or Sweep attack. Using additional limbs would count as further Rapid Fire or Sweep attacks, and would incur the normal penalty (though a character could buy Combat Skill Levels to counteract this, thus simulating his ability to attack with many limbs at once).

### VENTRILOQUISM

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 3 Character Points; +1 to roll per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can make his voice sound as if it's coming from somewhere other than himself. Ventriloquism also allows him to speak without apparently moving his lips. Ventriloquism is detected with a PER Roll in a Skill Versus Skill Contest.

The Ventriloquism roll takes a -1 for every 1" of distance between the ventriloquist and the point where the voice will "speak."

Ventriloquism is particularly useful for deception — one of the oldest tricks in the book is for a character to cast his voice behind a gunman, saying "Freeze!" This can distract the gunman enough so the character can try to escape. An unsuccessful Ventriloquism roll means other people realize the sound comes from the ventriloquist.

### WEAPON FAMILIARITY

Combat: No roll required
Cost: 1 Character Point per WF, or 2 Character Points for a category (if purchasable)

Weapon Familiarity represents the knowledge of how to use specific weapons. It's used primarily in Heroic campaigns; characters in Superheroic campaigns, who pay Character Points for their weapons, automatically know how to use them (see page 456). A character with a WF knows how to perform basic cleaning and maintenance on a weapon he's Familiar with, but he can't repair it, modify it, or the like (that requires Weaponsmith).

A character fights at -3 OCV when using a weapon for which he does not know the Weapon Familiarity. If a weapon has an inherent OCV or Range Modifier penalty, having the WF for that weapon does not eliminate that penalty.

Example: *Andarra's gun is knocked out of her hand, so she grabs a laser sword off the wall. She doesn't know how to use a laser sword (i.e., she didn't pay for WF: Blades), so she suffers a -3 OCV penalty.*

*Later on, Andarra gets her gun back. It's not well built, so it has an inherent -1 OCV penalty. She suffers this penalty even though she has WF: Small Arms; the Weapon Familiarity doesn't eliminate the weapon's inherent negative modifier.*

Weapon Familiarity is bought by category (see accompanying table, page 76). Large categories that characters may purchase as a group, such as *Common Melee Weapons* or *Small Arms,* cost 2 Character Points; individual categories, such as *Handguns* or *Blades,* cost 1 Character Point each. A character must buy Weapon Familiarity separately for each weapon category in weapon groups he cannot buy as a group. All characters have Familiarity with Clubs, Fist-Loads, Unarmed Combat, and Thrown Rocks for free.

A character can buy a WF with whatever the GM is willing to let him define as a "weapon." That eliminates the -3 OCV penalty for Unfamiliar Weapon (page 382), but not any other penalties (such as for the inherent bulkiness or awkwardness of a weapon).

### WEAPONSMITH

Intellect: 9 + (INT/5)
Cost: 2 Character Points for a category, +1 point for each additional category; +1 to roll with all categories per +2 points

A character with this Intellect Skill can make, maintain, and repair various types of weapons. He can also identify the origin, uses, and effects of any weapon he's familiar with or has time to analyze.

Weaponsmith does not cover the building of explosives, bombs, and related weapons such as landmines; that requires Demolitions. Nor does it cover the invention of new types of weapons, which requires Inventor in addition to Weaponsmith.

The cost for buying Weaponsmith with one category of weapons is 2 points for a (9+(INT/5))

# WEAPON FAMILIARITY CATEGORIES

**Common Melee Weapons**
(may be purchased as a group)
- Unarmed Combat*
- Axes, Maces, Hammers, and Picks
- Blades
- Clubs*
- Fist-Loads* (1)
- Polearms and Spears (2)
- Two-Handed Weapons

**Uncommon Melee Weapons**
(must be purchased separately)
- Flails (3)
- Garrote
- Lances
- Nets
- Spread-The-Water Knife
- Staffs
- Whips

**Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons**
(may be purchased as a group)
- Chain & Rope Weapons
- Karate Weapons
- Mourn Staff
- Ninja Weapons
- Rings
- Staffs
- War Fan

**Uncommon Martial Arts Melee Weapons**
(must be purchased separately)
- Flying Claw/Guillotine
- Hook Sword
- Kiseru
- Lajatang
- Pendjepit
- Rope Dart
- Three-Section Staff
- Urumi
- Wind and Fire Wheels
- Off Hand (4)

**Common Missile Weapons**
(may be purchased as a group)
- Thrown Rocks* (5)
- Bows (6)
- Crossbows (7)
- Javelins and Thrown Spears
- Thrown Knives, Axes, and Darts (8)

**Uncommon Missile Weapons**
(must be purchased separately)
- Arare
- Atlatl
- Blowguns
- Boomerangs and Throwing Clubs
- Early Thrown Grenades
- Fukimi-Bari
- Iron Mandarin Duck
- Metsubishi
- Sling
- Sling Bow
- Staff Sling
- Steel Olive
- Steel Toad
- Thrown Chain & Rope Weapons
- Thrown Sword
- Wishful Steel Ball

**Siege Engines**
(may be purchased as a group)
- Ballista
- Catapult
- Onager
- Siege Tower
- Spring Engine
- Trebuchet
- Turtle

**Early Firearms**
(may be purchased as a group)
- Early Muzzleloaders
- Matchlocks
- Wheellocks
- Flintlocks
- Early Percussion Firearms (up to approximately 1850)

**Small Arms** (may be purchased as a group)
- Assault Rifles/LMGs
- Handguns
- Rifles
- Shotguns
- Submachine Guns
- Thrown Grenades

**Uncommon Modern Weapons**
(must be purchased separately)
- Flamethrowers
- Grenade Launchers (9)
- General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns (10)
- Shoulder-Fired Weapons (11)

**Emplaced Weapons**
(may be purchased as a group)
- Early Emplaced Weapons (12)
- Anti-Aircraft Guns
- Anti-Tank Guns
- Artillery
- Howitzers
- Mortars
- Recoilless Guns

**Vehicle Weapons (13)**
(must buy per vehicle)

**Notes**

* = All characters have this Weapon Familiarity for free

1. Fist-Loads includes brass knuckles, *bagh nakh,* the *yawara,* rocks or rolls of quarters held in the fist, and similar weapons. It also includes tasers that the user must touch to the victim's skin (the type of taser that fires small metal darts requires WF: Small Arms).

2. Polearms and Spears includes the use of Bayonets attached to rifles (Bayonets wielded on their own are considered Blades).

3. Flails includes the flail, the morningstar, and other articulated clubs not listed elsewhere.

4. WF: Off Hand, which costs 1 Character Point and may only be purchased once, is most suitable for martial arts campaigns and some other Heroic games. A character with WF: Off Hand gets a +1 DCV in HTH Combat when fighting with a weapon in each hand. This does not allow the character to attack twice in a Phase, however. To attack more often in a Turn, buy more SPD; to attack more than once in a Phase, use Combat Maneuvers like *Sweep* or *Rapid Fire* or buy the Skill *Two-Weapon Fighting.*)

5. Thrown Rocks includes Molotov cocktails and other crude missile weapons. All characters know this WF for free.

Related to Thrown Rocks are some hand-held dropped weapons, like caltrops, marbles, and the like. Such weapons do not require a WF to use.

6. Bows includes pellet bows/sling bows.

7. Crossbows includes pellet crossbows and the *chu-ko-nu* (Chinese repeating crossbow).

8. Thrown Knives, Axes, and Darts includes shuriken and *chakram.*

9. Grenade Launchers includes both GLs which are separate and those which are a component of another weapon, and also includes rifle grenades. Examples include the U.S. M79 and M203.

10. General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns includes the U.S. M60, M61A1/M168, M134 Minigun, Vulcan, M249 SAW, and similar weapons. However, if mounted in a vehicle, these weapons usually require a WF: Vehicle Weapon to use.

11. Shoulder-Fired Weapons is a broad category that includes anti-tank weapons (such as the U.S. M20 bazooka, M72 A2, and M47 Dragon), man-portable SAMs (such as the U.S. Stinger or Russian SA-7 Grail), hand-held recoilless guns (such as the Armbrust), and some man-guided missiles (such as TOWs, FOGs, laser-guided missiles, and so forth).

12. Early Emplaced Weapons includes all such weapons developed prior to World War I, such as cannons, bombards, culverins, and early howitzers. The GM may wish to break this category out into several separate categories for campaigns set in periods in which such weapons are commonplace (such as a pirates campaign or Civil War campaign).

13. Vehicle Weapons must be purchased per vehicle (for example, WF: M1A Abrams Weapons, WF: F-15 Weapons), at 1 point per vehicle. Bombs and missiles dropped or launched by aircraft, tank guns, and torpedoes are all examples of Vehicle Weapons. Mines do not require a WF (building and working with them is a function of Demolitions), though vehicle-based minelaying weapons require a Vehicle Weapons WF.

Advanced land-based missile systems and some other weapons are controlled via Systems Operation (*q.v.*), not a WF.

## WEAPONSMITH CATEGORIES

| Category | Examples |
|---|---|
| Muscle-Powered HTH | Swords, knives, axes, maces, polearms, clubs |
| Muscle-Powered Ranged | Bows, crossbows, javelins, throwing blades |
| Firearms | Revolvers, pistols, rifles, shotguns, machine guns |
| Missiles & Rockets | Stingers, Patriots, rocket launchers |
| Chemical Weapons | Tear gas, nerve gases |
| Biological Weapons | Bacteriological and virological warfare agents |
| Incendiary Weapons | Flamethrowers, napalm, thermite, white phosphorus |
| Energy Weapons | Lasers, blasters, magnetic weapons, tasers |

or less roll. Each additional category costs 1 point. A character may increase his roll in all categories he knows for 2 Character Points for each +1 to the Skill Roll.

Complementary Skills for Weaponsmith vary based on category. Electronics is usually Complementary for Energy Weapons; SS: Ballistics would be Complementary for Firearms or Missiles & Rockets; and several SSs would be Complementary to Chemical or Biological Weapons.

A character with Weaponsmith can identify weapons (and their effects) of any type he can build. For example, Weaponsmith: Firearms allows a character to recognize guns by sight or sound, and possibly to identify the origin of a gun.

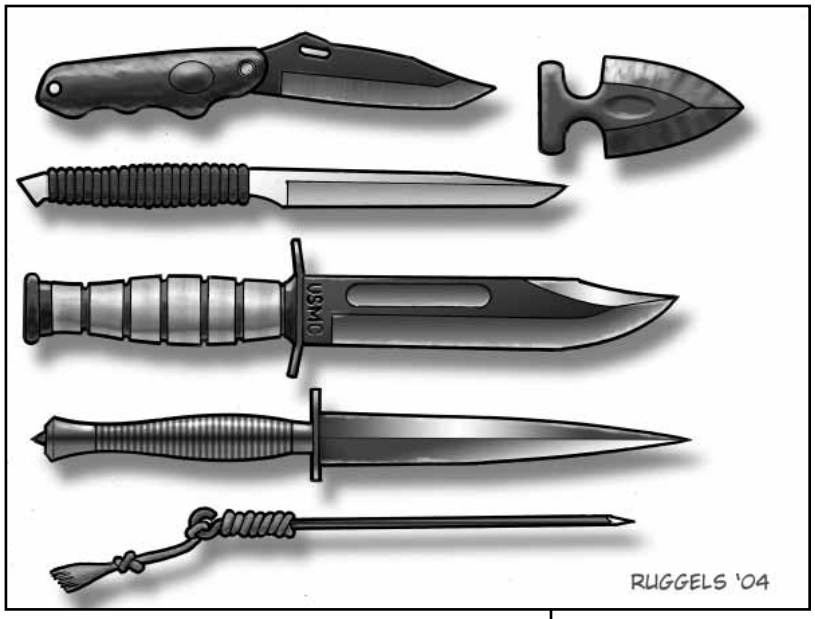
## SKILL ENHANCERS

Skill Enhancers reduce the cost of certain Skills or Perks. Each Skill Enhancer costs 3 Character Points, can only be purchased once, and cannot be increased beyond the basic level.

The minimum cost of any Background Skill learned through a Skill Enhancer is 1 Character Point, but for that 1 point the character receives an 11- roll.

Jack of All Trades: The character picks up trades, crafts, and similar Skills extremely easily; he learns new Professional Skills at -1 Character Point to the cost.

Linguist: This Skill Enhancer allows the character to learn new Languages more easily. Linguist decreases the cost of each Language Skill a character buys by 1 point. The minimum cost of a Language is still 1 point, but for 1 point the character speaks fluent conversation (which usually costs 2 points).




## SKILL ENHANCERS TABLE

| Skill Enhancer | Affects Skill | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Jack of All Trades | Professional Skills | 3/- |
| Linguist | Languages | 3/- |
| Scholar | Knowledge Skills | 3/- |
| Scientist | Sciences | 3/- |
| Traveler | AKs, CKs, and CuKs | 3/- |
| Well-Connected | Contacts, Favors | 3/- |

Scholar: The character learns Knowledge Skills easily, at -1 Character Point to the cost. Scholar does not help the character learn AKs, CKs, or CuKs (see *Traveler*).

Scientist: The character learns Science Skills easily, at -1 Character Point to the cost.

Traveler: A character with Traveler is adept at learning about new locations and cultures. The character learns new Area Knowledges, City Knowledges, and Cultural Knowledge Skills easily, at -1 Character Point to the cost. However, the character must acquire the knowledge through hands-on experience (*i.e.,* he must actually visit the location).

Well-Connected: This Skill Enhancer affects the cost of certain Perks, rather than Skills. The character is extremely skilled at making friends and earning favors. He makes Contacts easily, at -1 Character Point to the cost. Characters with Well Connected may also purchase two Favors for only 1 point (thereby halving the cost).

# PERQUISITES



Perks (or Perquisites) are useful resources, items, privileges, and contacts to which a character has special access. Perks are not innate abilities, but rather special benefits the character enjoys.

Unlike Skills, Perks are inherently transitory in nature. A character can gain Perks during the course of the campaign and later lose them just as easily. If a character loses a Perk he typically gets the Character Points he spent on it back, unless the rules for a specific Perk note otherwise. However, the final decision is up to the GM, since it may depend on the situation, the special effects of the Perk, common sense, dramatic sense, and other factors.

Characters cannot purchase Perks in Power Frameworks, or apply Power Modifiers to them, except as specifically noted elsewhere or with the GM's permission. For example, some GMs allow characters with Gadget Pools to buy Vehicles through the Pool.

Gamemasters don't have to use the rules for Perks at all; players can handle most of the situations described by roleplaying. However, the Perk costs help provide a rough estimate of the value each Perk has for characters. Perks can help flesh out a character conception or give the GM another way to manipulate a character during an adventure. The GM should use this list of Perks as an example of what Perks can cost, and then decide what Perks are available and appropriate for the campaign. Players should always ask the GM for approval before buying a Perk.

## PERK SUMMARY TABLE

| Perk | Cost | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Access | 1-5 points | Character has special access to a secured area |
| Anonymity | 3+ | No official records of character exist |
| Computer Link | 1-10 points | Character has a link to an important or useful computer system |
| Contact | 1/1 | Character knows someone who sometimes helps him |
| Deep Cover | 2 | Character has an elaborate cover identity |
| Favor | 1 | Someone important owes character a favor |
| Follower | 1 Character Point per 5 Character Points in Follower | Character has a loyal servant or helper |
| Fringe Benefit | Varies | Character has some influence or authority based on his job or position in society |
| Money | Varies | Character is wealthier than normal |
| Reputation | Varies | The character is well-known and highly regarded for something |
| Vehicles and Bases | 1 Character Point per 5 Character Points in Vehicle or Base | The character has a special vehicle or facility |

## PERK DESCRIPTIONS

### ACCESS

Cost: 1-5 Character Points

Sometimes characters have access to heavily secured areas or buildings as a result of secret entrances or passages they know of or built, security passes they have stolen or forged, and so forth. For example, if a character suspects that one day he may need to gain secret access to the King's bedchamber, he can bribe the castellan to make him an extra key, or persuade the builder to create a secret passage only the character knows about.

The *Access* Perk represents this sort of resource. Access costs from 1-5 points, depending upon how useful the secret passage or other form of access is likely to be. Generally, Access is completely foolproof and/or undetectable; in some cases, Concealment, Forgery, or other Skills may detect the Access. Characters can make their Access better hidden or less detectable at the cost of 1 point per -1 to any Skill Rolls made to detect the Access.

### ANONYMITY

Cost: 3 or more Character Points

For many characters, a high degree of anonymity is a valuable asset — what the authorities don't know about someone, they can't use to catch him. With the GM's permission, characters can buy this Perk. Anonymity means no official or police records exist regarding the character — or if they do exist, they don't contain any truly useful information.

If Anonymity is bought before a character has the chance to establish a record for criminal, dissident, rebel, or other illicit conduct, it costs 3 Character Points. If purchased after the character has attracted the attention of the authorities, it may cost more than 3 points (possibly much more). The cost depends upon how much information the authorities have on the character and how damaging it is. (Of course, the GM should not allow a PC to buy this Perk after the game begins without running an appropriate adventure to explain its effects.)

Like many Perks, Anonymity can be nullified. If the authorities acquire information about the character after he purchases Anonymity, the effects of the Perk are diminished or lost. In this case, the character does not get the Character Points he spent on Anonymity back — and if he wants to preserve his Anonymity, he'll have to purchase the Perk again.






## COMPUTER LINK

Cost: 1-10 Character Points

Although many computer databases are open to the public, some of the ones characters would like access to, such as FBI computers or the Galactic Empire's military computers, are heavily restricted. A character can buy Computer Link to reflect the fact that he has permanent access to such databases.

Computer Link costs 1-10 Character Points, depending upon the size and usefulness of the system the character has access to. For example, a Computer Link to a local police, government, or corporate computer system might cost 1-3 points; similar national or federal systems, 4-6 points; worldwide or galactic-level systems, 7-10 points. Sensitive systems, such as those containing law enforcement or military information, cost more.

## CONTACT

Cost: See Contact Table

A character with this Perk knows someone who can occasionally help him out. Characters can purchase this Perk multiple times; in each case, it represents a person or persons the character knows. The Contact usually holds a job or position that can be useful to the character. Contacts must always be defined when the character buys the Perk, and any Contact must be approved by the GM. Examples of Contacts include the captain of the guard, a CIA clerk, a Senator in the Galactic Senate, an armorer, a helicopter pilot, or an underworld informant.

A character cannot take the same NPC as a Contact and a DNPC or as a Follower and a Contact unless the GM specifically permits him to.

**Buying Contacts**

A Contact can help the character on an 8- roll for 1 Character Point, or an 11- for 2 Character Points; with +1 to the Contact Roll for every +1 Character Point thereafter. Exceptionally useful Contacts (like the King, a KGB colonel, or a generous billionaire) may cost more (see below). The minimum cost for a Contact is always 1 Character Point, even after applying the modifiers described below.

**Contacts Limited By Identity**

If the character has two or more identities, and he can only access a Contact through one identity, the Contact costs -1 point. This may occur if the Contact is only available to the character's Social Limitation: Secret Identity (but not his "masked" persona), or if the Contact is known to a character through a disguise-based identity or Deep Cover.

**Extremely Useful Resources**

The rules assume all Contacts possess information, skills, or resources useful to the character. If the Contact has *very* useful skills, information, or resources, he costs +1 to +2 points; examples include minor underworld figures; minor arms dealers; minor political figures (a city council member, a guild leader, a Congressional staffer, a local judge, most bureaucrats); or minor corporate figures. If the Contact has *extremely* useful skills, information, or resources, he costs +3 points. Examples of this include powerful underworld figures; the King's trusted advisor; well-connected black market arms dealers; major political figures (the President, a Congressman, a Galactic Senator); an extremely wealthy person; a highly skilled armorer or gadgeteer; and major corporate figures.

**Access To Important Institutions**

If the Contact grants the character access to important organizations or institutions, he costs +1 point. The extra cost here depends on two factors: how important and useful the organization or institution is; and the quality of the access granted by the Contact. A Contact who's a member of the King's Guard would be worth +1 point (important group, but the Contact has little overall influence on it), whereas the Captain of the Guard would be +3 points (important group, Contact has high level of influence over the group). The priest of a small local church would be worth +1 point (great influence over group, but group is of little importance). Organizations or institutions generally considered "important" include organized crime groups, the military, governments and government agencies and offices, popular or well-connected social clubs, major religions, megacorporations, and key bureaucracies or lobbying groups.

**The Contact's Contacts**

If the Contact has a significant quantity or quality of Contacts of his own, he costs +1 point. Buying a Contact often means the character obtains access to a whole network of quasi-Contacts — "friends of a friend" who may prove helpful to him. (The character may also make "enemies by association" this way.) If the character attempts to gain the help of a "friend of a friend" directly (without going through the Contact), there's a -2 to all rolls involved with contacting and using that person.

**Nature And Quality Of The Relationship**

The nature of a character's relationship with his Contact may affect the cost of that Contact. If the character has an especially long-lasting, good, or deep relationship with the Contact, the cost is +1-2 points. Contacts of this nature are more likely to be available to the character and to do what he asks. Examples include a childhood buddy, a good friend, an old flame, or a long-time comrade or colleague with whom the character has frequently worked. If the Contact is slavishly loyal to the character, the cost is +3 points. Loyal Contacts are almost always available to the character and will do virtually anything he asks (though they're not as readily available, or as willing to help, as a Follower). Examples include someone whose life the character saved (or for whom the character performed some extremely important favor in the past), someone who's in love with the character, or someone who owes the character a large debt (of any sort) and will do anything to work some of it off.

Not all Contacts are friendly to the character. If a character has acquired a Contact via blackmail, intimidation, or similar unscrupulous methods, the Contact will deliberately try to make it harder for the character to find him and do his best to weasel out of or subvert any work given to him by the character. Such Contacts cost -2 points.

**Organization Contacts**

Most Contacts are with individuals, but sometimes a character wants to buy a Contact defined as an entire group or organization rather than a person — for example, *Contact: CIA 11-* rather than *Contact: CIA Agent Jim Brewster 11-*. This sort of Contact grants the character broad access to the organization, its resources, and its knowledge. Organization Contacts cost three times what a standard Contact costs: 3 points for an 8-, 6 points for 11-, +1 to the roll per +3 Character Points thereafter.

The multiplier for an Organization Contact applies after all additions and subtractions to the base Contact cost have been made (the minimum cost is 3 Character Points — the standard minimum of 1 Character Point, times 3). If the character has the *Well-Connected* Skill Enhancer (page 77), it affects the Contact's cost last, after the character applies all other modifiers (both additive/subtractive and multiplicative) (thus, the minimum cost for an Organization Contact bought through Well-Connected would be 2 Character Points).

**Using Contacts**

When a character needs some special help during an adventure (or even between adventures), he can try to get in touch with his Contact. This requires a Contact Roll. The GM should apply appropriate modifiers (for example, camping out on the Contact's doorstep adds a +2 bonus).

If the character reaches the Contact, then he has to convince the Contact to help him. The base chance is the Contact Roll. This is modified extensively by the exact nature of the help the character needs. The Contact Modifiers Table has modifiers for finding and using Contacts.

A characters should only use his Contacts to do things he can't do or would have great difficulty doing. Contacts should never hand the solution to an adventure or dilemma to a character — they're there to help move the adventure along when the players are stumped about how to proceed or need a little help to get through a difficult spot, not to take the PCs' place. Characters most often use Contacts to gather information, obtain equipment or money, broker deals, arrange meetings with important people, and so forth.

A Contact can be almost anyone, from a janitor all the way to the President. People with important positions and/or influence are often the most watched, and therefore will refuse to help in many ways. If a character had the President as a Contact (perhaps they're childhood friends), the President couldn't get a murder charge dismissed — he'd be

## CONTACT TABLE

| Cost | Contact |
|---|---|
| 1 | Basic 8- Contact |
| 2 | Basic 11- Contact |
| +1 | +1 to Contact Roll |
| -1 | Contact limited by identity |
| +1-2 | Contact has very useful Skills or resources |
| +3 | Contact has extremely useful Skills or resources |
| +1 | Contact has access to major institutions |
| +1 | Contact has significant Contacts of his own |
| +1-2 | Good relationship with Contact |
| +3 | Contact is slavishly loyal to character |
| -2 | Contact is unfriendly to character |
| x3 | Organization Contact |

## CONTACT MODIFIERS TABLE

| Finding the Contact Modifiers | Modifier |
|---|---|
| Long-lasting or deep relationship | +1 |
| Slavishly loyal Contact | +3 |
| Contact is "settled" (has a steady job, family, *etc.*) | +2 |
| Contact is being blackmailed by PC | -1 |
| Character devotes substantial time to finding Contact | +2 |

| What the Contact Will Do Modifiers | Modifier |
|---|---|
| Requested action is very beneficial to Contact | +2 |
| Requested action is beneficial to Contact | +1 |
| Requested action is potentially harmful to Contact | -1 to -2 |
| Requested action is potentially very harmful to Contact | -3 to -5 |
| Use of Persuasion (per points roll is made by) | +1 per 2 |
| Lavishing gifts, *etc.,* upon Contact | +1 to +5 |
| Long-lasting or deep relationship | +1 |
| Slavishly loyal Contact | +2 |
| Unfriendly Contact | -1 to -2 |

impeached. However, he could probably get the character an invitation to a diplomatic party or an appointment with almost anyone. A police records clerk can usually get information much more easily than a police captain, whose conduct is watched more carefully. The GM should always control Contacts and their use.

Often characters don't start the game with Contacts. The GM may award a Contact to a character when it's appropriate in the course of an adventure, as a way of giving out Experience Points (though the character should get Experience Points as usual in addition to the Contact). For instance, if the characters befriend a wizard during an adventure, the GM might give each character an 8- Contact with that wizard.

### DEEP COVER

Cost: 2 Character Points

A character with this Perk, also known as *Alternate Identity,* has a long-established, nigh-unquestionable false identity or disguise he can use. The player defines how the character established the Deep Cover — he may have spent years creating an elaborate false persona, killed someone and taken over his identity, or the like. In any case, the cover is so well-established that no one suspects it *is* a cover. Deep Covers cost 2 Character Points each.

The GM should carefully examine every Deep Cover a character wants to buy to make sure it won't unbalance the campaign (for example, the GM probably shouldn't let a PC buy a Deep Cover as the Sultan's vizier, a general in the U.S. Army, or the like).

Characters can lose Deep Covers. If a PC acts oddly for a long time, does something completely out of character, or is somehow discovered, the Deep Cover may be "blown." That means the character's been exposed and can never use that identity safely again. The PC does *not* get the 2 Character Points back to spend again; he loses them forever. The GM may allow him to replace the blown Deep Cover with another Deep Cover, but it should take the PC months or years of game time to craft another such identity.

### FAVOR

Cost: 1 Character Point

This Perk means someone, or some organization, owes the character a favor.

A Favor functions like a Contact with a 14- roll. However, once the character uses the Favor, it's gone — he can only call in a Favor once. Really large tasks may require him to call in several Favors. Use the guidelines from the Contact Modifiers Table to determine how easily a character can call a Favor in.

Most Favors cost 1 Character Point. More important Favors, or Favors owed by particularly powerful or important people, may cost more. Again, use the modifiers for Contacts as a guideline. But since a character can only use a Favor once, it should generally be much cheaper than a Contact.

Some GMs often award Favors to PCs as part of the Experience Points for an adventure. For instance, if the characters save an admiral's life during an adventure, the GM might give each of them a Favor from that admiral. If PCs buy Favors on their own, the GM should approve every Favor to make sure it doesn't unbalance the campaign.

### FOLLOWER

Cost: See text

This Perk means the character has a Follower of some kind — an individual who's loyal to the character and willing to do what he asks. Examples of Followers include human agents, animal companions, kid sidekicks, familiars, intelligent computers, zombie servants, and golems.

**Buying Followers**

Players build Followers just like any other character. They typically have the same Base Points as other characters, and can have Disadvantages (up to the campaign's Disadvantage limit); the GM may change the Base Points or Disadvantage total available to Followers if he wishes. The GM should write up Followers, or review and approve Followers written up by players. A character cannot take the same NPC as a Follower and a Contact or as a Follower and a DNPC, unless the GM specifically permits him to. A character cannot buy another PC as a Follower, nor can he buy a known NPC (such as the king, or an infamous supervillain) as a Follower without the GM's permission.

The character pays 1 Character Point for each 5 Base Points possessed by the Follower (in other words, when calculating the character's cost, do not include the Follower's Disadvantages, just the Base Points he receives "for free," plus any Experience Points or other points he's earned which aren't accounted for with Disadvantages). However, this cost only applies as long as the Follower's total points (Base Points + Disadvantages + Experience Points) is less than or equal to the total Character Points of the character buying the Follower (including the points spent on the Follower). Beyond that total, the character pays 1 Character Point for each Character Point possessed by the Follower. If the character later earns enough Experience Points to

make his point total equal or exceed the Follower's, he does not receive a "refund" of the Character Points previously spent to buy a Follower built on more points than he.

If a Follower is built on fewer total points than the Base Points in the campaign (as many small animals are), use the Follower's total Character Points to calculate his cost as a Follower. For example, a homing pigeon has a total cost of 15 points, so it costs 3 Character Points as a Follower. The minimum cost for any Follower, regardless of the Follower's total points or abilities, is 1 Character Point.

Example: *Captain Australia, fearless hero from Down Under, wants to buy a sidekick, Jacko. Captain Australia's built on 200 points; Jacko's built on 100 points + 75 points of Disadvantages. Jacko costs Captain Australia 100/5 = 20 Character Points. If Jacko had been built with 250 points, then Captain Australia would have paid 70 points ((100/5) + (50/1)).*

A character can have two times as many Followers for +5 Character Points (*i.e.,* twice as many Followers for +5 points; four times as many for +10 points, and so on). These additional Followers do not have to be identical to the first Follower, they just have to be built on the same number of Character Points (or less). For example, a character who's a knight built on 150 Character Points might have two Followers, each built on 100 points — a well-trained horse and a squire. Followers cannot themselves have Followers, except with special permission from the GM.

**Using Followers**

A Follower is loyal to the character (sometimes slavishly so), but that doesn't mean he'll do anything for him. He'll often risk life and limb to aid the character, but the character can't exploit him at will. Followers won't tolerate abuse, degradation, or similar poor treatment any more than any other NPC would; a character who wants to keep a Follower's loyalty has to treat that Follower with a certain amount of respect. The GM determines what tasks a Follower will perform, taking common sense and dramatic sense into account.

The GM should review Followers' Disadvantages to make sure they're balanced and fair. Follower "Disadvantages" that help the character who bought the Follower (such as the Psychological Limitation *Obeys Master*) aren't really disadvantageous, and thus worth 0 points.

After a Follower enters the game, he earns Experience Points just like a PC. However, in most adventures a Follower will earn far fewer Experience Points than his "master" — after all, he's not the main focus of the game. A Follower should only earn Experience Points for adventures he participates in with his "master;" he shouldn't be allowed to take part in, or earn Experience Points for, "solo" adventures. A character cannot spend his own Experience Points to "improve" a Follower after purchasing him, unless the GM specifically permits this.

If a Follower dies during an adventure, the character may permanently lose the Character Points spent on him. At the GM's option, the character can recruit another Follower (built on the same amount of Character Points) to replace the dead Follower, but this typically takes a long time and should be roleplayed.

## FRINGE BENEFIT

Cost: See Fringe Benefits Table

A Fringe Benefit is a Perk which the character acquires from his job or background — a "perk" in the classic sense.

*Membership* represents the benefits that accrue to a character from belonging to a large and/or powerful organization — the King's Guards, the FBI, an organized crime family, a trade guild, you name it. The character can call on the group's resources when he needs them (within reason, and subject to the GM's permission). On the other hand, being a member of a group means the character also has responsibilities to that group (often reflected with related Disadvantages, such as *Hunted (Watched)* or *Social Limitation: Subject To Orders*).

The cost of Membership depends on two things: the extent of the group's power and resources; and the character's position within the organization. The greater the power/resources, and the more important the character's position,

## FRINGE BENEFITS TABLE

**Universal Fringe Benefits (apply in any genre or time period)**

| Cost | Fringe Benefit |
|---|---|
| 1 point | License to practice a profession (*e.g.*, Lawyer, Engineer, Physician) |
| 1 point | Right to Marry (can perform the marriage ceremony) |
| 1-10 points | Membership (see text) |
| 5 points | Diplomatic Immunity |
| 10 points | Head Of State (with GM's permission; may cost more) |

**Modern-Day Fringe Benefits**

| Cost | Fringe Benefit |
|---|---|
| 1 point | International Driver's License |
| 1 point | Passport |
| 1 point | Press Pass |
| 1 point | Weapon Permit (where appropriate) |
| 2 points | Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate) |
| 2 points | Local Police Powers |
| 2 points | Private Investigator License |
| 3 points | Federal/National Police Powers |
| 5 points | International Police Powers |
| 10 points | License To Kill |
| 1-10 points | Security Clearance (see text) |

**Fantasy Fringe Benefits**

| Cost | Fringe Benefit |
|---|---|
| 2 points | Knight |
| 2 points | Member of the Lower Nobility |
| 3 points | Low Justice: Character has the right to mete out justice in a fantasy setting |
| 5 points | Member of the Aristocracy/Higher Nobility |

**Science Fiction Fringe Benefits**

| Cost | Fringe Benefit |
|---|---|
| 1 point | Starship License |
| 3 points | Galactic Computernet Access Card |

the more points Membership costs. Thus, being a lowly member of the King's Guard or a street gang might cost 1 point; an FBI or CIA special agent, 2-3 points; head of an organized crime family, 4-5 points (maybe more); a member of the King's elite Circle of Champions, 6 points; and Deputy Director of Operations of the CIA, 8-10 points.

*Security Clearance,* which is separate from Membership, also costs 1 to 10 Character Points. It represents the character's access to classified or secret data. Typically this is government data, but it could be corporate data or something similar. The cost depends upon the character's degree of access: a low-level filing clerk might have only 1 point of Security Clearance; the President has 10 points. The GM should be wary of letting characters buy this Fringe Benefit at too high a level. It can unbalance the campaign to give PCs access to a lot of sensitive information. The GM should examine and approve every Security Clearance to make sure it isn't abusive.

### MONEY

Cost: 0-15 Character Points

This Perk represents the amount of money or related assets a character possesses. Money may not make the world go round, but it can help motivate PCs. Characters receive money as payment for services, loot from treasure hoards, gifts, and so forth. They use the money to buy equipment or homes, bribe guards, travel, and the like.

The type of Money a character has depends on whatever currency or commodity is appropriate for the genre and campaign. In a Fantasy setting it might be gold pieces or bushels of wheat; in a Science Fiction campaign, it's megacredits. For simplicity's sake, the descriptions of this Perk use United States dollars. The GM should determine the appropriate currency for his campaign.

**How Much Money Does A Character Have?**

The GM has several choices when determining how much money a player has. The first option is to start all the PCs with roughly the same amount. Thus, at the beginning of a modern campaign the GM could assume each character has a home, a job, a vehicle, and about $5,000. In a Fantasy setting, each character could start with basic equipment, a horse, and enough coins of the realm to eat for a month or two. Or the characters could all start out penniless, giving them a powerful motivation right from the start.

The second option is for the GM to assign amounts of money depending on each character's background. For example, Mr. Fortune owns stock in a major corporation and therefore has $100,000 in the bank, while Randall Irons, an out-of-work adventurer, has only $5 to his name.

The third choice is to use the Optional Money System (see sidebar).

The GM should carefully control the amount of money possessed by the characters, since that directly influences game play. Letting PCs have lots of Money affects most campaigns. You can't motivate rich characters by offering them a reward; conversely, impoverished characters may not be able to *afford* an adventure. Characters' wealth should fluctuate as a campaign proceeds. Perhaps the players discover a revolutionary device and sell it for $1,000,000; or the local Baron seizes their property, leaving them with nothing. Changes like that are much more interesting than a steady, reliable income.

Money matters less in some campaigns than in others. Incredibly wealthy superheroes aren't uncommon, and even perpetually impoverished superheroes somehow always seem to be able to afford all those nifty gadgets they use (maybe that's why they're so poor the rest of the time). On the other hand, wealthy people are uncommon in most Fantasy settings, and wield great power. The GM shouldn't let characters be wealthy (except in appropriate campaigns) unless he's ready to deal with the consequences for the other characters and the campaign.

### REPUTATION

Cost: See Reputation Table

While some Reputations mostly hinder a character, and are a Disadvantage (see page 337), many are primarily beneficial. Beneficial Reputations are Perks and cost Character Points.

Before buying this Perk, a player should decide, after consulting with his GM, whether his character's Reputation is beneficial or not. A Reputation that's more likely to cause problems for a character than to help him is a Disadvantage. A Reputation that's more likely to help a character than to hinder him is a Perk. When making this decision, take into account what the character will do throughout the campaign. For example, the Reputation *Violent* causes problems for most characters when they deal with the general public, law enforcement, government, and some potential employers. However, in a *Dark Champions* campaign, that Reputation can be very helpful to some PCs — it makes their adversaries (criminals, enemy soldiers, and the like) scared of them. Thus, while *Reputation: Violent* is usually a Disadvantage, in some *Dark Champions* campaigns it may be a Perk. A character may have the same, or similar, Reputations as a Perk and as a Disadvantage, since different groups view certain Reputations different ways.

Example: *The Harbinger of Justice has two Reputations. One, the Perk* Ruthless Vigilante, *reflects the fact that he's the terror of the underworld. When he uses Interrogation, Persuasion, or Presence Attacks based on fear against criminals, he receives positive modifiers. The other, the Disadvantage* Murderous Vigilante, *indicates the general public views him as an extremely dangerous, sociopathic serial killer. When Harbinger tries to interact with the general public, he suffers negative modifiers, because most people are terrified of him.*

Characters may purchase Reputation multiple times. Each level of Reputation adds +1 to relevant Interaction Skills (and related Skill and Characteristic Rolls) and +1d6 to Presence Attacks that take

### OPTIONAL MONEY SYSTEM

In the Optional Money System, characters buy their annual income level with Character Points (or, if they are poor, receive Character Points for that Disadvantage, which counts as one of the character's Disadvantages).

Income levels aren't set in stone — rich characters sometimes lose their money, poor characters can strike it rich. The GM can assume the Money System represents characters' starting annual income levels — their annual income at the beginning of the campaign. Thus, if a poor PC struck it rich, he'd have to buy off his *Poverty* Disadvantage or exchange it for new Disadvantages. Perhaps the alien princess starts Hunting him for stealing her gems, his poor Reputation grows, or he acquires a new DNPC "friend."

Alternately, these rates can reflect a character's expenses, not just his current wealth. For example, a poor character doesn't necessarily lack money, but has a gambling problem or a large family with associated expenses. Even if he comes into a lot of money, he'll soon have spent it all, unless he buys off the Disadvantage. Conversely, a wealthy character who suffers a financial reverse could regain his wealthy status through family connections, good credit, or an old (and rich) friend.

In either case, remember that money, even tremendous amounts of it, should only help a character, not solve (or create) all his problems or substitute for Skills or roleplaying. Don't let characters use it that way.

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### INCOME LEVELS

Destitute (10-point Disadvantage): Income of $3,000 or less per year. The character cannot pay bus fare or be sure of eating day to day, has no fixed address, and so forth.

Poor (5-point Disadvantage): Income of $10,000 or less per year. Unemployed and/or in debt, the character cannot make any large purchases. He might be hounded by creditors, or simply have a number of outstanding financial obligations (like a large family). He must take jobs where he can get them.

"Middle" Class (0 points): Income of $75,000 or less per year. This is the standard income level for PCs; it ranges from just above the poverty level to reasonably well off. A Middle income character can make occasional large purchases, is financially secure enough to withstand sudden reverses of fortune, can pay for his son's braces, and so forth.

Well Off (1-5 points): Income of $500,000 or less per year. The character has more than enough money to support himself; he can take lengthy leaves from work and not feel the financial pinch. He can make major purchases with some regularity and probably owns numerous vehicles, homes, and other luxuries. This cost for this Perk is:

| Points | Money (per year) |
|---|---|
| 1 | $100,000 or less |
| 2 | $200,000 or less |
| 3 | $300,000 or less |
| 4 | $400,000 or less |
| 5 | $500,000 or less |

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advantage of the Reputation. For example, a character who spends 2 points on having *Reputation: Honesty* in the Chicago area on an 11- receives +2 to his Persuasion rolls when he tries to convince a Chicagoan he's telling the truth.

The cost of a useful Reputation depends upon how widely and well the Reputation is known, as indicated by the accompanying table. The minimum cost per level of Reputation is 1 Character Point, regardless of modifiers.

Roll the "How Well Known" frequency whenever the character encounters someone who might know his Reputation. The frequencies are just guidelines; some characters may automatically know another character's Reputation (for example, every criminal in Hudson City knows who the Harbinger is; they don't have to make a Reputation roll).

Example: *Caldan the Conqueror has a Reputation in the land of Valdoria as a Champion Gladiator — his prowess as a gladiator helps him intimidate people and earns him favors from fans. Because this Reputation applies in an entire nation, and he wants it known on a 14-, it costs 3 points per level. He buys three levels, giving him +3/+3d6 to appropriate Interaction Skill Rolls and Presence Attacks. While most Valdorians know him (14- roll), gladiatorial afficionados and mercenaries may automatically know who he is, without the need to make a roll.*

A character may have more than one Reputation, if appropriate. For example, a character with a Deep Cover might have a Reputation as a *Generous Philanthropist* in his normal identity, and another one as a *Dangerous Crimelord* in his other identity.

A Reputation can be lost, or converted into a Disadvantage, if a character doesn't live up to it. For example, if Brak the Barbarian has the Reputation *Brave And Valiant,* but suddenly starts refusing fights and running away from danger, his Reputation becomes a Disadvantage — *Cowardly.* Brak must somehow restore his good name; how he can do so depends upon the situation and the GM.

## REPUTATION TABLE

| Cost Per Level | How Widely Known |
|---|---|
| 0 point | A small to medium sized group (close neighbors) or a limited geographic area (a neighborhood) |
| 1 points | A medium-sized group (everyone in a small area, all doctors) or a large geographic area (a city, state, or region) |
| 2 points | A large group (all the citizens of a country, world, or interstellar region) or a huge geographic area (a nation, internationally, intergalactically) |

| Modifier | How Well Known |
|---|---|
| -1 | 8- |
| 0 | 11- |
| +1 | 14- |

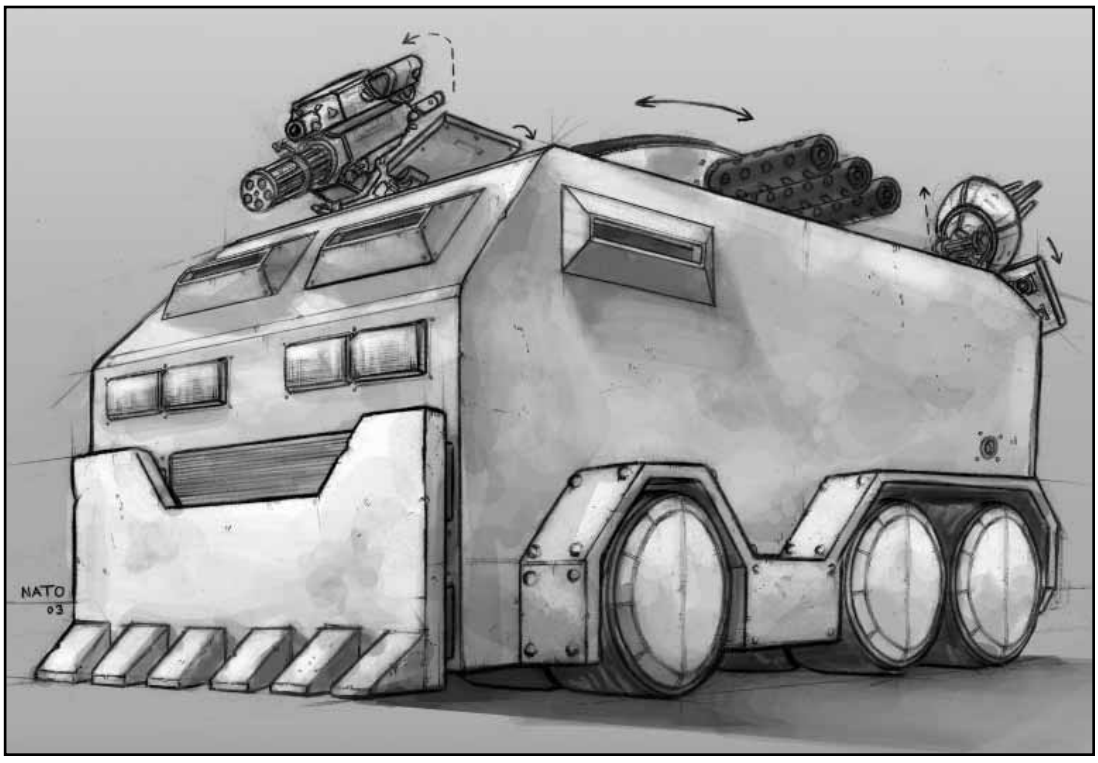
The minimum cost for the *Reputation* Perk is 1 Character Point per level, regardless of modifiers.

### VEHICLES AND BASES

Cost: See text

A character with this Perk has a Vehicle or Base of some kind. Vehicles range from flying carpets, to the souped-up coupes of pulp fiction, to a sleek modern sportscar equipped with the latest weapons and devices for use by a master spy, to the star cruisers of Science Fiction. A Base could be a castle, a superhero's gadget-laden secret headquarters, or Starbase 7-Alpha.

In Heroic campaigns, characters should pay for Bases and Vehicles with money. In Superheroic



## BUYING BASES, FOLLOWERS, AND VEHICLES

The cost of Bases, Followers, and Vehicles may depend on the relationship of the total cost of the thing purchased to the total Character Points of the character making the purchase (see the individual Perk descriptions). In this case, the breakpoint at which the cost shifts from 1 Character Point-for-5 Character Points to 1-for-1 is the total Character Points the purchasing character is build on *after* he pays for the Base, Follower, or Vehicle. In other words, include the cost of the Base, Follower, or Vehicle in his point total before determining if the cost shift applies.

If you want a simpler standard to follow, use the starting points for the campaign as the breakpoint. For example, if characters in the game can start with 350 points (200 base + up to 150 Disadvantages), then any character, regardless of how many points he's actually built on, can buy a Base, Follower, or Vehicle built on up to 350 points (regardless of where it gets those points) at the 1-for-5 cost. The GM should carefully evaluate any such purchases to prevent abuse.

campaigns, characters must buy them with Character Points. (See page 462 for Vehicle and Base construction rules.)

Vehicles and Bases are built with Character Points and can have Disadvantages. The character pays 1 Character Point for each 5 Character Points used to build the Vehicle or Base, excluding points received from Disadvantages (in other words, when calculating the character's cost, do not include the points the Vehicle or Base receives from Disadvantages). However, this cost only applies as long as the Base's or Vehicle's total points (including Disadvantages) are less than or equal to the total Character Points of the character buying the Vehicle or Base. After this the character must pay 1 Character Point for each Character Point possessed by the Base or Vehicle.

A character can have two times as many Bases or Vehicles for +5 points (*i.e.,* twice as many Vehicles or Bases for +5 points; four times as many for +10 points, and so on). These additional Bases or Vehicles do not have to be identical to the first Base or Vehicle, they just have to be built on the same number of Character Points (or less). For example, a character who's a spy built on 150 Character Points might have four Vehicles each built on 100 points — a souped-up sportscar, a high-tech motorcycle, a mini-sub, and a miniplane. However, characters must buy Vehicles and Bases separately; a character cannot buy a Vehicle, pay +10 Character Points to have four times as many Vehicles, and then define one of the Vehicles as a Base.

More than one character can contribute towards a Base or Vehicle. In this case the cheaper rate (1 Character Point per 5 Character Points the Vehicle or Base is built with) applies up to the highest number of Character Points possessed by any of the characters.

Example: *The Guardians build a Base. The team consists of four characters built on 225 Character Points, and one character built on 250. Therefore they can build a Base with up to 250 points at a cost of (points/5); for all points beyond 250 points, they must pay (points/1). They can also take Disadvantages for their base, which add to the 250 points without costing them any more Character Points.*

*The Guardians' players set to work and soon have designed their Base. It costs 290 points, but has 40 points' worth of Disadvantages. Therefore it meets the 250 point limit and costs the Guardians only 250/5 = 50 Character Points. The team members can divide this cost up in whatever way they see fit. They decide each member will contribute 10 Character Points.*

If a Vehicle or Base suffers damage, it can be repaired at the rate of 1 BODY per day (the GM may alter this to suit campaign needs if he sees fit). If a Vehicle or Base is destroyed during an adventure, the character can spend the Character Points spent on it to build a replacement, again at the rate of 1 BODY per day (the character may not "recover" the spent points and use them to buy something else, such as a new Power or spell; he must spend them to replace the destroyed item).

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Wealthy (6-10 points): Income of $5,000,000 or less per year. The character, a typical millionaire, has the capacity to do, or buy, pretty much whatever he pleases in the financial realm. The cost for this Perk is:

| Points | Money (per year) |
|---|---|
| 6 | $1,000,000 or less |
| 7 | $2,000,000 or less |
| 8 | $3,000,000 or less |
| 9 | $4,000,000 or less |
| 10 | $5,000,000 or less |

Filthy Rich (15 points): Unlimited income. The character, a typical multi-billionaire, has more money than he can spend. He might head a megacorporation or lead a small country.

# TALENTS



### GRANDFATHERING: TALENTS

Standardizing the Talents by building all of them with Skills and/or Powers has caused the costs of many of them to change from the Fourth Edition costs. As usual, if the cost goes up, characters should receive the extra points needed to maintain their current level of ability "for free"; points savings accrue to the character and can be spent elsewhere.

### LOST TALENTS

The following abilities, which were Talents in the Fourth Edition of the *HERO System,* have been changed:

Cramming, Defense Maneuver, and Fast Draw are now Skills.

Find Weakness and Luck are now distinct Powers. Immunity is now part of Life Support.

Talents are unusual abilities some characters possess. They include weird or unique attributes, bizarre skills, and a variety of effects that aren't common among normal folk, but are sometimes possessed by heroes and their enemies.

The GM should examine the Talent list carefully. Not all Talents fit every campaign, and in some extremely realistic campaigns the GM won't allow Talents at all. Talents are usually appropriate for Heroic campaigns, though the GM may wish to forbid characters to buy some of the more outlandish ones (such as Universal Translator).

## THE NATURE OF TALENTS

Think of Talents as a halfway step between Skills and Powers. Some of them, like Combat Sense, resemble Skills. Others, like Universal Translator or certain forms of Danger Sense, are more like Powers. They are, in effect, a collection of "super-Skills." They often represent abilities like Eidetic Memory which, while extremely uncommon in the real world, do exist.

You can construct all Talents using Skills and/or Powers. Notes following each Talent show how it was built. Players and GMs may design their own Talents the same way, using the examples provided here as guidelines. Similarly, the GM can expand the Talents list with Skills and Powers which seem more appropriate as Talents for a given campaign. For example, in some Heroic campaigns, the Skills *Fast Draw* and *Two-Weapon Fighting* and the Power *Find Weakness* may work better as Talents.

Talents do not cost END to use, unless the description of a specific Talent notes otherwise.

### Sensory Talents

Several Talents — Absolute Range Sense, Absolute Time Sense, Bump Of Direction, Combat Sense, Danger Sense, Lightning Calculator, and Perfect Pitch — are really just special forms of Detect (see page 162), and were constructed using the rules for Detect. Notes following the cost for each one indicate how they were built. However, a character almost never has to make a PER Roll to use some of them, such as Absolute Time Sense and Bump Of Direction — they function automatically with absolute accuracy. Only when the character experiences stress (for example, in combat) or something interferes with his ability should the GM even consider having him make a PER Roll to use such Talents. As noted in their rules, a few sensory Talents (such as Combat Sense and Danger Sense) do require frequent rolls.

Enhanced Perception (page 163) or other bonuses that apply to "all of a character's Senses" generally do not apply to Sensory Talents. Just because sensory Talents are "built" as Detects doesn't mean they *are* Detects in the full sense of the term.

## LEARNING TALENTS

Characters cannot learn most Talents as easily as they can learn Skills. First, of course, the GM must allow Talents in the campaign. Second, the character must possess some natural aptitude for the ability. It's impossible to learn to be ambidextrous, and no one just acquires an Eidetic Memory. Therefore, the GM may rule that characters cannot learn some or all Talents after the campaign begins.

However, because some Talents are "Skill-like," conceivably a character could train himself in them. Characters probably could, for example, learn to react more swiftly (Lightning Reflexes) or read quickly (Speed Reading). Therefore the GM may allow characters to learn some Talents after character creation.

As an optional rule, a character could have a "latent" Talent for the cost of 1 Character Point. A latent Talent gives the character no benefit, but allows him to buy the Talent later. The GM might also decide that a character must undertake some special quest or perform a special mission to gain a Talent after the campaign has begun. For example, a martial artist might have to travel to a lonely monastery in Tibet and study there before he could buy Combat Sense.

Characters shouldn't purchase Talents with Power Modifiers or in Power Frameworks unless the GM permits it or the text notes otherwise. If the GM or rules permit this, apply the Power Modifier to the listed cost of the Talent; don't "re-build" it using the construction noted for the Talent with the new Modifier. Similarly, if a character puts a Talent in a Power Framework, he uses the Talent's listed cost.

To keep Talents rare and "special," the GM may wish to allow only one PC in the campaign to buy each one. Once one character buys, say, Danger Sense, no other character can buy that Talent: it's the first character's "trademark" special ability, one no other PC has.

## UNBALANCED TALENTS

Every effort has been made to balance the Talents. However, some Talents can be more powerful than they initially appear. These Talents are marked with a ⚠. A second group of Talents can completely alter a GM's plot or scenario. These Talents are marked with a STOP. For more information, see *Balancing Powers,* page 95.

# TALENT DESCRIPTIONS

## ABSOLUTE RANGE SENSE

A character with this Talent can detect the distance between himself and any object within his Line Of Sight accurately without the aid of any external measuring devices. He still suffers the Range Modifier to Attack Rolls and Skill Rolls, however. A character doesn't have to make a roll to perform this Talent; it always succeeds.

■ Absolute Range Sense Cost: 3 Character Points (Detect Range To Objects [3 Character Points]; Passive).

## ABSOLUTE TIME SENSE

A character with this Talent can gauge the passage of time accurately without using a watch, the sun, or other external means. This Talent can be useful when timing explosives, coordinating assaults and infiltrations, estimating distance traveled, and so forth. The character doesn't have to make a roll to perform this Talent; it always succeeds.

■ Absolute Time Sense Cost: 3 Character Points (Detect Time [3 Character Points]; Passive).

## AMBIDEXTERITY

This Talent allows the character to use either hand to perform tasks with no penalty. Normally, a character using a weapon or performing certain Skills with his off hand (the left hand for right-handers, and vice-versa) suffers a -3 OCV (or -3 Skill Roll) penalty. Ambidexterity reduces or eliminates this penalty, but does *not* allow the character to attack twice in one combat Phase. (To attack more often in a Turn, buy more SPD; to attack more than once in a Phase, use Combat Maneuvers like *Sweep* or *Rapid Fire* or buy the Skill *Two-Weapon Fighting.*) Ambidexterity is particularly useful when the character's good hand is injured.

■ Ambidexterity Cost: 3 Character Points to reduce Off Hand penalty to -2; 6 Character Points to reduce Off Hand penalty to -1; 9 Character Points to eliminate Off Hand penalty entirely (Penalty Skill Levels)

## BUMP OF DIRECTION

A character with this Talent has an innate sense of direction. He can always tell direction without reference to visual clues, and can also tell if he is above or below the local ground level (Bump Of Direction applies in three dimensions, not just two). This Talent doesn't automatically allow him to find his way out of a maze, but he will know which way he's facing at all times. He doesn't have to make a roll to perform this Talent; it always succeeds. In most circumstances characters with this Talent gain a +2 (or greater) bonus to Navigation rolls.

■ Bump of Direction Cost: 3 Character Points (Detect Direction [3 Character Points]; Passive).

# TALENT SUMMARY TABLE

| Talents | Cost | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Absolute Range Sense | 3 | Character can gauge distances accurately |
| Absolute Time Sense | 3 | Character can gauge the passage of time accurately |
| Ambidexterity | 3/6/9 | Character doesn't suffer Off Hand penalties |
| Bump Of Direction | 3 | Character has an innate sense of direction |
| Combat Luck | 6+ | Character has a knack for avoiding injury |
| Combat Sense | 15/1 | Character can fight effectively in HTH Combat even while blinded |
| Danger Sense STOP | 15+ | Character has a special "sixth sense" for danger |
| Double Jointed | 4 | Character's flexible joints make some Skills easier to use |
| Eidetic Memory | 5 | Character has a photographic memory |
| Environmental Movement | 1-4 | Character can move and act without restriction in an unusual environment |
| Lightning Calculator | 3 | Character can perform mathematical calculations rapidly |
| Lightning Reflexes ⚠ | Varies | Character reacts more swiftly than normal with some attacks |
| Lightsleep | 3 | Character is rarely surprised while asleep |
| Perfect Pitch | 3 | Character can identify musical pitch exactly |
| Resistance | 1+ | Character can withstand interrogation better than normal |
| Simulate Death | 3/1 | Character can feign death |
| Speed Reading | 4+ | Character can read much faster than normal |
| Universal Translator STOP | 20/1 | Character can communicate in any language |

## COMBAT LUCK

This Talent represents a character's ability to avoid damage in combat due to luck, skill, training, or some similar reason. Although referred as Combat *Luck,* it can indicate a character's skill at dodging attacks (it's sometimes known as the "just missed me!" effect).

Combat Luck provides a character with 3 points of Resistant PD and ED for 6 Character Points. This defense is considered Hardened (see page 115). It works together with any other applicable defenses a character has, such as his innate PD/ED, armor he wears, his Force Field power, and the like.

Because Combat Luck depends on a character's ability to dodge, block, or otherwise avoid damage, it doesn't work if he's asleep, unconscious, or deliberately throws himself in the way of an attack (for example, to save a comrade from injury). Nor does it protect him from damage in most situations where he deliberately does something he knows will hurt him (such as performing a Move By/Through, both of which cause him to take some of the damage he does to the target). In some cases Combat Luck won't apply if the character is Surprised (see page 380); the GM may require a PER Roll or other roll to determine if the character perceived the attack in time to use his Combat Luck. (The *Luck-Based* Limitation in the cost description covers all these factors.)

Among other things, Combat Luck is a good way for characters in Heroic campaigns to have a little Resistant Defense at all times without having to wear armor everywhere they go. Characters may buy Combat Luck more than once, unless the GM rules otherwise.

■ Combat Luck Cost: 6 Character Points for 3 points of Resistant PD and ED (Armor [3 PD/ED], Hardened [+¼]; Luck-Based [-½], Nonpersistent [-¼])

## COMBAT SENSE

This Talent gives a character the innate ability to fight effectively even while in darkness or blinded. Combat Sense costs 15 Character Points for a base 9 + (INT/5) or less roll, +1 for 1 Character Point.

A successful Combat Sense roll allows a character to make, or defend himself against, HTH Combat attacks without suffering a penalty to his OCV or DCV because he's unable to perceive his opponent with a Targeting Sense. The character must roll each Phase to keep track of his opponents; this takes a Half Phase (unless the character pays +2 Character Points to make this ability a Sense). Should the roll fail, the character suffers normal penalties for not being to perceive his opponent with a Targeting Sense (see *Lack Of Senses In Combat,* page 349).

A character with Combat Sense isn't restricted to reacting to other attackers. He can use Combat Sense "proactively" to seek out and attack someone who's in his hex or an adjacent hex without waiting for that person to attack first. It does not, however, allow him to perceive foes who aren't in his hex or an adjacent hex (unless the GM permits this for some reason). A character cannot extend the "sensory range" of Combat Sense by using long weapons, Stretching, or the like; it only applies to find and fight foes in the same hex or adjacent hex as the character.

Combat Sense has no effect on Ranged combat. The OCV and DCV of a character who's blinded or in darkness are not affected by Combat Sense when he makes a Ranged attack or is attacked with one.

Combat Sense does not simulate any Sense Group (see *Enhanced Senses,* page 160). It stands alone, and only Sense-Affecting Powers specifically bought to affect it can interfere with it.

■ Combat Sense Cost: 15 Character Points for a base 9 + (INT/5) roll; +1 to roll for 1 point (Detect Target In HTH Combat [5 Character Points], Targeting; Passive)

## DANGER SENSE STOP

A character with this Talent has a sixth sense about danger. At its most basic level, Danger Sense prevents the character from being surprised in combat; at more powerful levels, Danger Sense alerts the character to any threat to his person, or even his world.

### BUYING DANGER SENSE

The character may make a PER Roll to perceive danger in combat for 15 Character Points. Using Danger Sense requires a Half Phase Action; for +2 Character Points, Danger Sense functions as a Sense (it works all the time; no Half Phases required). A character can increase his Danger Sense roll by +1 for every +1 Character Point. A successful roll prevents the character from being surprised in combat by any danger to himself (not to others).

A character can make his Danger Sense more sensitive by paying more points:

—Out Of Combat (+5 points): For +5 points, the character who succeeds with a Danger Sense roll will not be surprised while out of combat; he perceives surprise attacks before they occur (if they could be perceived, given his senses). For example, a normal human with this type of Danger Sense could see a sniper who was about to shoot at him from the top of a building, but couldn't sense that he was walking into a cloud of odorless, colorless gas.

—Any Danger (+5 points): For an additional +5 points, the Danger Sense transcends normal human senses — the character will be forewarned of any danger to his person, regardless of the source or whether he could detect the danger with his other Senses.

As noted above, most forms of Danger Sense only let a character perceive dangers he could perceive given his other Senses. The benefits to this type of Danger Sense are (a) it doesn't belong to any Sense Group, and therefore works even when the character's other Senses are "blinded," inoperative, or subject to PER Roll penalties; and (b) the character can use his PER Roll as Complementary to his Danger Sense roll. At the GM's option, Danger Sense might have a slight extrasensory effect, so that it functions as a mild intuition or "sixth sense" that alerts the character even when he can't perceive the source of the danger with his normal senses (perhaps the character subconsciously notices that something's "wrong").

A character can make his Danger Sense cover a broader area and more people by paying more points:

—Immediate Vicinity (+5 points): For +5 points, a character who succeeds with a Danger Sense roll is forewarned of danger to anyone or anything in his immediate vicinity (say, the room he's standing in).

—General Area (+5 points): For an additional +5 points, the character can detect any danger in his general area (*e.g.,* the city).

—Any Area (+5 points): For an additional +5 points, the character can detect danger over any area. This is subject to GM's discretion; danger at the planetary level is usually a good upper limit.

These forms of Danger Sense do not suffer from the Range Modifier, nor do they require Telescopic or MegaScale to work.

Characters can also restrict Danger Sense:

—Intuitional (-5 points): This form of Danger Sense cannot be bought to detect Any Danger, nor can it cover more than the character's Immediate Vicinity. It represents an almost preternatural intuitive ability that tells the character that "Something's not right here...." Characters with Intuitional Danger Sense get their full DCV against dangers, but cannot make attacks at full OCV if they make the roll by half. Because Intuitional Danger Sense

derives, in part, from a character's experiences, the GM may apply modifiers based on how familiar a particular danger would be to the character.

Characters can also buy Danger Sense with some Sense Modifiers (see *Enhanced Senses,* page 160). For example, a character could apply *Discriminatory* or *Analyze* to Danger Sense to provide him with precise information of the danger facing him, regardless of whether he makes a half roll (see below).

### EFFECTS OF DANGER SENSE

Normally, Danger Sense just gives a character the "feeling" of being in danger; it doesn't tell him exactly what danger he's exposed to or exactly where it's located. If he reacts, he's allowed his full DCV against an attack (and may, if he wishes, Abort to a defensive Action such as Dodge). If he rolls less than or equal to half his Danger Sense roll, he can ascertain the true position and type of danger well enough to launch an attack at full OCV.

Example: *Michiko, a ninja assassin, has Danger Sense (11-, out of combat) because she is exceptionally observant and almost never surprised. While preoccupied with her meditation, she fails to notice three samurai enter her garden. However, as they approach her, she makes a successful Danger Sense roll. Sensing danger, she spins, pulling a knife from her boot scabbard and denying her attackers a Surprise bonus.*

Danger Sense does not simulate any Sense Group (see *Enhanced Senses,* page 160). It stands alone, and only Sense-Affecting Powers specifically bought to affect it can interfere with it.

■ Danger Sense Cost: See above (base ability is Detect Danger Detectable By Normal Human Senses In Combat, Including Range To Danger [5 Character Points], Increased Arc Of Perception [360 Degrees; +5 points], *plus* Targeting; Only If Make Half Roll [-1]).

## DOUBLE JOINTED

A character with this Talent has unusually flexible joints. Double Jointed gives a bonus of +1 to +3 to Contortionist rolls (and sometimes Breakfall rolls as well), depending on the circumstances.

■ Double Jointed Cost: 4 Character Points (+3 Skill Levels with Contortionist and Breakfall, with a -1 Limitation to reflect the limited circumstances under which the ability functions).

## EIDETIC MEMORY

A character with this Talent has a photographic memory. He can remember images and other sensations which he's studied (including written pages) with near photographic exactness. This doesn't mean he remembers everything that happens perfectly, or that he doesn't forget facts over time. But he can remember any information he memorizes exactly, down to the smallest detail. Functionally, it allows the character to smuggle information very safely (he stores it in his head); he can also memorize phone books, code books, and the like. He doesn't have to make a roll to perform this Talent; it always succeeds.

Eidetic Memory applies to all Senses, not just Sight. If a character can only remember particular types of sensations (such Visual Only, or Audio Only), he may buy his Eidetic Memory with a -1 Limitation (or -½ for only two Senses). You can build cameras, recorders, and similar devices as Eidetic Memory on a Focus.

Eidetic Memory doesn't teach a character any Skills, even though he can recall facts from books he's read. A character may spend Experience Points to retain any information he studies as permanent KSs or SSs, or use Eidetic Memory as an in-game explanation for his ability to learn Skills quickly. However, most Skills require more than simple "book learning," so just studying them in a text isn't a good way to learn them. The GM may wish to limit characters to 8- or 11- rolls for any Skills learned primarily through Eidetic Memory (if appropriate).

■ Eidetic Memory Cost: 5 Character Points (+5 to INT Rolls, Only To Recall Memorized/Perceived Information (-2))

## ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

A character with this Talent can move easily and without restrictions in environments which hamper most characters. For example, walking or fighting on ice without slipping is difficult, as is doing just about anything underwater; in Science Fiction settings, adapting to zero gravity often requires effort. A character with Environmental Movement does not suffer the standard penalties associated with a specific environment (characters must buy this Talent separately for each type of environment). Instead, he may move, act, and fight in the chosen environment as if born to it — with his full movement rate, CV, DCs, and Skill Roll.

For further information on the penalties associated with certain environments, see *Environmental Conditions,* page 379.

## DANGER SENSE QUICK-REFERENCE TABLE

| Cost | Danger Sense |
|---|---|
| 15 | Basic Danger Sense (requires a Half Phase Action) |
| +2 | Danger Sense functions as a Sense (it doesn't require a Half Phase Action to use) |
| +1 | +1 Character Point for each +1 to the Danger Sense roll |
| **Cost** | **Dangers Detected** |
| +0 | Character can perceive dangers in combat |
| +5 | Character can perceive dangers out of combat |
| +10 | Character can perceive any type of danger, in or out of combat, and regardless of whether he could perceive it with his standard Senses |
| **Cost** | **Area Covered** |
| +0 | Character can only perceive dangers to himself |
| +5 | Character can perceive dangers to anyone in his immediate vicinity |
| +10 | Character can perceive dangers to anyone in his general area (such as the city he's in) |
| +15 | Character can perceive dangers to anyone in any area (see text) |
| **Cost** | **Modifiers** |
| -5 | Intuitional (see text) |

### ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT EXAMPLES

Aquatic Movement (no penalties while in water): 3 Character Points

Icewalking (no penalties on slippery surfaces): 1 Character Point

I Can Drunk Just As Good Fight! (no penalties for intoxication): 3 Character Points

Supreme Balance (no penalties on narrow surfaces): 3 Character Points

Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero gravity): 4 Character Points

### OTHER "RESISTANCES"

By using Resistance as a model, you can easily create Talents that allow characters to resist the effects of other Interaction Skills. Here are some examples, each with the same cost of 1 Character Point per +1 to the appropriate Characteristic or Skill Roll to resist:

Drama Critic (resists Acting)

Ferocious (resists Animal Handler)

Incorruptible (resists Bribery)

Rulesmonger (resists Bureaucratics)

Tight-Lipped (resists Conversation)

Blasé (resists Oratory)

Immovable (resists Persuasion)

Unfriendly (resists Seduction)

Hard Bargainer (resists Trading)

■ Environmental Movement Cost: 1-4 Character Points (one to three 3-point Penalty Skill Levels, Only Apply In [Specific Environment] (-1); PSLs offset DCV and DC penalties instead of OCV penalties).

#### LIGHTNING CALCULATOR

A character with this Talent has the innate ability to perform mathematical operations mentally with startling speed. Multiplying four-digit numbers takes a Full Phase; calculating the vector of an approach orbit with regard to relative speeds, gravities, and rotation speeds takes a full Turn; medium calculations take medium times. This is a handy Talent for those galaxy-spanning heroes of Science Fiction. But remember: Garbage In, Garbage Out. A character's calculations are only as good as the information they're based on.

■ Lightning Calculator Cost: 3 Character Points (Detect Correct Answer To Mathematical Operation [3 Character Points]; Passive).

#### LIGHTNING REFLEXES

A character with this Talent can act before other characters with higher DEXs. A character with Lightning Reflexes has an increased effective DEX only for the purpose of acting earlier in a Phase. Lightning Reflexes doesn't affect CV, Figured Characteristics, Skill Rolls, or DEX Rolls (not even DEX Rolls for the purpose of resolving simultaneous or Held Actions). Nor does it change the rate at which a character recovers from Drains and Transfers of DEX.

Example: *A character with a base DEX of 18 and +6 Lightning Reflexes (total effective DEX 18 + 6 = 24) would act before a character with a base DEX of 20. However, his base CV remains a 6, and Agility Skill Rolls remain 13-.*

A character can purchase Lightning Reflexes to affect all of his Actions, or to affect any single Action or maneuver (such as a specific weapon attack, Combat Maneuver, form of movement, power, or other ability). Each +2 Lightning Reflexes for all Actions costs 3 Character Points. Each +1 Lightning Reflexes for a single Action or attack costs 1 Character Point. The cost of Lightning Reflexes is not affected by Normal Characteristic Maxima (see page 32).

When a character uses Lightning Reflexes to increase his effective DEX, he may only execute the specific Action or maneuver he purchased Lightning Reflexes for. For example, if a character has +4 Lightning Reflexes that only work with his Defensive Strike, he may only use his Defensive Strike (no movement, acrobatics, or other Actions) in a Phase when he uses the +4 effective DEX.

Example: *Michiko has DEX 23 and +4 Lightning Reflexes she can only use with her shuriken. On a normal Phase she can make a Half Move and then throw some shuriken. If she decides to use her Lightning Reflexes to act at an effective Dexterity of 27, she may only attack with the shuriken; she may not move or take other Actions.*

■ Lightning Reflexes Cost: 3 Character Points for +2 Lightning Reflexes for all actions; 1 Character Point for +1 Lightning Reflexes for a single action or maneuver (bought as Dexterity, Only To Act First In A Phase (-1), with an additional -1 Limitation if the DEX only applies for a single action or maneuver)

#### LIGHTSLEEP

A character with this Talent sleeps lightly, and therefore is rarely surprised while asleep. Normally a character must make Hearing PER Rolls at -6 to wake up when someone enters the room, leans over his bed, makes an unusual noise, or the like. A character with Lightsleep makes his normal PER Roll to wake up (if the other individual makes a Stealth roll, this becomes a Skill Versus Skill Contest). Lightsleep also allows the character to conceal the fact he has awakened with a successful EGO Roll.

■ Lightsleep Cost: 3 Character Points (+6 Enhanced Perception for Normal Hearing; Only To Wake Up (-1))

#### PERFECT PITCH

A character with this Talent can tell the exact pitch of a musical tone by listening; no roll is necessary. Perfect Pitch also adds a +1 to any music-related Skill Roll.

■ Perfect Pitch Cost: 3 Character Points (Detect Exact Pitch [3 Character Points]; Passive).

#### RESISTANCE

Resistance represents a character's ability to resist interrogation and questioning through self-hypnosis, meditation, pure stubbornness, or the like. It also helps a character fool lie detectors. Resistance has *no effect* on Mental Powers or Pushing. Resistance costs 1 Character Point for each +1 to the character's EGO Roll for the purpose of resisting interrogation (or -1 to the PS: Polygraph Operator roll when the character takes a lie detector test).

At the GM's option, Resistance also helps a character withstand the pain of injuries. If the campaign uses the optional Wounding rules (see page 414), every point of Resistance a character has adds +1 to his EGO Rolls for purposes of withstanding wounds.

■ Resistance Cost: 1 Character Point per +1 to EGO Roll (+1 Skill Level with EGO Roll, Only To Resist Interrogation/Questioning (-1)).

#### SIMULATE DEATH

This Talent allows a character to slow his metabolism down to the point where he appears completely dead (although a thorough medical investigation would reveal signs of life). For 3 Character Points, a character can simulate death; he receives +1 to his EGO Roll for purposes of making Simulate Death rolls for +1 Character Point. The character should determine either the length of time he wishes to remain in his deathlike state or what set of circumstances awaken him before he makes his Skill Roll.





When a character Simulates Death, no non-Persistent powers function, and he cannot spend END on anything. He cannot make PER Rolls of any sort; he has no awareness of his surroundings (except to the extent he requires "awareness" to determine the wake-up condition). He does not gain any of the benefits of Life Support of any type, unless the GM chooses to give them to him in the interest of dramatic sense (though he should be considered to be "asleep," so there's no need for Diminished Sleeping). Even if the GM chooses to allow some Diminished Eating or Extended Breathing, he probably shouldn't allow Longevity. If the character wants those effects, he should buy them Linked to his Simulate Death.

Preparing to enter a Simulate Death trance takes 5 minutes; if the character wishes to take a shorter amount of time, he must make an EGO Roll at -1 for every level on the Time Chart (thus, at -4 to enter the trance on the same Phase). If the character makes his EGO Roll, he enters the trance as desired and wakes up at the appointed time. Once the character enters the trancelike state, nothing can awaken him except the passing of the proper amount of time or the stated circumstances.

If the character fails his EGO Roll, he fails to go into a trance. However, if he fails it badly or rolls a 18, he enters the trance anyway. He must then attempt a CON Roll. If he fails, he has slipped into an unregulated trance and will truly die if he does not receive immediate medical attention. If the character makes the CON Roll, he simply remains in his trance 1d6 hours longer than anticipated.

It takes a Paramedics roll at -5 to detect that a character is using Simulate Death. A character with Forensic Medicine can detect it with a normal roll, but this takes time. A character simulating death breathes and otherwise functions at 1/10 his normal metabolic rate.

Simulate Death is even better than Resistance for fooling lie detectors. Characters who make their roll with a +2 positive modifier will completely fool any polygraph, regardless of how skilled the operator is.

■ Simulate Death Cost: 3 Character Points (Invisibility To Detect Life Signs/Paramedics [10 Active Points]; Extra Time [5 Minutes; -2], Requires An EGO Roll [-½]; total cost: 3 points); +1 to the EGO Roll per +1 Character Point (+1 Skill Level with EGO Roll, Only To Enter Trance (-1)).

## SPEED READING

This Talent allows a character to read books and documents up to ten times faster than normal. A book that takes three hours to read can be read in twenty minutes with Speed Reading. When combined with Eidetic Memory, Speed Reading allows a character to memorize documents as fast as he can turn the pages.

Characters may purchase Speed Reading multiple times; each purchase increases the character's reading speed by a factor of 10. Thus, for 6 points a character reads 100 times as fast; for 8 points, 1,000 times as fast; and so forth.

■ Speed Reading Cost: 4 Character Points at base level (*Analyze* Sense Modifier for Normal Sight plus x10 Rapid, all with -1 Limitation *Only For Speed Reading*); +2 Character Points for each additional x10 Rapid.

## UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR STOP

A character with this Talent can understand any form of communication — from verbal speech, to gestures and body language used as part of a deliberate process of speaking (such as sign language), to written text — and communicate back in a crude fashion.

**Using Universal Translator**

To use Universal Translator, a character must make an INT Roll. If the INT Roll succeeds, he comprehends what he hears or reads. The GM should impose negative modifiers (-1 to -3) if the language the character tries to understand is extremely different from known forms of communication. Conversely, if he tries to understand a language similar to others he has already encountered, he gets a bonus (+1 to +3). He can improve his INT Roll by spending more time, as with a Skill Roll.

**The Limits Of Universal Translator**

Universal Translator allows a character not only to understand speech and speak back, but to write and read as well. But remember, it's a form of communication, not "know all languages for free." If the character isn't involved in some sort of process of communicating, generally the GM should not allow him to use Universal Translator. This Talent lets a character "understand any form of communication," but the GM should apply any restrictions necessary in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, and preserving game balance.

In particular, a character with Universal Translator generally cannot:

—Read/understand encrypted or encoded documents or transmissions (he might understand the literal meaning of the words of a code [as opposed to a cipher], but wouldn't know what they signified)

—understand or speak to animals (unless animals can routinely speak to humans in the campaign setting)

—understand or "read" mathematical equations

—perceive lies or emotions by "reading" body language

—understand cultural context (for example, the character won't know if a particular word or gesture is considered a gross insult, a proposal of marriage, a combat challenge, or the like in a given culture or society)

—read or understand symbols, runes, logos, flags, and the like (except to the extent the GM believes those things are intended to "communicate" a specific word or meaning)

—understand or "read" the sounds made by a modem or like device.

Universal Translator isn't restricted to written or spoken languages. It could comprehend (and, in appropriate circumstances, allow the character to respond to) semaphore signals, signal fires or drums, and the like (assuming they're not encrypted or encoded).

Universal Translator only allows a character to understand the current communication; it doesn't automatically allow him to communicate back unless he has the proper physical attributes. For example, if the Butterfly People of Altair "talk" by reflecting sunlight off their wings, a human translator could understand them but couldn't talk back. In addition, Universal Translator only allows a character to translate what he hears or reads, and to make a reasonable response; he doesn't know the language. He always has to make his Universal Translator roll (even for the simplest words), and always has an obvious accent.

Ordinarily, Universal Translator works on languages from all planets, dimensions, and places. If a character's form of Universal Translator only works on certain groups or types of languages (for example, a computerized translation device programmed with all Earth languages, but no languages from other planets), then he may buy Universal Translator with a Limitation (usually -½ to -1).

■ Universal Translator Cost: 20 Character Points for INT Roll, +1 to roll for 1 Character Point (Detect Meaning Of Speech [10 Character Points] + Detect Meaning Of Text [10 Character Points])

# POWERS



Powers are, typically, abilities far beyond those of mortal men — for example, flying or firing energy bolts. They can simulate the superpowers of a superhero, the spells of a sorcerer, or the abilities of an alien.

You can also use Powers to simulate a wide variety of abilities and skills common to characters from many genres of fiction, but which don't fit the standard definition of "superpowers." For example, many a strong-jawed pulp hero has the ability to take blow after blow without falling because of his strong will to triumph over evil and injustice. You might represent this with a Limited form of Damage Reduction. Many Heroic characters buy a few points' worth of Powers like Running, Swimming, Leaping, and Hand-To-Hand Attack.

Equipment, particularly weapons, is often built using Powers. For example, a sword is a Hand-To-Hand Killing Attack with the *Focus* Limitation.

The rules for each Power define the basic structure of a power or ability built with that Power. For example, when a character buys Energy Blast, the rules define the amount of damage the attack does, how to perform the Attack Roll, and the maximum Range of the power.

You can create most characters' abilities by purchasing the appropriate Power. However, if an ability requires more than a Power by itself, you can apply *Power Modifiers* (Advantages and Limitations) to improve or restrict the Power appropriately. Power Advantages (page 244) increase the cost of a Power and extend the Power's capabilities. For example, a Power Advantage can make an Energy Blast affect all targets in an area or decrease the target's defenses by half. Power Limitations (page 280) reduce the cost of a Power but restrict the Power's capabilities. For example, a Limitation can remove an Energy Blast's ability to work at Range or increase its END cost.

Sometimes characters have several related powers grouped together in a *Power Framework.* Frameworks allow a character to buy several Powers for a greatly reduced cost, but with some restrictions on how he can use those Powers. For example, typically a character cannot use all of the Powers in a Framework at the same time. See page 310 for more information.

You can create virtually any ability using a combination of Powers and Power Modifiers. Like everything else in the *HERO System,* Powers are parts in the toolkit, and you can use them to build anything you want your character to have.

## BUYING POWERS

The following basic rules apply to the purchase of Powers with Character Points.

### WHO CAN BUY POWERS

Not all characters have Powers. You can build a modern spy or a Fantasy swordsman with only Characteristics, Skills, and Talents (though he may need Powers to simulate some types of equipment or special abilities). On the other hand, a superhero or a wizard can easily have many different Powers.

The GM should define which Powers characters in his campaign can purchase, and how they can use them. He may also require certain Limitations or Advantages on all Powers characters purchase — many Heroic campaigns have strict limits on which Powers a character can purchase, what he can purchase them for, and how many Active Points an ability built with Powers can have. For example, in a campaign focusing on psychic PCs, characters could purchase Mental Powers, but might have to take the *Concentration* Limitation on all such Powers. Superheroic campaigns, such as those based on comic book superheroes, allow characters to purchase Powers with few restrictions. The GM decides whether to allow a Power in the campaign, and if so, how characters must purchase and use it.

If the GM wants to let characters buy only a limited group of Powers, he may want to consider making those Powers (perhaps in a slightly altered form) into Talents (see page 565).

### HOW TO BUY POWERS

Characters purchase Powers by paying the Character Point cost listed under each Power. These are the same Character Points used to buy other game elements, such as Characteristics and Skills. The minimum cost of any Power, regardless of how it's defined or the Limitations applied to it, is 1 Character Point. A character cannot "buy" a Power for 0 Character Points.

The amount of points paid for a Power often determines what the character can do with it. For instance, if a character has 50 Character Points in Energy Blast, he may do up to 10d6 damage with it.

Most Powers have a variable cost — the more Character Points spent on the Power, the better the Power becomes. However, some Powers (such as Desolidification and Extra Limbs) have a fixed cost; beyond a certain level, spending more points on them doesn't improve them.

Ordinarily, once a character has bought all of his Powers, he can't shift points from one Power to another. But because there are so many Powers, the first characters a player builds might not have

### LOST AND NEW POWERS

Several Fourth Edition *HERO System* Powers have been folded into other Powers. Instant Change is now simply a type of Cosmetic Transform; Regeneration is a special form of Healing.

The Fifth Edition features several new Powers. These include Find Weakness, Healing, and Luck. Many other powers have been significantly expanded or altered.

exactly the Powers he wants. The GM should allow a player to rebuild his character once he gains more familiarity with the rules.

Few characters are all-powerful when built, but they improve as time goes on. After each game, the GM may award a character Experience Points (see page 555). The character can spend his Experience Points just like Character Points. For example, he may use them to improve the Powers he already possesses. The GM may even allow him to buy totally new Powers — a character can buy Powers (or anything else) after character creation, if he has a valid in-game rationale for doing so. Usually this involves an expansion or evolution of the character's existing powers.

Although characters build all their powers from the same list of Powers, each power is a new and unique power unlike any other character's power. Five different characters' Energy Blasts 10d6, even if they have the same special effect, are each unique.

A character can purchase the same Power more than once if he wants. This makes the most sense if each use of the Power differs from the others in some way (for example, it has different Power Modifiers).

**Active Points And Real Points**

As you work with Powers, you should keep in mind two important concepts: *Active Points* and *Real Points*.

The *Active Points* in a power (also called the "Active Cost") is the total cost of a power after all Adders and Advantages are applied (before you reduce the cost via Limitations or other modifiers). For example, an Energy Blast 8d6 has 40 Active Points (8 x (5 points per d6)); an Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing has 60 Active Points ((8 x (5 points per d6)) x (1 + ½)). The Active Points in a power determine how much END it costs, the Skill Roll penalties for using it (if any), whether it fits into the reserve of a Multipower, and so forth.

The *Real Points* in a power (also called the "Real Cost") is the final cost of a power after you apply all Advantages *and Limitations.* In short, Real Points is the actual number of Character Points a character spends to buy the power. For example, an Energy Blast 8d6 with no Limitations has a Real Point cost of 40; one bought with the Limitation *OAF* costs 20 Real Points (a base of 40 Active Points, subject to a -1 Limitation). For a Power with no Advantages, Adders, or Limitations, the Active Point and Real Point costs are the same.

**"Compound" Powers**

A "compound power" is a power built with two or more Powers. A partially-Advantaged or partially-Limited power (page 282) also qualifies as a compound power. Generally, compound powers are built as and function just like any other power, but there are special rules for certain aspects of them.

The Active Points in a compound power equals the sum of the Active Points the character combines to create the power. For example, an Energy Blast 8d6 + Sight Group Flash 4d6 has 60 Active Points (40 + 20). For information on the END cost, Skill Roll penalty (if any), and Multipower reserve allocation (if appropriate) for compound powers, see pages 102, 304, and 311, respectively.

Generally, a character cannot Link two instances or uses of a single Power to form a compound power. He can create a partially-Advantaged or partially-Limited power, or even a two-part power that adds together without being partially Limited, but he receives no Limitation for doing so.

Example: *Gravitar has the ability to manipulate gravity. One of the powers she uses to represent this is Telekinesis — she has Telekinesis (60 STR). However, there are times when she wants to focus all her efforts into moving objects through gravitic manipulation. Therefore she buys a slot in her Gravitic Powers Multipower defined as Telekinesis (+40 STR). That Telekinesis can't be used on it's own; as the plus sign indicates, it only adds to her base STR 60 Telekinesis. She does not get to apply the* Linked *Limitation to the +40 STR Telekinesis, or otherwise Limit it, just because she can only use it with her standard Telekinesis — that's simply how she chooses to define this particular compound power.*

**Minimum Costs**

In some campaigns, GMs may choose to impose minimum costs on Powers (beyond the minimum cost of 1 Character Point that applies to everything in the *HERO System*). This means characters must buy a certain minimum amount of every Power they buy. For example, if the minimum cost of Ego Attack is 20 Character Points, characters must always buy a minimum of Ego Attack 2d6 whenever they buy that Power. Minimum costs do not include Adders or Advantages. A character cannot, for example, satisfy a minimum cost of 20 Character Points for Teleportation by buying Teleportation 5", x8 mass — he must buy a minimum of 20 points' worth of unmodified Teleportation, or 10".

Minimum costs are most appropriate for Superheroic games, where larger-than-life characters have lots of points to spend. The GM can, if desired, set an appropriate minimum cost for each Power to reflect this. Minimum costs are rarely appropriate for Heroic games, where characters often need just a few Character Points to build a particular ability.

The most important effect of minimum costs relates to Adjustment Powers such as Drains. If an Adjustment Power reduces a Power below its minimum cost (including any Advantages applied to that Power), the victim cannot use that Power, even if it wasn't reduced to 0 points. When the lost points return to a level equal to or above the minimum cost, the Power functions again (albeit at reduced strength until all lost points are regained). However, if a Power has a fixed minimum cost established by the rules (like Desolidification, which always costs 40 points), then all points in it (including points for Advantages) must be removed before it ceases to function (see pages 107-08).





Example: *For his comic book superhero campaign, Andy establishes a minimum cost for Energy Blast of 10 Character Points (2d6). Starburst buys an Energy Blast 8d6 with the Advantage Armor Piercing (+½). If a villain Drains Starburst's Energy Blast to, say, 10 points, Starburst cannot use it, since 10 is less than the Power's (minimum cost x Advantages), or 15 points. At the next Post-Segment 12 Recovery, when Starburst's Energy Blast recovers to 15 points, he can use it again, but it will only be an Energy Blast 2d6, AP until he recovers more points.*

**Other Requirements**

The GM may establish any other requirements he deems appropriate for purchasing Powers. For example, he could establish a Characteristic minimum as a prerequisite for buying a particular Power, or require a character to buy Power A before he buys Power B. This does not, however, entitle characters to a Limitation or any reduction in the cost of the Power.

## Balancing Powers

Each Power's point cost serves to balance it against the other Powers. However, in certain situations, some Powers are more powerful than usual. Powers that may be extremely effective in certain circumstances are marked with a ⚠. For example, a character with a Multipower or Absorption may, in some situations, have capabilities that exceed his point total. The GM should carefully examine abilities built with ⚠ Powers before permitting them in his campaign.

A second group of Powers can alter a GM's storyline substantially. For example, characters with Extra-Dimensional Movement or Summon may easily solve mysteries that would stump characters without these Powers. Powers that can radically alter a scenario are marked with a STOP. The GM should carefully consider the impact of these Powers before permitting them in a scenario.

**SPECIAL EFFECTS: A SAMPLE LIST**

Acid
Air/Wind
Animal Powers
Athletic Prowess
Body Control
*Ch'i* Manipulation
Cosmic Energy
Cyberkinesis
Darkness
Density Alteration
Dimensional Manipulation
Earth/Stone
Electricity
Emotion Control
Energy Manipulation
Fire/Heat
Force Manipulation
Gadgets
Gravity
Hyper-Characteristics
Hypersenses
Ice/Cold
Illusions
Kinetic Energy
Light
Luck
Magic
Magnetism
Martial Arts
Matter Manipulation
Mental/Psionic
Precognition
Radiation
Shape Alteration
Size Alteration
Sleep/Dreams
Solar/Celestial
Sonic
Speedster Powers
Spirit Projection
Strength/Toughness
Stretching Powers
Super-Skills
Technology
Telekinetic
Teleportation
Time
Training, Advanced
Vibration
Water
Weapons
Weather
Wood/Plant

# SPECIAL EFFECTS

One of the most important things to remember when you use the *HERO System,* particularly for creating superpowers, spells, and other abilities, is the concept of *special effects.*

The *HERO System* explains Powers in game terms: a certain number of Character Points buys so many dice of Energy Blast; a 20-point Force Field always has 20 points of defense; and so forth. The Power descriptions don't explain what Powers look like, or what they're made of. For example, the text of Energy Blast just describes it as a way to inflict damage at range. It doesn't mention whether the energy beam is made of fire, lightning, magic, "pulson particles," rubber bullets, magic power, plasma, or something else. A Power's description simply explains what it does in rules terms. It's up to you to define what the power is and what it looks like — in other words, you decide what its *special effect* is.

If you read through this book, you won't find any specific rules for things like "fire blasts" or "lightning bolts" or "magic." Fire, lightning, and magic are all special effects, and the *HERO System* rules let you pick the special effect you want. So, if you want your character to have the power to project a lightning bolt, you might spend 40 Character Points to buy him an Energy Blast 8d6, then label that Energy Blast "Lightning Bolt." Later on, if you design a character who's a fire elemental, you might want him to have the power to shoot a blast of fire at his enemies. You could spend 40 Character Points on an Energy Blast 8d6 and call it "Fire Blast." Both characters have an Energy Blast 8d6, but for one character the special effect is "lightning," while for the other the special effect is "fire." Power Modifiers (pages 243-309) often help you better define a power in game terms to represent the special effect you have in mind.

The accompanying sidebar has a list of some special effects, but it includes just a few of the dozens of possibilities. There's no "master list" of special effects because there are no restrictions on the concept other than your own imagination.

## THE EFFECT OF SPECIAL EFFECTS

The special effects of a Power define how it works, what it looks like, and any other incidental effects associated with it. Sometimes a Power receives minor benefits and drawbacks because of its special effects. These minor modifiers don't change the cost of the Power, but if the special effect provides a major benefit, you have to pay Character Points for that to buy an Advantage (page 244). If the special effect significantly restricts an ability, you can save Character Points by taking a Limitation (page 280) for it. In the *HERO System,* you have to pay Character Points for things that help your character, but you save points if something hinders your character — in short, you get what you pay for.

For example, a character with Fire powers can help keep his friends warm if they're trapped in a freezer. While the character could buy this (as Life Support [Safe Environment: Intense Cold], Usable By Other), the effect is so minor the GM should allow him to do it without paying Character Points for it — it's just an "indirect benefit" of his chosen special effect. Only if this effect becomes useful in the game on a frequent basis, or the character tries to exploit it in combat, should the GM make him pay points for it (or make him use his *Power* Skill, if he has it, to achieve the desired effect). Once the benefits or drawbacks of the Power become significant, the cost of the Power should reflect them.

Example: *Howler has a sonic Energy Blast. Since her attack is sound, it wouldn't work in a vacuum, and would probably work better underwater (perhaps adding 1-2d6 or becoming a small Explosion). The GM might allow her to shatter glass in a room without making an Attack Roll. Generally, these effects are so minor that she doesn't have to pay for them (nor do they entitle her to a Limitation). If Howler were in a campaign involving frequent adventures in outer space, she could take a Power Limitation on her Energy Blast (Limited Power: Doesn't Work In A Vacuum, -¼), since a vacuum would be a common occurrence. If she were in a campaign where the characters often ventured underwater, she might have to buy an Advantage to reflect the greater effectiveness of her Energy Blast in such an environment (perhaps Explosion as a naked Advantage with the Limitation, Only Underwater (-1)).*

Another example of a special effect is Flight, defined as a spell that leaves a glowing trail of light as the character flies through the air. The trail helps the character because it shows his friends where he's gone. However, it hinders him because his enemies can follow it, too. These effects balance out, so the character doesn't modify the cost of his Flight. However, suppose part of the special effect of the character's powers is that he's made of energy, so he can power his Flight without any effort. In game terms, that means it costs no END. That's a significant benefit, so he has to pay Character Points for it by buying the Advantage *Reduced Endurance.*

The GM should bring the PCs' special effects into play on occasion, allowing them to affect the campaign world or the course of a scene. Sometimes the only way a character can get out of a trap or save the day is by using his powers and their special effects creatively.

Often, a specific set of special effects provides inspiration for the design of a PC or NPC. A character who glides through the air with a parawing differs from a character who glides by making himself lighter than air, even though both buy the Power *Gliding.* Extra Running bought through a skateboard has some inherent Limitations and Advantages that simple sprinting doesn't (a skateboard doesn't work well offroad, but gets velocity bonuses going downhill). The better you know your character's special effects, the more fun you'll have with the character.

## REASONING FROM SPECIAL EFFECTS

Most roleplaying games don't work the way the *HERO System* does. Instead of letting you choose the special effects of a power and create the power the way you want, they give you a list of powers and abilities, and you have to pick from what they offer. For example, in some games you might find "Lightning Bolt" and "Fire Shield" listed among the powers you can choose from. You won't find that in the *HERO System;* instead, you'll find generic Powers like *Energy Blast* and *Force Field* from which you could create *your own* "lightning bolt" or "fire shield."

This has important ramifications for how you create your character and his abilities. To get the most enjoyment out of the *HERO System* — to take advantage of the enormous creative freedom it offers you — you have to *reason from special effects.* In other words, you have to do three things:

1. Decide what sort of power you want to create by choosing the power's special effect.

At this step, don't think about the rules. Instead, focus on what you want the power to be and to do: "I want my character to have weather control powers"; "I want my character to have the power to fire laser bolts from his eyes."

2. Once you've chosen a special effect for a power, decide what game effect you want that power to have.

Think about what you expect the character to do with the power in the game. Does he use it to hurt people? To move around the battlefield? To make another character tired and weak? To protect himself from energy attacks?

At this step, you need to think in rules terms. Remember, the *HERO System* rules are "generic." You won't find a rule or a Power called "laser bolts." You have to think about what a laser bolt power does *generically:* it causes damage to people and objects. What types of powers in the *HERO System* cause damage? The Attack Powers. Therefore you want to use the rules for one of the Attack Powers to create a laser bolt power.

3. Last but not least, you have to put 1 and 2 together, combining your power idea with your knowledge of the rules to build the power you want.

All you have to do is decide which Power (and possibly which Advantages and Limitations) works best for the effect you have in mind. Think of the *HERO System* rules as a set of building blocks, then choose the right ones to build what you have in mind.

This may sound a little complicated, but it's really pretty simple. The more you do it, the easier it becomes. Here are two examples:

**Weather Powers**

Suppose you want to create a character who can control the weather and generate various weather-based effects. As with any *HERO System* ability, think about the idea for a minute. You've done the first step: you've decided on a special effect, "weather control." But there's no Power in the book called "Weather Control" — you have to build your character's weather control powers using the *HERO System* rules.

So, you proceed to the second step and decide what weather control can do for your character *in game terms.* In other words, what *game effect* does "weather control" have?

First, there's the simple effect of "changing the weather." Looking through the Powers, you decide *Change Environment* seems like the best way to alter the local weather — and you're right, that's one of the classic uses of that Power. So you buy some Change Environment defined as "changing the weather." For the basic combat effect that comes with the power, you choose -1 to PER Rolls (defined as blinding rain, snow, or fog; distorting heat waves; and so on).

But you have some other weather-based effects in mind, too. Change Environment just lets you alter the local weather; it doesn't let you blast people with lightning bolts or use the wind to fly. So you've got some more powers to build. You decide you want three more powers: the ability to project lightning bolts; the ability to create intensely cold mini-blizzards; and the power to fly on the wind.

Step two recommends that you determine a power's game effect and use that to tell you how to build a power. For the Lightning Bolt, the power's game effect is "it causes electrical damage at range." That definitely sounds like an Attack Power (page 38) of some sort. After you look through the list of Attack Powers, you decide either Energy Blast or Ranged Killing Attack would work for your Lightning Bolt. You choose Energy Blast.

For the mini-blizzard, once again the effect of the power is to hurt people — by freezing them so quickly, you can make them pass out. Only people who can keep themselves warm somehow can resist the attack. Once again an Attack Power is in order, but none of the basic Powers seems quite right. You decide to look at the Advantages to see if you can use one of them to make the power work *in game terms* like you envision. Sure enough, there's an Advantage called *No Normal Defense.* By applying that to Energy Blast, you can create a mini-blizzard that knocks out anyone who doesn't have fire powers or the Power *Life Support (Safe Environment: Intense Cold).*

For flying on the wind, the game effect is obvious: you can move quickly through the air. Moving around means a Movement Power is involved. The list of Movement Powers makes it obvious which one you need: Flight. All you have to decide is how many inches of Flight you want to buy.

**Laser Bolt Eyes**

This concept is a little easier. "Weather Control" is a broad special effect with lots of possible uses, but being able to shoot laser beams from your eyes is simple and straightforward.

Once again, the step two analysis tells you exactly what you want: this power causes damage to people and objects at range. But it's a little better than most attack powers; lasers can cut through targets easily. Being "better than most" suggests the power has an Advantage.

### POWER CREATION CHECKLIST

For easy reference, here are the steps in building an ability using Powers.

1. Choose the Power that best represents the ability you want your character to have.

2. Spend the amount of Character Points indicated in the Power's description to buy as much of the Power as you want your character to have.

3. Spend the amount of Character Points indicated in the Power's description to buy any Adders that you want the ability to have.

4. Apply any *Power Advantages* (page 244) you want the power to have to make it better (and thus more expensive). To determine how much an Advantage or Advantages increase the cost of a power, use this formula: Character Points already spent on the power x (1 + (total value of Advantages)). The result of the formula is the *Active Points* in the power.

5. Apply any *Power Limitations* (page 280) you want the power to have to make it less useful or effective (but also cheaper). To determine how much a Limitation or Limitations decrease the cost of a power, use this formula: Active Cost of the power divided by (1 + (total value of Limitations)). The result of the formula is the *Real Points* in the power — in other words, the amount of Character Points the character actually spends to buy it.

Adders, Advantages, and Limitations are all optional — you don't have to include any of them as part of a power you build if you don't want them.

Choosing the basic power isn't too difficult. It's definitely an Attack Power, and once again it comes down to a choice between Energy Blast and Ranged Killing Attack. Since lasers are supposed to be pretty deadly, you choose RKA. To make the laser cut through targets more easily than normal, you apply the Advantage *Armor Piercing.* Voila! — in a few seconds you've created a laser bolt power that's just the way *you* want it.

#### STRANGE AND UNUSUAL POWERS

Occasionally, you may come up with an idea for a power that doesn't fit into the rules smoothly. You should work with the GM to determine the best combination of Powers, Power Modifiers, and other game elements to build the power with. Powers that are often helpful when attempting to fit strange effects into the game include Change Environment, Missile Deflection And Reflection, Telekinesis, and Transform.

Example: *Sniper's player wants his character to have an attack that permanently blinds an opponent by targeting his eyes with an acid mist. This sounds something like a Flash, but a Flash (even a big one) blinds an opponent for a short period of time. Getting back to the effect, the player realizes his "Acid Mist" changes the target in a substantial, long-lasting way. This sounds like a Transform. Sniper's player buys the attack as a Transform that "transforms" his opponent into a blind individual; the victim heals from the damage at the normal rate.*

## Sensing Powers And Special Effects

As discussed on page 102, almost all Powers that cost END to use must have a perceivable special effect (even if bought to 0 END cost; the text notes exceptions). If a player wants an invisible Force Field or Energy Blast, he has to buy the Power Advantage *Invisible Power Effects* (page 261).

A perceivable power can be perceived by three different Sense Groups (see *Senses In The HERO System,* page 348). These normally include the Sight Sense Group and the Hearing Sense Group — observers can see and hear any use of the power. The third Sense Group depends on the power's special effects. For example, a power based on energy could perhaps be sensed by the Radio Sense Group; characters can perceive a power based on burning chemicals with the Smell/Taste Sense Group.

Under special circumstances, the GM may rule that a power cannot be perceived by Hearing or Sight. However, characters cannot use this as a cheap way to get the equivalent of the *Invisible Power Effects* Advantage for free.

For the most part, players may freely define what their powers look and sound like. "Perceivable" can mean many things, from the perceptibility of the actual power itself (for example, a blue energy beam that projects from the character's hands and hits the target) to just the source of the Power being visible or obvious (for example, few characters can perceive a bullet in flight, but they can all see the gun, hear the shot, and smell the gunpowder). See *Invisible Power Effects,* page 261, for further information.

**Power's Point Of Origin**

The special effects of a power can take any form, as long as it's clear that the power comes from the character. For instance, when a character buys an Energy Blast, the attack might come from the character's fingertips, eyes, forehead, or a weapon such as a blaster pistol. Each point of origin has its own benefits and drawbacks (an eyebeam is easy to aim, but it's hard for a character to use it to free himself if his hands are tied behind his back). Once a character chooses a point of origin for a power, he cannot change it unless he buys the *Indirect* Advantage (page 260) to let him do so (or, at the GM's option, if he makes a relevant *Power* Skill roll).

# POWER DESCRIPTIONS

Each Power has certain attributes and qualities that describe and define it. In addition to Power Category (page 104), these are: Duration; Target; Range; and Endurance (END) cost.

## Duration

*HERO System* Powers are defined as having one of three types of Duration: Instant; Constant; or Persistent. Characters can also make some powers Inherent.

#### INSTANT POWERS

An Instant Power lasts just long enough for the character using the power to make an Attack Roll. Examples include Powers like Energy Blast, Entangle, and Flash. Although an Instant Power lasts for just a second (at most), its effects may linger. For example, the damage from an Energy Blast could last for minutes, or even days; an Entangle remains in effect until the victim breaks out (or is broken out by someone else). These "lingering" effects cannot be Drained, Dispelled, or the like, since the Power is no longer "in use."

Adding Limitations like *Extra Time* or *Incantations* to an Instant Power does not change it into another type of Power. Duration Advantages (page 257) can convert an Instant Power into a Constant or Persistent Power.

#### CONSTANT POWERS

A character can maintain a Constant Power over time. Once a character has turned a Constant Power on, all he has to do is spend END each Phase to keep it activated. Constant Powers include Powers like Force Field, Flight, Invisibility, and any power bought with the *Continuous* Advantage (page 257).

If a Constant Power works against a target, the character must make an Attack Roll on the Phase he activates the Power. If he succeeds, the target takes the damage (or suffers the effect of the Power)






normally. Thereafter, the character must maintain a Line Of Sight to the location of the Power and pay the END for the Power on each of his Phases. From then on the target takes damage (or suffers the Power's effect) in every Segment in which the attacker has a Phase (on the attacker's DEX) until the attacker turns off the Power, stops maintaining it (*i.e.,* stops paying END for it), or loses LOS to the target. The attacker does not have to make further Attack Rolls or use further Actions to maintain the Power (but see page 311 regarding Constant Powers in Multipower slots).

If a character uses a Constant Attack Power (for example, an Energy Blast 10d6, Continuous), in later Phases he can attack another target with that power. Similarly, he could attack the same target a second time and affect him with the power twice (he'd roll each effect separately, and the target would apply it to his defenses). Each use of the power costs END to activate and to maintain, as usual.

Example: *Sapphire has an Energy Blast 10d6, Continuous (100 Active Points, for a cost of 10 END). On her Phase in Segment 8, she hits Green Dragon with it. Green Dragon takes the 10d6 damage. Sapphire pays 10 END to use the power.*

*When Sapphire's next Phase occurs, on her DEX in Segment 10, she pays 10 END to maintain the power and Green Dragon again takes 10d6 damage from the Energy Blast because it's a Constant Power. If Sapphire chooses to, she can attack him again with another use of her Continuous Energy Blast. If she hits, Green Dragon takes another 10d6 damage! In that case, when Sapphire's Phase occurs in Segment 12, Green Dragon will take 10d6 for the first attack, and 10d6 for the second attack! (Of course, Sapphire has to pay END to maintain each use of the Constant Power, for a total of 20 END per Phase.)*

*Instead of attacking Green Dragon on her Phase in Segment 10, Sapphire might attack Snowblind instead. If she hits Snowblind, the cold-wielding supervillainess takes 10d6 damage. On Sapphire's Phase in Segment 12, Green Dragon and Snowblind each take 10d6 from the attacks Sapphire used against them. Sapphire has to pay END to maintain each use of the Constant Power (a total of 20 END per Phase).*

Once a character has established a Constant Power, he can't alter the effect he established (unless the specific rules for a Power say otherwise). For example, a character cannot alter the defense of his Force Field after he activates it, or make a Change Environment field or area of Darkness larger or smaller. (Movement Powers are an exception; a character can alter them to accelerate or decelerate.) To alter the Power, he has to stop using it, then re-activate it at the level of effect he now wants (in the case of Powers like Change Environment and Images, this requires him to take an Attack Action). (But see below regarding Constant area-affecting powers.)

**Area-Affecting Constant Powers**

If a Constant Power affects an area (either inherently or because the character purchases the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages for it), the Power remains in effect in the Segments between the attacker's Phases. Any target who enters the

area takes damage or is affected in the Segment he enters and every time the attacker's Phase occurs while the target remains within the area.

If a character enters a Constant area-affecting power's field of effect more than once per Phase, he does not suffer the damage (or other effect) multiple times. However, he does continue to suffer from any ongoing circumstance the power creates (such as the penalties caused by a Change Environment, or the "blindness" created by Darkness to the Sight Group).

Once established, an area-affecting Constant Power cannot be moved unless the power has the *Mobile* Advantage (page 250) or the GM allows it to move for no additional cost. At the GM's option, an area-affecting Constant Power with No Range (*i.e.,* which centers on the character who creates it) may move with the character as he moves for no additional cost (this is particularly appropriate for Change Environment, Darkness, and Images). (To create an area-affecting Constant Power that "sticks to" another character and moves as he moves, use the *Usable As Attack* Advantage.)

A character cannot alter the size of an area-affecting Constant Power once he's established it. For example, if he creates a Darkness 5" radius, he can't reduce it to 3"; it remains 5" radius as long as it's in effect. At the GM's option, a character can buy a +5 Character Point Adder, *Alterable Size*, that allows him to change the size of an area-affecting Constant Power this way. The character cannot make the Power larger than what he's purchased — for example, if he's bought Darkness 4" radius, he can't alter the size of his Darkness to make it larger than 4", he can only vary it between 1" and 4". Altering the size of a Constant Power by any amount is a Zero Phase Action, but the character can only do it once per Phase. If the ability requires *Extra Time* to use, or *Concentration* to activate or use, that restriction governs the changing of size as well.

**Constant Powers And Endurance**

The END cost for a Constant Power remains the same each Phase, it doesn't add together, becoming larger and larger the longer the character maintains the Power. For example, if a character has Darkness to Sight Group 4" radius (40 Active Points), he pays 4 END per Phase to maintain it (not 4 END the first Phase, 8 END the second, and so on).

The END cost for maintaining Constant Powers is paid when the character's Phase begins, before he does anything else, unless he chooses to deactivate/stop using the Power at that time.

**Changing Constant Powers**

The *Persistent* Advantage (page 257) makes a Constant Power into a Persistent one. The *Instant* Limitation (page 289) converts it into an Instant Power.

## PERSISTENT POWERS

A Persistent Power stays activated unless the character deliberately turns it off. Persistent Powers include Mental Defense, Armor, Enhanced Senses, and any power bought with the *Persistent* Advantage (page 257). A character does not have to turn on a Persistent Power; it's assumed to be on at all times, even when the character is unconscious. A character can turn off a Persistent Power if he chooses; the Power remains off until he turns it back on. Persistent Powers never cost END.

If a Persistent Power has a Limitation that prevents it from working under certain conditions, when that condition ends or goes away the Power automatically "restarts," unless (a) the Power has its own specific rules governing such situations (in which case apply those rules), or (b) events during the period of non-functionality would prohibit automatic restart.

**Converting Persistent Powers To Constant Powers**

If a character takes the *Activation Roll* or *Costs Endurance* Limitation for a Persistent Power, it automatically becomes Constant instead. The *Non-persistent* Limitation (page 289) also converts a Persistent Power into a Constant one. Once a character changes a Persistent Power to a Constant Power, he can apply the *Instant* Limitation (page 289) to make it an Instant Power if desired.

Depending on special effects, the GM's judgment, and considerations of game balance, common sense, and dramatic sense within the context of the campaign, some other Limitations can convert a Persistent Power to a Constant Power. Possible candidates for this include: Concentration; Gestures; Incantations; and Requires A Skill Roll.

Applying Extra Time to a Persistent Power generally does not convert it into a Constant Power, but the GM may reduce the Limitation's value to reflect the fact that it's not as restrictive as it would be on an Instant or Constant Power (in most cases Extra Time only makes sense as a Limitation on a Persistent Power if coupled with other Limitations, such as *Nonpersistent* or *Costs Endurance*).

## INHERENT POWERS

Persistent Powers that are Always On (see page 284), or which in the GM's judgment function in a similar fashion to being Always On, can be made *Inherent.* An Inherent Power is one that reflects a character's natural state of being. For example, ghosts are naturally intangible (Inherent Desolidification), and many characters have tails (Inherent Extra Limbs, the most common example of an Inherent Power that's not Always On). Inherent Powers cannot be Drained, Transferred, or "turned off" — you can't make a ghost solid by using Drain Desolidification on him, for example. They also can't be improved or boosted through Absorption, Aid, or the like. However, Transforms and Powers *Usable On Others* can alter or remove an Inherent Power.

## CHANGING A POWER'S DURATION

A Power's duration category isn't fixed. You can improve a Power's duration with a Duration Advantage (page 257), or restrict its duration with a Duration Limitation (page 289). For example, you can make an Instant Power into a Constant Power with the *Continuous* (+1) Advantage. As mentioned in several places above, applying certain Power Modifiers to a Power may automatically change its duration.

## Target

*HERO System* Powers are defined as having one of four types of targets: Self Only; Target's DCV; Target's DECV; and Hex.

*Self Only* Powers are Powers that only affect the character himself. They always have a Range of *Self*. Defense Powers, Sensory Powers, and Body-Affecting Powers tend to be Self Only Powers.

*Target's DCV* is the target for most Attack Powers and the like. It means the Power is intended for use against another person, usually to affect him negatively in some way, and that the character has to succeed with an Attack Roll to hit the target. *Target's DECV* is similar; it's used for Mental Powers and like abilities.

**Hex**

*Hex* is the target for Powers that affect an area, such as Change Environment, Images, or Powers with the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages. The character has to make an Attack Roll to position them properly; target hexes typically have a DCV of 3 (see page 375). The radius covered by these Powers is spherical, reaching "up" and "down" in addition to the four cardinal directions.

The three main Hex-targeted Powers — Change Environment, Darkness, and Images — cover an area with a radius, similar to a power with the *Area Of Effect (Radius)* Advantage (page 247). Characters cannot buy Area Of Effect (Radius) for such Powers, since they already work that way. However, with the GM's permission, for a +0 Advantage a character can redefine those Powers as covering a Cone, Line, or Any Area forms of Area Of Effect. Every 1" radius the Power would normally have equals 2" in the side of the Cone or length of the Line, or 1 hex in the Any Area. However, the character must buy the Power up to the point where the change to a differently-shaped area gives him the size he wants — he can't buy the Power at a lower level, then use the "each additional +¼ doubles the size of the Area" Advantage (page 247) to increase the size of the Area cheaply.

Example: *Allen wants to buy a smoke generator for his character's Jetpack that leaves a trail of thick, blinding smoke behind the character as he flies. He decides to build this as Darkness to Sight Group, with the Darkness redefined as a Line. The character can fly at 20", so the Darkness needs to cover a 20" Line. Since each 1" of radius equals 2" of Line, Allen needs to buy Darkness 10" radius. Here's how he builds the power:*

Jetpack Smoke Generator: *Darkness to Sight Group 10" radius (20" Line) (100 Active Points); OIF (-½), No Range (-½), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (-½). Total cost: 40 points.*

*Allen had to buy the Darkness all the way up to 10" radius, which converted to the size he wanted (20" Line). He could not buy Darkness 5" radius, define that as a 10" Line, then apply a +¼ Advantage to double that to a 20" Line.*

*Later, Allen wants his character to have a powerful spotlight mounted on the chest of his powered armor. The Power for creating light is Images. But given the way the power works, the Image shouldn't cover a radius, it should have a conical shape. So, here's how he builds it:*

Chestplate Spotlight: *Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls, Increased Size (8" radius [16" Cone]; +¾) (38 Active Points); OIF (-½), No Range (-½), Only To Create Light (-1), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (electrical recharge, Easy to obtain; 1 Hour; -0). Total cost: 13 points.*

If a character buys just 1" of an inherently area-affecting power, like Change Environment, Darkness, or Images, he can apply the -0 *Accurate* Limitation from Area Of Effect (One Hex) to it with the GM's permission.

If a character using a Hex-targeted power misses his Attack Roll, the GM may use the rules on page 376 to determine where the effect "hits." Or he can simply assume the attack has no effect at all.

**CHANGING A POWER'S TARGET**

Several Power Modifiers allow you to change the Target of a Power. For example, the *Area Of Effect* and *Explosion* Advantages both convert a Power to targeting a Hex, while the *One Target Only* (-½) Limitation makes a Hex-targeting Power only affect a single person. The *BOECV* Advantage changes a Power into a quasi-Mental Power that targets DECV instead of DCV.

## Range

*HERO System* Powers are defined as having one of four Ranges: Self; No Range; Standard Range (5" x Active Points); and Line Of Sight (LOS).

*Self* Powers only affect the character himself, and/or can only be used on/by him. Examples include most Defense Powers, Movement Powers, and Sensory Powers. Generally speaking, characters cannot make these Powers work at Range, nor can they apply the *Area Of Effect* Advantage to let others use the Power at the same time they do (that requires the *Usable On Others* Advantage, unless the GM gives permission otherwise).

*No Range* Powers only work, at best, within the hex the character's currently occupying, or adjacent hexes — in other words, they can only affect targets within HTH Combat distance (page 383). This may mean the character has to touch the target of the Power to affect him, but not necessarily. Generally speaking, characters can make these Powers work at Range by applying the *Ranged* (+½) Advantage.

If a Power has No Range, the character using it does not have to remain in HTH Combat range with the target to maintain the effect — he only has to be in HTH Combat range to use it. Once the Power takes effect, the character can distance himself from the target (though in the case of Constant Powers, he still has to maintain Line Of Sight to keep the Power functioning).

*Standard Range* is commonly used for Attack Powers and the like. Typically a Power with Standard Range has a maximum Range equal to 5" times the Active Points in the Power. An Energy Blast 10d6 (50 Active Points) has a Range of 250"; an Energy Blast 10d6, Armor Piercing (75 Active Points) has a Range of 375". (This maximum range remains in effect even if the character chooses to use the power at less than full strength.) Of course, the Range Modifier (page 373) applies to attacks made at Range, so the chances of hitting something at a Power's extreme range are usually slim at best.

A few Powers, notably Mental Powers, have a Range defined as *Line Of Sight.* See page 116 for further discussion of LOS.

**CHANGING A POWER'S RANGE**

A character can make a No Range Power into a Power with Standard Range by applying the *Ranged* (+½) Advantage (page 267), or convert a Power that works at Range into a No Range Power with the *No Range* (-½) Limitation (page 302). If a Power works at Range, either innately or because Ranged (+½) was applied, the Range Advantages (page 266) can improve the way it works at Range.

## Endurance Cost

Most Powers cost END to use. Every Phase such a Power is turned on, it costs the character 1 END for every 10 Active Points of Power used (this includes the points spent on Adders and Advantages, unless the rules for them note specific exceptions). Each Power's description notes whether it costs END. The minimum END cost for a power that costs END is 1 END per Phase, regardless of how few Active Points of the Power a character uses.

If a character buys a Power that costs END, and he already has some of that Power for free (such as Running and Leaping), the END cost depends on the total amount of "Active Points" used — just because the character gets some of the Power for free doesn't mean it doesn't cost END (even if the character uses the "free" part of the Power by itself).

Example: *Zaldrok, a native of Tau Alpha V, buys Running +10". He now has a total of 16" Running. When he uses all 16", he pays 3 END — just as if he'd paid 32 Active Points for all 16". The 6" he receives for free still cost END.*

The standard rounding rules apply to END cost calculations. A character using a 15 Active Point ability pays 1 END; a character using a 46 Active Point ability pays 5 END.

Powers that inherently cost no END (such as Mental Defense) always function at full strength, even if the character is Stunned or Knocked Out (unless the character chooses to deactivate them or use them at lesser strength). Powers that normally cost END turn off at the end of a Segment in which the character is Stunned or Knocked Out, even if bought to 0 END cost, unless they have the Advantage *Persistent.* For example, if a character is Knocked Out during Segment 5, at the end of Segment 5 his Force Field turns off, but his Armor still works.

**PERCEIVABLE SPECIAL EFFECTS**

Powers that normally cost END automatically have perceivable special effects when used, even if bought to 0 END (see *Special Effects,* above). The player decides what the Power looks like, but it must be obvious that he's using a Power and where it comes from. Powers that inherently cost no END do not automatically have perceivable special effects. If the player wants such a Power's special effect to be perceivable, he can buy it with the *Visible* Limitation or some other Limitation that implies perceivability (such as *Focus*).

In most cases, Constant Powers that cost END are perceivable throughout their use, not just in the Segment when they're activated. If the GM believes a Constant Power would not ordinarily be perceivable throughout its use (only when first activated and used), he might allow the character to take the *Visible* Limitation on the Power to make it perceivable throughout.

If a character has power that inherently costs no END (such as Armor) and he applies the *Costs Endurance* Limitation to it, it automatically become perceivable by three Sense Groups. He cannot also take the Limitation *Visible* for it. If a character applies Reduced Endurance (0 END) to a power, it does not become invisible just like a power that inherently costs no END; if a character wants that effect, he has to apply the Advantage *Invisible Power Effects.*

**The Perceivability Of Powers Not In Use**

An END-using Power has to be "in use" (in other words, the character has to be paying END for it) to be perceivable. If a Power isn't active or "turned on," it's not perceivable — the mere fact that a character possesses a Power isn't perceivable if he's not using it. (If it is, he can take the *Visible* Limitation and/or appropriate Disadvantages to represent that.) Once a character activates or turns on a Power (*i.e.,* starts paying END for it, even if it isn't directly helping or benefitting him at present), it becomes perceivable.

**ENDURANCE AND COMPOUND POWERS**

Sometimes characters want to buy "compound" powers that combine two or more Powers in some fashion (see page 94). That may impact the END cost of the total power.

If the two powers combined are the same (for example, with a partially-Limited power), calculate the END for each part separately using the normal rules. Add the END costs together to get the total END cost for using the whole power. The GM may change this if he feels a character is structuring a power primarily to take advantage of this rule and cause game balance problems.

If the two powers combined are different, calculate the END for each part separately, using the normal rules. Add the END costs together to get the total END cost for using the whole power. For example, the END cost of a Flare Blast defined as Energy Blast 5d6 + Sight Group Flash 3d6 is 3 ((25/10) + (15/10)).

If the character applies an END-altering Power Modifier to one of the parts of a compound power, the Modifier affects only that part. Using the Flare Blast example, if the Energy Blast 5d6 has Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END), then it costs 6 END and the Sight Group Flash 3d6 costs 1 END, for a total of 7 END. If the Energy Blast 5d6 has Reduced Endurance (½ END), it costs 1 END and the Sight Group Flash 3d6 costs 1 END, for a total of 2 END.

If the two parts of the compound power, added together, have so few total Active Points that the whole would only cost 1 END, the GM may, in his discretion, keep that as the END cost for the power.

### CHANGING A POWER'S ENDURANCE COST

The *Reduced Endurance* Advantage (page 267) can halve a Power's END cost, or reduce it to zero. The Endurance Limitations (page 289) can make a Power cost END even though it normally does not, or increase a Power's END cost. Some Powers have their own special rules for changing their END cost. A character may not apply both the *Reduced Endurance* Advantage and the *Costs Endurance* Limitation to the same Power.

## USING POWERS

As a general rule, a character may use as many Powers as he wants to in the same Phase, provided he (a) has the time to activate all of them, (b) can afford to pay END for all of them, and (c) has the Framework points to allocate to them if they're in a Power Framework. For example, a character could use Flight while operating his Force Field and firing an Attack Power at a target, all in the same Phase (assuming he could afford the END). However, there are specific rules for using multiple powers to attack in the same Phase; see page 358.

### FULL POWER

A character does not have to use a Power at its maximum potential. He can use any amount of his Power, from zero to the number of Character Points he has in the Power. For instance, a superhero with 50 Character Points in Energy Blast can do up to 10d6 damage at a cost of 5 END. He could choose to do only 8d6 and spend only 4 END.

A character must use all of a Power's Advantages and Limitations each time he uses the Power (unless a specific rule indicates otherwise). For example, if a character buys his Energy Blast 10d6 with the Power Advantage *Armor Piercing*, the Energy Blast is always Armor Piercing, even if reduced to 8d6.

A character does not have to use all of a power's Adders, unless the GM rules otherwise. For example, if a character has Flight 20", x16 Noncombat, he can choose to fly only 20" and not use his extra Noncombat Movement multiples. However, he must still pay END based on the Active Points of the Power used (with Adders).

### ACTIVATING POWERS

Unless a Power's description says otherwise, activating or "turning on" a Power is a Zero Phase Action, even if activating it causes or requires physical changes in the character, his powers, or his equipment. For example, even if a character activates his Powers by transforming from a human into a man-beast, converting his clothes into a suit of powered armor, or reconfiguring a gadget into another type of gadget, they still only take a Zero Phase Action to activate — the fact that he physically transforms himself or something else doesn't change the required activation time. Characters who want to alter their clothing without using another Power should buy *Instant Change* as defined under *Transform* (sidebar, page 238). In some cases — such as when a Power has the Limitations *Extra Time* or *Only In Heroic Identity* — activating a Power may take longer (typically a Full Phase, but sometimes more). Turning a Power off and switching slots in a Power Framework are also Zero Phase Actions.

Even though activating a Power is a Zero Phase Action, unless the GM rules otherwise a character may not both activate and deactivate a given power in a Phase (nor may he switch slots in a Power Framework more than once in a Phase). For example, a character cannot start his Phase solid, Hold his Phase, become Desolidified when someone attacks him, then become solid again and attack — having chosen to turn on his Desolidification this Phase, he can't turn it off during this Phase as well. However, the GM may choose to allow a character to do this as a campaign ground rule, as a one-time thing in appropriate circumstances, or as a trick occasionally pulled with the assistance of an appropriate *Power* Skill roll.

#### Attack Actions

Some Powers, such as Aid and Healing, are described as constituting, requiring, or taking an Attack Action, or requiring an Attack Roll. Unless a Power's description says otherwise, this means that when the character uses the Power, he must take an Attack Action and make an Attack Roll (if the roll does not succeed, he fails to use the Power). As an Attack Action, this ends the character's Phase. As always, the GM may change this if he feels it would be appropriate and not unbalancing to do so (such as when the character uses the Power on himself, or on a willing target).

#### Skill Rolls

A character never has to buy a Skill to use a Power he has paid points for (unless some Limitation on the Power requires the use of a Skill). For example, in a Heroic fantasy campaign, where characters normally get their weapons for free, they buy the ability to use weapons with the *Weapon Familiarity* Skill. But if a character chose to pay Character Points for a sword, he could use it without having to pay for Weapon Familiarity — having paid Character Points for his sword, he automatically knows how to use it. However, the ability to use a power or equipment a character pays Character Points for only extends to that one power or device. For example, the character described above suffers Unfamiliar Weapon penalties when he uses any sword other than the one he paid for unless he buys WF: Blades.

### THE STANDARD EFFECT RULE

You use dice to determine the effects of many Powers. This may frustrate you, since you'll sometimes get disappointingly low rolls, and counting the dice takes time during the game. At the GM's option, you can apply the *Standard Effect Rule* ("SER") to any Power. The Standard Effect Rule is that the Power does a flat 3 points of effect per die automatically for a +0 Advantage (for Powers such as Flash, where you count the BODY on the dice, this becomes a flat 1 BODY per die). This rule allows you to predict the effects of a power with much greater precision.

Example: *Arkelos has a Major Transform spell 7d6 (turn humans to frogs). Rather than depend on the vagaries of the dice, he opts to apply the Standard Effect Rule (+0) Advantage to the spell. Now he knows that he'll always do 21 BODY worth of effect with the spell (enough to instantly transmute a typical person into a frog).*

At the GM's option, you can apply the Standard Effect Rule to only part of a Power. That means part of it has a fixed result, while the rest is determined randomly and added to the fixed portion. For example, Arkelos could have a Major Transform 4d6+9.

If a character applies the Standard Effect Rule to a power, he cannot switch back and forth between the "standard" effect and the rolled effect. He can only use it as a Standard Effect.

A half die counts as +1 point for the Standard Effect Rule. A +1 point likewise counts as +1 point (or, if the GM prefers, as +0 points). Just add that final one point to the total of the attack based on the dice. Ignore a -1 point, treating the dice as if they had no subtractor (for example, the SER damage for an RKA 3d6-1 would be 9 BODY).

If a character applies the Standard Effect Rule to all of a Power that allows a character to add STR to increase damage (such as an HA or HKA), it applies to any STR added to the power as well. If the SER only applies to part of the power (say, half the dice, such as an HKA 4d6 defined as 2d6+6), maintain the ratio — determine the total dice (from Power + STR), and apply the SER to the same portion of the STR as the Power. The GM may alter this approach if it doesn't make sense for a particular character, or if Limitations (such as No STR Bonus) apply to some of the dice.

## POWER CATEGORIES

The *HERO System* organizes Powers into several categories: Adjustment Powers, Attack Powers, Body-Affecting Powers, Defense Powers, Mental Powers, Movement Powers, Sense-Affecting Powers, Sensory Powers, Size Powers, Special Powers, and Standard Powers. Each category of Powers has certain special rules that apply to all Powers in that category. Some Powers belong to multiple categories, since some categories are functional, and others based primarily on game rules.

### CHANGING CATEGORIES

Sometimes a Power changes from one category to another because of the Power Modifiers applied to it. If so, the Power is subject to the rules governing both its original category and its new category.

Example: *Tesseract wants to have the power to Teleport other people out of her way. She buys this as Teleportation, Usable As Attack. Because this ability requires an Attack Roll, and she uses it offensively, this Teleportation-based power becomes an Attack Power. However, it's still subject to rules governing Movement Powers generally, and Teleportation specifically.*

Similarly, a Power's special effect may cause the GM to change its category. For example, suppose a character with psychic powers can create a "psychokinetic duplicate" of himself with mental energy. Although he buys this with Duplication, it doesn't really work like a Body-Affecting Power — the character's body isn't involved at all, it's his mind that creates the Duplicate. Therefore, the GM might declare that this form of Duplication is actually a Mental Power.

A Power's category is not a restriction; it's simply a way of indicating how characters generally perceive and use the Power. For example, there are special effects for Duplication that don't involve the body. However, since most uses of Duplication do involve the body, it's most appropriately placed in the Body-Affecting Powers category. Don't think of the Power categories as a straitjacket — they're simply a "shorthand" designed to make it easy to conceptualize Powers.

## WHAT POWERS DO

Here's a quick list of the primary Power categories and what the Powers in them allow a character to do, to help you when conceptualizing an ability.

| Power Category | What These Powers Do |
|---|---|
| Adjustment Powers | Raise or lower the power of Characteristics or Powers |
| Attack Powers | Hurt or hinder another character |
| Body-Affecting Powers | Alter or improve the character's body |
| Defense Powers | Protect the character |
| Mental Powers | Attack or affect another character mentally |
| Movement Powers | Move the character |
| Sense-Affecting Powers | Blind or fool another character's senses |
| Sensory Powers | Improve the character's senses, or provide new senses |
| Size Powers | Increases or decreases a character's size |
| Special Powers | Powers that can't be put in Power Frameworks without GM's permission |
| Standard Powers | A catch-all category |

# ADJUSTMENT POWERS

These Powers temporarily alter a character's Powers and/or Characteristics by adding to, or subtracting from, the number of Active Points in them. Characters can use them to drain a target of his abilities, restore lost Characteristics (like healing BODY or recharging an Endurance Reserve), or temporarily raise a character's abilities above their starting values.

A character usually defines the effect of an Adjustment Power when he purchases it. For example, he could define his Drain as draining STR or his Absorption as adding to his Endurance Reserve. He can vary or change the effect if he pays for an Advantage, *Variable Effect,* for his Adjustment Power (see page 111).

## BASIC EFFECTS AND GUIDELINES

The effects of Adjustment Powers are applied to the Active Points of a Characteristic or Power. To determine the effect of an Adjustment Power on a Characteristic, divide the points Adjusted by the Characteristic's cost per point. Adjustment Powers that affect Primary Characteristics have no effect on Figured Characteristics, but do affect abilities calculated from Primary Characteristics (such as the lifting capacity of and damage caused by STR, a character's Combat Value derived from DEX, and so forth).

Example: *The Necromancer has a Transfer DEX to Energy Blast. He hits Chiron and rolls 15 points of effect. Chiron loses 15/3 = 5 points of DEX, but loses no SPD. The Necromancer gains 15 Character Points (3d6) of Energy Blast.*

A character cannot use an Adjustment Power to give himself a Characteristic, Power, Advantage, or Adder he doesn't already have. Nor can a character use an Adjustment Power to remove an Advantage or Adder from a power — he negatively Adjusts the underlying Power, and when it's reduced to 0, the Adders and Advantages become useless. (But see *Can Apply/Remove Adders,* page 111.

At the GM's discretion, a character can create an Absorption, Aid, or Transfer power which specifies that some or all of the Character Points received go to improve the effectiveness of the Adjustment Power itself. However, the GM should review such powers carefully, and forbid them or require the player to revise them if they prove to be too unbalancing.

Characters can only use Adjustment Powers to affect Skills, Perks, or Talents with the GM's permission.

A character must specify exactly which of a character's Characteristics or Powers he's affecting with an Adjustment Power. For example, unless the GM permits otherwise, a character couldn't declare "I'm Draining the target's most powerful Energy Blast with my Drain EB" — he has to specify exactly which Energy Blast he's targeting. He can designate the target Characteristic or Power generically ("I'm targeting the Energy Blast I saw him use three minutes ago"), but he still has to choose one in some specific fashion.

### Increasing Expendable Abilities

If an Adjustment Power boosts or increases a Characteristic or Power, any part of the Characteristic or Power which is used up or removed (like STUN damage from attacks or END used to power abilities) comes out of the boosted part first.

**THE ADJUSTMENT POWERS ARE:**

Absorption
Aid
Drain
Healing
Suppress
Transfer





When the Adjustment Power fades, those lost or used points do not then come out of the character's remaining Characteristic or Power — he's used those boosted points without sacrificing any of his own personal energy or resources.

The use or loss of points of an expendable ability (primarily END, STUN, or BODY) gained from an Adjustment Power does not affect the fade rate for the Adjustment Power in regard to the power's maximum effect. The character has to keep track of how the Adjustment Power would fade so he knows how much additional effect the power can add.

Example: *A character has Transfer END to END 1d6 (with the standard fade rate of 5 Character Points per Turn). The maximum effect this can have is 12 points of END Transferred (a roll of 6 on the die, in other words). He uses it and rolls a 5, thus Transferring 10 END from his target. On his next Phase, he uses all 10 END to power his Energy Blast. If he wants to use the Transfer again, he can only Transfer another 2 points' worth of END (to his maximum of 12), because the earlier Transfer remains "in effect" for 1 Turn for purposes of determining the Transfer's maximum effect.*

Similarly, if a character has an expendable Characteristic or Power boosted to the maximum effect possible using an Adjustment Power, and he then uses up or removes some of what he gained, the Adjustment Power cannot be applied again until the Adjustment Power would fade naturally. If a character has STUN (or END) boosted through an Adjustment Power, as long as his STUN (or END) total remains equal to or greater than his normal full STUN (or END), he gets no benefit to that Characteristic from Post-Segment 12 Recoveries or from normal Recoveries taken in a Phase (but see below).

Example: *A character has 30 STUN and Absorption 4d6 (physical, to STUN). In his Phases in Segment 6, he Absorbs his maximum effect worth of STUN, 24, and thus has 54 STUN. He gets attacked in Segment 9 and suffers 10 STUN damage, so he now has 44 STUN. Since his Absorption hasn't faded yet, he cannot apply it again, even though his STUN is now less than the maximum possible he could have using Absorption. And as long as the character's STUN remains above 30, he gets no benefit to STUN from taking any type of Recovery (he could still Recover END he uses, though).*

However, in some cases, characters will gain points of an expendable ability from an Adjustment Power that has a lengthy fade rate (such as "points fade at the rate of 5 per Hour" or the like). In that situation, if a character uses some or all of the gained points, with the GM's permission he may use his REC to regain them during the duration of the Adjustment effect.

Example: *A character has 30 STUN. He uses an Aid STUN 3d6, Delayed Return Rate (points fade at the rate of 5 per 6 Hours; +1¼) to increase his STUN to 40. He then suffers 20 STUN damage from an attack. When he gets to take Recoveries, with the GM's permission he can Recover up to 40 STUN, not 30.*

**Maximum Effect**

Absorption, Aid, and Transfer have maximum effects. These Powers can Adjust a maximum amount of points equal to the maximum amount you can roll on the dice — for example, Absorption (Energy) 2d6 could Absorb a maximum of 12 BODY from energy attacks. You can increase this maximum by 2 points for every 1 Character Point spent (add this cost to the power before applying any Advantages). A character may achieve this maximum with one or more rolls; later rolls do not have to exceed the total of prior rolls to provide additional benefit. (A similar Adjustment Power, *Healing,* works differently; see page 185.)

Even if two different characters use separate versions of one of these powers on the same character's Characteristic or Power, the maximum number of points they can add to that character equals the largest maximum for any of the powers used. For example, one character with a Aid STR 2d6 can add 12 Character Points' worth of STR to a target — but two characters, each with Aid STR 1d6, can only add 6 points of STR to a target.

Example: *Avatar has Absorption 8d6 (goes to CON). An attack that does 90 STUN and 30 BODY hits her. She rolls 24 on her Absorption dice. Therefore she Absorbs 24 BODY of effect — meaning she gains 12 CON, since CON costs 2 Character Points per point. Since the maximum amount Avatar can add to her CON is 48 BODY worth of effect, she could use her Absorption in her next Phase to Absorb no more than another 24 BODY. She does not have to roll higher than 24 to do this; she can use her Absorption again and again, regardless of the effect rolls, until she has Absorbed a total of 48 BODY.*

Example: *Kasdrevan has an Aid 4d6 that affects "all Characteristics below starting value simultaneously" (a +2 Advantage). This means he can add a maximum of 24 Character Points to all Characteristics below starting value (for example, that would add 12 BODY, 24 STUN, and 48 END). He can add these 24 Character Points through one really good roll (a 6 on all four dice), or through two or more rolls — but he cannot add more than 24 Character Points, regardless of the totals of the two or more rolls.*

*Later Kasdrevan uses Experience Points to increase the amount he can add with this Aid by 20 Character Points. He can now add a total of 44 Character Points; this requires, at a minimum, two rolls, since at most he can add 24 points with any one 4d6 roll.*

An Adjustment Power can have its maximum effect on multiple targets. For example, suppose a character has Aid STR 3d6 (maximum effect of 18 points). He uses his Aid on Bill Ferguson and rolls 12 (giving Bill +12 STR). He then uses his Aid on Randall Irons and rolls a 10. The 10 gives Randall +10 STR — the Aid isn't restricted to 18 points of effect between the two of them, it can add up to 18 points to each of them.

If a character buys extra dice of Absorption, Aid, or Transfer with a Limitation, those dice increase the power's maximum effect only when the character can use them. Applying the Standard Effect Rule (page 104) to an Adjustment Power does not alter its maximum effect.

**Adjusting Powers With Advantages/Adders**

When a character Adjusts a Power or Characteristic that has Advantages, you must take the Advantages into account when determining how much the character gains from being Adjusted. For example, suppose a character uses Aid to increase Avatar's Armor Piercing Energy Blast. Normally it takes 5 Character Points to increase the EB by 1d6, but in this case you must apply the Advantage. Since (5 x 1½ = 7.5), it takes 7 Character Points to increase the EB by 1d6. Drain would work the same way; a character would have to Drain 7 Character Points to reduce that EB by 1d6.

Characters cannot use Adjustment Powers to apply, increase, or remove Adders unless they buy the *Can Apply (Remove) Adders* Advantage (see page 111). However, the GM may allow a character who already has an Adder for a Power to increase that Adder with an Adjustment Power (for example, if a character has bought *Increased Mass* for his Teleportation, the GM might let him improve that Adder with Aid so he could carry more extra weight than usual). Characters cannot use Adjustment Powers to apply, increase, or remove Advantages.

**Hit Locations**

Adjustment Powers are not affected by Hit Location modifiers. Whether a Drain, Transfer, or Aid hits a target in his Head or his Arms, the effect is the same.

**The Source Of A Power Versus The Effects Of A Power**

Adjustment Powers work the same whether they're used on the *effects* of a power or on the *creator or originator* of the power. For example, a character could use Suppress Summon on a Summoned demon, or on the wizard who cast the Summon spell; either attack could banish the demon if the Suppress effect roll is high enough.

If the target is a being opposed to the character using the Adjustment Power (such as a demon serving the character's wizard enemy), use the being's DCV, Power Defense, and so on. If it's just some free-standing effect (like a Suppression field or Change Environment effect), use the original creator's DCV, Power Defense, or the like. If a character wants the victim of a Power like Mind Control (or the like) to be less susceptible to having that effect Adjusted, he also needs to have a Power Defense Usable As Attack ability to make the Mind Control more resistant to Drains and similar powers.

If a Drain or Transfer is used on the effect but not the character who created it, the Adjustment Power reduces only the effect, not the character's power. If a Transfer is used on an effect, the character using it gains points from the use of Transfer as per normal.

**SPECIAL EFFECTS**

Generally speaking, characters buy Adjustment Powers in one of two ways. The first way is to buy an Adjustment Power that affects the target Characteristic or Power regardless of the Characteristic's or Power's special effect. For example, an Aid STR affects any type of STR, whether it comes from a character's natural muscles, a suit of powered armor, a magic spell, super-steroids, or the like. Similarly, a Drain Energy Blast would affect any sort of EB — a power blast, a lightning bolt, a rubber bullet, and so on — regardless of special effect. (Using this type of Adjustment Power on an Elemental Control still affects *all* the base cost and slots in the EC, as described on page 314-15.)

The second way is to define the Adjustment Power as only affecting Characteristics or Powers of a given special effect. Typically this is done with the *Variable Effect* Advantage (see page 111) or the *Limited Special Effect* Limitation (page 113).

**AFFECTING INCREMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND POWERS**

Some Powers and Characteristics are bought incrementally, at costs greater than 1 Character Point per increment. For example, DEX costs 3 Character Points per point (increment), and Energy Blast costs 5 Character Points for every d6 (increment of damage). In this case, a character using an Adjustment Power to reduce (or increase) that Power or Characteristic must remove (or add) enough Character Points to remove (or add) an entire increment of the Characteristic or Power — removing (or adding) less than the number of Character Points required to buy 1 point of the Characteristic (or one increment of the Power) has no effect. However, the target regains (or loses) the remainder of the reduced (or increased) Character Points at the usual rate, and the remainder can be added to by another use of the Power later on, potentially taking effect.

Examples: *Transferring 3 Character Points' worth of BODY results in a loss of only 1 point of BODY, since BODY costs 2 Character Points per point. To Drain a point of SPD requires that 10 Character Points be Drained from the victim; Draining 1-9 Character Points' worth of SPD doesn't cause the victim to lose a point of SPD.*

*Leech uses his Drain CON to attack Starburst. He rolls 15 points of effect. Starburst loses 7 points of CON, since CON costs 2 Character Points per point. The remaining Drained point stays with Starburst until he regains the lost Character Points. Before he Recovers any lost*

*Character Points, Leech hits him with another Drain CON for 7 points of effect. Starburst loses 4 points of CON (7, plus the lingering 1 unused point of effect, equals 8, enough to Drain 4 points of CON).*

In the case of Powers or other abilities bought with varying types of increments (such as Change Environment, which has an incremental radius and increments of combat effects), apply the effects of the Adjustment Power as evenly as possible to reduce the power in a logical and reasonable manner (keeping special effects, common sense, and dramatic sense in mind). The GM has the final say as to how this works.

If a Power is not bought in increments (for example, Desolidification, which costs a flat 40 Character Points), a character using a Drain or Transfer to reduce that Power or Characteristic must remove enough Character Points to remove the entire Power (including Adders and Advantages).

Once an Adjustment Power removes (or adds) an entire increment of a Power or Characteristic, the affected character must regain an entire increment's worth of lost Characteristic Points to get an increment back (or an entire increment's worth must fade before he loses said increment). Similarly, he must regain all the Character Points in a flat-cost Power before he can use it again.

Example: *Leech uses his Drain Desolidification to rob Dr. Mist of his powers. Doctor Mist spent 60 points on his Mist Form power (Desolidification, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)). Leech has to Drain the entire 60 points before Dr. Mist loses the ability to become intangible. Assuming he succeeds, Dr. Mist loses the use of his Mist Form until he Recovers all 60 Drained Character Points.*

## REGAINING LOST POINTS; LOSING GAINED POINTS

The Character Points gained or lost via an Adjustment Power (except Healing) fade/return at the rate of 5 Character Points per Turn. The points are usually regained at the end of Segment 12 when normal Post-Segment 12 Recoveries are recorded. Individual Power descriptions note exceptions or other special rules.

Example: *The Necromancer Transferred 15 Character Points' worth of Chiron's DEX to his (the Necromancer's) Energy Blast, thus causing Chiron to lose 5 DEX. On the next Post-Segment 12 Recovery, Chiron regains 5 Character Points' worth of DEX, and the Necromancer loses 5 Character Points' worth of EB.*

Characters can delay the fade/return rate of 5 Character Points per Turn with the Advantage *Delayed Return Rate* (see page 111). The fade/return rate of an Adjustment Power has no connection to a character's REC or his ability to take Post-Segment 12 Recoveries.

If you want to do some additional work, you can apportion the Character Points returned over time. This can be especially important when the return rate has been lengthened. For example, if the Character Points from a Drain were bought to return at the rate of 5 Character Points per 5 hours, the GM could rule that they return at the rate of 1 point per hour. Similarly, for shorter time intervals, the GM could allow the points to return 12 Segments after the initial effect (rather than at the end of Segment 12). These variations increase the flexibility of the Adjustment Powers at the expense of extra bookkeeping. They're not recommended for new GMs or when many characters are using Adjustment Powers.

## POWER FRAMEWORKS

Special rules apply to Adjustment Powers bought in, or used to affect, Power Frameworks.

### Adjustment Powers Bought In Power Frameworks

When a character buys an Adjustment Power through a Multipower or Variable Power Pool, if he switches the Framework to another Power the boosted (or reduced) Characteristic or Power fades at the standard rate (or whatever rate the character has paid for with the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage). It does not dissipate immediately (but see below regarding improving a Power Framework slot).

Example: *Starburst has a Multipower with Flight, Energy Blast, Force Field, and Aid STR. If he uses his Aid STR to boost his STR, and then switches his Multipower to its Flight slot, the STR he gained from his Aid fades at the standard 5 points/Turn rate.*

### Positively Adjusting Power Frameworks

If a character uses an Adjustment Power such as Aid to boost or increase a Power Framework, both the base "pool" of points and the individual slot or Power must be Adjusted. An Adjustment Power that works on more than one Power of a given special effect simultaneously (see below) can affect both the Framework's pool of points and one or more of its slots or powers at once; otherwise they have to be Adjusted one at a time. The points in an individual Multipower slot or Variable Power Pool power cannot exceed the points in the pool, regardless of the total rolled on the Adjustment Power dice (see page 314-15 for specific guidelines regarding Elemental Controls).

Examples: *The Medic wants to use an Aid to boost Firelord's flame attacks. Firelord's attacks are bought as slots in a 60-point Multipower. Therefore the Medic must Aid both the 60-point reserve and the individual slots he wants to improve. First the Medic rolls his 4d6 and gets a 12, so the Multipower reserve is now 72 points. Then he rolls 4d6 and gets 16 points, which are added to Firelord's 12d6 EB "Flame Blast." This would normally make the Flame Blast a 76-point Energy Blast (15d6), but since the reserve is only 72 points, the most points the Flame Blast can have is 72 (a 14d6 Energy Blast).*

*Winter Dragon has a VPP: Ice Powers with 40 points in the Pool. Thus, Winter Dragon could have one 40 Active Point Power, two 20 Active Point Powers, or four 10 Active Point Powers in his Pool; he could also have, for example, two 40 Active Point Powers, each with a -1 Limitation. If the Medic uses an Aid to boost just Winter Dragon's Pool (to, say, 60 points, and his Control Cost to 30 points), the number of Active Points Winter Dragon can put in any one Power does not increase — he can still have, at most, 40 Active Points in a Power built with the VPP. However, he can have up to 60 Real Points' worth of such Powers at once, whereas before being Aided he could only have 40 Real Points' worth of Powers at any one time. If the Medic Aided both Winter Dragon's Pool and the Energy Blast he builds with the Pool simultaneously, then the EB could have as many as 60 Active Points; all other Powers built with the Pool could still only have 40 Active Points.*

If a character uses an Adjustment Power to boost, increase, or improve a slot or power in a Multipower or VPP, and the subject switches the Framework to another slot or power, the points added to the previous slot or power instantly fade. When the character switches the Framework back to the Power which was Adjusted, it's at its usual strength, not its Adjusted strength. On the other hand, if a character uses Drain or similar Adjustment Powers to reduce or decrease a slot or power in a Framework, the slot or Power regains the lost points at the standard rate for the power, regardless of whether the victim switches the Framework to another slot or power.

If a character uses an Adjustment Power to boost, increase, or improve a VPP, he has to improve both the Pool and the Control Cost. For every 2 points added to the Pool, he must add 1 to the Control Cost so that he maintains the proper ratio between them. If the points added by the Adjustment Power aren't evenly divisible this way, any overage has no effect. For example, if a character uses Aid to add 5 points of effect to a VPP, the first 2 points go to the Pool, and the third point goes to the Control Cost. Since the remaining 2 points aren't enough to apply 2-and-1 in this fashion, they have no effect. However, the remainder fades at the usual rate, and can be added to by another use of the Adjustment Power later on, potentially taking effect. After boosting the VPP itself, the character must also boost individual powers bought within the Pool, as described above. If the VPP has Advantages, characters must account for that using the standard rules (see above), but only for the Control Cost, since the Advantage doesn't change the cost of the Pool itself.

**Negatively Adjusting Power Frameworks**

If a character uses Adjustment Powers such as Drain to reduce or decrease a Power Framework, he must reduce the individual slots rather than the base pool of points. Reducing the base pool of points doesn't affect the individual slots unless the slots are also reduced. (Elemental Controls are an exception; see page 314-15.) Furthermore, the Drain (or like Power) affects the slot's Active Points, not the Real Cost of the slot. For example, suppose a character has a Multipower with a reserve of 70 points and a slot with an Energy Blast 14d6 (which costs 7 Character Points). If an attacker uses a Drain Energy Blast to remove 10 points' worth of power from the EB, it becomes an EB 12d6 (60 points' worth of EB) — the fact that the slot costs less than 10 points doesn't matter, since the Drain applies to the slot's Active Points, not its actual cost.

If a character uses an Adjustment Power to reduce, decrease, or diminish a slot or power in a Multipower or VPP, doing so does not affect the reserve/Pool or otherwise restrict the target's ability to switch to or use other slots or powers. For example, suppose Avatar has a Multipower with a 60-point reserve and five slots (all Fixed slots with 60 Active Points, thus costing 6 points apiece). An enemy Drains one slot to 0 points. That means Avatar can't use that slot, but he can still use the other four slots freely — the Drain of the one slot doesn't affect the reserve. (Elemental Controls work differently; see page 314-15.)

For Variable Power Pools, the GM may rule that reducing or eliminating one power from the Pool prevents a character from creating similar powers until the Adjustment effect fades. Thus, a character can't negate the effect simply by "switching" the Pool to "another" power that's identical (or nearly so) to the one Adjusted. A character cannot reduce, decrease, or diminish just the Control Cost of a VPP to "lock in" the powers currently built with the Pool; he must affect the individual slots in the VPP as outlined above.

**CHARACTERISTICS**

Body: Adjustment Powers never affect the point of a character's "negative BODY." If a character normally has 10 BODY, then he dies at -10 BODY, even if Aided to 15 BODY or Drained to 5 BODY. A character reduced to negative his BODY solely due to an Adjustment Power dies.

A character who has positive BODY and is reduced into negative BODY by an Adjustment Power loses more BODY in Post-Segment 12 (just like any other character injured into the negative BODY range). However, the loss of BODY stops if the effects of the Adjustment Power fade and the fading at any time returns him to positive BODY. (He does not, however, regain the BODY he lost while in the negatives.)

If a character is in the negative BODY range due to a wound, and an Adjustment Power adds to that effect, he keeps bleeding from the wound on Post-Segment 12 and eventually dies (or dies immediately if the Adjustment Power takes him to negative his starting BODY).

If a character is in the negative BODY range due to a wound, and an Adjustment Power takes him to positive BODY, he stops Post-Segment 12 bleeding from the wound as long as the Adjustment Power keeps his BODY score positive. When the fading of the Adjustment Power returns him to negative BODY, he starts bleeding again in Post-Segment 12.

## ADJUSTING DEFENSE POWERS

As noted in the main text, the effect of Adjustment Powers on Defense Powers and related abilities is halved. For Adjustment Powers that have a maximum effect (Absorption, Aid, and Transfer), the maximum effect remains unchanged, but so does the halving effect. Thus, reaching that maximum only allows the power to have half the effect it otherwise would. For example, suppose a character has a Transfer 6d6 (STR to PD). The maximum effect remains 36, but since those 36 points are halved for purposes of adding them to PD, the character only gains a maximum of 18 points of PD. In other words, he can't "keep going" until he reaches a maximum of 72 so that he gets 36 PD — he's restricted to 18 PD.

The fade rate of an Adjustment Power used on a Defense Power is unchanged — the character loses/regains 5 Character Points' worth of the Adjusted ability per Turn (or other defined time increment). If a character has gained +18 PD from a Transfer 6d6 (STR to PD) that's achieved the maximum result of 36, when the first fade period hits he loses 5 Character Points' worth of PD (down to +13 PD).

See also under *Suppress,* page 227, for some specific rules on this subject pertaining to that Power.

Comeliness: Even though COM actually has some positive benefits as it gets into the negatives, Drain, Aid, and other Adjustment Powers have the same effect on COM whether the COM is positive or negative: a Drain makes the COM rating lower (which actually makes it better once the target's in the negatives, at least for purposes of frightening people), and an Aid makes it higher (which makes the person less ugly).

Speed: Adjustment Powers ignore "fractional SPD." For example, a character with DEX 27 has a base SPD of "3.7," which rounds down to 3. The .7 fractional SPD doesn't matter for Adjustment Power purposes. If someone affected him with a Drain SPD that removed 6 Character Points' worth of SPD, he'd have "SPD 2.4" (but that means he still has SPD 3 because of the rules about Adjusting incremental abilities; until the Drain has a full 10 Character Points' worth of effect, the target remains at SPD 3).

Endurance: If a character uses an Adjustment Power to boost the points in a power that costs END, the character who receives the boost must pay the extra END for using the additional points in the power. For example, if a character with STR 20 (costs 2 END to use) receives +10 STR from an Aid, and he uses all 30 points of STR he now has, he must pay 3 END.

Stun: A character Drained/Transferred/Suppressed to 0 STUN or below is Knocked Out, with all that state implies. He only regains Drained/Transferred STUN at the rate bought for the power — in other words, he doesn't take Recoveries of, or apply his REC to, the Drained/Transferred STUN (though he could still Recover STUN lost in other ways). When he regains enough STUN to wake up, his END equals his positive STUN (per the usual rule, page 411), and he regains END at the same rate as STUN. He only regains Suppressed STUN when the attacker stops maintaining the Suppress, but at that point regains all of the Suppressed STUN, and an equivalent amount of END, and awakens instantly.

### POWERS

Attack Powers: If a character boosts or improves an Attack Power such as Energy Blast or HKA with Aid or a similar Adjustment Power, the extra damage counts as "base damage" for purposes of determining how much damage the character can add with STR, movement, Combat Skill Levels, and the like.

Defense Powers: To balance the usefulness of defenses in the *HERO System,* the effect of any Adjustment Power that increases or decreases PD, ED, any Defense Power, and the like is halved. EGO, PRE, Desolidification, and similar abilities do not count as "Defense Powers" for this purpose even though they have defensive functions.

Example: *Leech buys Drain 6d6. This would normally Drain a full 6d6 worth of Character Points of a certain Power or Characteristic. However, if he buys it to apply against a defense (PD, ED, Force Field, or the like), he would roll 6d6 and then halve the result to determine how many Character Points of the defense he Drained.*

Movement Powers: If a Movement Power is reduced to zero inches of movement by a Drain or similar Adjustment Power, the character is unable to use that mode of movement (not even at Noncombat speeds) until he gets at least 1" of movement back.

Characteristics: It's not uncommon for a character to buy some extra points in a Characteristic as a Power — for example, a magical amulet that adds +30 to a character's STR. This has some implications for the use of Adjustment Powers.

Typically, for simplicity's sake, negative Adjustment Powers (such as Drain, Suppress, or Transfer) subtract Character Points from the Characteristic as a whole, not either "part" of it. But the final decision as to how to apply the Adjustment Power is up to the GM based on the situation, special effects, common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance. For example, If a target's extra Characteristic-bought-as-Power is bought that way because it's restricted in some way (maybe it's a Focus, for example), it may make more sense to apply the Drain to the target's base STR first (the GM might build the Focus with *Inherent,* so its Characteristic cannot be Drained). The GM could even let the attacker choose what to Drain, the character's base Characteristic or his Characteristic-bought-as-Power, in some situations.

Adjustment Powers that boost or improve things (like Aid or Absorption) work similarly. They usually just add to the Characteristic as a whole, but they could add to the target's base Characteristic, or his Characteristic-bought-as-Power, depending on the circumstances.

Duplication: For purposes of determining the maximum effect an Adjustment Power like Aid can have on a single character, Duplicates are considered separate characters.

Flash: Some Adjustment Powers can reduce or remove the effects of a Flash. See pages 187 and 354.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Area Of Effect, Explosion: If an Adjustment Power (other than Transfer; see page 236) has this Advantage, it affects everyone in the area equally, up to its maximum affect per individual. For example, if an Aid STR, Area Of Effect (Radius) can add a maximum of 12 Character Points, everyone in that radius can gain up to 12 Characters Points' worth of STR.

Example: *A character uses an Aid PRE 4d6, Area Of Effect, on a group of 10 characters. He rolls 14 points of effect, so each of the 10 characters gets 14 points of PRE.*





If an Adjustment Power does not work this way — if it has to divide its effect equally between everyone in the affected Area — it may take a -¾ Limitation, *Divided Effect.*

These rules apply to Explosion as well, but of course the effect of the Adjustment Power decreases the further a target is from the center of the Explosion.

Can Apply (Remove) Adders (+1): A character can use an Adjustment Power with this Advantage to apply Adders to a Power which that Power does not already have, or can enhance an existing Adder if appropriate. The character chooses what Adders to apply when he uses the Adjustment Power; the Adder applied can vary from use to use.

An alternate version, *Can Remove Adders,* is appropriate for Adjustment Powers such as Drain. It allows the Power to remove Adders a target Power possesses. The Adders are removed first, before the base Power itself is Adjusted.

Continuous: Applying Continuous to Absorption, Aid, or Transfer does not overcome the rules about maximum effect.

Cumulative: Characters should not apply Cumulative to Adjustment Powers that increase a Power or Characteristic (such as Aid or Absorption), since they have their own rules for how many Character Points they can add to a particular Characteristic or Power and how and at what rate they're added. They can apply Cumulative to Adjustment Powers that decrease a Power or Characteristic (such as Suppress).

Delayed Return Rate (+¼ or greater): The Character Points gained or lost via an Adjustment Power normally return to their previous value at the rate of 5 Character Points per Turn. For a +¼ Advantage the return rate moves one level down the Time Chart. For example, a Drain that returns at the rate of 5 Character Points every 20 Minutes is three levels down the Time Chart, making it a +¾ Advantage.

Trigger: Adjustment Powers affect a power with Trigger just like any other power, and fade/return in the normal fashion. Setting the Trigger doesn't "lock in" an Adjustment Power effect and keep it from fading/returning.

Variable Effect (+¼ to +2): To apply an Adjustment Power to any Characteristic or Power within a related group of special effects, *one Power at a time,* is a +¼ Power Advantage. Thus, a character could have, for example, a Drain that works against any one fire-based Power. When attacking a target with more than one fire-based Power, the character decides which fire-based Power to Drain. Similarly, a character with Absorption can use the points Absorbed to augment any one of his Powers with a related special effect, one per Phase. Switching to another Characteristic or Power does not cause the previously-affected Characteristics or Powers to immediately fade/return; they fade/return at the standard rate for the power — each use of the Adjustment Power is a separate use, so the points fade/return separately.

For a +½ Advantage, a character can apply an Adjustment Power to any two Characteristics or Powers with related special effects simultaneously. For a +1 Advantage, a character can apply an Adjustment Power to any four Characteristics or Powers with related special effects simultaneously.

For a +2 Advantage, a character can apply an Adjustment Power to *all* Characteristics and Powers with related special effects simultaneously (regardless of how many there are). This extremely powerful Advantage allows a character to increase or decrease the Power level of many different Powers with a single Action.

Example: *Gigawatt buys Absorption that feeds the Absorbed points into his Energy Blast (and only his Energy Blast). Later, after earning some Experience Points, he buys the Absorption with the +¼ Variable Effect Advantage. Now he can use the Absorbed points to increase his Energy Blast, Force Field, Flight, or even his Absorption, all of which derive from his control of electricity. Each time he's attacked, he must decide which Power he assigns the Absorbed points to. Much later, he earns enough Experience Points to purchase the +2 Advantage. Now, whenever he's attacked by an appropriate attack, the Absorbed points increase all of his related Powers at once.*

Instead of defining a Variable Effect power as affecting a pure special effect, a character can define it as working against any similarly related grouping of Characteristics and/or Powers. Examples include "four defined Characteristics at once" (+1), "any Characteristic that's currently below starting value, one at a time" (+¼), or "any Sense-Affecting Power, one at a time" (+¼).

When using an Adjustment Power with Variable Effect, a character can switch which Characteristic(s) and/or Power(s) it can affect from use to use. For example, if a character has Drain Fire Powers (any one Fire power at a time), he could Drain the target's Fiery Flight power with one attack, and his Fireball with the next attack, and so on. If he could Drain two Fire powers simultaneously, he could choose a fire-based Energy Blast and Flight in one Phase, and fire-based RKA and Force Field next Phase. However, a character may, if he chooses, define the Adjustment Power as affecting specific abilities every time. For example, a character could buy an Aid STR, DEX, CON, and PD 4d6 (+1). The power does not receive a Limitation for this.

An Adjustment Power with Variable Effect can have its maximum effect on all Characteristics or Powers it can affect. For example, suppose a character has an Aid with the +¼ *Variable Effect* Advantage, and the Aid can add a maximum of 30 Character Points' worth of effect. He wants to Aid both STR and DEX. He could add 30 Character Points' worth of STR (+30 STR) and 30 points' worth of DEX (+10 DEX) to the same character. He's not limited to a total of 30 points' worth of effect; he can add his maximum of 30 Character Points' worth of Aid to both Characteristics.

Similarly, if an Adjustment Power has Variable Effect at the +½ or higher level of effect, it has its full effect on all Characteristics or Powers it can affect simultaneously. For example, suppose the character described above had Aid STR and DEX 3d6, affects two Characteristics at once (+½). If he rolls 12 on the dice, he adds 12 Character Points to *both* Characteristics, gaining +12 STR and +4 DEX. (If the GM finds this unbalancing, he should devise some meaningful and fair split of the points between the affected abilities, or devise another solution he finds acceptable.)

An Adjustment Power used to affect two or more Characteristics or Powers simultaneously fades/returns from them simultaneously. For example, if a character uses an Aid Fire Powers 4d6 to add 15 Character Points to his Fire Blast (Energy Blast) and Firebolt (RKA) simultaneously, at the end of Segment 12 both the EB and the RKA lose 5 of the added points.

At any level of Variable Effect that allows a character to affect two or more powers of the same special effect simultaneously, a character can use an Adjustment Power to increase both the reserve/pool and one or more slots in a Power Framework at once (depending on how the power's defined, the value of the Advantage, the nature of the Framework, and so forth).

Variable Effect — Multiple Special Effects: At the GM's option, a character who's bought Variable Effect at the +½ or greater level can buy a separate Advantage, *Multiple Special Effects,* to increase the number of *special effects* he can affect. For a +¼ Advantage, an Adjustment Power with Variable Effect can affect either of two special effects, but only one special effect at a time. For a +½ Advantage, an Adjustment Power with Variable Effect can affect the defined number of powers in two special effects simultaneously. For a +1 Advantage, it can affect the defined number of powers in four special effects simultaneously. For a +2 Advantage, it can affect the defined number of powers in all special effects simultaneously.

Example: *AquaChimp, the world's only water-breathing chimpanzee, wants to project a blast of water that can reduce a target's Fire-based powers. However, he realizes water usually short-circuits Electricity-based powers as well, so he wants his power to affect two special effects at once. Here's how he builds that power:*

*Drain Fire and Electricity Powers 2d6, all Fire powers simultaneously (+2), Multiple Special Effects (Fire and Electricity simultaneously; +½). Total cost: 70 points.*

*When AquaChimp uses his power, he does a Drain 2d6 of all Fire Powers and all Electricity Powers his target possesses.*

**LIMITATIONS**

Charges: With the GM's permission, a character can use an Adjustment Power just to affect a target power's Charges. Divide the Active Points in the power by the number of Charges it has. Using the resulting "point total" for each Charge, apply the Adjustment Power as per normal.

If a power has Continuing Charges, and an Adjustment Power is applied to it, the Adjustment

Power typically affects the entire power (*i.e.,* all Charges, whether in use or not), not just the Charge currently in effect. However, at the GM's option, a character could declare that he wants to Adjust only the Charge(s) in effect at a particular time (or the GM may restrict him to doing so).

Gradual Effect: If a character applies the *Gradual Effect* Limitation to a negative Adjustment Power, such as Drain or Transfer, the target doesn't start regaining lost points until all increments of effect have accrued. Once the last increment accrues, he starts regaining lost points at the specified rate for the power. The same is *not* true of Adjustment Powers that boost or improve game elements, such as Aid; their effects fade at the standard rate regardless of the Gradual Effect increment. If the GM feels any of this might be abusive or pose game balance problems, he should forbid such powers.

Increased Return Rate (-¼ or more): For some powers, a character may want to increase the rate at which the Character Points added or removed by an Adjustment Power fade or return.

If an Adjustment Power doesn't have the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage, then every doubling of the amount of points that fade/return per time increment is a -¼ Limitation, *Increased Fade(Return) Rate:* -¼ if the points fade/return at 10 per time increment; -½ if the points fade/return at the rate of 20 per time increment; and so on (assuming the GM allows any further increase in the rate of fade/return). If all the points fade/return immediately when 1 Turn or some lesser increment of time passes, that's worth a flat -½ (the GM may reduce this to -¼ if the Adjustment Power typically adds/removes 10 or fewer Character Points).

If an Adjustment Power has the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage, the Limitation described above simply reduces the value of the Advantage, but the Advantage has a minimum value of +¼. The GM may alter the value of the Advantage as he sees fit to preserve game balance.

Limited Special Effect (-¼ or more): If a character buys an Adjustment Power to affect a specific Power (Aid Energy Blast, Drain Telekinesis), it takes this Limitation if it can only affect that Power when the Power has a particular special effect. Examples include Aid Energy Blast, Fire Special Effect Only (-½), or Drain Telekinesis, Mentalism Special Effect Only (-½). The value of the Limitation depends upon how common the special effect is; a Very Common special effect would be worth -¼, a Common special effect -½, and an Uncommon special effect -1.

One Use At A Time (-½): If a character cannot use an Adjustment Power on a target a subsequent time until the first use fades entirely, it takes this Limitation.

Only Restores To Starting Values (-½): Some Adjustment Powers can raise Characteristics and Powers far above their starting levels. If an Adjustment Power can only restore lost Characteristics and Powers (but not raise them above starting values), it's bought with a -½ Limitation. Characters cannot take this Limitation for Healing (which by definition only restores Characteristics and Powers to their starting levels) or for Adjustment Powers with a Variable Effect defined as affecting "Characteristics and Powers below starting value."

Self Only (-½): An Adjustment Power that can affect others, such as Aid, may take this Limitation if the character who buys it can only use it on himself. A similar Limitation is *Others Only* (-½), meaning the character who buys the Power can never use it on himself.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Normal Characteristic Maxima: Adjustment Powers are not affected by the cost-doubling imposed by Normal Characteristic Maxima (see page 32). They add or remove points in a Characteristic or Power at the standard rate, even if the character has paid extra points to buy that Characteristic or Power above the defined threshold.

# ATTACK POWERS

Attack Powers are those Powers characters primarily use in an offensive manner in combat. They typically require an Attack Roll or ECV Attack Roll to use, and their effect is to cause damage to, hinder, or otherwise harm the target. Of course, characters can often use these Powers for other purposes — using an Energy Blast to dig a trench, for example. Similarly, characters can use other Powers, such as Change Environment, to attack their enemies (and in such cases, those Powers should be considered Attack Powers). Attack Powers are Powers that are primarily offensive in nature.

**LIMITATIONS**

Most of the Power Modifiers (see pages 243-309), particularly the Advantages, apply primarily (though not necessarily exclusively) to Attack Powers. The ones listed here include just a few examples of other Limitations applicable to Attack Powers.

Beam (-¼): This Limitation represents a Ranged Attack Power that manifests as a thin/narrow beam or similar type of effect. You can use it to build lasers, bullets, arrows, and similar types of attacks.

Beam has several important effects. First, a character cannot Spread a Beam attack (see page 380). Second, characters must use Beam attacks at maximum damage; they cannot use them at reduced effect. Third, when it damages characters or items, a Beam attack does so by "puncturing" them rather than blasting or blowing open a larger hole — unlike most attacks, which create a human-size hole whenever they exceed the DEF+BODY of a wall or similar object (see page 449). This makes it very difficult for a character to blast down a door or escape from an Entangle using a Beam attack, for example.

Characters often buy Beam attacks with the Limitations *Cannot Be Bounced* and *No Knockback,* but they're not required. Attacks that affect an area (either inherently, or because they have the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantage) cannot take Beam.

**THE ATTACK POWERS ARE:**

Characteristics (STR only)
Darkness
Dispel
Drain
Ego Attack
Energy Blast (EB)
Entangle
Flash
Hand-To-Hand Attack (HA)
Images
Killing Attack, Hand-To-Hand (HKA)
Killing Attack, Ranged (RKA)
Mental Illusions
Mind Control
Suppress
Telekinesis
Transfer
Transform
Powers with the *Usable As Attack* Advantage

**THE BODY-AFFECTING POWERS ARE:**

Density Increase
Desolidification
Duplication
Extra Limbs
Growth
Multiform
Shape Shift
Shrinking
Stretching



**THE DEFENSE POWERS ARE:**

Armor
Characteristics (PD and ED only)
Damage Reduction
Damage Resistance
Flash Defense
Force Field
Force Wall
Knockback Resistance
Lack Of Weakness
Mental Defense
Missile Deflection & Reflection
Power Defense

Can Be Missile Deflected (-¼): Characters cannot normally Missile Deflect some Attack Powers — such as Mental Powers, Powers bought with the *Area Of Effect* Advantage, and most Entangles — unless those Powers take this Limitation.

Cannot Be Used With [Specific Combat Maneuver] (-¼ or -½): This Limitation represents an Attack Power (usually bought to simulate a weapon) that a character cannot use with a specific Combat Maneuver. For example, characters cannot use some weapons, such as slings, with Rapid Fire. The value of the Limitation depends upon the effectiveness, usefulness, and commonality of the Combat Maneuver in the campaign. For example, in a four-color superheroes campaign, Suppression Fire might be uncommon, so the inability to use it with a particular Attack Power might only be worth -¼. On the other hand, in a "special forces" military action-adventure campaign, Suppression Fire might be very common, so inability to use that Maneuver would be worth -½.

Cannot Be Used With Multiple-Power Attacks (-¼): A character cannot use an Attack Power with this Limitation in a multiple-power attack (see page 358). Characters can only apply this Limitation to Powers they can ordinarily use in multiple-power attacks; if a power is bought in such a way that it would be difficult or impossible to use it in a multiple-power attack, he cannot take this Limitation for it.

Cannot Use Targeting (-½): This Limitation, which only characters in campaigns that use the Hit Location rules can take, signifies that the character cannot target the Attack Power at specific areas of the body. The Attack Power does the same damage regardless of where it hits, or is so unwieldy the character cannot aim it accurately. For example, a spell that inflicts a wasting disease on someone, resulting in the target's rapid death, should not receive extra damage for Hit Locations, since it affects the whole body at once. Therefore it would take this Limitation.

No Knockback (-¼): An Attack Power with this Limitation never does Knockback, regardless of how much BODY the attacker rolls. Characters can only apply this Limitation to powers that normally do Knockback. In most cases, an Attack Power that does No Knockback exerts no pressure — the character can't use it to flip a switch or push a button, for example. However, it may, at the GM's discretion and based upon the nature of the special effects involved, exert pressure.

## LESS THAN FULL DICE

As a general rule, unless the specific rules for an Attack Power indicate otherwise, here's what a half die of one (or a single point of damage) costs:

| If A Full Die Costs... | Then A Half Die Costs... |
|---|---|
| 15 points | 10 points (or 5 points for 1 point) |
| 10 points | 5 points (or 3 points for 1 point) |
| 5 points | 3 points (or 2 points for 1 point) |
| 3 points | 1½ points (or 1 point for 1 point) |

# BODY-AFFECTING POWERS

Body-Affecting Powers alter a character's physical form or nature in some way. They may change a character's shape (Shape Shift, Stretching), size (Growth, Shrinking), or other properties (Density Increase, Desolidification).

**Character Mass**

Three Body-Affecting Powers — Density Increase, Growth, and Shrinking — alter a character's mass. If a character uses both Density Increase and Growth at the same time, all mass multipliers add together. Thus, a character with 15 points of Growth and 5 points of Density Increase has x16 normal human mass. If a character uses both Density Increase and Shrinking at once, determine the character's mass based on the use of Shrinking, then double that mass for each level of Density Increase in effect.

**LIMITATIONS**

Must Be Used At Full Power (-0): A character may want to have Density Increase, Growth, or Shrinking that he has to use at full effect. In most cases this is a -0 Limitation, but the GM may increase the value to -¼ if he believes this condition would significantly hinder the character in some circumstances. The value may depend, in part, on how big, dense, or small the character can become. The difference between 1" tall and 2" tall probably isn't enough to qualify for more than -0, but if a character's only option is to become 64" tall, the case for a higher Limitation value is stronger.

# DEFENSE POWERS

Defense Powers protect the character from damage or harm in some way. This includes Powers that offer physical protection, such as Armor, and Powers that protect less tangible things, such as Mental Defense or Power Defense.

Just because a Power isn't listed here doesn't mean characters can't use it defensively. For example, characters often use Desolidification as a defense (if an attack can't touch someone, it can't hurt him). However, Desolidification's primary purpose is to allow a character to move through solid objects, not to protect against attacks, so it's not a Defense Power.

If a character buys a Defense Power that requires him to specify how many points of PD and ED it provides (such as Armor or Force Field) as a slot in a Power Framework, he must still define the points when he buys the Power. If he uses the Power at less than full strength, he reduces its protection in proportion — he cannot vary the defense provided or change the allocation. For example, suppose a character has a Multipower with a 60-point reserve. One of the slots is a Force Field (30 PD/30 ED). The Force Field must always provide PD and ED in equal proportion. If he only uses 10 points' worth of Force Field, it provides 5 PD/5 ED — he cannot only use 10 points of PD without using any ED.

## ADVANTAGES

Area Of Effect, Explosion: Generally, characters should not apply Area Of Effect or Explosion to Defense Powers. If a character wants to grant a Defense Power to a large number of characters, he should use the *Usable On Others* Advantage. However, in some situations, based on special effects and other considerations, a GM might allow Area Of Effect Defense Powers.

Hardened (+¼): This Power Advantage "hardens" a particular defense, enabling it to counteract the Power Advantages *Armor Piercing, Penetrating,* and *Indirect.* Attacks with these Advantages apply normally against Hardened Defenses — the Advantage is ignored. (Characters can buy Hardened multiple times to counteract the Advantages bought together or multiple times, or to counteract an attack that has two or more of these Advantages.)

A character's normal PD and ED, as well as any Defense Power, can be Hardened. A character must buy Hardened with each of his Defenses separately; a character who has a Hardened Force Field doesn't automatically get Hardened Flash Defense or Armor, for example.

If a character buys Hardened for his normal PD and ED, he calculates the cost based on the value of the PD/ED Characteristic, not just on the points he spent on it. For example, if a character wanted to buy Hardened (+¼) on 20 PD (which cost him, say, 16 Character Points), he pays 5 Character Points (20 x (1 + ¼) - 20).

For purposes of overcoming Hardened, Armor Piercing, Penetrating, and Indirect are considered together, not separately. A single level of Hardened will not stop both Armor Piercing and Penetrating bought for a single Power — that requires two levels of Hardened. A character who buys Hardened defenses can define which Advantage the Hardened affects in this situation when he buys the Advantage.

> Example: *Lazer has an Energy Blast with the Advantages Armor Piercing and Penetrating. He shoots Defender, who has Hardened ED Armor. Defender only bought Hardened one time, so he can't stop both the Armor Piercing and the Penetrating effect. Deeming the Penetrating effect to be worse, Defender decided his Hardened defenses would stop it, not the AP effect, when he bought the Advantage. Therefore, he only applies half his defenses to stop Lazer's blast, but the Armor stops the Penetrating effect.*

A character cannot have partially Hardened defenses. A given defense must be all Hardened, or it's not Hardened at all. A character can, however, have some defenses that are Hardened, and others that are not. For example, a character could Harden his natural PD and ED, but not his Armor. If a character has some defenses that are Hardened, and some that are not, the Hardened defense applies in full against an Armor Piercing attack, and non-Hardened defenses have half value as usual. Against Penetrating or Indirect, any Hardened defense, no matter where it's layered in, stops the Advantage from affecting the character. (Of course, GMs should remain wary of players who attempt to unfairly exploit this rule by buying a tiny amount of some defense and making it Hardened just to stop Penetrating attacks.)



## LIMITATIONS

Ablative (-½, -1): A Defense Power with this Limitation is shot off little by little by attacks. As an Ablative Defense takes damage, it acquires a lower and lower Activation Roll (see page 283), until the defense is gone altogether. The value of the Limitation depends on whether STUN or BODY reduces the defense.

At the -1 value, if the STUN or BODY damage done by an attack exceeds the Ablative Defense, the Ablative Defense acquires an Activation Roll of 15-. Each time an attack exceeds the Ablative Defense thereafter, the Activation Roll drops by one (14-, 13-, 12-, 11-, 10-, 9-, 8-, gone). At the -½ level, the Ablative Defense is only reduced if the BODY damage of an attack exceeds it.

Every time an attack hits, the character makes the Ablative Defense's Activation Roll. If he succeeds, the Ablative Defense affects the attack. If he fails the Activation Roll, the Ablative Defense doesn't affect the attack (and the Activation Roll does not drop regardless of how much damage the character takes). If a character's Ablative defenses are hit by multiple attacks in the same Segment or

**THE MENTAL POWERS ARE:**

Ego Attack
Mental Illusions
Mind Control
Mind Link
Mind Scan
Telepathy



from the same source (such as Autofire, or a Coordinated attack), each hit that can reduce the defense does so. (Thus, five hits could potentially reduce the Activation Roll five steps, even if they all occur on the same DEX in the same Phase.)

If a character has mixed types of defenses, some Ablative and some not Ablative, the Ablative defense is always "on top" — it takes damage first, and is affected by any attacks that exceed it, even if those attacks do not penetrate the non-Ablative defenses beneath it. (If the character has multiple Ablative defenses, the weakest one is "on top" for these purposes.)

If a character with Ablative Defenses uses the rules for Hit Locations and Sectional Defenses (see pages 414-15), he should spread his Ablative Defense around the covered Hit Locations in a roughly equal fashion (unless it's known from the way the character buys or builds the defenses which parts are Ablative and which are not). For example, if the character builds his breastplate as Ablative, but doesn't take the Limitation for his helmet, greaves, or gauntlets, it's obvious which Hit Locations the Ablative Defense protects. Only attacks that hit the Locations it protects affect this sort of Ablative Defense; hits to other locations cannot reduce it.

A character can restore his Ablative Defenses to their starting values at the end of each adventure, or more frequently given the GM's permission. This works just like Charges (page 284).

If a character buys an Ablative Defense Power through a Focus, attackers may specifically target the Focus with an attack and damage it per the normal rules for damaging Foci (see page 293), regardless of its Ablative qualities.

At the GM's option, Ablative can function in a different, but somewhat simpler, fashion: for a -1 Limitation, every shot against which an Ablative Defense Power provides protection and which could, if a good enough roll were achieved, do BODY damage to the target reduces the Defense Power by 5 Active Points, regardless of whether the target itself takes damage. This Limitation would only be worth -¼ for Defense Powers such as Mental Defense and Power Defense which are not ordinarily "attacked" with Powers which cause BODY damage. The GM may even apply this form of Ablative to non-Defense Powers if he wishes.

Linked: A character cannot buy two parts of a Defense Power separately and then Link them. For example, a character can't Link a Force Field (20 ED) to a Force Field (20 PD), or Link Physical Damage Reduction to Energy Damage Reduction. Characters can buy a single Defense Power in two or more "parts" (this is often done when different Power Modifiers apply to the two "parts"), but Linking those "parts" is illegal.

Only Works Against Limited Type Of Attack (-½, -1): This Limitation represents a Defense Power which only protects against a limited type of damage. If the Defense Power only protects the character against a Limited class of attacks or type of damage (such as Fire or Sonic attacks), the Limitation is worth -½. If it only protects against a Very Limited class of attacks or type of damage (such as Magical Fire attacks or Sonic Killing Attacks), the Limitation is worth -1.

# MENTAL POWERS

Mental Powers define a character's mental, rather than physical, abilities. They directly affect the target's mind, ignoring conventional defenses. Characters target Mental Powers with EGO Combat Value (ECV), using an ECV Attack Roll:

**ECV Attack Roll = 11 + Attacker's ECV - Defender's ECV**

The character must roll equal to or less than this number on 3d6 to hit a target with a Mental Power. Willing targets can voluntarily lower their ECV to 0, making it easy for a friendly mentalist to "lock on." A willing target can also lower his Mental Defense to 0 (or not "turn it on" if it's not already in use). A sleeping or unconscious mind has ECV 0.

A character who purchases any Mental Power receives Mental Awareness (page 163) for free, unless the rules note otherwise. His Mental Awareness functions whenever he wants it to, even if the Mental Power is a slot in a Power Framework, unless the GM rules otherwise. The character can buy Sense Modifiers for his free Mental Awareness at the usual cost for such Modifiers without having to pay for the Mental Awareness itself.

## LINE OF SIGHT

Mental Powers do not have the standard Range (5" x Active Points) — a character can use them to attack any character within his *Line Of Sight* (LOS). LOS means the character has direct perception of or can perceive any part of the target with a Targeting Sense. A character can establish LOS with any Targeting Sense. The Range Modifier does not apply to Mental Powers.

Don't read the term "line of sight" literally. First, a character can establish LOS with Targeting Senses other than Sight. Second, he cannot attack any speck on the horizon with his Mental Powers just because he can perceive it. He must at least recognize the target as a being with a mind of some sort that's susceptible to mental attack before he can attack it with Mental Powers. Third, a character doesn't literally have to "keep his eye on" a target at all times to maintain LOS; he just has to be able to do so if he's perceiving in that direction.

Conventional barriers don't stop Mental Powers. For example, a mentalist with N-Ray Perception could use his Ego Attack to attack a target through a wall, so long as he could establish LOS to the target. Once a continuing-effect Mental Power is established, a character doesn't need to maintain LOS for its effects to continue, to continue feeding END to the power, or to change the level of effect.

In some cases the GM may require a character to make an appropriate PER Roll or EGO Roll (perhaps with a modifier, usually a bonus of +3 or more) to make sure he has sufficient LOS to use

a Mental Power. If he fails the roll, either no LOS exists, or the level of recognizability is "fuzzy." In the latter case, the GM might consider imposing the Range Modifier on the mental attack, to simulate the difficulty the character has "locking on" to the target.

At the GM's option, a character with a Mental Power may make a successful mental attack even when he does not have LOS. If the character attacks a target he cannot perceive, but of whose location he's reasonably sure, halve his OECV. If he lacks LOS but has a fairly precise idea of where a target is (for example, he knows someone's hiding in a particular closet or the trunk of a car), his OECV might only suffer a -1 to -3 penalty. To use this rule, the character must have some reasonable idea of the location of the target mind — he can't just lash out at random, hoping to hit something with half OECV. The GM determines whether a character can attempt an attack when he lacks LOS.

A character must establish LOS with his "naked eye" — with his Targeting Senses unaided by any outside enhancements. Thus, he could use his innate Telescopic Sight to establish LOS, but not binoculars. Characters cannot establish LOS through Clairsentience, television, or similar methods.

### CLASSES OF MINDS

At their base level, all Mental Powers (including Ego Attack) affect only one class of minds. The basic classes include Human, Animal, Machine, and Alien; the GM can add other classes or alter these as he sees fit. A character's Mental Powers operate against other minds like his as a default; for example, unless specified otherwise, a human's Mental Powers work on Human minds, not on Animal minds or Machine minds. When a character purchases Mental Powers, he may specify that they work against a different class of minds.

A character who wishes to have Mental Powers that affect, for example, computers and other machines must buy the Powers at full cost, defined as affecting that class of minds. He cannot buy Mental Powers that affect Human minds and take a Limitation on them (such as *Only Affects Computers*). When using Mental Powers on machines that have INT but not EGO, substitute INT for EGO as appropriate.

Mental Powers may affect more than one class of mind if purchased with an Adder, and limited types of minds if purchased with a Limitation; see *Advantages And Adders* and *Limitations,* below. Alternately, at the GM's discretion a character can use his Mental Powers against a class of minds they can't normally affect at -3 to all ECV Attack Rolls and -10 to all Effect Rolls (except for Ego Attack, which only suffers a -5 Effect Roll).

The class of minds rules are intended to provide flavor and intriguing options for Mental Powers — not as a cheap way for abusive players to try to make their characters immune to most mental attacks. Unless the GM indicates otherwise, assume all player characters in the campaign are affected as if they belong to the Human class of minds, regardless of their nature, where they come from, or the like. For example, a PC who's an android is a machine, but if he's smart enough and self-willed enough to function like a human being, he should probably be affected as both the Human and Machine classes of minds (for which he may be allowed to take a Physical Limitation; see page 121).

### EFFECT ROLLS

Once a character makes a successful ECV Attack Roll, he makes an *Effect Roll.* The *HERO System* rates Mental Powers in a number of dice of effect. Roll these dice, total them, and subtract the target's Mental Defense (if any).

For Ego Attacks, the total rolled on the Effect Roll minus the target's Mental Defense equals the STUN damage inflicted on the target.

For other Mental Powers, such as Mental Illusions, the attacker declares the effect he wants to cause. Then he makes his Effect Roll, and the GM compares the roll to the target's EGO on the Effects Table for each Power. If the Effect Roll equals or exceeds the target's EGO plus a modifier based on the desired effect, the attack succeeds.

Typically, if a character using a continuing-effect Mental Power tries to achieve a specified level of effect, but the roll only achieves a lesser degree of effect, the attack fails altogether. However, the GM may, in his discretion, allow the character to achieve a lesser effect instead.

Mind Link requires no Effect Roll.

### RESISTING AND BREAKING FREE FROM MENTAL POWERS

The target can attempt to resist a successful Mental Illusions, Mind Control, Mind Scan, or Telepathy attack with a modified EGO Roll called a *Breakout Roll.*

Starting on the target's next Phase after being successfully attacked with a continuing-effect Mental Power, he may attempt to break free from the Power. These attempts are subconscious and take no time — whether he succeeds, he may still act in that Phase. Since he can only react to the effects of a Mental Power on his own Phases, and he gets to make his first Breakout Roll on his first Phase after being successfully attacked with a Mental Power, a character always gets one (but only one) Breakout Roll before he suffers the effects of a Mental Power.

Example: *Darkmind, a mentalist with SPD 6 and EGO 28, uses his Mind Control on Firelord, SPD 6 and DEX 24, in Segment 4. Since Darkmind's EGO is higher than Firelord's DEX, Darkmind acts first on Segment 4. Darkmind's ECV Attack Roll and Effect Roll both succeed. Since Firelord hasn't acted yet in Segment 4, Phase 4 is his "first Phase after being successfully attacked with a Mental Power," and he gets to make a Breakout Roll. His roll succeeds. Since Breakout Rolls take no time, he has his full Phase in which to act.*

*Darkmind survives Firelord's counterattack and decides to go after easier prey. He chooses Firelord's companion Nebula (SPD 5, DEX 23).*



*In Segment 6 Darkmind Mind Controls her to "Attack Firelord!" Since Nebula has SPD 5, she can only respond to and follow this order on Segments 3, 5, 8, 10, and 12 (i.e., she does not act on Segment 6 just because the order was given in that Segment). Therefore, Segment 8 is her first Phase since being Mind Controlled, so she gets her Breakout Roll then. (She's not entitled to a Breakout Roll in Segment 6 just because she was attacked in that Segment.) She fails, and immediately launches an energy blast at the hapless Firelord!*

A character's Breakout Roll equals his EGO Roll (9 + (EGO/5)). Modify the Breakout Roll by -1 for every 5 points of effect rolled over the minimum needed to achieve the desired level of effect on the Effects Table. For example, if a mentalist tries to achieve an EGO +20 effect and rolls EGO +30 for his Effect Roll, the Breakout Roll is at -2.

After the initial attempt to break free, the victim can re-attempt the Breakout Roll at +1 for each step on the Time Chart. The character thus gets to roll at +1 after 1 Turn has passed, +2 after 1 Minute has passed, and so forth. (The victim does *not* get to make a Breakout Roll on each of his Phases — only when specified by the Time Chart.)

**Preventing Deterioration**

A character can prevent his continuing-effect Mental Power from growing weaker (*i.e.,* keep the target from getting progressive bonuses to his Breakout Roll) by continuing to pay END for the Power on each of his Phases. As long as the character pays END on each of his own Phases, the target gets no EGO Roll bonuses for the passage of time (but he does get to roll).

A character cannot feed END to a power this way unless he maintains "mental contact" with the target. (He does not have to maintain LOS.) For example, if he uses a Mental Power that's a slot in a Multipower and then switches to a different slot, or if he's Stunned or Knocked Out, he can no longer feed END to the power. When a character stops paying END to prevent deterioration, the victim makes Breakout Rolls from that point forward — he gets to roll at +1 when the next time interval for one occurs (he's already been making Breakout Rolls at +0 all along, as described above), another at +2 after the next time interval, and so forth.

A character may pay END to keep a Mental Power from deteriorating even if the Mental Power is bought to cost half END or 0 END. He must pay the Power's full normal END cost (1 END per 10 Active Points) to do so.

Maintaining a continuing-effect Mental Power by paying END each Phase does not prevent a character from using the same Mental Power on another target.

## INSTANT AND CONSTANT MENTAL POWERS

With two exceptions, Mental Powers are Instant Powers. A character pays END when he uses a Mental Power, regardless of whether it succeeds. Once a character successfully uses a continuing-effect Mental Power, he need not pay END to maintain the effect — the target continues to follow the order, see the illusion, or communicate at the same level until he resists the effect with a successful Breakout Roll. If a character using a continuing-effect Mental Power is Stunned or Knocked Out, the Power continues to affect the target. If a character has a continuing-effect Mental Power in a Multipower or Variable Power Pool, he may use the Power on a target, then switch to another slot or Power without "erasing" the effects of the Power. However, he would have to recover from being Stunned, wake up, or switch the Framework back to that Power, and then succeed with an ECV Attack Roll against the target, to change the Power in any way or to keep paying END to prevent the target from getting bonuses to his Breakout Roll. If the character loses his LOS on the target, the Power continues to affect the target and the character may continue to feed it END or attempt to change the level of effect.

To give a new order with Mind Control, change a Mental Illusion, or communicate on a different Telepathic level, the character must again attack with his Mental Power. He makes a new ECV Attack Roll, rerolls his Effect Roll and compares it to the Effects Table, and pays the END cost. If the

ECV Attack Roll fails, the Power remains at its current level of effect. If the ECV Attack Roll succeeds, but the Effect Roll is insufficient to give the new order, change the illusion, or communicate at a different level, the Power ceases to affect the target (in failing to alter his "grasp" on the target's mind, the character has lost hold of it entirely).

Example: *Darkmind's Multipower has Mind Control, Mental Illusions, Telepathy, and Telekinesis slots. After using his Mind Control on Nebula, in Segment 10 he switches to his Telekinesis slot so he can throw a car at Firelord. The effects of his Mind Control do not disappear simply because he switched slots; however, he cannot alter the level of effect on the Mind Control without switching back to his Mind Control slot, nor can he feed END to it to keep it from deteriorating over time. If Darkmind wishes to increase the level of his Mind Control over Nebula, he must re-establish mental contact with her by making an ECV Attack Roll and then make an Effect Roll.*

There are two exceptions to these general rules. The first is Mind Scan, which is a Constant Power — the character must constantly maintain his "lock-on" or it vanishes. If he has Mind Scan in a Multipower or Variable Power Pool and switches from using Mind Scan to another slot or Power, the Mind Scan lock-on immediately breaks. However, unlike other Constant Powers, a character need only pay END for Mind Scan on Phases in which he makes an ECV Attack Roll with it. The second exception is Mind Link, which is Persistent.

### THE PERCEIVABILITY OF MENTAL POWERS

All Mental Powers are invisible to characters who do not themselves have a Mental Power or Mental Awareness. However, the target of a mental attack can sense the source of the attack and knows what Power he's been attacked with. This identification occurs immediately for Ego Attack, Mind Scan, and Telepathy; for Mind Control or Mental Illusions it usually occurs after the Power no longer affects the character. Of course, a mentalist can buy a Mental Power with the Power Advantage *Invisible Power Effects* (versus Mental Senses); in this case, the target would not be able to sense the source of the attack (but would know he'd been attacked with a particular Mental Power). A mentalist can prevent a target from knowing he's been attacked with a Mental Power by achieving a +20 effect on his Effect Roll.

### COMPETING MENTAL POWERS

A character with Mental Powers can help another character who's affected by one of the continuing-effect Mental Powers. Once an attacker has established one of these Powers on a character, another character can attempt to break the victim free by using Telepathy, Mind Control, or, in some cases, Mental Illusions (the GM determines which Powers work in a given situation). After making a successful ECV Attack Roll (the target cannot lower his EGO voluntarily), the character makes his Effect Roll. If the total equals or exceeds the total of the initial effect, the victim is freed.

Example: *Capt. Burke of the Psi-Patrol used her Mind Control 12d6 to force a soldier to attack his comrades. The total of her Effect Roll was 45. Another mentalist, Hugo, tries to help the soldier break free. After making a successful ECV Attack Roll, Hugo rolls his Telepathy 10d6. His Effect Roll is 47 (a great roll), which is just enough to break the Mind Control. Hugo frees the soldier from Burke's Mind Control.*

A similar situation occurs when a character is under the effect of two Mental Powers at once (for example, when two different mentalists both Mind Control him, but the orders aren't inherently contradictory). In this situation, if the character can react to both effects, he does so; if he can only react to one, he first reacts to the one that achieved its effect by the greatest amount (not necessarily the one that had the highest Effect Roll). If the lesser effect is maintained while the victim reacts to the first one, the victim has to do as that effect dictates after he complies with the first one.

At the GM's option, a competing Mental Power that doesn't achieve a high enough Effect Roll to free the victim from the first Mental Power's effect may still help him break free. The Breakout Roll penalty (if any) achieved by the competing Mental Power reduces the Breakout Roll penalty imposed by the initial Power. For example, if Capt. Burke achieved a Mind Control result that was high enough to impose a -5 penalty on the Breakout Roll, and Hugh's Effect Roll with a competing Mental Power is high enough to impose a -2 penalty, the "penalty" from Hugh's Power reduces the penalty for breaking free from Capt. Burke's Power to -3.

### COMPLEMENTARY MENTAL POWERS

In some situations, two characters may want to help each other by affecting a target with the same Mental Power (for example, by both giving the target the same orders with their Mind Control powers). To do this, both characters must make successful ECV Attack Rolls, and each must make an EGO Roll (to simulate their ability to "coordinate" their attacks). If all rolls succeed, the character with the lesser level of power (*i.e.,* the fewest dice in the power) may roll ¼ of his dice and add the total to the other character's Effect Roll. The characters do not need to Coordinate or act on the same EGO or Phase to do this. Even though both characters are now "in the target's mind," the more powerful character controls the power they're using to affect the target. If the two characters begin to issue contradictory orders, describe different illusions, or the like, refer to "Competing Mental Powers," above.

### POWERS

Dispel: Characters cannot Dispel the effects of an Instant continuing-effect Mental Power, such as Mind Control (see page 150).

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Multiple Classes: Normally, Mental Powers only affect one class of minds (see above). For every +10 Character Points, a Mental Power can affect an additional class of minds after the first. Characters can purchase this Adder multiple times, and the GM may alter its value as appropriate for the campaign.

Area Of Effect, Explosion: Characters target Area Of Effect Mental Powers using OECV against DECV 3. A character does not need to have Line Of Sight on all possible targets in the Area Of Effect to affect them; he need only have LOS to the target point of the area.

In the case of Mental Powers that require a specific command or description of effect from the mentalist, such as Mind Control or Mental Illusions, the effect must be the same for everyone in the Area Of Effect — the character cannot attack one victim with a Mental Illusion of a dragon, while attacking the victim next to him with a Mental Illusion of Mechanon. At the GM's option, the character can vary his command or effect if he buys his Area Of Effect as Selective.

These same rules apply to Explosion.

Armor Piercing: When purchased for a continuing-effect Mental Power, this Advantage only reduces the target's Mental Defense (if any). It has no effect on the target's EGO.

Autofire: This Advantage costs an additional +1 when applied to Mental Powers, because they affect a non-standard defense.

When bought for a continuing-effect Mental Power, Autofire allows a character to try to use that power on one or more minds at once, up to the limit of his Autofire, but he must use the same command, illusion, or the like on all affected targets. If a character uses an Autofire Mental Power against a single target, the attacker can make one Effect Roll for each attack which hits. The best Effect Roll applies to the target, with a -1 to the Breakout Roll for each additional hit achieved by the attacker.

Continuous: At the GM's option, when a character applies *Continuous* to continuing-effect Mental Powers, he may attempt to achieve a different level of effect without making another ECV Attack Roll — he need only reroll his dice of effect (this requires an Attack Action, though). Alternately or in addition, a Continuous continuing-effect Mental Power won't deteriorate (*i.e.,* Breakout Rolls don't become easier over time), even if the mentalist does not feed it any additional END, or is Stunned or Knocked Out.

Cumulative: If a character buys this Advantage for a continuing-effect Mental Power, the target is not affected by it, and does not get to make a Breakout Roll, until the first Phase in which the total rolled by the attacker equals or exceeds the amount needed to achieve the desired effect. Until that time the Power has no effect (though the target realizes he's being attacked with that Mental Power). If he wants, a character can declare when he starts using the power that he wants to attain an extra effect to impose penalties to the Breakout Roll — but the Breakout Roll doesn't occur until he hits the full point total he's indicated in advance.

Invisible Power Effects: If the GM uses the "effects of the Power can be made undetectable" option (page 262), characters don't have to buy IPE for continuing-effect Mental Powers. Instead, they can achieve the same result by getting a +20 effect on their Effect Roll. This hides from the victim the fact that he has been subject to a Mental Power — he will not know, for example, that his mind has been read with Telepathy.

Transdimensional: With the exception of Mind Scan, characters must apply Indirect to Mental Powers before buying Transdimensional.

**LIMITATIONS**

Based On CON (-1): You can use the *HERO System*'s Mental Powers to create some drugs or other physical effects. To simulate this, characters can buy a Mental Power to affect targets through their CON instead of their EGO. A Power with this Limitation becomes a normal attack with a range of 5" x Active Points, is targeted with CV instead of ECV (unless the GM allows the character to choose otherwise), is perceivable by three Sense Groups, is subject to the Range Modifier, and requires an Attack Roll to hit its target. The target's Energy Defense or Physical Defense, not Mental Defense, applies against the attack (the character defines which Characteristic applies when he buys the power, and cannot change it thereafter). Compare the Effect Roll to the target's CON (substitute CON for EGO on the Effects Table of the Mental Power). A Mental Power Based On CON lasts until the target shrugs off its effects, which requires a successful CON-based Breakout Roll made with the standard modifiers (if applicable).

When sufficiently affected by a Mental Power Based on CON, a character responds to the first person to give commands: for Telepathy, he answers the first question asked; if Mind Controlled, he obeys the first order given him; for Mental Illusions, he responds to the first illusion described to him. Of course, the attacker isn't always the first person to give a command....

Powers with this Limitation are automatically perceivable, just like normal attacks. Buying a Mental Power with this Limitation does not enable a character to detect Mental Powers (*i.e.,* it does not grant Mental Awareness for free).

Some Mental Powers, like Mind Scan, do not work well based on CON, but several others create interesting dynamics. A good way to build a truth serum or other "mind drug" would be the appropriate Mental Power, Based On CON, NND (defense is Resistant PD), No Range, OAF Fragile. This creates a drug that has to be injected and lasts until the victim overcomes its effects.

Cannot Be Used Through Mind Link (-¼): This Limitation represents a Mental Power a character cannot use through a Mind Link. See *Mind Link,* page 204.

Costs Endurance To Maintain (-¼, -½): This Limitation represents a continuing-effect Mental Power

that costs END both to activate and to maintain. If the character wants to keep the Power working, he must pay END for it each Phase; if he does not, it instantly stops affecting the target. At the -¼ level, the Mental Power costs half of its END cost to maintain; at -½, it costs full END to maintain. In either case, this END only maintains the Power, it does not prevent it from "deteriorating" so that Breakout Rolls become easier (to do that, he must pay END a second time each Phase).

Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-¼): A Mental Power with this Limitation does not grant Mental Awareness to the character. (At the GM's option, characters with multiple Mental Powers that would take this Limitation should instead take *No Mental Awareness* as a 5-point Physical Limitation.)

Eye Contact Required (-½): A Mental Power with this Limitation requires the character to establish eye contact to make an ECV Attack Roll. Typically a character can only make eye contact with a target within 3" of him in decent light. Once the ECV Attack Roll is made, the eye contact can be broken without disturbing the effect of the power (if eye contact must be maintained throughout the use of the power, this is a -1 Limitation).

Limited Class Of Minds (-½, -1): If a Mental Power only works against a subset of a class of minds (such as a Mental Power that works on Humans, but *Only Works On Men*), it takes a -½ Limitation. A Mental Power which only works against a single species or type of mind (such as a Mental Power that works on Animals, but *Only Works On Sharks*), it takes a -1 Limitation.

> Example: *Haxxorz, a human cyberkinetic, has Mental Powers which affect the Machine class of minds. If his powers affect only Macintosh computers, he takes a -½ Limitation on them; if he can only affect iMacs, he takes a -1 Limitation.*

Mandatory Effect (varies): A continuing-effect Mental Power takes this Limitation if the character must achieve a certain level of effect for the power to have any effect at all. If the Power must achieve EGO +10 or fail to work, the Limitation is worth -¼; EGO +20, -½; EGO +30 or greater, -¾. If the character always has to achieve a certain effect (victim never remembers Mind Control, victim is never aware Telepathy has been used on him), this Limitation is worth an additional -¼.

No Range: If a character takes this Limitation for a Mental Power, he still targets it with ECV — he just can't use it against targets outside of HTH Combat distance. (To simulate a mental power that requires the character to touch his victim, also apply the Limitation *Requires A Skill Roll* [typically a DEX Roll or Attack Roll].)

Normal Range (-¼): A Mental Power with this Limitation has a normal range (5" x Active Points), but is not subject to the Range Modifier. The mentalist must still have Line Of Sight to make an ECV Attack Roll, but his Powers can only affect targets within his range. If a character takes this Limitation for a continuing-effect Mental Power and the target travels beyond the Power's Range, the Power immediately stops affecting the target.

At the GM's option, if a Mental Power with this Limitation does not have its full normal range, the character can redefine it as *Limited Normal Range* (-½).

Skin Contact Required (-1): A Mental Power with this Limitation requires the character to establish skin-to-skin contact to make an ECV Attack Roll. Otherwise it functions similarly to *Eye Contact Required.* A power with this Limitation cannot also take the *No Range* Limitation. "Skin Contact" means just that — contact between the attacker's skin and the target's skin. Anything which gets in the way, even a superhero's skintight costume, prevents the character from using the power. If a target's clothing reveals only a portion of his skin, the character must make an Attack Roll (with appropriate Hit Location modifiers) to touch the unclothed area.

Stops Working If Mentalist Is Knocked Out (-¼) or Stunned (-½): Ordinarily a character simply "starts" the proper effect of a continuing-effect Mental Power by making an ECV Attack Roll, and then can leave the power to work on its own. Even if he's Knocked Out or Stunned, the Power keeps working. If this Limitation is taken, Knocking Out (-¼) or Stunning (-½) the character causes the Power to shut off instantly. This Limitation is not normally the same as the *Concentration* Limitation; a character may take both Limitations (unless the GM rules otherwise).

**DISADVANTAGES**

Physical Limitation: A character who can be affected as two or more classes of minds can take a Physical Limitation to reflect that. The value of the Disadvantage depends on which classes of minds he's affected as (and how many), the prevalence of Mental Powers in the campaign, and so forth. In most cases it's worth 5 Character Points (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing).

Vulnerability: If a character is Vulnerable to a continuing-effect Mental Power, all Effect Rolls against him are multiplied by the Vulnerability multiplier before subtracting Mental Defense (if any) and comparing them to his EGO.

**THE MOVEMENT POWERS ARE:**

Extra-Dimensional Movement
Faster-Than-Light (FTL) Travel
Flight
Gliding
Leaping
Running
Swimming
Swinging
Teleportation
Tunneling



# MOVEMENT POWERS

Movement Powers allow a character to move from place to place. Some are extensions of existing abilities, like Running or Swimming; others are completely new modes of movement, such as Teleportation or FTL Travel.

All characters begin the game with Running 6", Swimming 2", and a running leap of 1" per 5 STR. In a Heroic campaign, the maxima for movement are Running 10", Swimming 5", and Leaping 5"; the cost of additional Running, Swimming, or Leaping doubles after these maxima. There is no maximum on any form of movement in Superheroic campaigns, or on other forms of movement in Heroic campaigns.

## COMBAT AND NONCOMBAT MOVEMENT

The *HERO System* rules divide movement into two categories: Combat and Noncombat. A character using *Combat Movement* is dodging and looking out for targets and enemy attacks — he moves as fast as he can while still trying to find targets and to present a difficult target for his attackers. A character using Combat Movement retains his full OCV and DCV and can move at his normal movement rate.

A character using *Noncombat Movement* concentrates on moving swiftly, not on finding targets or dodging attacks. Accordingly, his Noncombat Movement rate is double his Combat Movement rate, but he's at ½ DCV and 0 OCV (and ½ DECV and 0 OECV, if appropriate). You can also determine a character's Noncombat Movement DCV from his velocity, though this takes more time (see page 364). All characters can move double their Combat Movement rate with all of their Movement Powers for free; you can double the rate of Noncombat Movement in one movement mode for +5 Character Points. (This does not apply to Extra-Dimensional Movement, which has no "velocity," or FTL Travel, which has its own rule for increasing velocity; Leaping also has special rules for Noncombat Movement. Refer to the individual Power descriptions for further information.)

Example: *Golden Eagle wants to fly and run at incredible velocity. He purchases Running +14" (28 Character Points) and Flight 20" (40 Character Points), giving him a total of 20" in both types of movement. He can move double that rate, or 40", when using Noncombat Movement with either type of movement. After gaining some Experience Points, Golden Eagle pays 10 Character Points for an additional x4 Noncombat Movement multiple for his Flight (making his Noncombat Movement total x8, since his original doubling is free). His Noncombat Movement with his Flight is now 160" (approximately 300 MPH since he has SPD 5); with Running it's still 40". His Flight costs 5 END, regardless of whether he uses Combat or Noncombat Movement.*

A Half Move made with a Movement Power consists of any amount of movement up to half of a character's inches of movement. A character may not use part of this Half Move, perform an Action (even a Zero Phase Action or Action which takes no time), and then use the rest of his Half Move inches of movement as a single Half Phase Action. Characters may make Half Moves when moving at Noncombat velocity.

Example: *Cheshire Cat has Teleportation 20", giving him a 10" Half Move. He wants to Teleport to a room 5" away, look around quickly (a Zero Phase Action), and then Teleport back to his starting location, for a total move of 10" (equivalent to his Half Move). However, since his Teleportation Half Move consists of any Teleportation* up to *10", his first 5" Teleportation is a Half Move — if he wants to Teleport back to his starting location, that requires another Half Move (*i.e., *what he wants to do counts as a Full Move).*

## ACCELERATING AND DECELERATING

A character can accelerate or decelerate up to his full Combat Movement velocity each Phase. Adding or removing velocity is a Zero Phase Action, but characters can do it only once per Phase, unless the GM rules otherwise (as the GM typically does if the character simply wants to move to a location within his inches of movement — the character accelerates while moving there, then slows down and stops when he reaches his destination). Characters can Abort to decelerate if necessary. A character can add or subtract up to 5" velocity per hex he moves, up to his full Combat Movement velocity. Characters may increase their acceleration/deceleration by buying an Advantage (see below).

Example: *Golden Eagle pursues some bank robbers. He can accelerate up to his full Combat Movement in Flight (20") in one Phase; however, it takes him 4" to get up to full speed (20"/5" per hex = 4"). If he flew at full velocity (160"), it would take him eight Phases and 564" of space to come to a complete stop.*

*Later Golden Eagle fights Grond and tries a Move Through with his Flight. Grond is 2" away from him. Because he can only travel 2", Golden Eagle can only accelerate to 10". His Move Through damage derives from that velocity, not his full Combat Movement of 20".*

A character cannot instantly decelerate to 0" by turning off a Movement Power, or by switching to another slot in a Power Framework (if that's how he bought the Power). He may not deactivate the Movement Power until he decelerates to 0" normally or through some outside means (such as being hit with an attack that would stop him from moving), or the GM specifically allows him to.





### ENDURANCE

Unless noted otherwise in a Movement Power's description, all movement costs END at the rate of 1 END per 10 Active Points in the Movement Power, regardless of whether a character uses Combat or Noncombat Movement. (This includes movement the character receives for "free," such as the standard Running 6" and Leaping from STR.) If a character moves at Noncombat velocities, the END cost equals the END he uses to move at Combat velocities — a character with Flight 15" (30 Active Points) and a x8 Noncombat Movement multiple (total of Flight 120") only spends 3 END per Phase. Gliding and FTL Travel don't cost END.

If a character uses less than his full inches of movement, typically he only pays END proportionately (for example, he pays half the power's full END cost when making a Half Move). However, if he's trying to attain full velocity for some reason (to improve Move Through damage, for example), he must pay END for the full number of inches, regardless of how many inches he actually moves.

## MEGAMOVEMENT VELOCITY-BASED DCV

| Levels Of MegaMovement | Velocity-Based DCV |
|---|---|
| 1 | 19 |
| 2 | 39 |
| Each level thereafter | +20 DCV |

### OTHER RULES

Characters with Movement Powers may carry a significant amount of weight without suffering any penalty to their movement... but if they carry too much, the weight slows them down. See *Encumbrance,* page 379, for details.

If characters with unusual Movement Powers (such as Flight or Teleportation) are knocked to the ground, they cannot use those Powers to stand up as a Zero Phase Action unless they have paid for the *Position Shift* Adder (see below).

Movement Powers have perceivable special effects, just like any other Power. In most cases this means others can see the character move (he's running, flying, hovering, teleporting, or what have you), hear his movement (as a rush of wind, footsteps on the ground, a sound effect that accompanies Teleportation, and so forth), and "feel" the movement if the character moves near them or collides with them. The exact special effects of the Power is up to the player, of course. Some forms of Flight might be visible because they leave a glowing energy trail, for example, or the stench of brimstone may accompany a demon's Teleportation.

For more information on movement, including Turn Modes, see pages 363-69.

### POWERS

Adjustment Powers: If a Movement Power is reduced to zero inches of movement by a Drain or similar Adjustment Power, the character is unable to use that mode of movement (not even at Noncombat speeds) until he gets at least 1" of movement back.

### MEGAMOVEMENT POWERS

By applying the *Mega-Scale* Advantage (page 262) to Movement Powers, you can give a character the ability to move at incredibly fast speeds. Assuming a character with 10" movement, SPD 5, and a speed of sound equal to 750 miles per hour, even a single level of MegaMovement allows speeds of over 9,300 miles (15,000 km) per hour — up to Mach 12. Even at its lowest effect, two levels of MegaMovement allow a character to move at up to about Mach 25.

To determine a character's Velocity-Based DCV when using MegaMovement, use the accompanying table.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Sometimes a character wants to apply an Advantage to purchased Running, Swimming, or Leaping — Movement Powers he receives some inches of for free. If he wants that Advantage to also affect the inches of movement he receives for free, he must apply any Advantages to the cost of the Power *including the free points.* For example, if a character buys Running +3" and wants all of his Running to be 0 END, he applies the +½ Advantage to 18 points (9" x 2 points each), even though he's only actually paying 6 points for Running (thus yielding a total cost to the character of [(18 x (1 + ½)) - 12 =] 15 points).

Improved Noncombat Movement: For every +5 Character Points, a character's rate of Noncombat Movement with a single mode of movement doubles. Characters can buy this Adder multiple times. The Normal Characteristic Maxima rules have no effect on the purchase of Improved Noncombat Movement.

Position Shift: Characters with unusual Movement Powers (such as Flight or Teleportation) can use those powers to get to their feet as a Zero Phase Actionafter being knocked down, and without moving any distance, if they buy this +5 Character Point Adder. See also page 235 regarding Teleportation.

Autofire: Autofire has no effect when applied to Movement Powers, except if they're bought *Usable As Attack,* and then can only be used to hit multiple targets.

Based On EGO Combat Value: Characters cannot apply this Advantage to Movement Powers. To create a movement ability that lets the character move when his "EGO" occurs in the combat order, buy Lightning Reflexes with the Movement Power to make the character's DEX equal his EGO for that purpose.

Improved Acceleration/Deceleration (varies): Normally a character can only accelerate up to his full Combat Movement velocity per Phase, and only at the rate of 5" per hex moved. For a +¼ Advantage, *Rapid Noncombat Movement,* a character can attain full Noncombat Movement velocity in a number of Phases equal to the number of doublings of his Noncombat Movement rate. For example, if a character has a x16 Noncombat Movement rate (four doublings), he can reach full Noncombat Movement velocity in four Phases. A character must always make Full Moves while using Rapid Noncombat Movement to attain full velocity.

A character using Rapid Noncombat Movement thus moves a number of inches per Phase equal to his Noncombat Movement divided by his number of Noncombat doublings. For example, a character with Flight 10", x64 Noncombat Multiple (640" Noncombat, six doublings) accelerates at the rate of 107" per Phase (640"/6), with the usual Noncombat Movement penalties (½ DCV, 0 OCV). He moves 107" in his first Phase of acceleration, 214" in his second Phase of acceleration, and so forth until he's at his full velocity of 640". However, he still cannot accelerate/decelerate at a rate greater than 5" per hex moved.

For a +¼ Advantage, *Combat Acceleration/Deceleration,* a character may accelerate or decelerate at a rate equal to his full inches of Combat Movement per hex (instead of the standard 5"/hex), but still cannot accelerate to more than his full inches of Combat Movement in a Phase.

For a +1 Advantage, *Noncombat Acceleration/Deceleration,* a character may accelerate or decelerate at a rate equal to his full inches of Noncombat Movement per hex (and thus can reach his full Noncombat velocity in one Full Phase and one hex of space).

Any form of this Advantage applies to both acceleration and deceleration. Characters don't have to buy it twice to be able to apply it to either action.

Invisible Power Effects: Characters should not normally purchase IPE for the Sight Group for Movement Powers, since the fact that a character has moved from one point to another by some means will be easily perceivable. However, a character could purchase it to, for example, make a Movement Power silent.

No Turn Mode (+¼): ⚠ Normally, many modes of movement (including all forms of vehicular movement) have a Turn Mode (page 367). A character with this +¼ Advantage on a Movement Power does not have a Turn Mode with that Power; he can turn and maneuver freely. This Advantage is most appropriate for certain types of Vehicles; the GM should monitor and regulate its use carefully, particularly when characters buy it for innate forms of movement that require Turn Modes, such as Flight.

Usable [As Second Mode Of Movement] (+¼): A character can use this Advantage, which requires the GM's permission, to make his main Movement Power function as a second mode of movement. Examples include: Flight that's usable underwater as if it were Swimming; ice slides defined as both Running and Gliding (so the character can create one when he's falling and "skate" to the ground safely), and wings defined as both Flight and Gliding. When used as the second mode of movement, the power is subject to all rules governing that Movement Power, instead of the rules for the primary Movement Power. For example, Running usable as Gliding has a Turn Mode when the character Glides, even though Running itself doesn't have a Turn Mode.

To use this Advantage, a character must apply it to the more expensive of the Movement Powers he wants to use. He can't buy the cheaper one and then use the Advantage to make it function like the more expensive one. For example, he can't buy Gliding (which costs 1 Character Point per inch) and then use the Advantage to make it function like Flight (which costs 2 Character Points per inch) — he has to buy Flight and make it function like Gliding. The character has the same number of inches in the secondary mode of movement as he does with the primary mode of movement, regardless of their relative Character Point costs, whether one adds to the character's base movement and the other doesn't, or the like. (In the case of Movement Powers not measured in inches, such as FTL Travel, use the Character Points spent on the base primary Movement Power to determine the speed or effect in the secondary mode of movement.) Changing from one mode of movement to another is a Zero Phase Action, but a character can only do it once per Phase. The GM can forbid any particular use of this Advantage that seems unbalancing or inappropriate. The GM can



**THE SENSE-AFFECTING POWERS ARE:**

Darkness
Flash
Images
Invisibility



also allow a character to buy this Advantage multiple times for the same Movement Power, allowing it to function as three, four, or more modes of movement.

Usable On Others: As a default rule, an Area Of Effect, Usable As Attack Movement Power must affect all persons within the affected area the same way. For example, if the character moves one person in the area 10" north, everyone in the area must move 10" north. However, at the GM's option, if the character applies the *Selective* Advantage to his Area Of Effect, he can affect each target individually, both in terms of distance traveled and direction traveled.

A Movement Power bought Usable As Attack can only use the Power's Combat Movement inches.

**LIMITATIONS**

Instant: Characters cannot apply this Limitation to Movement Powers unless the GM specifically permits them to.

Linked: If a character Links a Power to a Movement Power, he can define that Power as appearing, manifesting, or taking effect as he starts moving, when he ends moving, or at any other position along his path of movement that the GM allows. However, he must decide on the "appearance point" when he buys the power, and cannot change it thereafter.

A character can use a Power that's Linked to a Movement Power when he makes a Half Move, but pursuant to the standard proportionality rules governing Linked (page 299) can only use it at half effect.

No Noncombat Movement (-¼): Movement Powers with this Limitation cannot attain Noncombat Movement velocity.

Turn Mode (-¼): Movement Powers which naturally lack a Turn Mode (such as Running) have a Turn Mode (page 367) if they take this Limitation.

# SENSE-AFFECTING POWERS

Sense-Affecting Powers are Powers that work by limiting, hindering, or altering a target's Senses. At their base level, Sense-Affecting Powers affect all Senses in a single Sense Group.

Sense-Affecting Powers that affect a Sense Group typically containing Targeting Senses (*e.g.,* the Sight Group) cost more than those which affect Sense Groups that typically contain only Nontargeting Senses (*e.g.,* the Hearing Group). Even if a character has bought the *Targeting* Sense Modifier for, say, his Hearing Sense Group, that doesn't change the cost of Sense-Affecting Powers used against him. The GM determines which Sense Groups typically contain Targeting Senses in his campaign — for example, in a campaign where characters hunt aliens who detect prey by scent, the Smell/Taste Group typically contains Targeting Senses.

The GM must determine which Sense Groups fit this guideline. The Sight Group almost always qualifies for the higher cost, since characters most often use the Sight Group Senses to target attacks. The Hearing, Mental, and Radio Groups usually qualify for the lower cost, even though each contains one Sense which is a Targeting Sense, because those Targeting Senses are typically rare. The Smell/Taste Group and Touch Groups almost always qualify for the lower cost.

When a character buys a Sense-Affecting Power to affect more than one Sense Group, he must pay for the most expensive Sense Group first, then use the "Extra Senses" cost to buy the others. For example, Invisibility to the Sight and Hearing Groups costs 25 points (base of 20, +5 for the extra Nontargeting Sense Group), not 20 points.

**THE SENSORY POWERS ARE:**

Clairsentience
Enhanced Senses
Find Weakness
Mind Scan

**THE SIZE POWERS ARE:**

Growth
Shrinking



At the GM's option, a character can buy a Sense-Affecting Power as affecting all versions of a specific Sense, regardless of what Sense Group it belongs to. For example, a Heat Blast might Flash all type of Infrared Perception, regardless of whether the Infrared Perception is assigned to the Sight Group, Touch Group, or some other group. The character pays for such a power as if the power affected a Targeting Sense Group.

Some Senses can transmit or broadcast as well as receive sensory input (in game terms, they have the *Transmit* Sense Modifier, page 165). A Flashed Sense can still transmit. A Sense blocked by Darkness cannot transmit. An Image does not prevent transmission, but the GM may, based on the situation and special effects, impose a penalty on the PER Roll to receive the transmission.

Refer to *Senses In The HERO System,* pages 348-55, for more information on Senses.

**ADVANTAGES**

Autofire: Sense-Affecting Powers that are also Attack Powers require the +1 additional Advantage for Autofire (see page 252).

Invisible Power Effects: Characters shouldn't purchase IPE Sense-Affecting Powers, since by definition to affect a Sense they must be perceivable by that Sense. However, the GM may allow some applications of IPE. For example, a character might want to create an Invisible Darkness field which would still interfere with Sight of those inside it (and those trying to look into or "through" it), but whose source and/or special effects could not be perceivable. A character could also make a Sense-Affecting Power Invisible to a Sense it doesn't affect.

**LIMITATIONS**

Limited Effect (-¼): A Sense-Affecting Power with this Limitation only affects one or two Senses in a Sense Group, rather than the entire Sense Group. For example, a Heat Blast might only Flash a character's Infrared Perception, but not any of his other Sight Group Senses. The character could buy the Flash with a -¼ Limitation.

Typically, a character only takes this Limitation for a Sense-Affecting Power that affects one Sense Group. If he buys it for one affecting multiple Sense Groups, the GM may require him to apply it only to that part of the power that affects the Sense Group the Limitation restricts.

# SENSORY POWERS

Sensory Powers heighten or improve a character's Senses, or provide him with Senses most characters lack.

In addition to the four listed Powers, a few other Powers, such as Telepathy and Mind Link, have some Sense-like properties. Refer to *Senses In The HERO System,* pages 348-55, for more information.

**LIMITATIONS**

Affected As Another Sense Or More Than One Sense (-0, -¼, -½): When subject to Sense-Affecting Powers, some Senses are affected not as their usual Sense Group, but as some other Group. For example, a closed radio link defined as a Mind Link isn't affected as the Mental Sense Group — it's not really a "mental" power, after all — but as the Radio Sense Group. In most cases, this sort of "switch" is a -0 Limitation; in some circumstances (such as when a very common Sense, *i.e.* Sight, is substituted for a very uncommon Sense), it might constitute a -¼ Limitation.

Some Senses are affected by Sense-Affecting Powers as if they are more than one Sense. For example, the radar screen on a battleship requires both Radar (which is built into the device) and Normal Sight (used to read the screen); a high-tech communications unit in a soldier's helmet requires both HRRP and the soldier's Normal Hearing and Normal Sight (to hear and see the audio and video transmissions he receives). This amounts to a Limitation on the Power (in these examples, Radar and HRRP). If the additional Sense through which the Power can be affected is very common (for example, Sight), the Limitation is -½; if it's uncommon (*i.e.,* any other Sense), the Limitation is -¼.

# SIZE POWERS

Size Powers enable a character to change his size. Growth allows a character to become taller than normal; Shrinking allows him to become smaller than normal.

Size Powers are only appropriate for characters who can *alter their size.* Characters who are always very tall or very small should not buy these powers; instead, they should buy various Powers (such as high STR or an increased DCV) to reflect the benefits of having a permanently altered size, and a Physical Limitation (see page 336 and Appendix, page 573) to reflect the drawbacks. Use the Size Powers as guidelines for what Powers such characters should buy.

A character's size affects the ability of other characters to perceive him: Grown characters are easier to perceive (+2 to PER Rolls to perceive them for every x2 height); Shrunken characters are harder to perceive (-2 to PER Rolls to perceive them for every x½ height).

Size also affects the ability of other characters to hit the character: Grown characters are easier to hit (-2 DCV for every x2 height); Shrunken characters are harder to hit (+2 DCV for every x½ height). However, DCV modifiers do not apply, or only apply





partially, against other characters using the same Size Power. Subtract the attacker's modifier from the defender's modifier to determine how much of a DCV modifier, if any, the defender receives. However, a character can only get DCV bonuses against a Grown attacker if he (the character) uses Shrinking; characters who are normal human size or taller do not get DCV bonuses against Grown characters who are taller than they are.

Example: *Hornet can Shrink to one-fourth human size (-4 on PER Rolls to perceive him, +4 to his DCV). However, when he's attacked by Yellowjacket, who is also one-fourth human size, he does not receive his DCV bonus (+4 - +4 = 0). If Yellowjacket were only Shrunk to half human size, Hornet would receive a +2 DCV bonus (+4 - +2 = +2).*

*Similarly, if Tower can become eight times as tall as a normal human, he has a -6 DCV. When fighting Gargantua, who is also x8 normal human height, neither he nor Gargantua suffer their DCV penalties (-6 - -6 = 0). If Tower could only become x4 normal human height (-4 DCV), then Gargantua would suffer a -2 DCV against his attacks (-6 - -4 = -2), while Tower would suffer no DCV penalty (-4 - -6 = less than 0; Tower cannot get a DCV bonus for being smaller than Gargantua unless he uses Shrinking).*

As an optional rule, the GM can ignore all DCV modifiers for size in HTH Combat. While less "realistic," this rule is simpler and allows any two characters to engage in HTH Combat normally, regardless of their sizes.

## BUYING SIZE POWER-LIKE ABILITIES

Characters who are very tall or very short all the time should buy the appropriate Powers and Characteristics to simulate that state, using the Size Powers as guidelines for how strong, fast, easy/difficult to perceive, and so on the character is. The changes in size and mass inherent to such changes are special effects of those Powers, Characteristics, and the Physical Limitation the character takes. (Some other Disadvantages, such as Distinctive Features or Reputation, may also be appropriate for permanently tall or small characters.)

Taller than normal characters buy their extra STR, BODY, and so on as Characteristics; their reduced Knockback as Knockback Resistance, and their extra reach as Stretching (Reduced Endurance [0 END], Always Direct, No Noncombat Stretching, No Velocity Damage). Their size, mass, and reduced PER Rolls to see them are a function of special effects and their Physical Limitation.

Smaller than normal characters buy their improved DCV as five-point Combat Skill Levels for DCV. To represent how difficult it becomes to see a tiny character when he's hidden, buy bonuses to the character's Stealth roll (see *Shrinking,* page 218, for details). The character's size, mass, and increased Knockback potential are functions of special effects and his Physical Limitation.

The Appendix, page 573, has suggested templates for large and small characters.

**THE SPECIAL POWERS ARE:**

Duplication
Enhanced Senses
Endurance Reserve
Extra Limbs
Find Weakness
Flash Defense
Knockback Resistance
Lack Of Weakness
Luck
Mental Defense
Power Defense
Skills

**THE STANDARD POWERS ARE:**

Armor
Characteristics
Clairsentience
Clinging
Change Environment
Damage Resistance
Damage Reduction
Darkness
Density Increase
Desolidification
Dispel
Energy Blast
Entangle
Flash
Force Field (FF)
Force Wall (FW)
Hand-to-Hand Attack (HA)
Images
Invisibility
Killing Attack — Hand-to-Hand (HKA)
Killing Attack — Ranged (RKA)
Life Support (LS)
Missile Deflection & Reflection
Multiform
Shape Shift
Stretching
Summon
Telekinesis
Transform



# SPECIAL POWERS

Characters can buy Special Powers with all standard Power Modifiers (unless otherwise noted). However, they ordinarily cannot buy them in Power Frameworks without the GM's permission. This helps preserve campaign balance and prevents unreasonable use of these Powers.

Example: *Technon is a gadgeteering superhero with a Gadget Variable Power Pool. He wants to build a set of tinted goggles that provide him with 5 points of Sight Group Flash Defense. The GM decides this is reasonable and grants permission.*

*Later, Technon decides two of him would be better than one, so he wants to build a Metaphysical Essence Splitter to divide himself into two people (bought as Duplication). The GM decides this could potentially unbalance the campaign and denies permission.*

Most Special Powers do not cost END to use, and are assumed to function at all times unless the character expressly chooses to turn them "off." They function normally when the character has been Knocked Out. This means it's often not immediately apparent the character has the Special Power (although certain Powers like Duplication are obvious once the character turns them on).

# STANDARD POWERS

This category is the catch-all for any Power that's not an Adjustment, Mental, Movement, Size, or Special Power. Each Power's description mentions any special rules.

# THE POWERS TABLE

| Power Name | Power Type | Duration | Target | Range | END |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Absorption ⚠ | Adjustment | Constant | Self Only | Self | N |
| Aid | Adjustment | Instant | Target's DCV | No | N |
| Armor | Standard/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Change Environment | Standard | Constant | Hex | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Characteristics | Standard | Persistent | Self Only | Self | Varies |
| Clairsentience STOP | Standard/Sensory | Constant | Hex | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Clinging | Standard | Constant | Self Only | Self | N |
| Damage Reduction ⚠ | Standard/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Damage Resistance | Standard/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Darkness | Standard/Attack/Sense-Affecting | Constant | Hex | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Density Increase | Standard/Body | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Desolidification STOP | Standard/Body | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Dispel | Standard/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Drain | Adjustment/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | No | Y |
| Duplication ⚠ | Special/Body | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Ego Attack | Mental/Attack | Instant | Target's DECV | Yes/LOS | Y |
| Endurance Reserve | Special | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Energy Blast | Standard/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Enhanced Senses | Special/Sensory | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Entangle | Standard/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Extra-Dimensional Movement STOP | Movement | Instant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Extra Limbs | Special/Body | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Faster-Than-Light (FTL) Travel STOP | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | N |
| Find Weakness ⚠ | Special/Sensory | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Flash | Standard/Attack/Sense-Affecting | Instant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Flash Defense | Special/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Flight | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Force Field | Standard/Defense | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Force Wall | Standard/Defense | Constant | Hex | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Gliding | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | N |
| Growth | Size/Body | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Hand-to-Hand Attack (HA) | Standard/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | No | Y |
| Healing | Adjustment | Instant | Target's DCV | No | Y |
| Images | Standard/Attack/Sense-Affecting | Constant | Hex | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Invisibility | Standard/Sense-Affecting | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Killing Attack (Hand-To-Hand) | Standard/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | No | Y |
| Killing Attack (Ranged) | Standard/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Knockback Resistance | Special/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Lack of Weakness | Special/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Leaping | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Life Support | Standard | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Luck | Special | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Mental Defense | Special/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Mental Illusions | Mental/Attack | Instant | Target's DECV | Yes/LOS | Y |
| Mind Control | Mental/Attack | Instant | Target's DECV | Yes/LOS | Y |
| Mind Link | Mental | Persistent | Target's DECV | Yes/LOS | N |
| Mind Scan | Mental/Sensory | Constant | Target's DECV | Yes | Y |
| Missile Deflection & Reflection ⚠ | Standard/Defense | Constant | Self Only | Self | N |
| Multiform | Standard/Body | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Power Defense | Special/Defense | Persistent | Self Only | Self | N |
| Running | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Shape Shift | Standard/Body | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Shrinking | Size/Body | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Skills | Special | Constant | Self Only | Self | N |
| Stretching | Standard/Body | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Summon STOP | Standard | Instant | n/a | No | Y |
| Suppress | Adjustment/Attack | Constant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Swimming | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Swinging | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Telekinesis | Standard/Attack | Constant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Telepathy | Mental | Instant | Target's DECV | Yes/LOS | Y |
| Teleportation | Movement | Instant | Self Only | Self | Y |
| Transfer | Adjustment/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | No | Y |
| Transform STOP | Standard/Attack | Instant | Target's DCV | Yes/x5" | Y |
| Tunneling | Movement | Constant | Self Only | Self | Y |

# POWERS COST TABLE

| Power Name | Description |
|---|---|
| Absorption ⚠ | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Absorption |
| Aid | 10 Character Points for every 1d6 of Aid |
| Armor | 3 Character Points for every 2 points of Resistant Defense |
| Change Environment | 5 Chraracter Points to Change Environment in 1" radius area; double the area for every +5 Points |
| Characteristics | Varies, depending upon the Characteristic purchased (see page 139) |
| Clairsentience STOP | 20 Character Points for a PER Roll with one Sense Group, +10 Points per additional Sense Group |
| Clinging | 10 Character Points for ability to exert character's normal STR; +3 Clinging STR for +1 Point |
| Damage Reduction ⚠ | See Damage Reduction Table, page 143 |
| Damage Resistance | 1 Character Point to convert 2 points of Normal Defense to Resistant |
| Darkness | See Darkness Table, page 145 |
| Density Increase | 5 Character Points for every level of Density Increase (see page 146) |
| Desolidification STOP | 40 Character Points |
| Dispel | 3 Character Points for every 1d6 of Dispel |
| Drain | 10 Character Points for every 1d6 of Drain |
| Duplication ⚠ | 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points in Duplicate; 2x the number of Duplicates for +5 points |
| Ego Attack | 10 Character Points for every 1d6 of Ego Attack |
| Endurance Reserve | 1 Character Point per 10 END and 1 Character Point per 1 REC |
| Energy Blast | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Energy Blast |
| Enhanced Senses | Varies (see pages 160) |
| Entangle | 10 Character Points for every 1d6 BODY, 1 DEF of Entangle |
| Extra-Dimensional Movement STOP | See Extra-Dimensional Movement Table, page 171 |
| Extra Limbs | 5 Character Points for any number of limbs |
| Faster-Than-Light (FTL) Travel STOP | See FTL Table, page 174 |
| Find Weakness ⚠ | 10/20/30 Character Points; +1 Character Point for every +1 to the roll |
| Flash | See Flash Table, page 176 |
| Flash Defense | 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Flash Defense to protect a single Sense Group |
| Flight | 2 Character Points for every 1" of Flight |
| Force Field | 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Resistant Defense |
| Force Wall | 5 Character Points for every 2 points of Resistant Defense; +1" width or height for every 2 Points |
| Gliding | 1 Character Point for every 1" of Gliding |
| Growth | 15 Character Points for every level of Growth (see page 183) |
| Hand-to-Hand Attack (HA) | 5 Character Points for every +1d6 of HA, but with a mandatory -½ Limitation |
| Healing | 10 Character Points for every 1d6 of Healing |
| Images | See Images Table, page 189 |
| Invisibility | See Invisibility Table, page 192 |
| Killing Attack (Hand-To-Hand) | 15 Character Points for every 1d6 of HKA |
| Killing Attack (Ranged) | 15 Character Points for every 1d6 of RKA |
| Knockback Resistance | 2 Character Points for every -1" of Knockback Resistance |
| Lack of Weakness | 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Lack Of Weakness |
| Leaping | 1 Character Point for every +1" Leap |
| Life Support | See Life Support Table, page 198 |
| Luck | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Luck |
| Mental Defense | 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Mental Defense |
| Mental Illusions | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Mental Illusions |
| Mind Control | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Mind Control |
| Mind Link | See Mind Link Table, page 205 |
| Mind Scan | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Mind Scan |
| Missile Deflection & Reflection ⚠ | See Missile Deflection Table, page 208 |
| Multiform | 1 Character Point for every 5 Points in most expensive form; 2x the number of forms for +5 points |
| Power Defense | 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Power Defense |
| Running | 2 Character Points for every +1" of Running |
| Shape Shift | See Shape Shift Table, page 216 |
| Shrinking | 10 Character Points for every level of Shrinking (see page 218) |
| Skills | As per the Skill (see page 220) |
| Stretching | 5 Character Points for every 1" of Stretching |
| Summon STOP | Character Point for every 5 Points in Summoned being; 2x the number of beings for +5 points |
| Suppress | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Suppress |
| Swimming | 1 Character Point for every 1" of Swimming |
| Swinging | 1 Character Point for every 1" of Swinging |
| Telekinesis | 3 Character Points for every 2 points of Telekinetic STR |
| Telepathy | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Telepathy |
| Teleportation | 2 Character Points for every 1" of Teleportation |
| Transfer | 15 Character Points for every 1d6 of Transfer |
| Transform STOP | 5/10/15 Character Points for every 1d6 of Transform (see page 237) |
| Tunneling | 5 Character Points for every 1" of Tunneling through DEF 1 materials; +1 DEF per +3 Character Points |

# POWER DESCRIPTIONS

## ABSORPTION

Type: Adjustment Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Absorption

A character with Absorption may Absorb the BODY damage of an attack and add that energy, as Character Points, to a specific Power or Characteristic. Some examples of Absorption include a character whose STR increases when he's struck with physical blows or an alien who feeds off energy (gaining increased BODY from energy attacks and phenomena). Each 1d6 of Absorption costs 5 Character Points.

When a character purchases Absorption, he specifies whether it works versus energy or physical attacks and where the Absorbed Character Points go. The points can go either to a specific Characteristic or a specific Power. (The character cannot change where the points go, or what he can Absorb from, thereafter unless he purchases the *Variable Effect* Advantage, page 111, and/or the *Varying Effect* Advantage described below.) The character may choose to set up a ratio of Character Points between different Characteristics or Powers (for example, half the points go to END, half to STR). Absorption does not cost END to use.

If a character has two forms of Absorption that apply to a particular attack, he must choose one. He cannot Absorb points from a single effect with two different Absorption powers simultaneously.

### USING ABSORPTION

When a character encounters or is affected by the phenomenon he can Absorb, he rolls his Absorption dice (this is an Action that takes no time) and counts the total. The total rolled on the Absorption dice indicates the amount of BODY he can Absorb from incoming attacks that Segment. Each BODY Absorbed becomes 1 Character Point that goes where the character specified. (See below regarding fade rate and maximum effect.)

Most forms of Absorption only work against attacks or forces that cause BODY damage. However, in the GM's discretion, a character can Absorb from STUN-only attacks, if doing so would be reasonable according to the special effects involved and not unbalance the game. For example, a character with physical Absorption might be able to Absorb from an NND Energy Blast defined as a rubber bullet (because it has a definite physical impact), but not from a tranquilizer dart or an Enervator Ray. If the attack is one the character can Absorb (for example, it's an energy attack, and he has energy Absorption), count the Normal Damage BODY. That represents the amount of "BODY" he can Absorb from that attack, even though the attack itself doesn't cause BODY damage. The GM can apply the same reasoning to Powers that don't directly "damage" the character, like Dispel, though he should be even warier about allowing characters to Absorb from them than from STUN-only attacks.

**Fade Rate**

The points gained from Absorption fade at the rate of 5 Active Points per Turn. The character can extend the fade period (*i.e.,* move it down the Time Chart) with the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage (page 111).

If a character defines his Absorption as going to two or more Characteristics or Powers (such as STR and STUN, or CON, PD, and ED), the points should fade from the affected game elements at as equal a rate as you can achieve without using fractions. If a choice has to be made to avoid a fraction, the character makes that choice when he buys the power, and cannot alter it thereafter except with the GM's permission. If the Absorption affects two or more Characteristics (or the like) simultaneously because the power has the *Variable Effect* Advantage, the points fade from both at the full rate simultaneously.

Example: *Absorbo has Absorption (half to STR, half to PD) that fades at the rate of 5 points per Turn. Ordinarily that would mean 2.5 points from STR and 2.5 points from PD each Turn, but that causes fraction problems. Absorbo decides his STR loses 2 points and his PD 3 points per Turn.*

*Later, Absorbo spends some Experience Points to buy Varying Effect so that his Absorption feeds the full points Absorbed to STR and to PD simultaneously. Now when his Absorption fades, both STR and PD lose 5 Absorbed Character Points per Turn.*

**Maximum Effect**

As discussed on page 106, Absorption has a maximum possible effect. Once a character reaches his maximum Absorption amount, he can use his Absorption again when at least some of the points he Absorbed have faded, but still only up to the maximum. For example, if a character has Absorption 2d6, he can Absorb a maximum of 12 BODY worth of effect. If he Absorbs the full 12, he can't Absorb any more until some of those points fade. After a Turn, 5 points fade. He can now Absorb again, but only 5 points — up to his defined maximum of 12.

When determining whether a character reaches his Absorption maximum, only the BODY Absorbed matters. The amount of Absorption purchased, not the character's roll, defines his absolute maximum; the roll only indicates how many BODY he can Absorb that Segment. For example, suppose a character has Absorption 6d6 (maximum of 36 BODY). He's hit with an attack that does 10 BODY. He rolls his Absorption dice and gets 19. He Absorbs the full 10 BODY, and has 26 BODY worth of Absorption left. The roll of 19 doesn't define his overall maximum; it's the maximum on 6d6 and

### POWER EXAMPLES: ABSORPTION

Strength Of My Enemies: Absorption 6d6 (physical, half to STR, half to PD), Can Absorb Maximum Of 60 Points' Worth Of Physical Energy, Delayed Loss (loses 5 points per minute, +¼) (52 Active Points); Only Works Against HTH Combat Attacks (-¼). Total cost: 42 points.

Warrior's Shield Spell: Absorption 4d6 (physical, to STR), Usable By Other (usable by any one person at a time, +¼) (25 Active Points); Only Works Against HTH Weapon Attacks (-½), Costs END (-½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total cost: 10 points.

the 10 BODY he did Absorb that matter (though he can still only Absorb 19 BODY from attacks this Segment, because that's what he rolled).

Example: *Gigawatt buys Absorption 5d6, which costs him 25 points. At most, he can Absorb 30 Character Points' worth of energy (the maximum he can roll on 5d6). Gigawatt spends 20 Character Points to increase this maximum; he can now absorb a maximum of 30 + (2 x 20) = 70 Character Points. He specifies that his Absorption works versus energy attacks and that the points gained go to his Energy Blast. Not wanting to lose 5 Character Points every Turn, Gigawatt moves the return rate down two levels on the Time Chart, for a +½ Power Advantage. The total cost of his power is 50 x (1 + ½) = 75 Character Points, and the Absorbed points fade at the rate of 5 Character Points per 5 Minutes.*

*Howler hits Gigawatt with an energy attack, doing 30 STUN and 10 BODY. Gigawatt rolls his 5d6 and gets 22. Thus he Absorbs 10 Character Points from the attack, and could Absorb 12 more if he is hit by another attack before the next Segment. The 10 Character Points become 10 Energy Blast points, which add 2d6 to Gigawatt's Energy Blast. Gigawatt then applies the attack against his defenses. He loses 5 points of Energy Blast every 5 Minutes until he returns to normal.*

**Absorption And Damage**

If a character has Absorption that goes to a Characteristic that can be reduced by attacks (typically, STUN or BODY), and he's hit with an attack he can Absorb which damages that Characteristic, apply the damage that gets through his defenses (if any) first. Then apply the effects of Absorption.

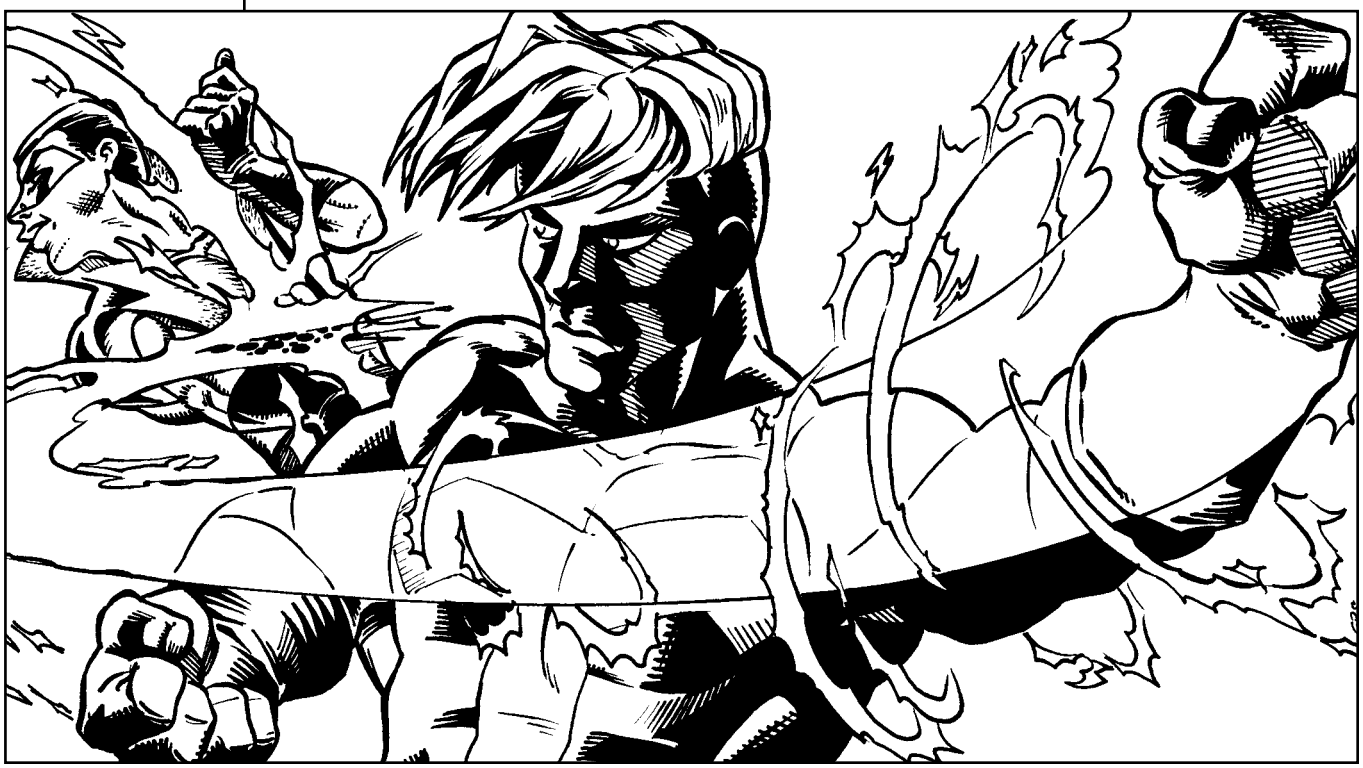
If a character's Absorption feeds his PD or ED (or a Defense Power), the increase obtained from Absorption applies against attacks suffered later in that same Segment. It does not apply against the attack he Absorbed from to increase that defense. The same applies to Absorption that increases CON (for purposes of determining whether later attacks in the same Segment Stun the character).

**ABSORPTION AS A DEFENSE**

Absorption offers no defense against an attack — just because a character uses the energy or force of an attack to improve his Characteristics and/or Powers temporarily doesn't mean the energy or force doesn't also hurt him (or Knock him Back). The attack applies normally against the character's defenses after he calculates his Absorption (if the Absorption increases any defense applicable to the attack, only the pre-Absorption amount of defense protects him that Segment). To simulate Absorption that functions as a defense, buy defenses (such as PD, ED, Force Field, or Armor) *Linked* to Absorption, and which also take a -½ Limitation, *Only Up To Amount Rolled By Absorption.*

Any defenses Linked to Absorption work normally according to their standard rules. For example, a defense power like Armor or Force Field applies against both STUN and BODY damage as normal, and offers the full value rolled on the Absorption dice against any attack the character Absorbs from.

Example: *Absorbo has Absorption 6d6 and 30 points of Armor that protect him Only Up To Amount Rolled By Absorption. He's hit with a 30 STUN, 10 BODY attack. He rolls his Absorption dice and gets 26, so he can Absorb 26 BODY worth of attacks that Segment. His Armor provides 26 points of protection against attacks he suffers that Segment that he can*



*Absorb. So, he takes 4 STUN, 0 BODY from that attack.*

*Absorbo is then hit with a 25 STUN, 5 BODY attack. He Absorbs all 5 BODY, leaving him 11 BODY worth of Absorption left this Segment. His Armor offers 26 points of protection against the attack, so he takes no damage.*

*Absorbo is then hit with a 38 STUN, 12 BODY attack. He can Absorb 11 BODY, but not the twelfth point of BODY damage. His Armor provides 26 points of protection against this attack, so he takes 12 STUN, 0 BODY.*

*Absorbo is then hit with a 27 STUN, 8 BODY attack. Since he can't Absorb from this attack, his Armor provides no protection for him at all.*

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Area Of Effect: Area Of Effect makes a character's Absorption work against any attack made within the area covered, whether the attack is against him or not. It does not work against phenomena that are not attacks, such as running water or electrical lines. Area Of Effect Absorption is still restricted to Absorbing the maximum amount the character can roll on his Absorption dice, even if he has multiple sources to Absorb from.

Autofire: Autofire Absorption does not allow a character to Absorb multiple amounts of Character Points from a single attack. Instead, he rolls his Absorption dice for each use of the Power and uses the best result to determine how many Character Points he Absorbs, +1 BODY per additional Autofire "shot."

Varying Effect (+¾): A character can switch Absorption with this Advantage from Phase to Phase to work against either physical or energy attacks. Thus, in one Phase, the character could Absorb from physical attacks; in the next Phase, he might decide to Absorb energy attacks instead (to Absorb from both physical and energy attacks at once, the character must buy Absorption twice). This does not change where the Absorbed points go; that remains as defined when the character bought the power. Switching effects is a Zero Phase Action and does not cause previously Absorbed points to fade.

### LIMITATIONS

Limited Phenomenon (-¼ or more): Absorption with this Limitation only works against certain types of physical or energy phenomena. If the Absorption only works against a Slightly Limited Group of phenomena (all forms of energy that generate heat, all HTH Combat attacks), this Limitation is worth -¼; if against a Limited Group of phenomena (all forms of fire, all HTH weapon attacks), it's worth -½; if against a Very Limited Group of phenomena (magical fire, knives), it's worth -1.

## AID

Type: Adjustment Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: No Range
Costs END: No
Cost: 10 Character Points for every 1d6 of Aid

A character with Aid may increase one or more of his or someone else's Characteristics or Powers. Some examples of Aid include a character who acts as a "living battery" to boost others' STR and END, or an enchanted item that increases a wizard's magical powers. A character must define what Characteristic(s) and/or Power(s) his Aid can increase when he buys it; Aid can apply to more than one Characteristic or Power at once if the characters purchases the *Variable Effect* Advantage (page 111). Each 1d6 of Aid costs 10 Character Points.

### USING AID

To use Aid, the character must first succeed with an Attack Roll (if the target's willing to be affected by the Aid, the Attack Roll succeeds automatically, but the character still has to use an Attack Action unless the GM rules otherwise). The character then rolls the dice and counts the total, which represents the Character Points added by the Aid. The Character Points rolled apply directly to the Active Points of the Characteristic or Power being Aided. See page 106 regarding the maximum effect of Aid.

Aid cannot give a character Characteristics, Powers, or Advantages he does not already have (to do that, buy Transform or a Power *Usable On Others,* pages 237, 273). It only boosts or increases Characteristics or Powers a character already has.

Aid does not cost END to use. If Aiding a Power increases its END cost, the character using the Aided Power must pay the additional END. If a character uses Aid to increase an expendable ability (such as STUN or END), any lost or used points come out of the boosted points first (see *Increasing Expendable Abilities,* page 105).

Example: *Gigawatt has an Aid 4d6 to STUN and END simultaneously. Before going into combat, he uses it on himself, gaining 18 STUN and 36 END. During the combat, Gigawatt uses 25 END and takes 14 STUN worth of damage. When the Aided Characteristics fade back down to their normal levels, Gigawatt will not subtract any STUN or END from his normal starting totals — it all comes out of the boost he got from his Aid.*

#### Fade Rate

The points gained from an Aid fade at the rate of 5 Active Points per Turn, even if the Aided Characteristic or Power was below its starting level. (To restore lost Characteristics or Powers permanently, use *Healing,* page 185.) The character can extend the fade period (*i.e.,* move it down the Time Chart) with the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage (page 111).

### GRANDFATHERING: AID

Since the cost of Aid has doubled, most Aid-based powers, if converted directly into the Fifth Edition, simply have half as many dice as they used to. If you, as GM, have found that Aid at 5 Character points per die has unbalanced your campaign, this may be the best solution for you; otherwise, most characters should be "grandfathered" so they get to keep the amount of dice they're used to having. If you do reduce a character's amount of Aid dice, consider giving him some additional Experience Points or other "compensation" to make up for it.

### POWER EXAMPLES: AID

Tipsy Giant Potion: Aid STR 6d6 (60 Active Points); OAF Fragile (potion, -1¼), Only Works On Characters Who Are Drunk (-1), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 14 points.

Fast Time: Aid SPD 4d6, Ranged (+½). Total cost: 60 points.

Cerebral Enhancement: Aid INT 3d6, Delayed Return Rate (5 points per hour, +1) (60 Active Points); OIF (headband, -½). Total cost: 40 points.

Spell Of The Hungry Flames: Succor Fire 6d6, any fire Power one at a time (+¼), Ranged (+½) (52 Active Points); OAF Expendable (piece of flint; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Fire Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 16 points.

Turbocharger: Succor Running 4d6, Uncontrolled (END from Endurance Reserve feeds Power on each of vehicle's Phases until exhausted; +½) (30 Active Points); OIF (-½), Automobiles Only (-1) (total cost: 12 points) **plus** Endurance Reserve (10 END [OIF; total cost: 1 point] and 10 REC [OIF, Only Recovers When Refueled (-2); total cost: 3 points]). Total cost: 16 points.

Example: *Nighthawk is hit by a Drain STR that lowers his STR of 25 by 10, down to STR 15, with a long fade rate. The Medic uses an Aid STR 4d6 to give Nighthawk 18 points of STR, thus raising his STR from 15 to 33. At the next Post-Segment 12, Nighthawk loses 5 Character Points' worth of STR (i.e., 5 STR), down to STR 28. On the next Post-Segment 12, Nighthawk loses 5 more Character Points' worth of STR, down to STR 23 — the Aid cannot permanently restore his STR to its starting level; that would require Healing.*

#### OPTIONAL AID: SUCCOR

As an option for Aid, GMs can allow characters to buy a slightly different form of the Power known as *Succor.* Succor is a Constant Power with No Range; using it requires an Attack Action, as with regular Aid. Succor costs END to use.

Succor works just like Aid, except that it costs 5 Character Points per die and only remains in effect as long as the character pays END. If he keeps paying END every Phase, the Succored Characteristic or Power remains at its boosted level. (If a character wants to buy Succor to cost 0 END, apply the same rules as for Reduced Endurance on Suppress, page 227.) Once the character stops paying END, the Character Points gained from Succor fade immediately.

Succor does not keep adding and adding more Character Points every Phase automatically. The END the character pays simply maintains the points added by the first roll. To add more points, the character has to use an Attack Action, roll the dice again, and pay more END. As long as he keeps succeeding with his Attack Rolls, the character can keep adding effect this way without worrying about the maximum effect rules for regular Aid.

#### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Continuous: If a character applies Continuous (+1) to Aid, he keeps rolling his Aid dice every Phase the power remains in effect until he reaches the power's maximum effect. Thereafter, the normal rules for the fading of the effect apply. For example, if the Aid is at maximum, and Post-Segment 12 rolls around, the subject loses 5 of the Aided points. The Aid kicks in again in the character's next Phase (probably in Segment 2 or 3) to boost him back up to the power's maximum effect.

#### LIMITATIONS

Only Restores To Starting Values (-½): A character can only use Aid with this Limitation to increase Characteristics or Powers that are below their normal starting levels (typically as the result of an injury or Drain). This still only provides a temporary "boost" of power; the points added fade at the standard rate. You cannot take this Limitation on an Aid that's been bought to affect multiple Characteristics or Powers with the "below starting values" special effect simultaneously.

### ARMOR

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Standard Power/Defense Power |
| Duration: | Persistent |
| Target: | Self Only |
| Range: | Self |
| Costs END: | No |
| Cost: | 3 Character Points for every 2 points of Resistant defense |

Armor provides a character with Resistant Defenses. Each 2 points of fully Resistant Defense (either PD or ED) costs 3 Character Points. Armor does not cost END to use.

Characters can only buy Armor for PD or ED. They must specify the type of Armor defense (PD or ED) when they buy the Armor. For example, if a character spent 21 Character Points he could have 14 PD, 0 ED Armor, or 7 PD, 7 ED Armor, or any other combination that totaled 14 points of PD and ED. The character cannot change this combination, though he can spend Experience Points to add to his existing Armor.



**CHANGE ENVIRONMENT**

Type: Standard Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Hex
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points to change the environment in a 1" radius area; double the area for every +5 Character Points, increase power of minor effects for up to +5 Character Points per level (see table)

A character with Change Environment can cause changes to his environment. The character could, for example, alter the temperature, create an intense magnetic field, or cause all plants in the area to bloom. To change the environment in one hex costs 5 Character Points; the radius doubles for every +5 Character Points. A character must specify the effect he can create when he buys Change Environment, and cannot change it thereafter (but see *Varying Effect,* below). For information on simulating various natural effects, see page 440.

### USING CHANGE ENVIRONMENT

To use Change Environment, the character must make an Attack Roll against a target hex to place the Change Environment where he wants it to be. Using Change Environment counts as an Attack Action with an area-affecting Constant Power (see page 99).

Change Environment costs END. Once the character stops paying END to maintain the Change Environment, the Power stops functioning, though its effects may linger for some time thereafter. For example, if a character used Change Environment to make all plants in the area bloom, those blooms remain when he turns off his CE, but quickly wither and die without the power of the Change Environment to keep them alive (unless normal conditions in the environment would keep them alive). An ice sheet created by Change Environment melts (at a rate dictated by environmental conditions, but typically in 1-5 hours) after the Change Environment stops functioning. If the change has little or no combat effect (for example, a speedster's or witch's ability to clean a room in the blink of an eye), then it may even be permanent. At the GM's option, long-lasting Change Environment effects require the *Long-Lasting* Adder (see below).

Characters cannot use Change Environment to duplicate existing Powers (like Darkness), nor can CE create light (use Images, *Only To Create Light* (-1)).

### COMBAT EFFECTS

Change Environment can have minor negative effects on combat or Skills, or cause minor amounts of damage or related combat effects. For example, creating a fog or an area of deep shadow might affect PER Rolls; an intense magnetic field might act as very low-STR Telekinesis against ferrous objects.

### POWER EXAMPLES: ARMOR

Level III Kevlar Body Armor: Armor (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Half Mass (-½), Real Armor (-¼). Total cost: 9 points.

Powered Battle Armor: Armor (25 PD/25 ED) (75 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 50 points.





### POWER EXAMPLES: CHANGE ENVIRONMENT

Confusion Spell: Change Environment 32" radius, -4 to all INT Rolls and INT-Based Skill Rolls (42 Active Points); OAF (broken shard from a mirror, reusable; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Skill Roll (-½). Total cost: 14 points.

Dr. Terror's Fear Aura: Change Environment 16" radius, -4 to PRE for purposes of resisting Dr. Terror's fear-based Presence Attacks, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); OAF (Fear Amulet; -1). Total cost: 30 points.

Pea-Soup Fog: Change Environment 8" radius, -3 to Sight Group PER Rolls. Total cost: 26 points.

Weather Alteration: Change Environment 8" radius, +/-10 Temperature Levels, Multiple Combat Effects, Varying Combat Effects, Varying Effect (+1), MegaArea (1" = 1 km broad and wide; +¼) (139 Active Points); No Range (-½), Can Only Alter Existing Weather, Not Create Weather (-¼), Extra Time (time required depends on the severity of the change in the weather the character wants to create, but minimum of 1 Minute; -1½), Requires A Weather Control Roll (-½). Total cost: 37 points.

When a character buys Change Environment, he may choose one combat effect. This does not cost any additional points (in other words, the first combat effect — such as the first -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls — is free when the character purchases CE). He can choose from the following combat effects:

—a -1 to the PER Roll with one Sense or Sense Group

—a -1 to a Characteristic Roll and/or related Skill Roll(s)

—a -1" to a particular Movement mode

—a one-step change in the Temperature Level

—a -1 to CV

—1 point of damage (GM must approve type of damage; the character may, at the GM's option, include appropriate Advantages; otherwise Advantages may be purchased for the damage)

—1 point of Telekinesis STR

—any other noncombat effect of equal magnitude listed on the accompanying table, or which the GM permits (the exact effect should be determined by the GM)

If applicable, the combat effect includes forcing an affected character to make at least one Characteristic, Skill, or PER Roll. For example, if a character enters a Change Environment field that imposes a -3 to DEX Rolls, it doesn't just affect any DEX Rolls he has to make for other reasons — he has to make a DEX Roll when entering the field, at the listed penalty.

The first combat effect a character chooses is free, but increasing the strength of that combat effect costs additional Character Points. For example, a wizard's *Create Fog Spell* imposes a -1 on Sight Group PER Rolls for no additional cost. If he wants to increase the effect to -3 to Sight Group PER Rolls, he has to pay more Character Points. Each additional -1 costs a number of Character Points, as indicated on the accompanying table. A Change Environment can only have a single combat effect unless the character purchases the *Multiple Combat Effects* and/or *Varying Combat Effects* Adders (see below).

The GM may limit how much of a negative modifier or other effect characters can create with Change Environment. In particular, the GM should strictly control any ability to reduce a target's CV. Life Support often counteracts the negative effects of Change Environment (see pages 197, 443).

A character does not have to use the full combat effect of his Change Environment if he doesn't want to. For example, if a character has a Create Fog power which imposes a -4 penalty on Sight Group PER Rolls, he could create a light fog that only imposes -2 to Sight PER Rolls.

In addition to causing damage or related combat effects, Change Environment can exploit a character's Susceptibilities or Power Limitations.

## CHANGE ENVIRONMENT COMBAT EFFECTS COST

| Cost Per Additional -1 | Effect |
|---|---|
| 2 | PER Roll for one Sense |
| 3 | PER Roll for one Sense Group |
| 3 | Characteristic Roll or Skill Roll |
| 3 | Inch of any one mode of Movement |
| 3 | +/- one Temperature Level (see page 441) |
| 4 | Characteristic Roll and all Skill Rolls based on same Characteristic |
| 5 | CV (OCV or DCV) |
| 5 | Point of damage (see text) |
| 5 | Point of Telekinesis STR |

Example: *Lodestone can create a low-level magnetic field. The GM rules the basic field acts as a 0 STR Telekinesis to pull ferrous metal objects straight up; for every +5 Character Points, the field has +1 Telekinetic STR. The field also harms characters who are Susceptible to Intense Magnetic Fields and prevents powers that Will Not Work In Intense Magnetic Fields from functioning.*

Change Environment should not be as effective at causing damage or creating other effects as other Powers (*i.e.,* a Change Environment effect should not do nearly as much damage or have as strong an effect as a similar Power for the same amount of Character Points). If necessary the GM should adjust the cost of a Change Environment power to ensure that it doesn't unbalance the game.

Example: *Winter Dragon wants the power to create a slippery sheet of ice beneath peoples' feet to make them fall. He buys this as Change Environment:*

***Ice Sheet:*** *Change Environment (create ice sheet) 8" radius, -4 to DEX Rolls to move on (29 Active Points); Only Affects Characters Who Are Moving On The Ground (-¼). Total cost: 23 points.*

*The GM rules that anyone moving on the ice sheet has to make a DEX Roll at -4, or a Breakfall roll at -2, each Phase to remain standing. (Characters with the Icewalking form of Environmental Movement are immune to this CE's effects.) If a character moves onto the ice sheet and loses his footing, he slides in the direction he was moving at the same velocity, and if he hits anything will damage it (and possibly himself) as if performing a STR 0 Move Through. The ice sheet melts at the standard rate for the environment after Winter Dragon stops paying END to maintain it.*

Example: *Gravitar wants to be able to create a field of high pressure. If she creates a field, then turns it off, anyone affected by the field suffers minor damage. The GM informs her that she can cause 1 point of NND Killing Damage (the defense is LS: Safe Environment [High Pres-*

*sure]), with an additional 1 point of damage for every +5 points (maximum of 3 points of damage). It takes a Full Phase to create the high pressure field, and a Half Phase to turn off the field and cause damage to anyone who was affected (characters who leave the field before then under their own power are affected when they leave it). For every time interval over 1 Turn which a character remains in the field, the damage Gravitar can cause to that character is halved (half damage after 1 Minute, quarter damage after 5 Minutes, and so forth).*

**Non-Cumulative Penalties**

The penalties or other negative effects of a Change Environment do not increase over time. For example, if a Change Environment power imposes a -2 penalty on DEX Rolls, it always imposes a -2 (not -2 the first Phase, -4 the second, and so on). Nor can a character "stack" the effects of his Change Environment by using multiple Attack Actions to layer one Change Environment field on top of itself, again and again (though the GM could make an exception to this if he felt it were appropriate to do so). However, two characters could use two different Change Environments that have the same combat effect on the same area and thus make the penalties add together. If a Change Environment causes damage, it can cause damage again and again; persons in the field are not limited to taking damage just once.

The penalties a character suffers generally apply once for the entire area — they do not accumulate from hex to hex. For example, if a character creates an Ice Sheet (-3 to DEX PER Rolls to walk on) that's 4" across, a character running all the way across that ice sheet suffers a -3 DEX Roll penalty, not -12. But a victim suffers the combat effect every Phase he stays in the Change Environment area. For example, if a character moved halfway onto the ice sheet described above in one Phase, he'd have to make a DEX Roll at -3. If he keeps moving across the ice sheet in his next Phase, he has to make another DEX Roll at -3.

**Positive Effects; Negating Other Effects**

Change Environment cannot provide "positive" effects or bonuses to any character (other than the beneficial result of hindering his enemies). For example, it cannot improve characters' OCVs or DCVs, provide bonuses to characters' PER or Skill Rolls, or the like. However, a character can have a Change Environment power that creates an effect generally considered pleasant or enjoyable, such as "springtime weather" or "make flowers bloom," provided the power has no beneficial effect in game terms.

Depending on special effects, the GM can allow one Change Environment power to cancel or negate a similar Change Environment power. For example, if a character uses his Weather Control power to create a fog (-2 to Sight Group PER Rolls), then another character who has a Weather Control ability could, with the GM's permission, "overlay" his Change Environment on the first character's field and negate the effect — he's controlled the weather by making the fog go away. A character with Weather Control (+4 Temperature Levels) might raise the temperature and cause an Ice Sheet (-4 to DEX Rolls to walk on) to melt. However, GMs may wish to require characters to use Images instead of Change Environment to negate Change Environment-created PER Roll penalties (particularly if doing so involves creating light).

**POWERS**

Transform: Although Change Environment and Transform have some similarities, there are important differences between them. Change Environment creates relatively subtle effects over a large area, and its changes are rarely permanent or long-lasting. Transform creates a drastic change in a very limited area (just one target, usually), and its effects often last for a long time. When deciding which Power is more appropriate to construct a particular ability, consider the extent of the effect a character wishes to create and area he wishes to alter; that will help him determine whether Change Environment or Transform better simulates the desired power.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Long-Lasting: The effects of a Change Environment with this Adder last for a period of time after the character stops paying END to maintain the Change Environment, though the exact length they remain depends on the power's special effects and the environmental conditions (ice sheets do not last long in the desert, for example, but may remain forever in arctic areas). How long they last is up to the GM, who may or may not require characters to purchase this Adder for long-lasting effects (defined as effects that linger longer than five minutes). Long-Lasting does not prevent outside forces, such as a change in the ambient environment or an Adjustment Power, from affecting or diminishing the Change Environment effect.

Long-Lasting costs +5 Character Points for each step on the Time Chart beyond 5 Minutes that the character wishes his effect to last; for example, making an effect last for an Hour costs +10 points. At the GM's option, for +20 points the change can be permanent. If a character buys Change Environment with Charges, he may use Continuing Charges instead of Long-Lasting to simulate this effect.

Multiple Combat Effects: Ordinarily a character with Change Environment can only buy one type of combat effect for it. For a +5 Character Point Adder, *Multiple Combat Effects,* a character can buy more than one type of combat effect for a single Change Environment power (the one he gets for free must be the cheapest one). He could, for example, buy -2 to DEX Rolls and -2 to STR Rolls, or -3 to Sight Group PER Rolls and 2 points of damage. The character can choose which of the combat effects to use whenever he activates the power — he can use one, some, or all of them as he prefers. This Adder requires the GM's permission.

Varying Combat Effects: Ordinarily a character with Change Environment can't switch between effects; he can only use the one he bought. For a +10 Character Point Adder, *Varying Combat Effects,* the character may switch between different combat effects as a Half Phase Action. He buys the most expensive type of combat effect he wants to create, and whenever he activates the power he can choose to substitute any effect of equal or lesser value for the one he purchased, provided the GM approves and he can justify the change within the special effect of his Change Environment power. He cannot increase the strength or effectiveness of the combat effect, but can choose to use a lesser-strength combat effect.

For example, a character with a Change Environment that provided -3 to DEX Rolls (costs 3 points for each level of effect after the first) could substitute up to 3 Temperature Level changes, -3" movement, or -3 PER Rolls. He could choose -2 PER Rolls or -1 Temperature Level, but couldn't have more than -3 of any of these things. Nor could he affect CV, for example, since that costs more than 3 points per effect. When he chooses a combat effect, he can only choose a single combat effect — he cannot "split" the effect between two types (such as -2 Sight Group PER and -2 to DEX Rolls) unless the power also has Multiple Combat Effects. This Adder requires the GM's permission.

Varying Effect (varies): A Change Environment power with this Advantage can create more than one type of environmental change (though it can't alter its defined combat effect). If the character can create a Very Limited Group of environmental changes, this is a +¼ Advantage; if a Limited Group of environmental changes, it is a +½ Advantage; and if a Broad Group of environmental changes, it is a +1 Advantage.

Example: *Stormlord wants to be able to alter the weather. He buys a "Heatwave" Change Environment to be able to raise the temperature. After acquiring some Experience Points, he pays for a +¼ Very Limited Group Advantage for his Heatwave, and now can raise or lower the temperature. A few Experience Points later, he buys a +½ Limited Group Advantage and upgrades Heatwave to "Temperature Effects," which allows him to create certain predefined effects, like snow or fog, that relate to temperature. Finally, after earning even more Experience Points, he changes his power to "Weather Effects" by upgrading to the +1 Broad Group Advantage. Now he can create any kind of weather effect with his Change Environment.*

Autofire: Autofire Change Environment does not cost an additional +1 Advantage (see *Autofire,* page 252). However, if multiple uses of Change Environment overlap, their effects are not cumulative (see above).

**LIMITATIONS**

Explosion (-¼): A character may define his Change Environment effect as having an Explosion-like effect — the effects of the Change Environment fade gradually as one gets further away from the target hex. For example, if Winter Dragon's ice sheet (described above) were an Explosion, the target hex would impose a -4 on DEX Rolls; in the next hex out from the target hex, DEX Rolls would only be at -3; and so on. The combat effect is reduced by -1, or an equivalent one-step reduction in strength, for every hex out from the center of the Change Environment. Defining a Change Environment as an Explosion is a -¼ Limitation, and does not increase the size of the area affected by the Change Environment.

Self Only (-½): A character may take this Limitation (together with No Range (-½)) to define a form of Change Environment that only applies its combat effects with respect to attempts to affect or perceive him. The Limitation means the Change Environment doesn't cover an area, only his person. For example, a character might have a "Stealth Suit" that imposes a -4 Sight PER Roll penalty on attempts to see him, or a plane might be built with radar-absorbing materials that impose a -8 PER Roll penalty to perceive it with Radar.

Typically, Self Only Change Environment only has a 1" "radius." If the character or object is larger than human size (such as many vehicles), the CE should have a radius equal in size to the character's or object's largest dimension.

## CHARACTERISTICS

Type: Standard Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Varies
Cost: Varies, depending upon Characteristic purchased

Characters can purchase Characteristics as Powers, with Advantages, Limitations, and/or in Power Frameworks. For these purposes, treat a Characteristic as a Standard Power, and compute the cost using the regular cost for that Characteristic (see page 32).

Unless noted otherwise, a Characteristic purchased as a Power adds to and works with a character's standard Characteristics, whether it has Power Modifiers or not. For example, suppose a character has 20 STR and buys +40 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END), Only To Lift Objects. He has 60 STR for purposes of lifting objects, and only pays 2 END to use all 60 STR.

A Characteristic bought as a Power does not cost END unless the Characteristic normally costs END. For example, extra STR bought as a Power costs END at the usual rate of 1 END per 10 points of STR used. But extra INT, EGO, or SPD bought as a Power don't cost END (though the character can apply the *Costs Endurance* Limitation if he wants; see below).

### FIGURED CHARACTERISTICS

Purchasing Primary Characteristics as Powers has some implications for the character's Figured Characteristics.

**Effect On Figured Characteristics**

If a character purchases a Primary Characteristic with an Advantage, the Primary Characteristic affects Figured Characteristics normally. If he buys a Primary Characteristic with a Limitation, the Primary Characteristic also affects the Figured Characteristics normally. However, any Figured Characteristics gained from a Limited Primary Characteristic are automatically subject to the same Limitation(s). If the Limitation does not restrict the Figured Characteristics, then the Limited Primary Characteristic does not add to the Figured Characteristics and may not take the *No Figured Characteristics* Limitation.

Examples: *The Necromancer has +35 STR with the Limitation* IIF *(Magic Ring). The Necromancer only gets the +35 STR, +7 PD, +7 REC, and +18 STUN figured from the STR when he has his ring on. When he loses the ring, he loses the 35 STR and the derived PD, REC, and STUN. If the Necromancer had bought his +35 STR with the Limitation* Only To Lift Objects, *he would not get the +7 PD, +7 REC, and +18 STUN, since that Limitation does not Limit the Figured Characteristics in any way.*

*Lifter wants to buy STR with almost no upper limit, so he purchases 100 STR with the Limitation* Increased Endurance Cost *(x10 END). Since none of the Figured Characteristics uses END, this doesn't Limit them in any way, so Lifter gets no bonuses to his Figured Characteristics.*

*Norse Storm-Hammer-God buys his STR with the -¼ Limitation* Only In Heroic Identity *(he's usually a wimpy normal). Since this is a mystical transformation, it affects his Figured Characteristics. In normal guise his PD, REC, and STUN are also lowered.*

A Characteristic bought as a Power as a slot in a Multipower never adds to Figured Characteristics, and must take the *No Figured Characteristics* Limitation (see below). Characters can only buy Characteristics in other Power Frameworks with special permission from the GM; the same rules apply.

**Calculating Figured Characteristics**

If a character buys a Primary Characteristic as a Power, calculate the Figured Characteristics deriving from that Primary Characteristic from each "part" of the Primary Characteristic separately. For example, suppose a character has 15 STR normally, and buys +45 STR as a Power. From 15 STR he gets (15/2, rounding up) +8 STUN. From +45 STR, he gets (45/2, again rounding up) +23 STUN. Therefore his STR adds +31 to his STUN altogether.

**Selling Back**

Characters cannot normally sell back the Figured Characteristics gained from Primary Characteristics bought with Limitations. If the GM allows this, the character must apply the Limitation to the points sold back to reduce the points he gains. For example, if a character purchases DEX with a -1 Limitation, any points gained by selling back the character's SPD are subject to the same Limitation — selling back one point of SPD yields 10/(1+1) = 5 points. In any case, characters may only sell back one Figured Characteristic (see page 39).

**Speed**

"Fractional" SPD (page 38) has no effect when buying SPD as a Power. A character buying SPD as a Power must pay 10 Character Points per +1 SPD, regardless of what his DEX or "fractional SPD" are.

If a character purchases SPD that Costs Endurance, he must pay the END cost every Phase, not just on the extra Phases he gains from the Power. (The same applies to DEX.) Therefore, he can't take Recoveries (other than the standard Post-Segment 12 Recovery) unless he de-activates the extra SPD, since his SPD costs him END every Phase. If he gets Stunned in one of his "extra" Phases (the Phases added by the Limited SPD) before his Phase occurs in the Segment, he still gets to recover from being Stunned when his Phase occurs in that Segment, since the power doesn't deactivate until the end of the Segment.

The GM may alter these rules in the interest of dramatic sense or game balance.

### POWER EXAMPLES: CHARACTERISTICS

Super-Steroid Pills: +10 STR (10 Active Points); OAF (-1), No Figured Characteristics (-½), 4 Charges lasting 1 Minute each (-¼) (total cost 4 points) **plus** +1 SPD (10 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges lasting 1 Minute each (-¼) (total cost 4 points). Total cost: 8 points.

Presence Defense: +20 PRE (20 Active Points); Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks (-1). Total cost: 10 points.

Spell Of Righteous Strength: +10 STR, Usable By Other (usable by any one person at a time; +¼), Persistent (no LOS required; +½) (17 Active Points); OAF (Holy Symbol; -1), 4 Charges lasting 1 Minute each (-¼) (total cost: 7 points) **plus** +5 CON, Usable By Other (usable by any one person at a time; +¼), Persistent (no LOS required; +½) (17 Active Points); OAF (Holy Symbol; -1), Linked (-½), 4 Charges lasting 1 Minute each (-¼) (total cost: 7 points). Total cost: 14 points.

**LIMITATIONS**

Costs Endurance: If a character buys extra points of a Primary Characteristic that Costs Endurance, he does not have to pay END for the Figured Characteristics derived from it. See above regarding SPD and DEX that Costs Endurance.

No Figured Characteristics (-½): Characteristics bought as Powers that would normally add to Figured Characteristics may be bought with this Limitation, in which case they don't increase the Figured Characteristics.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Normal Characteristic Maxima: Characteristics purchased as Powers are not affected by Normal Characteristic Maxima doubling requirements (whether Normal Characteristic Maxima are a campaign ground rule or taken as a Disadvantage). For example, a superhero with 20 STR and the *Normal Characteristic Maxima* Disadvantage who buys +40 STR with the Limitation *OIF (Powered Armor Suit)* does not pay 53 Character Points ((40x2)/1.5), he pays 27 (40/1.5).



**CLAIRSENTIENCE** STOP

Type: Standard Power/Sensory Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Hex
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: See Clairsentience Summary Table and text

A character with Clairsentience can use one or more of his Senses (usually the Sight Group) at Range, thus allowing him to perceive distant objects more clearly, perceive around corners or into locked rooms, and so forth. Examples of Clairsentience include mystic scrying spells, borescopes used to see through walls and around corners, and closed-circuit television systems. Clairsentience for the Sight Group is usually known as Clairvoyance; Clairsentience for the Hearing Group is sometimes called Clairaudience.

Clairsentience with one Sense Group costs 20 Character Points; each additional Sense Group is +10 Character Points (or +5 Character Points for only one Sense). You can double the range of Clairsentience for +5 Character Points (do not include these points in the Active Point calculation when determining the Power's Range). Clairsentience costs END to use, but neither the use of Clairsentience nor its perception point are perceivable by three Sense Groups.

Purchasing Clairsentience for a Sense Group does not automatically grant a character all the Senses in that Sense Group. It only allows him to perceive at a distance using any Senses he already possesses that belong to that Sense Group. If a character wants to have a Sense that only works with his Clairsentience, he can buy it with a -½ Limitation.

Clairsentience is a member of the Unusual Senses Group (see *Senses In The HERO System,* pages 348-55). Characters may purchase appropriate Sense Modifiers, such as *Dimensional* or *Increased Arc Of Perception,* for their Clairsentience

## CLAIRSENTIENCE SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost | Clairsentience |
|---|---|
| 20 | Base PER Roll with one Sense Group (Targeting or Nontargeting) at Range |
| **Cost** | **Extra Senses** |
| +10 | Extra Sense Group (Targeting or Nontargeting) |
| +5 | Extra Sense (Targeting or Nontargeting) |
| **Cost** | **Modifiers** |
| +20 | Precognition |
| +20 | Retrocognition |
| +5 | Mobile Perception Point (Adder) |
| var | Multiple Perception Points (x2 perception points for every +5 points) |
| var | Appropriate Sense Modifiers (such as Dimensional) (see page 164-66) |
| **Cost** | **Range** |
| +5 | 2x Range |
| +10 | 4x Range |
| +15 | 8x Range |

...and so forth

(see *Enhanced Senses,* pages 160-66). Clairsentience is not inherently a Targeting Sense regardless of what Senses it lets a character use at Range, but a character can make it into a Targeting Sense with the appropriate Sense Modifier. Clairsentience, even if a Targeting Sense, cannot establish Line Of Sight (unless the GM allows this).

### USING CLAIRSENTIENCE

Whenever a character uses Clairsentience, it's as if he were standing some distance away from his current position, trying to perceive something. He designates a *perception point* from which his Clairsentience works. He can change this perception point from use to use, and can put it anywhere within the range of his Clairsentience (but he cannot move it once it's established unless he buys the *Mobile Perception Point* Adder; see below). This lets him see (or hear, smell, and so on) in any direction from the perception point just as if he were standing there himself.

Calculate the Range Modifier for PER Rolls made via Clairsentience from the perception point, not from where the character actually is. Objects in the way won't block Clairsentience, but they may make it more difficult for a character to get his perception point in the desired spot. The GM may require a character to make an Attack Roll against DCV 3 (or higher, depending on the difficulty) to place his perception point properly.

### PERCEIVING THE PAST AND FUTURE

Some forms of Clairsentience can perceive into the past or the future. If the GM permits these options, they can have a powerful impact on the campaign — but if properly managed, they make interesting plot elements. In most cases Precognition and Retrocognition shouldn't be completely reliable; you can simulate unreliability with Limitations like *Activation Roll, No Conscious Control,* or *Vague And Unclear.*

**Precognition**

A character with Precognition can perceive the future (usually this involves the Sight Group and he receives "visions" of events to come). The GM must decide whether what the character perceives is permanent and immutable (that is, what he sees will occur, and the GM has to contrive the adventure so the scene happens) or won't necessarily occur (which makes the visions considerably less dramatic, but gives the characters control over their own fate).

If the GM chooses the first route, he should describe visions the character can easily misinterpret because they're imprecise or "fuzzy." For example, a character sees his best friend floating still and lifeless in a river. In "reality," his friend could be dead — or simply unconscious or playing around. Perhaps the person seen was actually dead but wearing a disguise so he only looked like the character's friend. In any case, the vision really occurs — but doesn't necessarily spell doom for the friend.

**Retrocognition**

A character with Retrocognition can perceive events that have already happened. A classic use of this is to "watch" the ancient Egyptians hide the tomb or to "watch" a crime take place to identify the culprit. Once again, the GM must use Retrocognition to help the game, not hurt it. Showing a detective the exact events of the murder doesn't make for a good mystery.

### POWERS

Sense-Affecting Powers: For a discussion of how Sense-Affecting Powers interact with Clairsentience, see pages 352 and 355.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Mobile Perception Point: When a character establishes a Clairsentience perception point, it's "fixed" at that point. To move it to another location, he has to deactivate that use and activate the Clairsentience again at the new perception point. To move the perception point while the power remains active requires a +5 Character Point Adder, *Mobile Perception Point.*

A mobile perception point can move up to 6" per Phase, and travels in three dimensions (*i.e.,* it can "fly"), but cannot move beyond the maximum range of the Clairsentience. It can pass through solid objects, though that may blind the character, disorient him, cause him to move the point "off course," or the like, based on the situation, special effects, common sense, and dramatic sense. (If the point cannot move through solid objects, the Clairsentience takes a -0 Limitation.) A character can double a mobile perception point's rate of speed for every +5 Character Points. Moving a mobile perception point any number of inches up to its maximum movement requires a Half Phase Action, but a character can only move it once per Phase.

Multiple Perception Points: Clairsentience normally allows a character to perceive only one perception point at a time — if he wants to look at some other location, he has to either move his perception point (if possible) or deactivate the power and reactivate it at the new location. At the GM's option, a character can buy an Adder called *Multiple Perception Points* to have the ability to perceive multiple perception points at once. For each +5 Character Points, the character can have up to double the number of perception points active at one time (two perception points for +5 Character Points, up to four perception points for +10 Character Points, and so forth).

Indirect: Characters don't have to purchase this Advantage for Clairsentience; it is inherently "Indirect" in its ability to see around corners, through walls, and so forth.

Invisible Power Effects: Characters don't have to purchase this Advantage for Clairsentience; as noted above, it's inherently not perceivable by three Sense Groups.

Transdimensional: Characters don't have to purchase this Advantage for Clairsentience; use the *Dimensional* Sense Modifier (page 164) instead.

### POWER EXAMPLES: CLAIRSENTIENCE

Spell Of Scrying: Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups), 16x Range (2,400") (50 Active Points); OAF Immobile, Fragile (large enchanted mirror; -2¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1½). Total cost: 9 points.

Borescope: Clairsentience (Sight Group), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (30 Active Points); OAF (-1), No Range (Clairsentience can only be used to see through or under doors and walls; -½), One Sense Only (Normal Sight; -¼). Total cost: 11 points.

Crystal Ball, Divinatory: Precognitive Clairsentience (Sight Group) (40 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Precognition Only (-1), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Time Modifiers (-½). Total cost: 9 points.

Closed-Circuit TV Security System: Clairsentience (Sight and Hearing Groups), Multiple Perception Points (up to eight at once) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1), Fixed Perception Points (-1). Total cost: 15 points.

**LIMITATIONS**

Attack Roll Required (-¼): Clairsentience with this Limitation requires an Attack Roll against DCV 3 every time the character tries to place his perception point. It represents a form of Clairsentience that's somehow inherently "inaccurate" or difficult to use precisely.

Blackout (-½): This Limitation signifies that the character cannot use any of his normal Senses while using his Clairsentience — in effect he's deaf and blind through his personal Senses and can only perceive things through his Clairsentience until he turns the Power off.

Only Through The Senses Of Others (-½ or more): This form of Clairsentience uses the Senses of others as a "focal point" — in effect, the character must have another creature to use as his perception point. If there are no creatures with the required Sense within range of the character, he cannot use his power.

This form of Clairsentience does not inherently have a mobile perception point. Unless the character buys that (see above), when the being whose Senses he's using moves away from the vicinity of his perception point, the power instantly turns off. If the character buys Mobile Perception Point, the perception point can keep moving with the subject even if the subject's velocity exceeds the perception point's velocity. The GM may rule that the power stops functioning in some circumstances (such as if the subject Teleports or uses a Mega-Scaled Movement Power).

At the GM's option, this form of Clairsentience might be hampered or blocked if the subject has a sufficient amount of Mental Defense (say, -1 to the character's PER Rolls for every point of Mental Defense). If the character can only perceive through the eyes of a single specific creature, or a very limited group of creatures, the Limitation is worth -¾ or -1.

Fixed Perception Point (-1): Clairsentience with this Limitation has a fixed perception point (defined when the character purchases the Power). The character cannot change the perception point thereafter. This Limitation is often used to build closed-circuit television systems and similar devices.

One Sense Only (-¼): Clairsentience with this Limitation does not work with a Sense Group at its base level, but only a single Sense. Characters should normally only take this Limitation for Clairsentience powers bought with a single Sense Group.

Precognition (or Retrocognition) Only (-1): Ordinarily, a character who buys Precognitive Clairsentience can use both normal Clairsentience (perceiving at a distance) and Precognition (perceiving the future). With this Limitation, the character can only sense the future (or past); he cannot use the perceive-at-a-distance aspect of Clairsentience.

Only Through Dreams (-1): Precognition or Retrocognition with this Limitation only provides visions to the character through dreams.

Time Modifiers (-½): Precognition or Retrocognition with this Limitation is harder to use over greater spans of time. The Precognition or Retrocognition must have a Required Skill Roll or Attack Roll. For every step on the Time Chart away from the present which a particular event will occur, there's a -2 "Range Modifier" to the Required Skill/Attack Roll. For example, an event 1 Turn in the future from when the character activates the power is at -2, one 1 Minute later is -4, and so forth. (The GM may alter the penalty, or the rate at which it accrues, if desired; this may also entail reducing the value of the Limitation.) This makes it much harder to view "distant" events.

Vague And Unclear (-½): This Limitation for Precognitive or Retrocognitive Clairsentience simulates an ability to foretell the future (or uncover the past) which is, at best, unreliable. The information gained is not definite; it could be misleading, false, easily misinterpreted, or any number of things — or it could, in fact, be a correct vision of what is to come (or what occurred). The character must decide for himself just how much he trusts the information he gains by using the power.



## CLINGING

Type: Standard Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 10 Character Points for ability to exert character's normal STR; +1 Character Point for every +3 Clinging STR

A character with Clinging may cling to walls and sheer surfaces and move on them as if they were level. Some examples of Clinging include high-tech cling-grips used by climbers or insect-based wall-crawling powers. Clinging costs 10 Character Points. Clinging does not cost END to use, but the character must pay the usual END cost for any movement used.

While Clinging, a character can use his full STR to "stick" to the surface. He can increase this total above his normal STR: every +3 points of Clinging STR costs +1 Character Point. If another character wants to pull a Clinging character from a surface, he must exceed the character's total Clinging STR in a STR Versus STR Contest; otherwise the character remains stuck. If the opponent does enough BODY damage with his STR to break whatever the character Clings to, that object might break (or, in the case of a large object such as a building, suffer damage in the hex where the character Clung to it). Other characters can never take damage from this, though — if two characters are stuck together with Clinging, and someone pulls them apart, the character being Clung to does not take damage.

Moving across a surface with Clinging (such as running along a wall) is the same as normal ground movement. Moving up a surface takes 2" of ground movement to move 1" up.

A character using Clinging subtracts an extra 1d6 from all Knockback rolls, as long as he is in contact with a solid surface.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Damage Shield: Although Clinging is not an Attack Power, characters may buy Damage Shield for it to create, for example, a "tar baby" effect in which anyone who attacks the character gets stuck to him. Clinging with this Advantage only functions as a Damage Shield; it doesn't allow characters to walk on walls or the like.

Usable On Others: If a character buys Clinging Usable As Attack, the base cost of Clinging (10 Character Points) buys him 10 STR (not his own normal STR). He can then increase the Clinging STR at the usual cost of +1 Character Point for every +3 points of STR.

### LIMITATIONS

Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼): Clinging with this Limitation does not subtract +1d6 from Knockback.

Requires A Skill Roll: Characters who take Climbing as a Required Skill Roll for Clinging usually suffer the same DCV modifiers as a character using Climbing would, though the GM may reduce these modifiers to reflect a Clinging character's greater mobility.

## DAMAGE REDUCTION

Type: Standard Power/Defense Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: See Damage Reduction Table

A character with Damage Reduction is tougher than normal characters — only part of any damage that gets through his defenses applies to reduce his STUN or BODY. Examples of Damage Reduction include gigantic monsters who feel little or no pain from standard attacks, super-tough characters, and a fire elemental who's nearly immune to damage from any type of fire. Damage Reduction does not cost END to use.

Damage Reduction helps the GM build Master Villains and Giant Monsters. A properly constructed character with medium defenses and Damage Reduction can be damaged by almost anyone, but can take quite a pounding before being Knocked Out.

The GM should be careful not to let a character have both high defenses (including high CON and/or STUN totals) and Damage Reduction, since this can make the character very difficult to affect in combat. Remember that a character with Physical Damage Reduction, 50%, Resistant has spent an extra 30 points on his physical defense. Also realize that fights against characters with lots of Damage Reduction can take a very long time.

### BUYING DAMAGE REDUCTION

A character purchases Damage Reduction separately for each class of attacks (Physical, Energy, or Mental). He lists it as a percentage (it removes 25%, 50%, or 75% of the damage taken after defenses), and must define it as Normal or Resistant:

—Normal Damage Reduction acts against Normal Damage, AVLD, and NND attacks

—Resistant Damage Reduction affects Normal Damage attacks, AVLDs, NNDs, Drain STUN or Drain BODY (but not other types of Drains), Killing Attacks, and any other type of damage the GM allows it to affect

A character may have two or more Damage Reduction-based abilities if he wishes (and the GM permits). However, this is usually only appropriate if each ability is somehow distinct (they have different Power Modifiers, or the like). If a character has two or more Damage Reduction powers that could apply to the same attack, he can only apply one of them (he chooses which one) — he can't apply multiple Damage Reductions to keep reducing the damage from a single attack.

## DAMAGE REDUCTION TABLE

| Damage Reduction | Normal Cost | Resistant Cost |
|---|---|---|
| 25% Damage Reduction | 10 points | 15 points |
| 50% Damage Reduction | 20 points | 30 points |
| 75% Damage Reduction | 40 points | 60 points |

### POWER EXAMPLES: CLINGING

Cling-Grips: Clinging (normal STR) (10 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼). Total cost: 4 points.

Perching (character can stand on tiny ledges, balance on doorframes, wedge himself into ceiling corners, *etc.,* without fear of falling): Clinging (normal STR) (10 Active Points); Only To "Perch" (-½), Requires A Climbing Roll (-½), Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼). Total cost: 4 points.

Swift-Climbers Of The Tree People: Clinging (normal STR); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (difficult to replenish sap-based body coating, 2 Hours; -0). Total cost: 10 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: DAMAGE REDUCTION

Magic Resistance: Magic Damage Reduction, 50%. Total cost: 30 points.

Fiery Body: Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75% (60 Active Points); Only Works Against Fire (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

Can Take A Punch: Physical Damage Reduction, Normal, 50% (20 Active Points); Requires A CON Roll (assumes a CON Roll of 12- or 13-, no Active Point penalty; -¼), Character Must Be Aware Of Attack (-¼), STUN Only (-½). Total cost: 10 points.

Gigantic Monster's Invulnerability: Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%. Total cost: 120 points.



Example: *Zigzag has a PD of 10 and Physical Damage Reduction, 50%, Normal to represent his rubbery body. If Zigzag gets hit with an attack that does 20 STUN, 10 points of STUN penetrate his defenses. Zigzag's Damage Reduction applies, so Zigzag takes 50% of 10 = 5 STUN. If Zigzag gets hit with 50 STUN he'll take 50-10 = 40, 50% of 40 = 20 STUN. If he gets hit by a Killing Attack 1d6 he takes all the damage that gets past his defenses, because his Damage Reduction is not Resistant.*

**Damage Reduction As Immunity**

Characters can buy Damage Reduction to simulate a special resistance or near-immunity to a specific type of attack. With the GM's permission, a character can define his Damage Reduction as working against a specific group or type of attacks, whether Normal or Resistant, Energy or Physical or Mental. For example, a character could buy *Poison Damage Reduction* that only works against poisons, drugs, and gases (regardless of how they're built or defined). However, the Damage Reduction still only reduces damage; it doesn't affect Entangles, Flashes, or the like even if they fall within the defined special effect. This form of Damage Reduction costs the same as Resistant Damage Reduction, and works like Resistant Damage Reduction in terms of what types of damage it affects.

## USING DAMAGE REDUCTION

A character with Damage Reduction applies his defenses normally to the damage done by an attack. If his Damage Reduction applies to the attack, he then uses it to reduce the remaining damage. If reducing the damage by a percentage yields a fractional result, the damage rounds in favor of the character per the standard *HERO System* rounding rules.

A character with 25% Damage Reduction takes ¼ less damage from every attack to which the Damage Reduction applies (in other words, he takes 75% of the damage).

A character with 50% Damage Reduction takes ½ less damage from every attack to which the Damage Reduction applies.

A character with 75% Damage Reduction takes ¾ less damage from every attack to which the Damage Reduction applies (in other words, he takes 25% of the damage).

Regardless of the percentage of damage reduced, calculate the Knockback or Knockdown done by an attack from the amount of BODY damage rolled, not the reduced amount.

If a character has Resistant Damage Reduction, but his PD and ED are not Resistant, he may not apply his PD and ED against the STUN caused by Killing Attacks. A character may apply his Damage Reduction to the damage caused by an NND or AVLD even if he lacks the specified defenses for the attack.

**Mental Damage Reduction**

Mental Damage Reduction reduces not only the damage caused by mental attacks such as Ego Attack, but the Effect Rolls of Powers such as Mind Control. The cost for Mental Damage Reduction is the Resistant cost (and it applies to any form of damage that Resistant Damage Reduction normally applies to, provided the attack is a Mental attack). Characters apply Mental Damage Reduction like the other forms of Damage Reduction: first, apply any applicable Mental Defense to reduce the effect of the attack; then apply the Reduction to reduce the damage rolled (Ego Attack) or the Effect Roll (continuing-effect Mental Powers).

## ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Armor Piercing: A power with this Advantage does not reduce the effects of Damage Reduction, but does affect the defenses applied to damage before Damage Reduction applies.

Hardened: Characters may apply the *Hardened* Advantage to Damage Reduction. The Damage Reduction then affects Penetrating attacks normally; the special rule stated below no longer applies.

Penetrating: Damage Reduction does not affect the minimum damage caused by a Penetrating attack. For example, if a character with 50% Damage Reduction is hit by an RKA 4d6, Penetrating that does 12 BODY, 36 STUN (roll of 5, 3, 2, 2), and his defenses plus Damage Reduction would reduce the BODY damage to 2 BODY, he takes 4 BODY — the minimum BODY damage the Penetrating attack can cause with that roll.

## LIMITATIONS

STUN (or BODY) Only (-½): Damage Reduction with this Limitation affects STUN damage only (or BODY damage only).

Set Effect (-1 to -¼): Damage Reduction with this Limitation only works against attacks of a specific special effect, or does not protect against attacks of a specific special effect. For example, a fire wizard could buy Energy Damage Reduction, *Only Works Against Fire,* at a -½ Limitation, giving him a special resistance to fire attacks. A werewolf could buy 75% Physical Damage Reduction which *Does Not Work Against Silver* (-½ Limitation — silver isn't common, but everyone knows it hurts werewolves).

## DISADVANTAGES

Dependence, Susceptibility: At the GM's option, characters who are Susceptible to damage from some substance, or who take damage because of a Dependence, cannot apply their Damage Reduction to reduce that damage. Otherwise, characters can achieve this same effect by taking a -¼ Limitation on their Damage Reduction.

## DAMAGE RESISTANCE

Type: Standard Power/Defense Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 Character Point to convert every 2 points of Normal Defense to Resistant Defense

A character with Damage Resistance may apply some or all of his normal PD or ED against Killing Attacks. Damage Resistance doesn't add to the character's defenses, it just converts some of a character's Normal Defenses into Resistant Defenses. Damage Resistance costs 1 Character Point per 2 points of Normal Defenses converted. Damage Resistance does not cost END to use.

If a character buys Damage Resistance, the Advantages on his base PD and/or ED and the Damage Resistance have to match. If the base PD and/or ED already has an Advantage, the Damage Resistance has to have it, too; if he wants to apply an Advantage to his Damage Resistance, he has to apply it to his base PD and/or ED as well. Otherwise, the Advantage has no effect. A character cannot, for example, buy Hardened for his Damage Resistance unless his base PD and/or ED are also Hardened; if he does, the Advantage has absolutely no effect.

Example: *Ogre (28 PD) buys 10 points of Damage Resistance, making 20 points of his PD Resistant. If his PD were Hardened, he'd have to buy his Damage Resistance with that Advantage, making it cost (10 x (1 + ¼)) = 12 Character Points.*

Characters can also purchase Damage Resistance for Mental Defense, Flash Defense, Power Defense, or similar Defense Powers to make them Resistant.

## DARKNESS

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power/Sense-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Hex
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: See Darkness Summary Table

A character with Darkness can create a field that's impervious to one Sense Group (usually the Sight Group). Some examples of Darkness include smoke grenades, mystic spells of silence, and blinding fields of impenetrable blackness.

At its base level, Darkness fills one hex for 10 Character Points and affects one Targeting Sense Group. Increasing the radius for a Darkness that affects one or more Targeting Senses costs +10 points for each +1" radius. A Darkness can be made impervious to additional Targeting Sense Groups: +1 Targeting Sense Group costs +10 Character Points; +1 Targeting Sense costs +5 Character Points.

If Darkness affects only a Nontargeting Sense Group, it costs 5 Character Points to fill one hex. Increasing the radius for such a Darkness costs +5 Character Points per +1" radius. Adding a Nontargeting Sense Group to any Darkness costs +5 Character Points; adding a single Nontargeting Sense, +3 Character Points.

Darkness costs END to use. Since it's a Constant Power, a Darkness field remains in existence as long as the character pays the END for it. A character may maintain more than one Darkness field at once, provided he pays the END cost for all fields.

### USING DARKNESS

To use Darkness, a character must make an Attack Roll against a target hex to place the Darkness field where he wants it.

Darkness makes the covered area *impenetrable* by the Senses it affects. For example, unlike natural nighttime darkness (which imposes up to a -4 on Sight PER Rolls and can be counteracted with Nightvision and other Powers), Darkness versus the Sight Group is impenetrable by Sight Group Senses — even someone with Nightvision cannot see into, out of, or through it. It doesn't just make PER Rolls with the affected Senses harder, it makes them impossible. A character in a Darkness field who cannot perceive his opponent(s) with a Targeting Sense usually suffers penalties to his DCV and OCV. See *Other Combat Effects,* page 422.

## DARKNESS SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost To Fill One Hex | Sense Group |
|---|---|
| 10 | Targeting |
| 5 | Nontargeting |
| **Cost per +1" Radius** | **Sense Group** |
| +10 | Targeting |
| +5 | Nontargeting |
| **Cost** | **Extra Senses** |
| +10 | Targeting Sense Group |
| +5 | Targeting Sense (single) |
| +5 | Nontargeting Sense Group |
| +3 | Nontargeting Sense (single) |

## POWER EXAMPLES: DAMAGE RESISTANCE

Tough Skin: Damage Resistance (20 PD/20 ED). Total cost: 20 points.

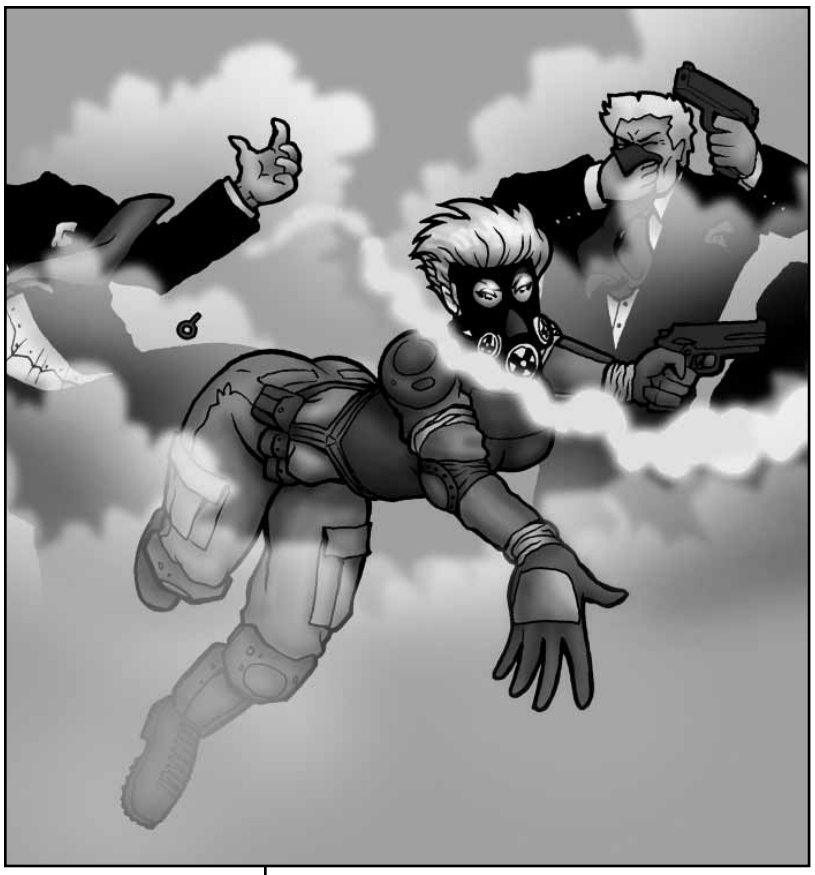
Iron Body: Damage Resistance (30 PD/20 ED). Total cost: 25 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: DARKNESS

Smoke Grenades, Mk. I: Darkness to Sight Group 3" radius (30 Active Points); OAF (-1), 8 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (removed by winds or rain; -0), Range Based On STR (-¼). Total cost: 13 points.

The Spell Of The Idle Tongue: Darkness to Hearing Group 1" radius, Usable As Attack (+1), Ranged (+½) (12 Active Points); OAF Expendable (two small pieces of leather stitched together; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total cost: 4 points.

The Sphere Of Chaotic Sensations: Darkness to Sight, Hearing, and Radio Groups 3" radius. Total cost: 40 points.



Sensory effects generated within a Darkness field, such as lights or noises, cannot be perceived inside a Darkness field that works against the appropriate Senses (or outside that field, by characters inside it). Flashes that affect the Sense(s) affected by a Darkness field cannot penetrate, and have no effect in, such a Darkness field; light created by Sight Group Images has no effect in a Darkness to Sight Group field.

A character who creates a Darkness field cannot automatically perceive through the field. To do so, he should buy an appropriate Enhanced Sense or apply the Advantage *Personal Immunity* to the Power.

**DENSITY INCREASE**

Type: Standard Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every +5 STR, +1 PD and +1 ED, -1" Knockback, and x2 mass

A character with Density Increase ("DI") can increase his density, thereby making himself stronger and physically tougher. Some examples of Density Increase include characters whose bodies are made of rock or metal, or a superhero with gravitic powers who can make himself denser. Density Increase costs 5 Character Points per doubling of mass (see the Density Table for the full effects).

Density Increase is only appropriate for characters who can *alter their density.* Characters who are always very heavy should not buy DI. Instead they should buy various Powers (such as increased Characteristics) to reflect the benefits of having a permanently altered density, and take a Physical Limitation (see page 336) to reflect the drawbacks. Use the guidelines provided with this Power to determine what the character should buy.

Density Increase adds to a character's mass, STR, PD, and ED without changing his appearance. Density Increase costs END to use; the character must pay END every Phase in which DI is turned on.

A character can use the STR he gets from Density Increase for any purpose he could normally use STR for — it doesn't just help him move his extra mass around, it affects how much he can lift, how much damage he does when he punches, and so forth. Density Increase does not reduce a character's STR-based forms of movement, such as Running and Swimming (though there are optional rules for the effect of mass on Leaping on page 35, if the GM wants to use them).

## DENSITY INCREASE TABLE

Every 5 points of Density Increase provides:
x2 mass
+5 STR (no Figured Characteristics)
-1" Knockback (functions as Knockback Resistance)
+1 PD (nonresistant)
+1 ED (nonresistant)

| Points | Mass (KG) | STR | KB | PD | ED |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 100 | +0 | -0 | +0 | +0 |
| 5 | 200 | +5 | -1 | +1 | +1 |
| 10 | 400 | +10 | -2 | +2 | +2 |
| 15 | 800 | +15 | -3 | +3 | +3 |
| 20 | 1,600 | +20 | -4 | +4 | +4 |
| 25 | 3,200 | +25 | -5 | +5 | +5 |
| 30 | 6,400 | +30 | -6 | +6 | +6 |
| 35 | 12,500 | +35 | -7 | +7 | +7 |
| 40 | 25,000 | +40 | -8 | +8 | +8 |
| 45 | 50,000 | +45 | -9 | +9 | +9 |
| 50 | 100,000 | +50 | -10 | +10 | +10 |
| 55 | 200,000 | +55 | -11 | +11 | +11 |
| 60 | 400,000 | +60 | -12 | +12 | +12 |
| 65 | 800,000 | +65 | -13 | +13 | +13 |
| 70 | 1,600,000 | +70 | -14 | +14 | +14 |
| 75 | 3,200,000 | +75 | -15 | +15 | +15 |

## CREATING HIGH- AND LOW-DENSITY CHARACTERS

Characters who have greater density than normal characters all the time should buy the appropriate Powers and Characteristics to simulate that state, using DI as a guideline for how strong, hard to Knock Back, and so on the character is.

High-density characters buy their extra STR, PD, and ED as Characteristics; and their reduced Knockback as Knockback Resistance. Their increased mass is a function of special effects and the Physical Limitation the character should take (see page 336 and Appendix, page 573).

If you want to create a character who is *less* dense than a normal person, you can simulate that with a Physical Limitation. See *Physical Limitation,* page 336, for details.

If a character who has Density Increase applies an Advantage to his STR, he must calculate the cost of the Advantage based on the character's total STR including DI bonuses. For example, if a character has STR 30 and 30 points of DI (+30 STR), the cost of an Advantage is calculated as if he had bought a 60 STR.

For rules regarding crushing damage, see page 422.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Hardened: If a character has applied Hardened to his PD and/or ED, he must also buy it for the PD and/or ED he obtains from Density Increase.

Invisible Power Effects: Density Increase is already "invisible," in that it does not change the character's physical appearance, so characters don't have to buy this Advantage for it. They can apply the Limitation *Visible* to forms of DI that are perceivable, such as transforming one's body into solid steel.

Reduced Endurance: If a character buys Density Increase with Reduced Endurance, he must still pay normal END costs for using the extra STR granted by DI, unless he buys Reduced Endurance separately for his STR.

Usable On Others: When used as an attack against another character (*i.e.,* when bought with the +1 *Usable As Attack* Advantage), Density Increase does not, and cannot be bought to, increase another character's weight without also increasing his STR (and other Characteristics that DI normally improves).

### LIMITATIONS

No STR Increase (-½): DI with this Limitation does not provide any extra STR to the character. Eventually the character's weight becomes more than he can lift with his STR, meaning he cannot walk and has to be carried or driven everywhere he goes (unless he turns his DI off).

### DESOLIDIFICATION STOP

Type: Standard Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 40 Character Points

A character with Desolidification can become intangible, allowing him to walk through walls and ignore attacks. Some examples of Desolidification include the intangible body of a ghost, a superhero who can pass through solid objects by synchronizing the "phase vibrations" of his molecules, and a vampire's ability to transform into a cloud of mist. Desolidification costs 40 Character Points and costs END to use.

### BASIC EFFECTS OF DESOLIDIFICATION

A Desolidified character can move through walls and other solid objects at his normal movement rate unless the walls are bought with the *Affects Desolidified* Advantage (page 247). When doing so, he can use any Movement Power he possesses. For example, he can walk (Running) through walls, use Flight to travel through solid ground, and so forth. Desolidified characters can walk on the ground without sinking into it by force of will; this allows them to, for example, walk up a staircase or climb a cliff. Desolidification doesn't automatically allow a character to "walk on air"; to do that, he has to buy Flight.

When Desolidified, a character cannot be touched, does not register on Sonar or Radar, and emits no scent. However, he can still breathe, and must do so; Desolidification provides no Life Support. Desolidified characters are visible, but look somewhat hazy (people can tell they're using Desolidification).

A Desolidified character cannot touch or feel solid objects. But except for Touch Group Senses, all of a Desolidified character's Senses, even "active" ones like Radar, work normally while he's intangible.

When a character Desolidifies, any small personal objects he's carrying (including any weapons or Foci) Desolidify with him. Larger objects he's carrying do not; he immediately "drops" them. However, a Desolidified character cannot drop objects (such as grenades or anvils) onto or near other characters in the expectation that they'll become solid and damage solid characters; such an "attack" has no effect on the solid world unless bought with the Advantage *Affects Physical World.*

### DESOLIDIFICATION AND DAMAGE

When Desolidified, a character is immune to most physical and energy attacks, including ones such as Drains and NNDs. However, several types of attacks *can* affect Desolidified characters. These include:

—Mental Powers (including any Power that uses an ECV Attack Roll);

—Sense-Affecting Powers that affect any Sense the character can use while Deso-

### POWER EXAMPLES: DENSITY INCREASE

Body Of Stone: Density Increase (25,000 kg mass, +40 STR, +8 PD/8 ED, -8" KB), Costs END Only To Activate (+¼) (50 Active Points); Visible (-¼). Total cost: 40 points

### POWER EXAMPLES: DESOLIDIFICATION

Cloud Form: Desolidification (affected by wind, fire, or cold) (40 Active Points); Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½). Total cost: 27 points.

Energy Body: Desolidification (affected by similar type of energy); Linked (-½), Only In Heroic Identity (-¼) (total cost: 23 points) **plus** Energy Blast 5d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Damage Shield (+½), Continuous (+1), Affects Physical World (+2) (125 Active Points); Only In Heroic Identity (-¼) (total cost: 100 points). Total cost: 123 points.

Super-Contortionist Skill: Desolidification (affected by any attack) (40 Active Points); Does Not Protect Against Damage (-1), Requires A Contortionist Skill Roll (-½). Total cost: 16 points.

lidified (characters may define some of their Senses as not working when they're Desolidified as a -0 Limitation if they wish);

—an Adjustment Power or Dispel bought specifically to affect Desolidification, such as Drain Desolidification or Dispel Desolidification (Desolidification is not considered a "Defense Power" for purposes of these Powers);

—Presence Attacks;

—any attack that affects the character through his breathing, such as inhaled gases; and

—any attack bought with the Power Advantage *Affects Desolidified*

Characters may, of course, buy Mental Defense, Flash Defense, Life Support, and similar Powers Linked to their Desolidification to reflect the immunity their Desolidified state offers to such attacks (similarly, knowledge of their relative invulnerability may make it easy for them to ignore Presence Attacks). Desolidified characters cannot automatically affect each other unless their powers have similar special effects (for example, two wizards using similar Desolidification spells could hit each other normally while they're both Desolidified).

Furthermore, *a character must define the special effects of a reasonably common group of attacks that affect him while he's Desolidified.*

Example: *Dr. Mist, who can transform himself into a cloud of vapor, is still affected by any attacks with the special effects of wind, heat, or cold. The wizard Arkelos, who uses magic to ride the streams of essence in ghostly form, still takes damage from any attack with a "magic" special effect.*

### THE DRAWBACKS OF INTANGIBILITY

Being Desolidified causes some problems. First and foremost, a Desolidified character cannot affect the physical world in any way. He cannot touch, lift, or move solid objects. His attacks against the physical world have no effect. He can't even affect solid targets with Mental Powers or Sense-Affecting Powers (though solid characters can affect him with them). If he wants to attack, he has to become solid (and therefore vulnerable) or have abilities bought with the Advantage *Affects Physical World* (see below).

Although a Desolidified character can walk through solid objects, he can't breathe while in a solid object unless he has appropriate Life Support. He can't consume solid food or drink, either; it's possible for a character to starve to death if he can't turn his Desolidification off for some reason.

A Desolidified character falls at normal velocity (see page 434). He takes no damage from impacting the ground... but he doesn't stop at the ground, he just keeps falling into and through it! This could cause serious problems if he doesn't have Life Support or a Movement Power that can counteract the fall. He can use the same "force of will" that lets him walk on the ground to stop his fall when he hits the ground, but he takes normal falling damage.

If a Desolidified character solidifies inside a solid object, he takes damage (and the object usually does as well). The GM should roll the damage on the Teleportation Damage Table, page 367.

### POWERS

Duplication: If a character who's Desolidified wants to be able to create Duplicates that are solid, he must have the *Affects Physical World* Advantage on his Duplication.

Summon: Summon requires the *Affects Physical World* Advantage if a Desolidified character wants to Summon solid beings while Desolidified. If the character can only Summon other beings who are permanently Desolidified (*e.g.,* ghosts), he does not need Affects Physical World, but the GM can require it if he feels that's necessary to maintain game balance (such as if the Summoned being can easily affect solid beings).

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Affects Physical World (+2): A character who wants to use a Characteristic or Power to affect the physical world while he's Desolidified must buy that ability (not the Desolidification itself) with the +2 Advantage *Affects Physical World.* Characters who can become Desolidified and still affect the physical world can be very powerful; the GM should carefully review characters with such Powers before letting them into a campaign.

Applying Affects Physical World to a character's STR allows him to use all HTH Combat and Martial Maneuvers on solid targets, and to use Skills that require physical contact, such as Lockpicking. It doesn't let him use ranged Maneuvers, like Rapid Fire or Haymaker with a Ranged attack, though at the GM's option it would probably let him pick up and throw objects. If he performs a maneuver that he takes damage from (such as Move Through), he still takes that damage even though he's intangible.

### LIMITATIONS

Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½): This Limitation represents a form of Desolidification that does not provide true intangibility; it simulates mist form powers, malleable bodies, and similar abilities. The character can squeeze through very tiny openings, but cannot actually pass through physical objects. He's still immune from damage as per standard Desolidification (though many powers with this Limitation also take the *Does Not Protect Against Damage* Limitation).

Example: *Dr. Mist purchases Desolidification to represent his power to transform into a cloud of vapor. Because he cannot travel through physical barriers, he purchases Desolidification with a -½ Power Limitation, so it costs him 40 x 1/(1+½)= 27 Character Points. If Dr.*

*Mist wants to attack solid enemies while Desolidified, he has to buy Attack Powers with a +2 Power Advantage. Thus an Energy Blast 4d6 — to simulate lightning, for example — would cost 20 x (1+2) = 60 Character Points.*

Does Not Protect Against Damage (-1): Desolidification with this Limitation offers no protection against damage. All attacks affect the character as they would normally; he specifies "any attack" as the "reasonably common group of attacks" that can affect him when he's intangible. The standard restrictions on what a Desolidified character can do still apply; this Limitation does not grant the character an *Affects Physical World* Advantage for free.

Focus: If a character buys Desolidification through a Focus, typically that Focus becomes Desolidified when he does (just like the character's other Foci). The GM can change this (or reduce the value of the *Focus* Limitation) if he believes it may cause game balance problems.

Only To Protect Against Limited Type Of Attack (-1): A character can purchase a limited form of Desolidification to obtain protection from a particular type of attack. For example, a character might buy Desolidification *Only To Protect Against Fire.* This offers near-total immunity to damage from fire (especially if made Persistent), but still allows any attack with a different special effect to affect the character normally (he specifies "all attacks other than [defined attack]" as the "reasonably common group of attacks" that can affect him when he's intangible). The character does not take Knockback from that form of attack, but would suffer both damage and Knockback if the attack were bought with the *Affects Desolidified* Advantage.

Normally, because the character is still technically solid and able to interact with the solid world freely, he must buy *Affects Physical World* for his STR and all Powers that can affect physical objects (unless the GM gives permission otherwise). This makes Desolidification a very expensive form of defense. However, at the GM's option, a character with a limited form of Desolidification doesn't have to buy Affects Physical World; he can touch and affect the solid world automatically.

Side Effects: Side Effects created by a character while Desolidified do not need Affects Desolidified to affect him; they apply automatically as normal. If they affect the environment around him, they do so without the need to apply Affects Physical World to them (but the GM may change this if he feels it's abusive or the character tries to use his Side Effects as a "weapon" rather than as a legitimate Limitation).

## DISPEL

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 3 Character Points for every 1d6 of Dispel

A character with Dispel can turn off another character's power. Some examples of Dispel include spells designed to disrupt or "break" other spells, light-based powers that can Dispel Darkness fields, or the ability to destroy or ruin gadgets.

Each 1d6 of Dispel costs 3 Character Points. The character must specify what Power he can Dispel when he purchases Dispel. Dispel costs END to use.

### USING DISPEL

To use Dispel, the character must declare what power or ability he's trying to Dispel, then make an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls and totals the Dispel dice and subtracts the target's Power Defense (if any). If the remaining total exceeds the Active Point total of the target power, the target power is Dispelled — that is, it stops working. Dispel is an all or nothing attack: it either completely turns off a Power or it has no effect.

The victim of a Dispel may "restart" the Dispelled power, but he has to start from scratch — he must perform any preparations again. This means Dispel is more effective against powers that are difficult to turn on or take a long time to activate (like many Fantasy spells) or against objects (which must be repaired, recharged, or rebuilt).

Dispel can dispel any Power, even Dispel (don't think about it too much — you'll hurt your brain). However, Dispel cannot affect Characteristics; use Drain for that sort of effect. Nor can Dispel affect Skills, Perks, or Talents unless the GM specifically permits it to. A character can make a power harder to Dispel with the *Difficult To Dispel* Advantage (page 256). Characters cannot Dispel Automata, Bases, Computers, or Vehicles (anymore than they can Dispel living characters), but can Dispel the abilities possessed by such objects.

#### Dispelling Incoming Attacks

A character can use Dispel to protect himself from incoming attacks, but he must have a Held Action. Assuming the Dispel applies to the attack, he uses his Held Action to "attack" the incoming attack with his Dispel. He rolls his Dispel dice (he doesn't have to make an Attack Roll, though this does constitute an Attack Action). He Dispels the attack if the total of the Dispel dice exceeds the Active Points in the attack. The Power Defense of the character making the incoming attack (if any) does not apply to reduce the Dispel effect roll.

### POWERS

Constant Powers: If a character wants to Dispel a Constant Power (such as Change Environment, Darkness, or Force Field) maintained by a character, he targets the character who activated and maintains the Power (typically by spending END).

### POWER EXAMPLES: DISPEL

Spell Of Rusty Doom: Dispel Armor 15d6 (45 Active Points); OAF (enchanted wand of rusty iron; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Only Affects Metal Armors (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

Dispel Magic Spell: Dispel Magic 12d6, any magic power one at a time (+¼) (45 Active Points); OAF (athame; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 15 points.

Fire Extinguisher: Dispel Fire Powers 10d6, any fire power one at a time (+¼) (37 Active Points); OAF (-1), Limited Range (3"; -¼), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 15 points.

He attacks against that character's DCV, and the target's Power Defense applies. However, if the Constant Power isn't maintained by a character — if it's Uncontrolled, on Continuing Charges, or the like — then the character using Dispel targets the power itself, attacking against DCV 3 (and the Power Defense of the character who activated the power does not apply).

Defense Powers: When a character uses Dispel against a Defense Power such as Armor or Force Field, he must Dispel the entire Power, both its PD and its ED. He cannot choose to, for example, Dispel only the ED. However, if a character defines his Dispel as, say, Dispel ED Armor or Dispel PD Force Field, then it applies solely to the type of defense it's defined as affecting. Characters cannot buy a Dispel against one of these Defense Powers and then restrict it to just PD or ED with a Limitation.

Instant Powers: Dispel cannot affect the lasting effects of Instant Powers. For example, a character cannot use Dispel to "heal" the damage caused by an Energy Blast, reverse a Transform, or to get rid of an existing Entangle — Energy Blast, Transform, and Entangle are Instant Powers, and once they've been used and taken effect, there's nothing for the Dispel to "turn off." (If such powers are made Constant via the *Continuous* Advantage, Dispel works against them as usual.)

However, in some cases, the GM may wish to allow Dispel to work against certain types of lasting effects. For example, in a *Fantasy Hero* campaign, maybe a wizard could use Dispel Magic to "undo" a Transform brought about by an evil spell or a curse.

Endurance Reserve: A character can use Dispel against an Endurance Reserve with the same rules as for Adjustment Powers (see page 158). Once a character "restarts" an Endurance Reserve that's been Dispelled, the Reserve typically has same amount of END that was in it when it was Dispelled (but the final decision is up to the GM, based on special effects, game balance, common sense, and dramatic sense).

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Expanded Effect (+¼ to +2): Dispel normally applies only to a single Power, like Teleportation or Energy Blast (regardless of the special effects of that Power). To buy a Dispel that affects any power of a given special effect (such as "magic"), one at a time, is a +¼ Advantage. For example, this could simulate a Dispel which can affect individual magic spells or mutant powers.

To use Dispel to affect two powers of a given special effect simultaneously, a character must buy it with a +½ Advantage; for a +1 Advantage, Dispel can affect four such powers simultaneously. A Dispel can affect *all* the Powers of a given special effect simultaneously for a +2 Advantage.

Example: *Arkelos the mage purchases Dispel Magic 12d6 that works against any single power with a magical special effect. This costs (36 x (1 + ¼)) = 45 points. A necromancer attacks Arkelos. Knowing he's faster than his opponent, Arkelos Holds his Action and waits for the necromancer to make his move. The necromancer casts an Energy Blast 8d6 spell. Arkelos uses his Held Action to cast his Dispel to try to stop the incoming Energy Blast spell. Arkelos rolls his 12d6, achieving a total of 42 Points of Dispel. Since the Energy Blast was only 8d6 (40 Active Points), the Dispel succeeds, dissipating the Energy Blast.*

Armor Piercing: Armor Piercing on Dispel halves any applicable Power Defense; it does not reduce the Active Points the Dispel must affect.

Cumulative: Cumulative removes the "one roll all or nothing" aspect of Dispel. A Cumulative Dispel can have its effect roll totals added together until the target power is Dispelled or the character reaches the Cumulative point ceiling. As the Dispel point total accumulates, the victim usually notices the effect in some way (for example, a Dispel Armor would create tiny cracks in Armor that would get larger and larger...).

A character can Dispel a Cumulative power while it's in the middle of being used (*i.e.,* after one or more rolls have been made, but before it reaches its target total). The Dispel would work against the total effect achieved for the Cumulative power at the time the Dispel is used.

**LIMITATIONS**

Focus: If a character Dispels a power in a Breakable Focus, look at the special effects involved to determine what happens. For example, if the Dispel is defined as "breaking small objects," the Focus probably needs some repairs — maybe just quick field jury-rigging, maybe something more — before it will work again. If the Dispel involves sucking all the battery power out of the Focus, the Focus needs recharging. Unbreakable Foci behave similarly, but are considered Difficult To Dispel (x16) solely for purposes of resisting Dispel. If a character Dispels only one power in a multiple-power Focus, that power ceases to function until "fixed," while the other powers remain unaffected.

Gradual Effect: With the GM's permission, a character can Dispel the as yet unaccrued effect of a power with Gradual Effect. However, he must Dispel the entire Active Points of the power, not just the "Active Points" of the unaccrued effect.

Independent: If a character uses Dispel against an Independent (page 297) power in an object or item, the total of the Dispel must exceed the total Active Points of all the Powers within the item. If it does, the item is ruined or broken and cannot be fixed (unless the GM allows it to be).

**DRAIN**

Type: Adjustment Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: No Range
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 10 Character Points for every 1d6 of Drain

A character with Drain can temporarily lower the value of one of an opponent's Characteristics or Powers. The character must specify which Power or Characteristic he can Drain when he purchases Drain. Examples of Drain include a spell that leeches mystic power, a poison that causes weakness, or a superhero's power to suck all the electricity out of electronic devices. Every 1d6 of Drain costs 10 Character Points. Drain costs END to use.

## USING DRAIN

To use Drain, a character must make an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls and totals the Drain dice, then subtracts the target's Power Defense (if any). The total remaining is the number of Active Points lost from the affected Power or Characteristic.

The points removed by Drain return to the victim at the rate of 5 Character Points per Turn. The character can extend the return period (*i.e.,* move it down the Time Chart) with the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage (page 111). By moving the return rate far down the Time Chart, a character can effectively "destroy" an opponent's Characteristic or Power.

Example: *Leech purchases a Drain Energy Blast 3d6 (30 points). The points Drained return to the victim at the rate of 5 Active Points per Turn. Not satisfied with this, Leech moves the recovery rate down 6 levels on the Time Chart, for a +1½ Advantage. The Drain still has 3d6 of effect, but now costs (30 x (1 + 1½)) = 75 points and the Drained Energy Blast returns at the rate of 5 Active Points per Day.*

There's no limit to the amount of Character Points a character can Drain from his victim; he may use the same Drain repeatedly on the same target, provided the target still has points left to Drain in the Power or Characteristic (see below regarding negative Characteristics). Of course, the rules for using Adjustment Powers on incremental Characteristics and Powers (page 107) apply to Drain.

## CHARACTERISTICS

A character with a Drain can continue to Drain a Characteristic below 0 into the negatives, as long as there's a distinctive effect to having a negative Characteristic (see pages 36-39). The standard rules for having a negative Characteristic apply as long as the Characteristic remains in the negative range.

Body: A Drain BODY kills a character if it Drains him to negative his starting BODY or less; the lost BODY does not then return. If an object is Drained of all of its BODY, it crumbles to dust (in any event, the GM may rule that an object cannot regain Drained BODY normally — it needs repairs instead).

PD, ED: A Drain PD or Drain ED still affects these Characteristics even if they've been made Resistant with Damage Resistance. (It will not, however, Drain Armor, DEF, or the like; those require their own Drains, since they're distinct abilities.)

Stun: A Drain STUN will Stun a character if the Drain removes more points of STUN than he has points of CON with any one attack.

## POWERS

Defense Powers: A Drain of a Defense Power such as Armor or Force Field must Drain the Power's points of PD and ED in equal proportion. Thus, if they're equal (6 PD/6 ED, for example), they each get Drained equally (half the effect of the Drain applies to each); if one is greater than the other (6 PD/4 ED, for example), the Drain divides its effect proportionately between them. The character cannot choose to, for example, Drain only the ED.

If a character defines his Drain as, say, Drain ED Armor or Drain PD Force Field, then it applies solely to the type of defense it's defined as affecting. Characters cannot buy a Drain against one of these Defense Powers and then restrict it to just PD or ED with a Limitation.

## LIMITATIONS

PD (or ED) Applies (-1): This Limitation represents a form of Drain against which a defense that provides PD (or ED) in any form (Characteristics, Armor, or the like) offers protection. If the character has Power Defense as well, it adds to his PD (or ED) for purposes of resisting Drain.

Focus: Unbreakable Foci are considered to have Power Defense equal to their (DEF x 4) solely for purposes of resisting Drain BODY or Drain DEF attacks.

## POWER EXAMPLES: DRAIN

Stun Gas Grenades: Drain STUN 3d6, Ranged (+½), NND (defense is LS: No Need To Breathe; +½), Area Of Effect (6" radius; +1) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 30 points.

Weakness Darts: Drain STR 4d6, Range based on STR (+¼) (50 Active Points); OAF Fragile (drugged darts, drug is easily wiped off or spoiled; -1¼), Must Target Non-Armored Hit Locations (-¼), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 14 points.

Spell Of Fear: Drain PRE 5d6, Ranged (+½) (75 Active Points); OAF Expendable (drop of blood; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 23 points.





## POWER EXAMPLES: DUPLICATION

Astral Form (creates astral form which leaves character's body behind to travel the astral plane): Duplication (creates 350-point astral form), Easy Recombination (Half Phase Action at half DCV), Ranged Recombination (+½), Altered Duplicate (100%; +1) (187 Active Points); Base Character Is Incapacitated And Helpless While Duplicate Exists (-1), Extra Time (must enter trance and meditate to allow astral self to leave its fleshy prison, 1 Hour; -1½), Feedback (-1), Both Characters Die If They Do Not Recombine Within 24 Hours (-½). Total cost: 37 points.

Telekinetic Sidekicks (creates a group of "second selves" out of telekinetic energy): Duplication (creates 8 250-point Duplicates), Easy Recombination (Zero-Phase Action at Full DCV), Altered Duplicates (100%, +1). Total cost: 150 points.

Nine-Headed Hydra (creates a "group of characters" which represents the creature's various heads, all attached to the base character, which is the body and main head): Duplication (creates 8 80-point Duplicates) (31 Active Points); Cannot Recombine (-0). Total cost: 31 points.

## DUPLICATION

Type: Special Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 Character Point per 5 Character Points in the base character, up to 2x the number of Duplicates for every +5 Character Points

A character with this Special Power can create duplicates of himself, which may have the same or different abilities than he does. Examples include a mutant superhero who can produce "carbon copies" of himself, a wizard with a spell that lets him separate his "astral form" from his body, or the ability to create a "double" of one's self out of psychokinetic energy. Duplication does not cost END to use.

For purposes of Duplication, the original character — the character who "produces" the Duplicates — is the "base character." The base character creates all Duplicates; Duplicates do not come from other Duplicates.

### BUYING AND BUILDING DUPLICATES

The cost for Duplication, which only the base character pays, is 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points the base character is built with (including points from Disadvantages and the points spent on Duplication). The character may buy more Duplicates; this costs +5 Character Points for up to two times the number of Duplicates (*i.e.,* 5 Character Points for x2 Duplicates, 10 Character Points for x4 Duplicates, and so on).

Example: *Threepeat (a 250-point character) has the ability to create two Duplicates of himself. The first Duplicate costs 50 points (250/5). The additional Duplicate costs 5 points (one Duplicate for the base cost, x2 the number, or 2 Duplicates, for +5 points). Each of the Duplicates is built on 250 points. Therefore Threepeat and his Duplicates each have another 195 points to buy other abilities with.*

Duplicates are built on the same Base Points as the base character, and should have the same amount of points' worth of Disadvantages as well. For example, if Threepeat is built on 100 base points plus 150 points of Disadvantages, his Duplicates are also 100+150 point characters. A Duplicate's Disadvantages are the same as the original form's, unless the GM permits otherwise.

Duplicates do not have the Power *Duplication* themselves, nor any ability to create other Duplicates, unless they pay for it separately. However, unless the GM permits otherwise, for ease of use all Duplicates must "pay for" the cost of the base character's Duplication ability. Otherwise, the Duplicates would end up with more points to spend on other abilities than the base character himself has.

Example: *Threepeat's Duplicates are all built on 250 Character Points, just like he is. However, each of them has to "spend" 55 of those points on Duplication, just like Threepeat does, so that each of them has another 195 points to spend (the same as Threepeat). But that does not give them the ability to Duplicate themselves; it's just part of the cost accounting for Threepeat's overall Duplication power. If they want to Duplicate, they have to buy Duplication separately out of their 195 remaining Character Points.*

**Duplicates Built On Fewer Points Than The Base Character**

A character may build Duplicates on less than the base character's full points if he wants. If a Duplicate is built on less than the full Character Points the base character is built on, the cost instead is 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points the Duplicate is built on, +5 Character Points for up to two times the number of Duplicates.

Assuming the Duplicate is the same as the base character, just with fewer abilities or less powerful abilities, the Duplication does not require an Advantage, and the GM typically should not require the Duplicate to "pay for" the cost of Duplication as outlined above. However, if the GM believes the Duplicate is significantly different than the base character, he should require the Duplication power to have the *Altered Duplicates* Advantage. (In this case, calculate the percentage of points that can differ based on the Duplicate's total points, not the base character's total points.)

Building a Duplicate on less than the base character's full points may mean the Duplicate needs fewer points in Disadvantages than the base character. If this is appropriate, the GM can permit the character to take fewer points in Disadvantages. However, it may also be appropriate to require the Duplicate to take all of the base character's Disadvantages, even if he gets no points from some of them, as a way of properly defining the Duplicate. The final decision is up to the GM.

**Duplicates Built On More Points Than The Base Character**

With the GM's permission, a character may buy Duplication to create a Duplicate who's built on more Base Points + Disadvantages that the base character has. This should be rare, but the GM may allow it as a way of properly constructing some interesting character concepts.

Regardless of how the Duplicate spends his points, building a Duplicate on more points than the base character is automatically considered a 100% alteration, requiring the +1 form of the *Altered Duplicates* Advantage (see below). Furthermore, the base character must pay 1 Character Point for every 1 Character Point above the base character's point total (including points spent on Duplication). (Since the base character pays the extra cost, the Duplicate doesn't have to justify the extra points with extra Disadvantages, but he must still have as many points in Disadvantages as the base character.)

Example: *Returning to Threepeat and his two Duplicates, suppose one Duplicate was going to be a 300-point character rather than a 250-point one like the original form and the first*

*Duplicate. That increases the cost of Threepeat's Duplication to 210 points (base cost of 50, +5 for two Duplicates, +50 for points in excess of 250, +1 Advantage for 100% point alteration). That leaves the base character and Duplicates with only 40 more Character Points to spend (or 90 points, for the 300-point Duplicate).*

To make it easier to calculate the cost of a Duplicate built on more points than the base character, the GM may want to use the character's allowable total starting points (350, for a Standard Superheroic campaign) as the breakpoint, even if the base character starts with fewer points than that. (If a character buys Duplication after the game begins, use his current total points.)

## USING DUPLICATION

It takes a Half Phase Action to create a single Duplicate. A character can create two Duplicates per Phase (one with each Half Phase Action) if he's willing to spend his entire Phase creating Duplicates. A character can create more than one Duplicate per Half Phase Action if he buys the *Rapid Duplication* Adder (see page 156).

When a character creates a Duplicate, the Duplicate appears right next to him in the same hex. The character can choose the Duplicate's point of appearance (in front of the character, to the left, behind him, and so on), and can vary the point of appearance from use to use of the power (or even from one Duplicate to another when creating multiple Duplicates). The Duplicate, when created, faces the same way the character is facing when he creates him.

After a Duplicate appears, he must spend the rest of the Segment in which he appears "orienting" himself, and can't do anything that Segment. Thereafter he can act as normal for his SPD. For example, if a Duplicate with SPD 5 is created in Segment 12, he gets no action in Segment 12 (he's orienting himself), but gets his usual Phase in Segment 3. A Duplicate cannot Abort while orienting, but could Abort to a defensive Action in a Segment after the Segment when he appears, but before he can first act.

### Duplicating And Injury

If a character has suffered injury (*i.e.,* the loss of BODY, END, and/or STUN) before he Duplicates, this affects his Duplicates. Divide the damage taken between the base character and his Duplicates. If the Duplicates and base character recombine before any healing takes place, the base character becomes fully injured once again (in other words, an injured character can't Duplicate and then recombine, using the "averaging" feature to partly heal himself). If the base character or a Duplicate is healed (in whole or in part) before they recombine, average the damage each one has suffered, then apply that to the base character. This rule applies even if the Duplication has the *Altered Duplicates* Advantage.

Example: *Threepeat and his Duplicates each have 12 BODY. Threepeat, while not Duplicated, suffers 6 BODY damage. When he Duplicates, the damage is averaged over each of his three selves, meaning each is down 2 BODY. If he recombines before any of them heal in any way, Threepeat still has a 6 BODY injury. However, if the Medic heals Threepeat's 2 BODY injury while he (Threepeat) is Duplicated, when Threepeat and his Duplicates recombine you average the damage suffered, so Threepeat has lost ((2 + 2 + 0)/3) 1 BODY.*

## RECOMBINING

At some point a character with Duplication will want some or all of his Duplicates to rejoin his body. This is called *recombining.* It takes a Full Phase for Duplicates to recombine, no matter how many Duplicates recombine. For example, if the base character has created 16 Duplicates, all 16 can recombine with him in one Full Phase Action. Both the Duplicates and the base character must take the Full Phase Action to recombine.

To recombine, Duplicates must be at ½ DCV and touching each other. Once they recombine with the base character, Duplicates effectively cease to exist; their self-affecting powers (such as Healing Regeneration) don't keep on working, and they can't affect the world in any way. However, powers they activated before they recombined but which they do not control, such as Uncontrolled powers and powers on Continuing Charges, keep functioning until they end normally.

After Duplicating, the base character may not combine with one of his Duplicates and "vanish"; he always remains in existence. For example, if base character A creates Duplicates B, C, D, and E, A cannot combine with C to leave only B, C, D, and E. If A and C combine, C "vanishes" and A remains.

### Recombining And Injury

When Duplicates and the base character recombine, you must average their BODY, STUN, END, Charges, Endurance Reserves, and the like, if different. If one Duplicate is Stunned or Knocked Out, the combined character will be Stunned or Knocked Out. This rule applies even if the Duplication has the *Altered Duplicates* Advantage, but not if the Duplication has the *No Averaging* Limitation (see page 156).

If a Duplicate is built as an Altered Duplicate, and naturally happens to have more BODY, STUN, Charges, or the like than the base character, his recombining with the base character cannot improve or increase the same attribute for the base character. If the original and a single Duplicate have different totals for something you should average, average the damage or loss each one has suffered, then apply that to the base character.

Example: *Kasdrevan uses a spell to create a clone of himself, bought as Duplication. Kasdrevan has 10 BODY, but his much hardier clone has 20 BODY. During a battle, Kasdrevan suffers 4 BODY in wounds, and the Duplicate takes 12 BODY in wounds. When they recombine, average the damage taken. Since ((4 + 12)/2 = 8), the recombined Kasdrevan has lost 8 BODY. Time for a Spell of Healing!*

## SIMPLIFYING DUPLICATION

Duplication is one of the most complex *HERO System* Powers, both conceptually and in terms of rules. The physical (and metaphysical) questions raised by the concept of producing a Duplicate often make the Power difficult for gamers to use, and the math involved in making sure that the cost of the Power reflects its benefits can take time to work.

Gamemasters who'd like to simplify things, and who can trust their players not to abuse simpler rules, should consider the following options:

—Keep the basic cost of Duplication the same (1 Character Point for each 5 Character Points the Duplicate is built with) even if the Duplicate costs more than the character who pays for the power.

—Ignore the *Altered Duplicates* Advantage and allow characters to have altered Duplicates for no additional cost (or, don't allow any alterations to Duplicates at all).

—Establish a flat cost for Duplication (such as 60 Character Points) regardless of how many points the Duplicate is built on.

If a character has injuries after recombining, and uses his Duplication again before he fully heals that damage, you should apply the rule stated under *Duplicating And Injury,* above. Alternately, if you want to keep track of each character's damage, when they recombine you can use the normal healing rules to determine how much of his wound each Duplicate would have naturally healed, and use that instead.

For attacks that affect a base character or Duplicate but which don't involve injury *per se,* apply these rules in the most consistent way possible in light of what happened to the character. For example, suppose an evil wizard uses Transform to turn one of Threepeat's Duplicates into a frog. You should average the Transform "damage" between Threepeat and the Duplicate; thus, Threepeat ends up partly Transformed. But track the healing of the Transform damage normally (assuming it heals like ordinary BODY damage). If Threepeat Duplicates again before the Transform has worn off, Duplicate-2 remains a frog, but Threepeat is back to his normal self.

If a Duplicate is killed, the others cannot revive him by recombining — he stays dead; the character has lost a part of himself. If he later spends points to buy more Duplicates, calculate the additional number as if the death(s) had not occurred. For example, suppose a character has eight Duplicates. One Duplicate is killed. If the character pays another +5 Character Points to double the number of Duplicates he has, he now has 15 — the 16 he'd ordinarily have for paying +20 Character Points, minus the one who died.

If the base character dies while Duplicated, what happens to the Duplicates depends on the special effect of the power. They may simply vanish forever, but as a default rule the Duplicates already in existence lose the ability to combine back together; they just become a group of characters whose "creator" no longer exists.

## OTHER IMPLICATIONS OF DUPLICATION

Each Duplicate is as free-willed as the base character. The player plays each character simultaneously, and must have a complete character sheet for each Duplicate (or some other method of keeping track of the actions and states of the various Duplicates). Typically, Duplicates are exactly the same as the character who created them, but may differ if the base character buys Duplication with an Advantage (see below). Other characters cannot determine which is the base character, and which are Duplicates, unless the Duplicates change appearance in some way.

Duplicates have no special "psychic link"; they must communicate by talking (or through any form of communication they pay points for, such as Mind Link). Nor do Duplicates receive a bonus to Coordinate attacks (see page 378), though they frequently buy the Skill *Teamwork.*

The base character has access to, or otherwise retains, the memories of his Duplicates while they're combined with him.

**Duplication And Equipment**

If a base character and his Duplicates all have a particular item of equipment — say, an energy rifle — it's possible one of them could lose his equipment, or it could get broken, while they're Duplicated. (For the use of Charges, see above.) When they recombine, as long as at least one of them still has an intact rifle, the base character has one. Items taken away from one of the characters do not "disappear" when he recombines, they remain in the possession of whoever took them. (However, the GM should *not* allow characters to create hoards of wealth or tons of materiel for free using Duplication).

Typically, recombining repairs or replaces any broken or lost equipment, but the GM may rule otherwise. For instance, if the character re-Duplicates before recovering the lost items, the Duplicates who lost them don't have their equipment anymore. Similarly, Duplicates who had broken equipment would find that it's still broken (so the character should, when he has some spare time, Duplicate and have everyone make repairs, so that he's ready when the next crisis occurs).

If a character has a *Gadget Pool* Variable Power Pool, and he allocates it to a particular assortment of devices, his Duplicates do not have those same devices when he Duplicates. They each have unallocated Gadget Pools (this also applies if, for some reason, the base character has no gadgets — his Duplicates still have their own Gadget Pools). When they get Actions, they can choose how to allot their Pools (subject of course to any Limitations or other restrictions on that process, based on how the Gadget Pool is built). The GM may alter this rule in the interest of drama or speeding up game play if necessary.

If a character obtains an object or piece of equipment during a game, his Duplicates do not have that same object when he Duplicates. Generally, the GM should not allow characters with Duplication to use it to create copies of objects or equipment they have not paid Character Points for.

A Duplicate may allocate his own personal Gadget Pool, or pick up some object or piece of equipment, while he's in existence. If so, when he recombines, objects paid for with Character Points (such as the Gadget Pool devices) recombine with the Duplicate and "vanish." Other objects are "dropped" by the Duplicate — they're left wherever he was standing when he recombined, and the base character can retrieve them if he wishes. (In other words, characters cannot use recombining as a quick-and-easy method of destroying or hiding objects.)

**Duplicates And Experience Points**

Duplicates do not earn Experience Points in the usual fashion. Normally, only the base character receives Experience Points. If he wants his Duplicates to improve along with him, he must spend some of his Experience Points to increase the value of his Duplication (typically 1 point for every 5 Experience Points earned). Alternately, the GM may assign Experience Points to the original form and any Duplicates that participate in an adventure, and require the player to keep track of which Duplicates have more Experience Points.

Example: *Threepeat earns 20 Experience Points from adventuring. He's now a 270-point character, but his Duplicates are only 250-point characters. To make them 270-point characters, he will have to spend 4 Experience Points to improve his Duplication (270/5=54, as opposed to the 50 points he spent on Duplication originally). So, Threepeat's player decides he'll spend the next 4 Experience Points Threepeat earns to improve Threepeat's Duplication.*

**POWERS**

Adjustment Powers: For purposes of determining the maximum effect an Adjustment Power like Aid can have on a single character, Duplicates are considered separate characters.

Typically a character should not be allowed to use an Adjustment Power to increase the number of Duplicates he (or another character) can create. However, the GM may choose to allow this (he might require the character to pay for the *Can Apply Adders* Advantage, even though the buying of additional Duplicates is not an Adder).

If a character's Duplication is Dispelled, Drained, Suppressed, or Transferred, all Duplicates in existence immediately vanish (but see the rules on page 108 about reducing powers not bought in increments). When the Suppress stops functioning, the Duplicates immediately re-appear.

Absorption: If a character has Absorption that feeds into his Duplication, it works like any other Absorption, adding points directly to the Duplication. Since Duplication works by having every point spent on it count as 5 points for purposes of building the Duplicate(s), that means every point Absorbed likewise increases the points available to build the Duplicate(s) with by 5. The GM may prefer to forbid characters to buy Absorption that affects Duplication to preserve game balance.

Multiform: A character could have an alternate form that has a Duplication-based power, even though the true form does not have a Duplication-based power. In that case, if the character's in his alternate form and Duplicates, and the alternate form changes back to the true form (which lacks the Duplication power), the Duplicate vanishes. For this reason, the GM should only let the base character change form if he's in contact with his Duplicate, and/or spends a Full Phase (as if recombining), or meets any other restrictions that seem appropriate for the special effect.

The same applies if the true form has Duplication, but changes to a form that does not while a Duplicate exists. To prevent this sort of thing from happening, the character should buy Duplication for his alternate form(s) as well. In that case, the Duplicates remain. They do not change shape themselves, unless they have a power that allows them to do so and choose to use it. If a character wants to buy Duplication for his additional form(s) solely to maintain the existence of his Duplicates, he can take a -1 Limitation on the power as bought by the additional forms.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Easy Recombination: A character who has Duplication with this +5 Character Point Adder can recombine any or all of his Duplicates as a Half Phase Action at ½ DCV (the character and Duplicates must still touch). For +10 points, the character can recombine any or all of his Duplicates as a Zero Phase Action at full DCV (but must still touch).

Altered Duplicates (+¼ to +1): Duplicates may have different abilities, personalities, equipment, memories, or Disadvantages than the base character if the base character buys Duplication with this Advantage. They can even have their own Duplication power separate from the one that created them.

For a +¼ Advantage, from 1-25% (*i.e.,* up to one-fourth) of the Duplicate's points can be spent differently (and/or one-fourth of his Disadvantage points can differ). For +½, from 26-50% (*i.e.,* up to half) of the Duplicate's points can be spent differently (and/or half of his Disadvantage points can differ). For +1, 51-100% of the character's points (and/or Disadvantage points) can differ. These percentages are guidelines, not absolutes; the GM may alter them as he sees fit.

Example: *Elemental Man, a 350-point character, can create four 250-point Duplicates that are completely different from him (the cost is 120 points [50 to create the first Duplicate, +10 points for 4x the number of Duplicates, +1 Advantage]). Each of the four forms represents one of the four elements (earth, air, fire, water), and has its own unique powers and appearance. Elemental Man's original form has powers from all four elements, and acts as "leader" of the Duplicates. Each Duplicate has 250 points to spend on its abilities; Elemental Man himself has 230 points to spend (350-120).*

Typically, even a character with the *Altered Duplicates* form of Duplication still spends the same points as the base character on Duplication (but gets no benefit from them, as described above). However, the GM can allow a character who takes the 100% form of Altered Duplicates to not pay points for Duplication that way.

With the GM's permission, a 100% Altered Duplicate could be of a "form" or "type" different than the base character. For example, the base character might be human (and thus built as a standard character), while his Duplicate is an Automaton, Base, Computer, or Vehicle.

If an Altered Duplicate wants to take different Disadvantages than the base character, the GM should examine them carefully before allowing him to do so. He should make sure the Duplicate doesn't take a lot of Disadvantages that "vanish" when he recombines.

The GM may choose to allow some minor changes in Duplicates without the need for this Advantage. Examples include different clothes, different hair or skin coloration, a few Character Points spent differently, or perhaps changes in powers' special effects. Most GMs allow cosmetic differences in a Duplicate's appearance or garb for no additional point cost.

Personal Immunity: If a base character has an Attack Power with Personal Immunity, as a default rule his Duplicates are not immune to the power. However, as noted on page 266, the GM can rule that Personal Immunity extends to some "extremely similar" powers, and in many cases "identical" powers possessed by Duplicates would probably qualify.

Ranged: Characters cannot buy this Advantage for Duplication.

Ranged Recombination (+½): A character who has Duplication with this Advantage can recombine any or all of his Duplicates at Range, without touching. The Range is limited to (Active Points in Duplication/5 in inches); the character does not have to have Line Of Sight to his Duplicate(s). Duplicates must still be at half DCV and take a Full Phase to recombine. Ranged Recombination is blocked by any Hardened barrier unless the character purchases the Advantage *Armor Piercing* for his Duplication.

A character whose Duplication has Ranged Recombination can also buy Increased Maximum Range to extend the range over which he can recombine. The GM may also allow characters to buy MegaScale for the same purpose.

Rapid Duplication (+¼ or more): As noted in the main text, ordinarily characters can only create one Duplicate per Half Phase Action. For every +¼ Advantage, a character can create x2 the number of Duplicates in a Half Phase. So, for +¼, he creates 2 per Half Phase (or 4 in a Full Phase Action); for +½, he creates 4 per Half Phase; and so on.

Usable On Others: Unless he has GM's permission to do so, a character cannot buy Duplication *Usable As Attack* to make Duplicates of things he has not paid Character Points for or does not normally possess (for example, the Hope Diamond or the *Mona Lisa*). If the GM allows this, he should remember that objects created in this way disappear when Duplicates recombine. He should also consider imposing some condition on the Power that causes the Duplicated object(s) to recombine or vanish (this is a -0 Limitation).

If a character buys Duplication Usable As Attack to create Duplicates of his enemies, he does not automatically control the actions of the Duplicate. He controls when the target can Duplicate, and could force the Duplicate and original victim to rejoin if they were in contact. But otherwise, the Duplicate acts as an independent character with the same personality and abilities as the original victim. If the attacker wants to maintain full control of the Duplicate, he must buy Linked Mind Control.

**LIMITATIONS**

Harder Recombination: If a character wants to take a Limitation to reflect the fact that he has a harder time than normal recombining (such as Extra Time, or Concentration to 0 DCV), he may take the Limitation for half its standard value.

A Limitation that affects the creation of Duplicates (such as Costs Endurance or Extra Time) does not also apply to recombining. The GM may allow (or require) the character to take the Limitation separately for recombining as described above, or increase the value of the Limitation slightly and have it apply to both.

Cannot Recombine (-0): This Limitation represents a form of Duplication that does not allow the Duplicates to recombine. Typically this is a -0 Limitation, since the benefits and drawbacks to this situation balance out, but the GM may alter the value as he sees fit. Characters cannot take the *Always On* Limitation for Duplication that Cannot Recombine; by definition Duplication with that Limitation is already "always on."

If you use Cannot Recombine to simulate a body with multiple parts that can attack or function semi-independently (such as a hydra), if one of the Duplicates takes Knockback (or is otherwise moved or similarly affected), all of the Duplicates take the same amount of Knockback (or suffer the same effect) — in other words, the "whole character" is affected.

Duplication with Cannot Recombine does not automatically become Inherent. Characters must buy that Advantage for it, if appropriate.

Costs Endurance: If a character buys Duplication that Costs Endurance to maintain, and he runs out of END, or becomes Stunned or Knocked Out, the Duplicates collapse and cannot revive until they recombine with the base character and are re-created. The base character must oversee the recombination process, since the Duplicates cannot go to him and recombine by themselves.

Does Not Work While Duplicate Exists (-¼): A base character may take this Limitation for powers he has that do not work when one or more of his Duplicates are in existence.

Feedback (-¼ to -1): Duplicates created by Duplication with this Limitation all share a bond of some sort. As a result of this bond, all of them suffer any damage that any one of them takes — and if one of them dies, they all die. This is worth a -1 Limitation (or -½ if only STUN damage feeds back). Feedback helps to simulate, for example, a form of Duplication that represents a character's ability to be in two places simultaneously. If the Feedback damage (STUN or STUN and BODY) only occurs from injuries to one Duplicate — typically the base character — the Limitation is only worth -¼.

Feedback applies to any loss of STUN or BODY, no matter what the source (an Energy Blast, an RKA, a Drain, a fall, and so on). It does not extend to non-damage-related effects like Mind Control, nor does it have any effect on beneficial abilities like Aid or Healing.

Focus: If a character buys Duplication through a Focus, and then loses the Focus while Duplicated, the GM must decide what happens based on special effects, common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance. Typically the Duplicates all vanish.



No Averaging (-0): For a -0 Limitation, *No Averaging,* a character can define his Duplicates as not averaging with the base character when they recombine. For example, if the base character loses 5 BODY and the Duplicate loses 12 BODY, when they recombine the original is still down 5 BODY. The Duplicate, if "created" again before it would normally have healed 12 BODY, remains injured (track the healing rate as you would for any other character).

Self Only/Only One Body: Characters may *not* buy Duplication with Limitations such as these as a cheap way of creating a "Multiform." They must use Multiform or Shape Shift to give themselves the ability to change shape.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Accidental Change: With the GM's permission, a character with Duplication could take an *Accidental Change* Disadvantage to reflect the fact that he involuntarily Duplicates under some conditions.

Dependent NPC: Characters may not buy their Duplicates as DNPCs.

**EGO ATTACK**

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Mental Power/Attack Power |
| Duration: | Instant |
| Target: | Target's DECV |
| Range: | LOS |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | 10 Character Points for every 1d6 Ego Attack |

A character with Ego Attack can directly attack another character's mind to cause STUN damage. Some examples of Ego Attack include pain infliction, induced sleepiness or euphoria, or harmful "mental feedback." Each 1d6 of Ego Attack costs 10 Character Points.

To use Ego Attack, the character makes an ECV Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls his Ego Attack dice. The target subtracts his Mental Defense (if any) and takes the remaining damage as STUN. Ego Attacks only do STUN damage, have no effect on inanimate objects, and do no Knockback. Ego Attack costs END to use.

**ADVANTAGES**

Does BODY: Ego Attacks that do BODY are not Killing Damage attacks, so Mental Defense does not have to be Resistant to stop the BODY damage. Ego Attacks that do BODY only work against beings with minds; they will not do BODY to inanimate objects such as walls or vehicles.

**LIMITATIONS**

PD (or ED) Applies (-1): This Limitation represents a form of Ego Attack against which a defense that provides PD (or ED) in any form (Characteristics, Armor, or the like) offers protection. If the character has Mental Defense as well, it adds to his PD (or ED) for purposes of resisting Ego Attack. Characters cannot take this Limitation for an Ego Attack that's *Based On CON,* since such a Power already works against PD or ED.

**POWER EXAMPLES: EGO ATTACK**

Mindlance: Ego Attack 6d6 (60 Active Points); Visible (-¼). Total cost: 48 points.

Psionic Pain Induction: Ego Attack 2d6, Continuous (+1). Total cost: 40 points.

Sleep Spell: Ego Attack 6d6 (60 Active Points); OAF Expendable (goose feather; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-¼). Total cost: 17 points.

**POWER EXAMPLES: ENDURANCE RESERVE**

Powered Armor Battery: Endurance Reserve (200 END, 20 REC) (40 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 27 points.

Amulet Of Magic Power: Endurance Reserve (100 END, 10 REC) (20 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 10 points.

**ENDURANCE RESERVE**

Type: Special Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 Character Point for every 10 END, 1 Character Point for every 1 REC

A character with Endurance Reserve has an independent source of Endurance that provides END to run Powers. Endurance Reserve can simulate the generator and batteries of a suit of powered armor, the "mana" in a magical wand, the fuel in a jetpack, or any other ability where the energy powering the effect doesn't come from a character's own END. Endurance Reserve does not cost any of the character's personal END to use.

To create an Endurance Reserve, a character purchases the END and REC for the Reserve. The END in an Endurance Reserve costs 1 Character Point for 10 END (or fraction thereof); the REC costs 1 Character Point for 1 REC. Think of the END as the storage capacity for the Reserve, and the REC as the recharge rate.

**USING ENDURANCE RESERVE**

An Endurance Reserve is "independent" of the character. Powers that draw END from an Endurance Reserve can keep doing so, and thus keep functioning, even if the character is Stunned, Knocked Out, asleep, or the like — the Reserve doesn't lose its END in those situations. Similarly, an Endurance Reserve can keep using its REC to Recover its END even if the character is Knocked Out, can't breathe, or the like.

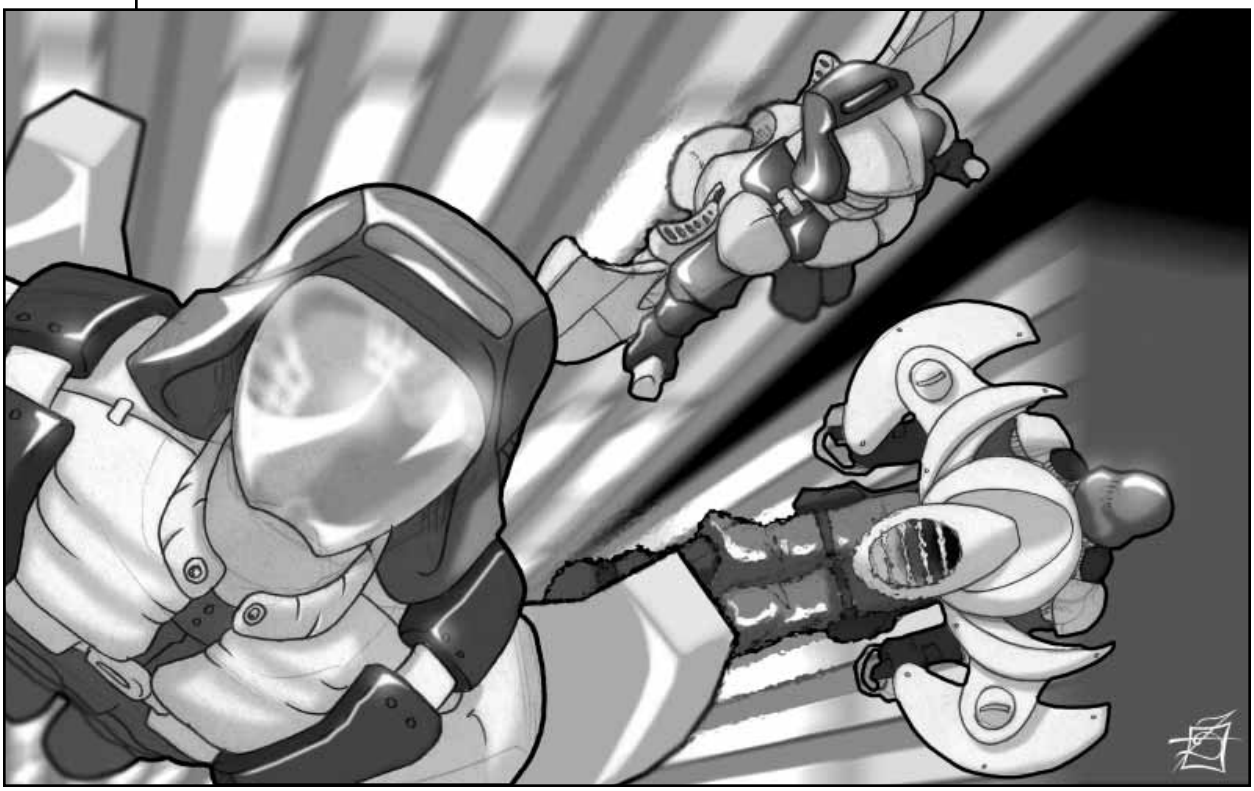
An Endurance Reserve normally Recovers its REC in END each Turn. You can decrease this return rate with a Limitation; see below. Endurance Reserves cannot Recover more frequently than once per Turn. However, the GM may, if he wishes, pro-rate the return of END over the course of a Turn, so that a character gets a little END back each Segment or Phase, rather than a lump sum of END during every Post-Segment 12 Recovery.

A character with an Endurance Reserve must decide which powers draw energy from the Reserve, and which draw energy from his personal END. A power can normally only draw energy from one or the other — it can't switch from one energy source to another unless it has the appropriate Advantage (see below).

If an Endurance Reserve does not function for any reason, a character can draw no END from it. That means he can't use any power that draws END only from the Endurance Reserve (though in some circumstances a GM might let the character run the power off his own END at a greatly increased END cost, or with other restrictions). A character cannot spend STUN in the place of Endurance Reserve END (as he can with normal END). A character can create "back-up" Endurance Reserves by purchasing this Power more than once.

Example: *Defender wants to build a self-powered suit of powered armor. He decides that all of the suit's Powers — Energy Blast, Force Field, Flight, and so on — are powered by an Endurance Reserve. Defender purchases a 100 END, 20 REC Reserve to serve as the suit's main batteries. These are OAF Power Packs on the side of the suit. The total cost is ((10 + 20) / (1 + 1)) = 15 Character Points.*

*Defender also purchases an emergency battery he can use if his other batteries are depleted or taken away. This Reserve is 50 END, 7 REC. It is part of the suit, so it is OIF. In addition, the*



*backup REC does not always work; it's bought with an Activation Roll 14-. Since the END and REC have different Limitations, the costs are computed separately. The END cost is (5/(1+½)) = 3 Character Points. The REC has the 14- Activation Roll, so the cost is (7/(1+½+½)) = 3 Character Points. The cost for the back-up battery is 6 Character Points, so the total cost for both batteries is 15 + 6 = 21.*

**POWERS**

Adjustment Powers: If a character uses an Adjustment Power to increase or decrease the END in an Endurance Reserve, treat the END like normal END which costs 2 END for 1 Character Point. For example, if a character Absorbed 11 Character Points into the END of his Endurance Reserve, this would only add 22 END to the Reserve, not 110. Similarly, Adjustment Powers affect the Reserve's REC as if it cost 2 Character Points per point.

Healing: Unless the GM rules otherwise, characters cannot use Healing END to replenish the END in an Endurance Reserve.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

For the purpose of applying Advantages and Limitations, an Endurance Reserve is considered one Power. Characters don't apply Power Modifiers to the END and REC separately unless the Power Modifiers for each part differ (as they do with, for example, the *Limited Recovery* Limitation, which only applies to a Reserve's REC). In that case, characters can still take Modifiers that apply to both parts on both parts.

Power Can Draw END From Character Or Endurance Reserve (+¼): A power that can draw END from either the character's personal END or the Endurance Reserve is bought with a +¼ Advantage (which, as usual, increases the END cost of the power). Buy this Advantage for the power that draws END, not the Endurance Reserve.

At the GM's option, this Advantage is unnecessary; powers can draw END from either personal END or the Endurance Reserve automatically. This would not be appropriate for a jetpack, for example, since it has a special fuel reserve that's not connected to the character in any way. However, it might be appropriate for a magic spell, which could run off an Endurance Reserve or off the spellcaster's personal END (perhaps at some extra cost).

**LIMITATIONS**

Characters can buy Endurance Reserves with Power Limitations. By putting Limitations on the Endurance Reserve's REC, you can simulate a wide variety of special effects. For example, if a Reserve only recovers END when plugged into an electrical socket, buy the REC with the *Limited Recovery* Limitation.

Charges: If a character buys an Endurance Reserve with Charges, activating a Charge gives the character the defined amount of END that Phase. If he doesn't use it all that Phase, the unused END "vanishes," depriving him of the ability to use it (he could use another Charge next Phase to get more, of course).

Double Endurance Cost (-½): This Limitation, taken on a power that uses an Endurance Reserve rather than the Reserve itself, signifies a power that must draw its full END cost from *both* the Endurance Reserve and the character's personal END every Phase it's in use. If either or both sources of END is unavailable for any reason, the character cannot use the power (though he could still expend personal STUN in the place of personal END, if necessary).

Increased Endurance Cost: GMs should be wary of characters who buy large Endurance Reserves and then apply the *Increased Endurance Cost* Limitation to the powers that use the Reserve. This can result in unbalanced, overly powerful characters, and should usually be forbidden.

Limited Recovery (-2 to -¼): An Endurance Reserve with this Limitation can only Recover END in certain circumstances, such as only when plugged into an electrical socket, only when more fuel is added, or only when the character performs a special process or procedure. Typically this is worth a -2 Limitation on the REC of the Endurance Reserve, but the Limitation may be worth less if the method of recharging the Endurance Reserve is particularly common.

Personal REC (-½): Some Endurance Reserves are so closely linked to the character that they can only Recover END if the character could — if the character is Knocked Out, cannot breathe, or otherwise could not take a Recovery himself, the Endurance Reserve cannot Recover either. This is bought as a -½ Limitation on the Endurance Reserve's REC.

Restricted Use (-¼): Generally, a character must define which of his powers draw END from an Endurance Reserve, and is not entitled to a Limitation for this. But in some cases, an Endurance Reserve can supply END to only some types of powers, abilities, or devices. This most commonly occurs with Endurance Reserves defined as large batteries or engines in Science Fiction settings that have many different types of technology. The Reserve can power some types of tech (such as electronic devices) but not others (such as biochemical devices). In this case, the GM may allow the Reserve to take a -¼ Limitation (he can increase the value, if that seems appropriate).

Slow Recovery (-½ per level): An Endurance Reserve with this Limitation recovers END more slowly than the usual rate of once per Turn. For every increment on the Time Chart below 1 Turn, the REC of the Endurance Reserve (not the END itself) receives a -½ Limitation. For example, an Endurance Reserve which recovered once every 20 Minutes (3 steps below 1 Turn on the Time Chart) would take a -1½ Limitation.

### POWER EXAMPLES: ENERGY BLAST

Light Blast: Energy Blast 8d6 (total cost: 40 points) **plus** Sight Group Flash 4d6, Linked (-½) (total cost: 13 points). Total cost: 53 points.

Blaster Pistol: Energy Blast 10d6 (50 Active Points); OAF (-1), 2 clips of 12 Charges each (-0). Total cost: 25 points.

Fire Bolt Spell: Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (60 Active Points); OAF (copper wand; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

## ENERGY BLAST

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Energy Blast

A character with Energy Blast can attack at Range, doing Normal Damage. Examples of Energy Blasts (EBs) include a superhero's force blast, many types of blunt throwing weapons, a wizard's bolt of mystic energy, rubber bullets, or a Galactic Trooper's blaster rifle. Each 1d6 of Energy Blast costs 5 Character Points.

The exact nature of the "energy" in an Energy Blast is defined by the character when the Power is purchased; it can be electricity, a laser, sonics, icy cold, cosmic energy, magic, or whatever else is appropriate (see *Special Effects,* page 96). Energy Blast can even represent a physical force, and apply against Physical Defense instead of Energy Defense (for example, force beams or thrown chunks of rock), but the character must specify this when he buys the Power, and cannot change it thereafter.

To use Energy Blast, a character states his target and makes an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls 1d6 for every 5 Character Points in Energy Blast as a Normal Damage attack against the target. Energy Blast costs END to use.

### LIMITATIONS

STUN Only (-0): A character may define his Energy Blast as a STUN only attack against PD or ED for a -0 Limitation (it is worth -0 since its benefits balance out its drawbacks). This is useful if a character wants to knock out opponents without causing them serious injury or property damage (in the event of a missed shot); it also prevents a character from accidentally injuring a target if he misjudges its ability to resist damage. A STUN Only Energy Blast does not do Knockback.

If a character wants an Energy Blast that can switch from doing its regular STUN and BODY damage to STUN Only damage, he should buy his EB as a Multipower.

## ENHANCED SENSES

Type: Special Power/Sensory Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: Varies

These Sensory Powers allow a character to sense things beyond the capacity of normal human Senses. Characters may buy several Enhanced Senses to reflect a wide array of sensory abilities. Enhanced Senses do not cost END to use.

The *HERO System* organizes Senses into seven "Sense Groups": Hearing; Mental; Radio; Sight; Smell/Taste; Touch; and Unusual. Sense Groups have important effects on the way Sense-Affecting Powers, and some other abilities, work. For more information about Senses, see *Senses In The HERO System,* pages 348-55.

### THE SIMULATED SENSE GROUP RULE

Unusual Senses are usually grouped according to their special effect. For example, if a character has the ability to smell water, his Detect Water becomes part of his Smell/Taste Group. This is called the *Simulated Sense Group* rule, and it has two primary effects.

First, an Unusual Sense is subject to Sense-Affecting Powers that affect the Sense Group it simulates. For example, Infrared Perception defined as part of the Sight Group is affected by Sight Group Flashes.

Second, Enhanced Senses (Unusual or otherwise) automatically acquire some or all of the following Sense Modifiers for no additional cost when assigned to a Sense Group: Discriminatory (to whatever degree indicated in the descriptions below), Range, Sense, Targeting. (Note that this does *not* include Analyze or Increased Arc Of Perception.) For example, a Sense assigned to the Sight Group automatically gains all four Sense Modifiers, since the Sight Group provides them for free. A Sense assigned to the Radio Group gains Range and Sense, but not Discriminatory or Targeting, because those are the Modifiers the Radio Group provides

## SENSE GROUPS

The Sense Groups, and the Senses that belong to them, are:

Hearing Group: Normal Hearing

Mental Group: Mental Awareness, Mind Scan*

Radio Group: Radio Perception

Sight Group: Normal Sight, Nightvision

Smell/Taste Group: Normal Smell, Normal Taste

Touch Group: Normal Touch

Unusual Group: Active Sonar, Clairsentience*, Detect, Find Weakness*, High Range Radio Perception, Infrared Perception, N-Ray Perception, Radar, Radio Perception/Transmission, Spatial Awareness, Sensory Talents*, Ultraviolet Perception, Ultrasonic Perception

* = These sensory abilities are described under their own headings

for free. See the text for a list of which Sense Modifiers each Sense Group provides. A Sense assigned to a Group also gains the benefits of any Enhanced Perception bought for that Group.

Example: *A character buys Infrared Perception, defined as the ability to see heat signatures. Therefore he assigns that Sense to the Sight Group. His Infrared Perception automatically becomes Discriminatory, works at Range, functions as a Sense, and is a Targeting Sense, because all Sight Group Senses have those Sense Modifiers. On the other hand, it's also affected by Darkness, Flash, Images, or Invisibility that work against the Sight Group.*

Characters can buy most Sense Modifiers to affect an entire Sense Group, in which case they apply to any Senses that belong to that Group (either inherently, or through the Simulated Sense Rule). For example, any Telescopic or Tracking bought for the entire Sense Group applies to any Senses made a part of that group via the Simulated Sense Rule.

If a character buys a Sense with a Sense Modifier that the Sense Group he assigns the Sense to already provides, he may reduce the cost of the Sense appropriately. For example, Spatial Awareness, if bought to represent incredibly heightened hearing, would only cost 20 points (it doesn't need the *Sense* Sense Modifier; the Hearing Group provides that).

**Independent Senses**

A character may define a Detect he buys as belonging to none of the standard Sense Groups — in effect, it becomes a Sense Group of its own, making it difficult to affect with Sense-Affecting Powers. On the other hand, "independent" Senses usually cost a lot of Character Points, since they gain no benefit from having a Simulated Sense Group and thus often need a lot of Sense Modifiers.

## THE SENSE GROUPS

Here are how the seven Sense Groups are defined.

**The Hearing Sense Group**

The Hearing Sense Group includes Normal Hearing, which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation.

The Hearing Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Range, Sense.

The Discriminatory effect provided by the Hearing Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell a bird's song from a trumpet solo, but might not be able to tell two different types of bird songs apart. Characters can make Normal Hearing (or the entire Hearing Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost. Although Normal Hearing has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), the Hearing Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group.

Active Sonar and Ultrasonic Perception are almost always bought as part of the Hearing Sense Group.

**The Mental Sense Group**

The Mental Sense Group includes Mental Awareness and Mind Scan. No character has any Mental Group Senses normally, though characters who buy any Mental Power get Mental Awareness for free (see page 116).

The Mental Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Range.

Mental Awareness functions as a Sense, but the Mental Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group.

**The Radio Sense Group**

The Radio Sense Group includes Radio Perception. No character has any Radio Group Senses normally.

The Radio Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Range, Sense.

Radio Perception has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), but the Radio Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group.

High Range Radio Perception, Radar, and Radio Perception/Transmission are almost always bought as part of the Radio Sense Group. Radio Perception/Transmission is simply Radio Perception with the *Transmit* Sense Modifier added. High Range Radio Perception is simply Radio Perception/Transmission with a broader Detect as its basis.

**The Sight Sense Group**

The Sight Sense Group includes Normal Sight (which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation) and Nightvision.

The Sight Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Range, Sense, Targeting.

The Discriminatory effect provided by the Sight Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell two people apart based on their visual appearance, but cannot always determine a person's ethnicity or religion through Sight. Characters can make Normal Sight (or the entire Sight Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost.

Infrared Perception and Ultraviolet Perception are almost always bought as part of the Sight Sense Group.

**The Smell/Taste Sense Group**

The Smell/Taste Sense Group includes Normal Smell and Normal Taste, which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation.

The Smell/Taste Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Range (Smell only), Sense.

The Discriminatory effect provided by the Smell/Taste Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell a steak from a potato by smell or taste, but can't necessary identify every ingredient in either dish. Characters can make Normal Smell or

## BUILDING SENSES

The *HERO System* derives the costs of Senses, whether normal human senses or Enhanced Senses, in two ways.

First, you can determine the value of a Sense by calculating what lack of that sense is worth as a Physical Limitation (page 336). The costs of normal human Senses are generally calculated this way. Thus, for game purposes, Sight costs 25 Character Points, Hearing costs 20 Character Points, Smell/Taste costs 5 Character Points, and Touch costs 15 Character Points. Of the normal human Senses, only Sight is a Targeting Sense.

Second, you can determine the costs of many Enhanced Senses by structuring them as a form of *Detect,* with appropriate modifiers. Each Enhanced Sense description includes a brief breakdown of how it was built.

**POWER EXAMPLES: ENHANCED SENSES**

Advanced Nightvision Goggles: Nightvision (5 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 2 points) **plus** Infrared Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 4 points.

Elvensight: Infrared Perception (Sight Group) (total cost: 5 points) **plus** Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group) (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 10 points.

Mage's Eye: Detect Magic (INT Roll) (Sight Group), Discriminatory, Analyze. Total cost: 15 points.

Radar-Sense: Radar (no Sense Group), Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees). Total cost: 25 points.

X-Ray Vision: N-Ray Perception (Sight Group) (blocked by lead, gold, Force Fields, and Force Walls). Total cost: 10 points.

Normal Taste (or the entire Smell/Taste Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost.

Although Normal Smell has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), the Smell/Taste Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group. Normal Smell works at Range, and provides this effect to other Smell-based Senses; Normal Taste and Taste-based Senses do not have Range.

**The Touch Sense Group**

The Touch Sense Group includes Normal Touch, which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation.

The Touch Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Sense.

The Discriminatory effect provided by the Touch Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell a dollar bill from a piece of ordinary paper of the same size, but cannot tell a $1 bill from a $5 bill. Characters can make Normal Touch (or the entire Touch Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost.

Normal Touch has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), but the Touch Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group.

**The Unusual Sense Group**

The Unusual Sense Group includes the following Senses: Active Sonar, Clairsentience, Detect, Find Weakness, High Range Radio Perception, Infrared Perception, N-Ray Perception, Radar, Radio Perception/Transmission, Spatial Awareness, Sensory Talents, Ultraviolet Perception, Ultrasonic Perception.

Characters cannot buy Sense-Affecting Powers that affect the "Unusual Sense Group." The Unusual "Group" isn't really a group; it's simply a convenient term to describe all Senses that don't automatically belong to a specific group.

## DETECT TABLE

| Cost | Detect Category |
|---|---|
| 3 | A single thing (an uncommon object or phenomenon, one that has little or no effect on combat). Examples: the direction one is currently facing, the current time, the range to nearby objects, Necromantic Magic, Denebians, or Gold |
| 5 | A class of things (a common object or phenomena, or any object or phenomenon that significantly affects combat). Examples: Magic, Aliens, Metals, or Minds |
| 10 | A large class of things (very common or abstract objects or phenomena). Examples: Life Energy, Physical Objects, or Enemies |
| **Cost** | **Modifiers** |
| +5 | Each extra thing or class of things (requires the GM's permission) |
| var | +1 to PER Roll with Detect for each +1 Character Point |

At the GM's option, a character who only wants a Detect on a flat 8- roll can buy it for 1 Character Point (this is most appropriate for the 3-point Detect category). No Enhanced Perception bonuses add to the roll of such a Detect.

**DETECT**

Detect allows the character to perceive whatever he defines as its subject — Detect Gold, Detect Minds, Detect Aliens, whatever he can think of and the GM allows. The basic cost of a Detect depends upon how broad a category of things the Power can detect (see accompanying table).

A basic Detect requires a Half Phase to use and has no Range (*i.e.,* it can only perceive things in the same hex or adjacent hexes as the character using it; in some cases the character may actually have to touch the subject to perceive its qualities). Detect indicates the presence of the subject if the character makes a normal PER Roll; the character can increase his PER Roll with the Detect by +1 for every +1 Character Point. A character doesn't have to make a PER Roll to use Detect if the subject is obvious or the character isn't in combat; the GM determines when, if ever, a roll is needed. A Detect functions at all times (as a Sense, no Half Phase required) if it has the Sense Modifier *Sense*.

Detect typically functions in a 120 degree arc in front of the user. The Sense Modifier *Increased Arc Of Perception* allows Detects to perceive objects over a broader area. Characters can buy Detects with other Sense Modifiers, such as Analyze, Discriminatory, and Range.

A Detect provides two basic types of information about the object or phenomenon it can perceive: first, whether the object or phenomenon exists, or does not exist, at the character's current location; second, the "intensity" of the perceived object or phenomenon. For example, just like Sight can determine how bright lights and colors are, and Hearing can determine how loud sounds are, a Detect Magic can determine how intense or strong the enchantments perceived with it are. More precise Detects require the Sense Modifiers *Analyze* and *Discriminatory.* At the GM's option, some Detects may provide slightly different information than intensity (just like Normal Taste differentiates between sweet, sour, salty, and bitter, instead of indicating an "intensity" of taste).

Example: *Arkelos the mage wants to have "Magesight," the ability to detect all forms of magic. He buys Detect Magic (5 Character Points) as a Sense (+2 Character Points). This allows him to detect magic, but requires him to touch any object or area he wishes to perceive and tells him only that magic is present and how intense it is. Later, after earning some Experience Points, Arkelos buys the* Range *and* Discriminatory *Sense Modifiers for his Magesight. Now he can Detect Magic at Range, and can determine the type and quality of magic he perceives.*

Cost: See Detect Table

## OTHER SENSES

**Active Sonar**

A character with Active Sonar can perceive nearby objects by emitting pulses of high-frequency sound that bounce off those objects and return to him. While Active Sonar compensates for blindness in some ways, the character cannot perceive fine detail (such as colors, print on paper, or fine textures). Additionally, some objects "absorb" or deflect sonar and are more difficult (or impossible) to perceive with it. The sound pulses ("pings") emitted by Active Sonar can be detected with Ultrasonic Hearing or by another character who also has Active Sonar.

Cost: 15 Character Points (Detect Limited Class of Physical Objects [5 Character Points], Targeting; Active).

**Enhanced Perception**

The character has better perception than normal.

Cost: +1 to PER Roll for all Sense Groups for 3 Character Points; +1 to PER Roll for one Sense Group for 2 Character Points; +1 to PER Roll with a single Sense for +1 Character Point.

**High Range Radio Perception**

The character can perceive and transmit along the entire broadcast spectrum, from radio, to television, to cellular telephone transmissions. (This does not guarantee he can understand or decipher the transmissions; they may be encoded, encrypted, digitized, or otherwise "scrambled" to prevent him from understanding them.) If a character or device can only receive and transmit in certain bands of the spectrum (such as only television), he can take a Limitation on his HRRP (the value of the Limitation depends on how restricted his HRRP is, but it's usually a -½ or -1 Limitation). HRRP also allows characters to sense radar emissions. Characters with HRRP may locate a specific frequency or channel by making an INT Roll.

Cost: 12 Character Points (Detect Broadcast Spectrum Transmissions [5 Character Points], Increased Arc Of Perception [360 Degrees], Transmit; Passive).

**Infrared Perception**

The character can perceive heat patterns and traces, but can only perceive the outlines of people and objects (unless there is a source of infrared light available). Cold objects are perceived as "dark," while hot objects may be blindingly "bright." Infrared Perception is not Discriminatory.

Cost: 5 Character Points (Detect Heat Patterns/Traces [5 Character Points]; Passive).

**Mental Awareness**

The character can perceive the use of Mental Powers within his Line Of Sight. He can perceive the user and target of a Mental Power, but not the type of Mental Power (that requires Discriminatory). Mental Awareness cannot perceive Powers that provide protection against mental attacks but which are not classified as Mental Powers, such as Mental Defense or a Force Field/Force Wall that provides Mental Defense.

Cost: 5 Character Points (Detect Mental Powers [3 Character Points], Sense; Passive).

**Nightvision**

The character can see in total darkness (not including the Power *Darkness,* but including some forms of Change Environment that obscure vision) as though it were normal daylight.

Cost: 5 Character Points (+4 Enhanced Perception, with a -½ Limitation, *Only To Counteract Darkness Modifiers;* Passive).

**N-Ray Perception**

The character can make normal PER Rolls through materials that block ordinary perception (such as walls). However, he must define one or more reasonably common substance(s) he cannot perceive through. For example, N-Ray Perception defined as X-Ray Vision could not perceive through Force Fields, Force Walls, lead, or gold.

Cost: 10 Character Points (Detect Physical Objects [10 Character Points]; Passive).

**Radar**

A character with Radar can perceive nearby objects by emitting radio waves that bounce off those objects and return to him. While Radar compensates for blindness, the character cannot perceive fine details, and his radio-wave emissions can be detected with HRRP or by another character who has Radar. As with sonar, some objects absorb or avoid radio waves, making them difficult to perceive with Radar.

Cost: 15 Character Points (Detect Limited Class Of Physical Objects [5 Character Points], Targeting; Active).

**Radio Perception**

The character can perceive local AM, FM, and police-band radio signals.

Cost: 8 Character Points (Detect AM/FM/Police Radio Transmissions [3 Character Points], Increased Arc Of Perception [360 Degrees]; Passive).

**Radio Perception/Transmission**

The character can perceive and transmit local AM, FM, and police-band radio signals.

Cost: 10 Character Points (Detect AM/FM/Police Radio Transmissions [3 Character Points], Transmit, Increased Arc Of Perception [360 Degrees]; Passive).

**Spatial Awareness**

The character can perceive his surroundings without having any contact with them, and can make normal PER Rolls through materials that block ordinary perception (such as walls). Spatial Awareness can simulate a wide variety of senses, such as "mystical awareness," passive sonar, or molecular analysis. A character with Spatial Awareness can operate normally in total darkness or while blinded, but cannot sense fine details.

### ACTIVE AND PASSIVE DETECTS

The *HERO System* groups Detects and other Enhanced Senses into two categories: *Active* and *Passive.* Each type has benefits and drawbacks, so neither receives an Advantage or Limitation.

Passive Detects simply allow the character to perceive information emitted by other persons, objects, or phenomena. Normal Range Modifiers apply to the PER Roll. Most forms of Hearing work this way — they perceive sounds generated outside the character, not a pulse of sound he creates on his own as a way of perceiving and analyzing things. Passive Detects don't reveal the character's presence or location — but are, as the name indicates, passive (they only work when the things they can perceive make themselves known).

Active Detects require the character to emit or project some sort of pulse. The Sense works by perceiving the pulses as they contact objects and phenomena and "bounce back" to the character. Normal Range Modifiers apply to the PER Roll because the further the pulse travels, the more it degrades. Most radar- and sonar-based Enhanced Senses work in this fashion. Active Detects allow a character to proactively try to perceive something, rather than simply waiting until the thing makes itself known to him. But other characters can sometimes perceive the pulses, alerting them to the character's presence and/or location.

Enhanced Senses listed in this section are labeled as either Active or Passive. For other Detects, the GM must decide whether they're Active or Passive (or perhaps both).

Cost: 22 Character Points (Detect Physical Objects [10 Character Points], Targeting Sense, Sense; Passive).

**Ultrasonic Perception**

The character can perceive very high and very low frequency sounds, such as dog whistles or Active Sonar.

Cost: 3 Character Points (Detect Ultrasonic Sound [3 Character Points]; Passive).

**Ultraviolet Perception**

The character can perceive ultraviolet (UV) light. He perceives as well at night as he can during the day, provided there's a source of UV light such as the moon or stars (this occurs even if the night is overcast). In the absence of UV light (such as inside a cave), Ultraviolet Perception provides no benefit.

Cost: 5 Character Points (Detect Ultraviolet Light [5 Character Points]; Passive).

## SENSE MODIFIERS

Sense Modifiers do not belong to any Sense Group — they improve Senses, either individually or by Sense Group. A character can buy a Sense Modifier for a Sense he gets for free (like Normal Sight), provided he satisfies any prerequisites for that Sense Modifier and has the GM's permission.

**Concealed**

This Sense Modifier makes it harder for other characters to detect the pulses or emissions of an Active Sense, or to perceive a Sense with Transmit.

Cost: 1 Character Point for -1 to PER Rolls with one Sense or Sense Group. (For completely undetectable pulses, buy the *Invisible Power Effects* Advantage for the Sense.)

**Discriminatory; Analyze**

These two related Sense Modifiers allow a Sense to perceive a greater range of information about an object or phenomena.

A Sense with *Discriminatory* can identify, distinguish, and analyze an object if the character makes a PER Roll. For example, using Detect Metals, Discriminatory would tell a character that a nearby mass of metal is a nickel/iron composite about 65% nickel, and that it weighs about 200 kilograms.

Cost: 5 Character Points for a single Sense; 10 Character Points for an entire Sense Group.

A Sense with *Analyze* can determine an even greater range of information, with greater precision, than can Discriminatory. If Detect Metals, Analyze, were used on the lump of metal described above, the character would know that the metal is 70% nickel, 23% iron, 4.6% cobalt, and 2.4% iridium; weighs 245.5 kilograms; and is roughly doughnut-shaped with many pits and hollows on the outside. Characters can only buy Analyze for Senses that are Discriminatory.

Cost: 5 Character Points for a single Sense; 10 Character Points for an entire Sense Group.

**Dimensional**

Characters sometimes need to perceive into other dimensions. A Sense with Dimensional can perceive into one or more dimensions in addition to the one the character's currently occupying. It doesn't grant any extra range to the Sense; the character merely perceives whatever he can at the point in the other dimension that physically corresponds to his location in the dimension he currently occupies.

Cost: To perceive into a single other dimension: 5 Character Points for a single Sense; 10 Character Points for a single Sense Group.

To perceive into a related group of dimensions: 10 Character Points for a single Sense; 20 Character Points for a single Sense Group.

To perceive into any dimension: 15 Character Points for a single Sense; 25 Character Points for a single Sense Group.

**Increased Arc Of Perception**

As noted above, Detects typically function in a 120-degree arc in front of the user. This Sense Modifier allows them to function in a 240-degree arc or 360-degree arc. A Sense with 360-Degree Perception operates all around the character, rather than being directional like ordinary Senses. The character can make a PER Roll against any point around him, making it much more difficult to surprise him (since he has his full DCV against perceived threats).

Cost: 240-Degree Perception: 2 Character Points for a single Sense; 5 Character Points for a Single Sense Group; 10 Character Points for all of the character's Sense Groups at once.

360-Degree Perception: 5 Character Points for a single Sense; 10 Character Points for a single Sense Group; 25 Character Points for all of the character's Sense Groups at once.

**Microscopic**

A Sense with this Sense Modifier, which is most often bought for the Sight Group, can detect objects in quantities so small they cannot be perceived by standard Senses. At its base level, Microscopic lets the character perceive objects at 10x magnification. Characters can buy Microscopic multiple times, each for an additional 10x magnification: thus, the second time allows perception at 100x magnification, the third at 1,000x magnification, and so forth.

Cost: 3 Character Points per level of magnification for a single Sense; 5 Character Points per level of magnification for an entire Sense Group.

**Range**

A nonranged Sense (such as Touch or Detect) with this Sense Modifier can perceive at Range in a 120-degree arc with the usual Range Modifier (just like, for example, Normal Sight).

Cost: 5 Character Points for a single Sense; 10 Character Points for a single Sense Group.

**Rapid**

A character with a Rapid Sense can use that Sense to "read" or otherwise take in or absorb data or sensations faster than normal. At its base level, Rapid lets the character perceive objects 10x faster than normal. Characters can buy Rapid multiple times, each for an additional 10x speed: thus, the second time allows perception at 100x faster than normal, the third at 1,000x faster than normal, and so forth. This allows characters to build, for example, sensory devices that work much faster than normal human senses.

Rapid does not provide any direct bonuses to PER Rolls. But as a guideline, the GM may assume each level of Rapid counts as +3 with appropriate PER Rolls, only to counteract penalties for performing tasks quickly (see page 45). Thus, with Rapid x10, a character can perceive in a Phase what other characters take 1 Turn to perceive; with Rapid x100, he perceives in a Phase what others need 1 Minute to perceive; and so on.

Cost: 3 Character Points per x10 speed for a single Sense; 5 Character Points per x10 speed for an entire Sense Group.

**Sense**

A character may convert a Detect (or other Enhanced Senses, at the GM's option) into a *Sense* for 2 Character Points. Characters can use a Sense without a Half Phase Action; it can be set off by contact at any time.

Cost: 2 Character Points.

**Targeting Sense**

A Nontargeting Sense (such as Normal Hearing) with this Sense Modifier can be used as a Targeting Sense to locate targets in combat. For normal humans, only Normal Sight functions as a Targeting Sense.

A Targeting Sense does not completely compensate for Sight — for example, Targeting Hearing cannot read print or sense colors. Furthermore, environmental conditions or other circumstances may adversely affect Targeting Senses, just like darkness or bright lights affect Sight.

Example: *Proboscis buys Targeting Sense for his Normal Smell/Taste for 10 points. He can now locate targets in combat with his Normal Smell/Taste even when he can't see (it also lets him function "normally" in noncombat situations — with his superacute sense of smell, he can avoid walking into objects and so forth, but he can't discern textures or colors). Anything that impedes his sense of smell, such as high winds or strong odors, may confuse or "blind" him.*

Cost: 10 Character Points for a single Sense; 20 Character Points for one Sense Group.

**Telescopic**

A Sense with this Sense Modifier works more accurately over long distances than an ordinary Sense. For every 3 Character Points spent, a character receives +2 to PER Rolls with a single Sense Group — but the bonus only applies to offset the Range Modifier as it affects PER Rolls with that Sense Group. Telescopic does not help the character perceive, locate, or identify an object, it merely makes that object easier to perceive at a distance. Nor does Telescopic reduce the Range Modifier's effect on a character's OCV. Of course, a Sense must already work at Range for Telescopic to have any effect.

Example: *A spy satellite with +30 Telescopic Sense for the Sight Sense Group (45 points) can read a newspaper held by a commuter in Newark. However, it could not automatically find a specific commuter — it would have to scan the faces of all the commuters, one at a time, to find the person it was looking for.*

Telescopic differs from the *MegaScale* Advantage in several ways. First, characters can buy it for their Normal Senses, which they normally cannot do with Advantages. Second, Telescopic allows the character to narrow his field of perception down to any point between where he's standing and the maximum range of his Sense. MegaScale isn't that precise; it lets a character perceive over great distances, but not necessarily to narrow his Sense to, for example, read a poster on the wall somewhere along his line of perception.

Cost: 1 Character Point for +2 PER, only to offset the Range Modifier with a single Sense; 3 Character Points for a single Sense Group. Characters may purchase Telescopic for more than one Sense Group.

**Tracking**

A sense with this Sense Modifier, which is most often bought for the Smell/Taste Group, can be used to identify and track a person or object if the character makes a PER Roll. Modifiers for time and circumstances can affect the PER Roll tremendously.

Cost: 5 Character Points for a single Sense; 10 Character Points for an entire Sense Group.

**Transmit**

This Sense Modifier allows a character to transmit information similar to that which he can perceive. It's most often purchased for the Radio Sense Group and the like.

Usually it's not necessary to establish an exact range over which a Sense with the *Transmit* Sense Modifier can "broadcast" — the GM can simply establish ranges for Transmit on a case-by-case basis, depending on special effects, common sense, dramatic sense, and campaign circumstances. In situations where knowing the exact range is important, assume any Sense with Transmit has a broadcast range of 1 kilometer per Active Point. To increase this range, apply the *MegaScale* Advantage,

with the +¼ level increasing it to 10 km per Active Point, and so on up the MegaScale Table from there. Characters may need to apply MegaScale as a naked Advantage, or put Senses in a Multipower (one slot MegaScaled, one not), to create both short-range and long-range transmitters.

Cost: 2 Character Points for a single Sense; 5 Character Points for a single Sense Group.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Generally, characters should not apply Advantages to Senses or Sense Modifiers. However, the GM may allow this if he feels it's a good way to create an interesting power construct, won't unbalance the game, and satisfies his common sense and dramatic sense. In some genres, for some purposes, Advantages on Senses may prove extremely useful or important. For example, in *Star Hero,* applying *MegaScale* to some Senses is a valid way of building very long-range sensors.

**LIMITATIONS**

Focus: If a Detect (or other Sense that involves a defined PER Roll the character purchases) is bought through a Focus, the character creating must define it in one of two ways. The first, and most common, is that it starts with a base 9- roll, the same as Skills bought through Foci do (see page 220). If the character wants the device to have a better PER Roll, he has to buy Enhanced Perception for it. The second, and rarer, option is to declare that the device functions with the same PER Roll as whoever uses it.

No Direction (-½): By definition, a Sense with Range can determine the direction to something he can perceive, at least in general terms. He may not know that it's north of him, but he knows where it is in relation to where he is. A Ranged Sense with this Limitation doesn't provide that information — it tells the character that what he can perceive is somewhere within the range of his Senses, but that's all. The character has no idea of the exact location of what he perceives.

**ENTANGLE**

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 10 Character Points for every 1d6 BODY, 1 DEF of Entangle

A character with Entangle can restrain, immobilize, or paralyze another character. He can also create barriers. Some examples of Entangles include ice bonds, handcuffs, glue bombs, paralytic touch, gravity manipulation, and transforming the ground to mud so the target sinks into it and cannot move. Each 1d6 of Entangle (which has 1 DEF) costs 10 Character Points.

**USING ENTANGLE**

To use Entangle, a character must make an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls his Entangle dice and counts the Normal Damage BODY. The BODY of the Entangle is the BODY rolled; the Entangle has 1 DEF (PD and ED, Resistant) for each 1d6 of Entangle. Entangle costs END to use.

**Basic Entangle Effects**

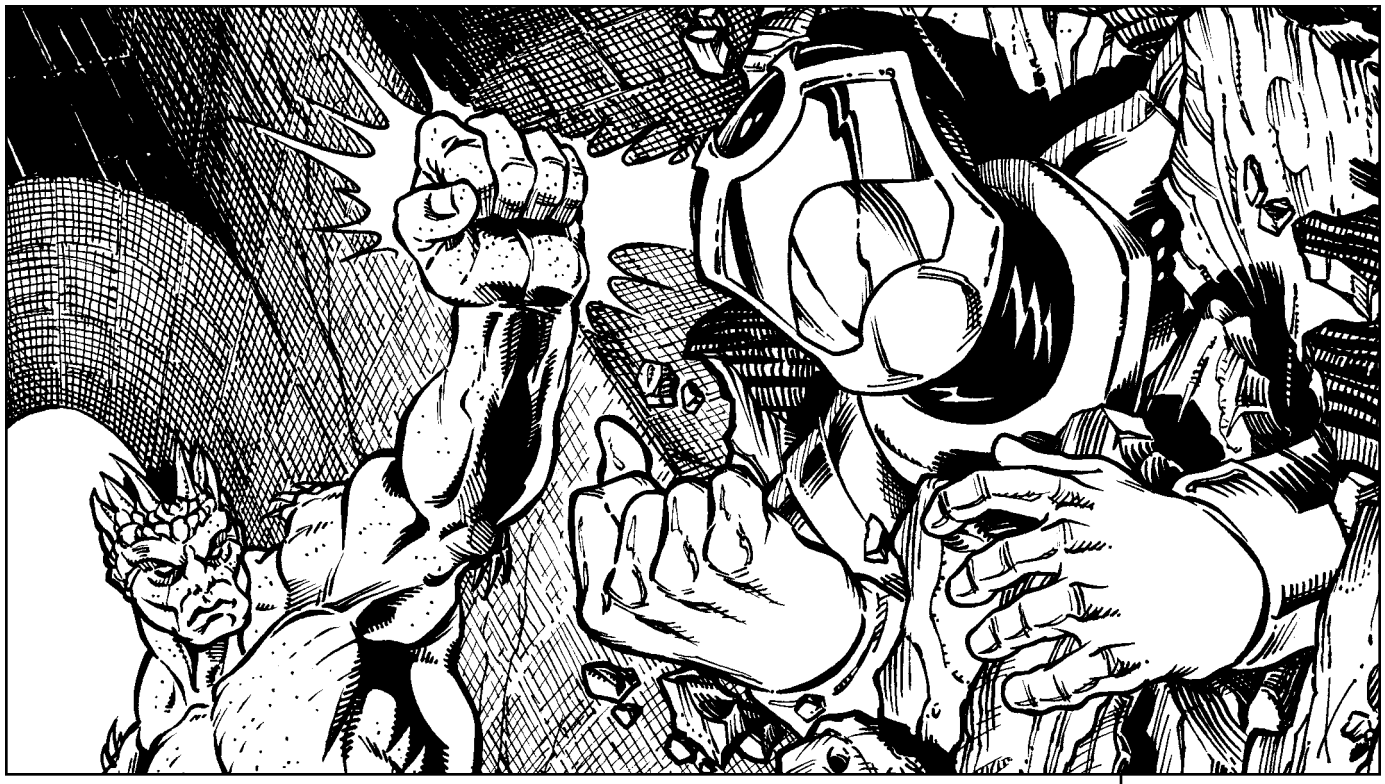
When a character is Entangled, his arms and legs are restrained, giving him a DCV of 0. Typically an Entangle completely immobilizes a character, making it impossible for him to move or use any Movement Powers except Teleportation, but the exact effects depend on the special effects of the Entangle and Movement Power. In some cases, the character may retain the ability to move, but remain Entangled when he does so. For example, a character with Flight could fly while handcuffed — but this wouldn't free him from the handcuffs, he'd just take them with him. But if his Flight had the *Gestures* Limitation, he couldn't fly, since the handcuffs prevent him from making the proper gestures.

**Multiple Entangles**

If a character is hit by more than one Entangle (whether from one attacker, or more than one), the Entangle's DEF is the highest DEF of all the Entangles. The Entangle's BODY is the highest BODY of all the Entangles, +1 BODY for each additional Entangle.

Example: *Thunderbird is hit with four Entangles of DEF 3/BODY 3, DEF 4/BODY 6, DEF 3/BODY 3, and DEF 5/BODY 5, respectively. The total Entangle has DEF 5 (the DEF of the highest DEF Entangle) and BODY 9 (the highest BODY [6] plus 3 for the three additional Entangles).*

If an Entangle has been damaged and another Entangle is then used on the Entangled character, the Entangle has the highest DEF and BODY of the two Entangles involved. However, at a minimum, applying another Entangle adds +1 BODY, thus "healing" the damaged Entangle.





Example: *Zigzag traps Thunderbird in a DEF 5/BODY 5 Entangle. Thunderbird manages to cause 3 points of BODY damage to the Entangle, so it is now DEF 5/BODY 2. Then Zigzag hits him with a DEF 4/BODY 4 Entangle. Thunderbird is now trapped in a DEF 5/BODY 4 Entangle. If Zigzag's second Entangle were only DEF 4/BODY 2, then Thunderbird would be trapped in a DEF 5/BODY 3 Entangle (Zigzag's second Entangle did not have more BODY than the first Entangle, so it just added +1 BODY).*

**Escaping From Entangles**

To escape an Entangle, an Entangled character must either

—do sufficient BODY damage (with one or more attacks) to exceed the Entangle's DEF and reduce its BODY to 0;

—use a Power that allows him to overcome the Entangle's effects (such as Desolidification or Teleportation); or

—find some other appropriate method of escape based on the special effect of the Entangle (for example, using Contortionist to get out of handcuffs).

An Entangled character does not have to make an Attack Roll to hit or damage the Entangle restraining him. When he reduces the Entangle's BODY to 0, he is free. See *Other Combat Effects,* page 423, for further information about breaking out of Entangles.

Characters with powers that cause BODY damage and are innate or bought through Inaccessible Foci can use those powers to try to break free (these attacks cause no damage to the Entangled character unless the Entangle has the *Backlash* Advantage; see below). Characters with powers bought through Accessible Foci normally cannot use those powers to break free from the Entangle, though the exact effects depend on the special effect of the Focus and the circumstances.

Example: *Thunderbird is attacked with an Entangle. He has a gun (an RKA). Because the Entangle immobilizes his arms, he can't draw the gun and shoot through the Entangle.*

*Later, Thunderbird is attacked with another Entangle. This time he already had his gun in his hand. The GM rules that, although his arms are restrained, Thunderbird can move his trigger finger enough to fire the gun and try to shoot his way out of the Entangle.*

It's up to the GM to determine the exact effect of any attempt to escape from or damage an Entangle — some attacks may not be as effective on some types of Entangles as others. For example, depending upon the special effects of the Entangle described above, Thunderbird's gunshot might only create a small hole that wouldn't help free him at all, or the gunshot might shatter it easily.

**Attacking An Entangled Character**

If an Entangled character is attacked, the Entangle takes damage from the attack first (unless the Entangle has the *Takes No Damage From Attacks* Advantage; see below). After the attack does damage equal to the Entangle's current DEF+BODY, the Entangle is destroyed and the Entangled character takes the remaining damage (if any) normally. Attacks that don't cause BODY damage (such as most NNDs or Drains) aren't affected by an Entangle in this way; the damage injures the Entangled character directly, in the usual manner.

### POWER EXAMPLES: ENTANGLE

Arkelos's Spell Of The Conjured Fetters: Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF (60 Active Points); OAF Expendable (a small silver chain, Difficult to obtain new Focus; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Side Effects (Drain STUN 6d6; -1). Total cost: 14 points.

Ice Bonds: Entangle 4d6, 8 DEF (60 Active Points); Vulnerable (Fire/Heat; -1). Total cost: 30 points.

Handcuffs: Entangle 3d6 (standard effect: 3 BODY), 6 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+½) (67 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), Set Effect (Hands Only; -1), Does Not Prevent Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), No Range (-½), Must Follow Grab Or Target Must Be Willing (-½), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Can Be Escaped Automatically With Modified Lockpicking Or Contortionist Roll (-½). Total cost: 9 points.

Glue Grenade Mk. I: Entangle 5d6, 5 DEF, Explosion (+½) (75 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1), No DEF (-1½), Can Be Missile Deflected (-¼), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼). Total cost: 15 points.

A character may target an Entangle specifically, without damaging the character inside it (unless the Entangle has the *Entangle And Character Both Take Damage* Advantage, below), at -3 OCV. Typically an Entangle targeted in this manner has DCV 0, but the GM may increase the Entangle's DCV if he believes it should be harder to hit due to its size, special effect, or other factors.

In most cases it's possible for a character to touch an Entangled character (for example, to grant him a Usable By Other power, or to attack him with a No Range attack) without touching the Entangle. However, the GM may disallow this based on the special effects involved, the circumstances, common sense, and dramatic sense. For example, if the Entangle's defined as trapping the target in a block of ice, it may be impossible to touch him.

**Removing An Entangle**

Whether a character can remove an Entangle once he's used it depends on the special effect. A character could easily take a pair of handcuffs off someone (assuming he has the key), but cutting someone out of an ice block or blob of glue probably takes a lot of time and effort. An Entangle that's already taken effect cannot be Dispelled, unless it's a Continuous Entangle.

#### CREATING BARRIERS

A character can also use Entangle to create a "wall" or barrier in one hex, depending upon the special effects of the Entangle. To place an Entangle barrier in the desired hex, the character must make an Attack Roll against DCV 3.

Entangle barriers are 1" tall and ½" wide. They are 1" long (three hex sides) for every 1 BODY in the Entangle. If the ends of the barrier connect (for example, the barrier forms a circle) the top and bottom are not considered covered.

> Example: *Fergus MacRoi, a druid, has a spell that lets him Entangle his enemies by causing local plants to grow to enormous size in the blink of an eye and ensnare them. He decides to use the spell to create an impromptu "hedge" so he and his comrades can escape from a band of Orcs. The spell creates an Entangle 5d6, 5 DEF, so Fergus's barrier will be 5" long, 1" tall, and ½" wide.*

An Entangle used to create a barrier does not also restrain or immobilize characters in the hexes it occupies — to apply an Entangle to every target in an area, buy the *Area Of Effect* Advantage for it. Characters cannot use Entangle to create objects other than barriers (such as bridges, braces, or stairs); to do that, use Transform.

A barrier created with Entangle takes damage just like any other Entangle — it applies its DEF to reduce the BODY damage, but when it reaches 0 BODY, it's destroyed. (Alternately, the GM could rule that it takes damage like a true wall; see page 449.) If the Entangle has the *Takes No Damage From Attacks* Advantage, an attacker must target it at -3 OCV to damage it. The *Backlash* Advantage and *Stops A Given Sense* Adder have no effect with an Entangle barrier, since the barrier doesn't actually Entangle anyone whom they could affect.

Unless the GM rules otherwise, a character cannot create an Entangle barrier in mid-air to have it fall on and injure anyone. If the GM allows this, apply the dropped object rules, page 436, to determine the damage done.

#### POWERS

Drain: A Drain BODY or Drain DEF can affect an Entangle.

Growth: A character who's trapped in an Entangle and uses Growth (or grows up from being Shrunk) can use his "growth momentum" damage to improve his chances of breaking out of the Entangle (see pages 183, 219). Depending on the special effect, the GM might rule that he breaks it automatically. On the other hand, the GM might also rule that he hurts himself trying this (growing out of handcuffs is hard on the wrists!).

Shrinking: In most cases, using Shrinking allows a character to walk out of an Entangle. However, the GM determines what happens based on special effects; for example, Shrinking might prove useless against an Entangle defined as a block of ice or a large blob of glue.

#### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Additional BODY or DEF: This Adder represents an Entangle that has more BODY or DEF than ordinary. For each +5 points, the Entangle has +1 DEF or +1d6 to roll for BODY. However, the number of BODY dice cannot be more than twice the DEF, and vice-versa.

Stops A Given Sense: This Adder represents an Entangle that blocks a certain Sense. An Entangled character cannot use that Sense until he breaks free. The character defines the affected Sense when he buys the Entangle. To stop one Sense costs +5 Character Points; to stop one Sense Group costs +10 Character Points.

Affects Desolidified: An Affects Desolidified Entangle can hit Desolidified characters and cannot be escaped with Desolidification.

Area Of Effect, Explosion: If a character uses an Area Of Effect Entangle to create a barrier, it creates a 2" tall barrier that fills every hex in the area of effect. For example, if Snowblind has a 4d6 Entangle, Area Of Effect: Radius, and uses it to create a barrier, it creates an ice barrier 2" tall with a 4" radius. An Area Of Effect Entangle used to create a barrier does not also Entangle any characters in the Area Of Effect; instead, they're typically on top of the barrier after it's created. If a character uses an Area Of Effect Entangle for its standard purpose (to restrain targets), none of the Entangle (not even the hexes with no targets in them) forms a barrier.

Generally speaking, an Entangle Explosion follows the same rules as an Area Of Effect Explosion. For ease of play, an Entangle Explosion loses 1 BODY and 1 DEF for each hex out from the center. (If the GM's willing to take a little more time, he can instead subtract 1 BODY or 1 DEF, alternating, from the Entangle for each hex.)

Autofire: The rule about determining the effects of putting more than one Entangle on a character applies to Autofire Entangle attacks used on a single target. Autofire Entangles do not cost an additional +1 Advantage (see *Autofire,* page 252).

Backlash (+½): This Advantage represents an Entangle that reflects back any attacks made by the Entangled character in an effort to break free. The damage done by the Backlash is the same as whatever was used to attack the Entangle with — Normal Damage for an Energy Blast, Killing Damage for an HKA, and so on. If an attack destroys the Entangle, the Entangle doesn't reflect that attack. Attacks made by other characters to free the trapped character do not activate Backlash.

> Example: *Zigzag puts Ironclad in a DEF 7/ BODY 5 rubber ball Entangle with Backlash. Ironclad exerts his 60 STR and punches the rubber ball for 40 STUN, 10 BODY. The ball now has DEF 7/BODY 2, but it was not broken by the attack, so Ironclad takes 40 STUN, 10 BODY as a Backlash. If Ironclad had done 12 BODY or more, he would have broken the Entangle and taken no damage from Backlash.*

Based On Ego Combat Value: Characters can use Entangle with BOECV to create a type of power called "Mental Paralysis." Mental Paralysis Entangles must be built with the Advantages *Takes No Damage From Physical Attacks* (+¼) and *Works Against EGO, Not STR* (+¼), and the Limitation *Cannot Form Barriers* (-¼) (the latter Advantage may be a Limitation in games where EGO is, on the average, much higher than STR).

Attacks with a physical manifestation, such as bullets, energy bolts, punches, or fire, cannot damage a Mental Paralysis. However, Ego Attacks and any Mental Power or BOECV Attack Power that primarily does STUN and/or BODY (for example, a BOECV Energy Blast, but not Mind Control) do affect it. Attacks that don't cause BODY damage do "Normal Damage BODY" for the purposes of affecting the Mental Paralysis. Characters can target a Mental Paralysis (at -3 OECV) without targeting its victim; the Mental Paralysis is assumed to have DECV 0 unless the GM rules otherwise.

The victim uses EGO, not STR, to escape a Mental Paralysis. He rolls 1d6 per 5 points of EGO; this costs 1 END per 10 Character Points of EGO used, and he can Push his EGO for this purpose. He may use his "Casual EGO" (half of his EGO) to break out of weak Mental Paralysis attacks effortlessly.

Mental Defense neither adds to the character's EGO for purposes of breaking out of, nor offers any other protection against, Mental Paralysis. Characters can apply a -½ Limitation, *Mental Defense Adds To EGO,* to Mental Paralysis. That means Mental Defense adds to EGO, point for point, in calculating the EGO a character may exert to break free.

A character cannot escape a Mental Paralysis with Desolidification. Depending on special effects, he may still be able to Teleport, but if so remains subject to the Mental Paralysis when he appears at his destination.

The normal rules for affecting a character with multiple Entangles apply to Mental Paralysis, though physical Entangles don't add to Mental Paralysis Entangles, and vice-versa.

Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation (+¼): Ordinarily, a character can escape from any Entangle by Teleporting out of it. Characters cannot Teleport out of an Entangle with this Advantage — unless the Teleportation is Armor Piercing, which cancels out this Advantage. (Characters may buy multiple levels of Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation to prevent this if desired, or multiple levels of Armor Piercing to counteract that.)

Continuous: An Entangle, if made Continuous, keeps affecting the victim on each of the attacker's Phases, as long as the attacker keeps paying END. The attacker rolls the Entangle's BODY each Phase. If the BODY rolled ever exceeds the Entangle's current BODY, the new roll takes effect (*i.e.,* in essence, a Continuous Entangle can "heal" itself). The BODY from each roll does *not* add together.

If the Entangle is an Area of Effect, standard rules for area-affecting Constant Powers apply. The BODY that applies to a character is the BODY of the most recent roll made prior to his entering the affected area.

Entangle And Character Both Take Damage (+¼): This Advantage represents an Entangle that does not protect the Entangled character. When the Entangled character is hit with an outside attack, he and the Entangle both take damage — the Entangle does not shield the character in any way. Even if an attacker targets the Entangle specifically, the damage still affects the Entangle and the Entangled character at the same time.

Hardened: A character can Harden the DEF of his Entangle. If the Entangle's BODY dice and DEF are bought separately (*i.e.,* they aren't equal), the character may only take this Advantage on the points used to buy DEF (which cost 5 Character Points per 1 BODY for these purposes).

Takes No Damage From Attacks (+¼, +½): An Entangle with this Advantage is transparent to attacks — attackers can damage the Entangled character normally without damaging the Entangle itself. If an attacker targets the Entangle specifically (at -3 OCV), the damage affects the Entangle and then the Entangled character, as with a normal Entangle. If the Entangle is only transparent to certain types of attacks, such as physical attacks or fire attacks, this is a +¼ Advantage; if the Entangle is transparent to all attacks, it's a +½ Advantage.

In many cases, Entangles with this Advantage should take the *Cannot Form Barriers* (-¼) Limitation. By definition, a barrier or wall has some sort of physical existence, and that means it ought to take damage if attacked.

**LIMITATIONS**

Can Be Dispelled (-¼): An Entangle with this Limitation can be Dispelled once it takes effect. The normal rules for Dispel apply. Characters cannot take this Limitation for Continuous Entangles.



Cannot Form Barriers (-¼): A character cannot use an Entangle with this Limitation to form walls or barriers. This Limitation is appropriate for such Entangles as handcuffs, glue grenades, paralyzing nerve strikes, and the like.

Does Not Prevent The Use Of Accessible Foci (-1): An Entangle with this Limitation does not prevent the Entangled character from using most Accessible Foci. (Handcuffs are a good example.) The GM determines whether an Entangled character can use a particular Focus.

Typically an Entangle with this Limitation also does not prevent the use of Restrainable powers (page 306). Again, the final determination is up to the GM based on special effects, common sense, and dramatic sense.

An Entangle with this Limitation does not automatically take no damage from attacks. If the character wants it to have that quality, he should apply the appropriate Advantage.

Entangle Has 1 BODY (-½): An Entangle with this Limitation is brittle. It has normal DEF, but only 1 BODY, and thus is much easier to break free from than a regular Entangle. If the Entangle's BODY dice and DEF are bought separately (*i.e.,* they aren't equal), the character may only take this Limitation on the points used to buy BODY dice (which cost 5 Character Points per die for these purposes). Characters may only take this Limitation for Entangles with 2 or more dice of BODY.

No Defense (-1½): An Entangle with this Limitation has no DEF, only BODY. Thus, anyone can break free from it, given time. When buying an Entangle with No Defense, build the Entangle normally (including buying extra BODY, if desired), then apply this Limitation.

Nonresistant DEF (-¼): The DEF of an Entangle with this Limitation is not Resistant, so Killing Attacks damage it easily.

Only To Form Barriers (-1): An Entangle with this Limitation can only form barriers; it cannot restrain or immobilize targets in the manner of a normal Entangle.

Set Effect (Hands Only; Feet Only) (-1): An Entangle with this Limitation only Entangles the target's hands or feet; his other limbs remain free. If only a character's arms/hands are Entangled, he may still run at his full Running velocity; if only his legs/feet are Entangled, he may still move at half Running velocity. In either case his DCV is only reduced to half while he's Entangled, not zero.

Susceptible (-¼ to -1): This Limitation represents an Entangle that can be completely removed by some substance or effect that wouldn't damage an ordinary Entangle. For example, a particular type of super-glue attack might easily be removed with alcohol. If the attack to which the Entangle is Susceptible is Uncommon or very difficult to determine, the Limitation is worth -¼; if it is Common or difficult to determine, -½; and if it is Very Common or easy to determine, -1.

Vulnerable (-¼ to -1): An Entangle with this Limitation is unusually vulnerable to particular types of attacks — it takes double damage from them. For example, an ice-based Entangle might take double damage from fire- and heat-based attacks. If the attack to which the Entangle is Vulnerable is Uncommon or very difficult to determine, the Limitation is worth -¼; if it is Common or difficult to determine, -½; and if it is Very Common or easy to determine, -1.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Vulnerability: If a character is Vulnerable To Entangles And Grabs, Entangles and Grabs used on him are considered to have 1½x or 2x as much BODY (or STR) when he attempts to free himself from them.

**EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL MOVEMENT** STOP

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: See Extra-Dimensional Movement Table

A character with this Movement Power can travel from one dimension to another, or can travel through time. Some examples of Extra-Dimensional Movement include wizards who can open gates to other planes, starships capable of breaching dimensional barriers, and time travel machines. Extra-Dimensional Movement costs END to use.

When buying Extra-Dimensional Movement, a character must pay a base cost of 20 points. That allows him to travel to a single physical location in a single other dimension — for example, only to Odin's Hall in Valhalla, or only to the Infernal Gates in Hell. (The character may, of course, also return to his native dimension.) If a character wants to travel to more locations in that one dimension, or to more than a single dimension, he has to pay Character Points for additional modifiers to the power (see the text below, and the Extra-Dimensional Movement Table).

Using Extra-Dimensional Movement takes a Full Phase. It does not involve acceleration, deceleration, or a Turn Mode. Traveling to another dimension, or through time, breaks Line Of Sight for the purposes of maintaining Constant Powers, Usable By Others powers, Mental Powers, and the like (unless the GM rules otherwise).

Normally, a character with Extra-Dimensional Movement can only move himself, his clothing, and his personal equipment (including any Foci). To move more weight, the character must buy an Adder (see below) for his Power.

### DIMENSIONAL TRAVEL

The standard use of Extra-Dimensional Movement is to travel to other planes and dimensions. This is a separate ability from traveling through time (see below).

**Number Of Dimensions The Character Can Travel To**

To travel to a related group of dimensions (such as the Nine Hells or the Four Elemental Planes) costs +5 Character Points. The GM determines what constitutes "a related group"; there's no specific numerical limit.

The ability to travel to any dimension costs +10 Character Points.

Regardless of how many dimensions a character can travel to, he can only travel to a single physical location in each one. He must define the specific location in each dimension when he buys the power, and cannot change it thereafter.

**Physical Locations The Character Can Reach**

As noted above, the default with Extra-Dimensional Movement is that a character can only travel to a single physical location in any dimension he can travel to, and he has to define that location when he buys the power (which he cannot change thereafter). (Once he reaches that single location he can, of course, travel freely under his own power, unless some outside force or circumstance prevents him from doing so.) A character may expand the number of locations he can travel to with additional modifiers.

If the character can only travel to a single dimension, the ability to travel to any location in that dimension costs +5 Character Points.

If the character can travel to a related group of dimensions, the ability to travel to any location in any of those dimensions costs +10 Character Points.

If the character can travel to any dimension, the ability to travel to any location in any of those dimensions costs +15 Character Points.

If a character can travel to "any location" in a target dimension, but is restricted to only traveling to physical locations in other dimensions corresponding to the physical location he occupies in the dimension he's currently in, that costs -3 points.

## EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL MOVEMENT TABLE

| Cost | Effect |
|---|---|
| 20 | Travel to a single location in a single dimension |
| | **Number Of Dimensions Modifiers** |
| +5 | Travel to a single location in a related group of dimensions |
| +10 | Travel to a single location in any dimension |
| | **Dimensional Location Modifiers** |
| +5 | Any physical location in a single dimension |
| +10 | Any physical location in a related group of dimensions |
| +15 | Any physical location in any dimension |
| -3 | Character can only travel to the physical location in the other dimension corresponding to his physical location in the dimension he's currently in |
| | **Time Travel Modifiers** |
| +20 | Travel through time to a single moment in time |
| +5 | Travel to a related group of discrete moments in time |
| +1 | Travel forward or back in time by up to 1 Turn in either direction; +1 point for each additional increment on the Time Chart; if character can only travel to the past or to the future, halve this cost |
| | **Time Travel Location Modifiers** |
| +0 | No change in physical location; character remains in the physical location he occupies when he activates the power |
| +2 | Any single physical location in the same dimension the character occupies when he uses the power, defined when the power is bought, regardless of where the character is when he activates the power |
| +5 | A limited group of physical locations, in the same dimension the character occupies when he uses the power, in the moments in time the character can travel to |
| +10 | Any physical location, in the same dimension the character occupies when he uses the power, in the moments in time the character can travel to |

### POWER EXAMPLES: EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL MOVEMENT

Cyberspace: Extra-Dimensional Movement (any location in cyberspace, but limited to the location corresponding to the computer where the character jacks in), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (33 Active Points); OIF (dataport; -½), Meat Body (character's body remains in the real world, but cannot move, perceive, or act, and damage to either the virtual form [in cyberspace] or the real body [in the real world] can hurt or kill the character; -1). Total cost: 13 points.

Enter The Microverse!: Extra-Dimensional Movement (any location in the Microverse, but limited to the location corresponding to the character's location in the normal-sized world). Total cost: 22 points.

Invocation Of The Gate To Hell: Extra-Dimensional Movement (one location in Hell), Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Continuous (+1), Usable Simultaneously (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (70 Active Points); OAF Fragile (obsidian mirror; -1¼), Gate (-½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 19 points.

Time Machine: Extra-Dimensional Movement (any place within 50 Billion Years forward or backward in time) (77 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½). Total cost: 31 points.

### TIME CHART (EXPANDED)

| Time Period/Duration |
|---|
| 1 Segment |
| 1 Phase |
| 1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) |
| 1 Minute |
| 5 Minutes |
| 20 Minutes |
| 1 Hour |
| 6 Hours |
| 1 Day |
| 1 Week |
| 1 Month |
| 1 Season (3 months) |
| 1 Year |
| 5 Years |
| 25 Years |
| 1 Century |
| 5 Centuries |
| 2,500 Years |
| 10,000 Years |
| 50,000 Years |
| 250,000 Years |
| 1 Million Years |
| 5 Million Years |
| 25 Million Years |
| 100 Million Years |
| 500 Million Years |
| 2.5 Billion Years |
| 10 Billion Years |
| 50 Billion Years |

### MEETING YOURSELF IN THE PAST

The *HERO System* rules do not offer or suggest any particular theory as to how time travel works, what effects characters traveling to the past can have on their present (or future), or any of the many other thorny issues related to the subject. Each GM must determine for himself how time travel works in his campaign. There are plenty of books and science fiction stories about the subject for readers interested in doing some research.

## EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost | Travel To A Single Dimension |
|---|---|
| 20 | A single location |
| 25 | Any physical location |
| 22 | Any physical location corresponding to his physical location in the dimension he's currently in |
| | **Travel To A Related Group Of Dimensions** |
| 25 | A single location in each dimension |
| 35 | Any physical location in each dimension |
| 32 | Any physical location in each dimension, corresponding to his physical location in the dimension he's currently in |
| | **Travel To Any Dimension** |
| 30 | A single location in any dimension |
| 45 | Any physical location in any dimension |
| 42 | Any physical location in any dimension, corresponding to his physical location in the dimension he's currently in |
| | **Travel In Time: Physical Location Same As Starting Location** |
| 40 | Travel to a single moment in time |
| 45 | Travel to a related group of moments in time |
| 67 | Travel to any moment in time within 50 Billion Years, future or past |
| | **Travel In Time: Single Physical Location Other Than Starting Location** |
| 42 | Travel to a single moment in time |
| 47 | Travel to a related group of moments in time |
| 69 | Travel to any moment in time within 50 Billion Years, future or past |
| | **Travel In Time: Limited Group Of Physical Locations** |
| 45 | Travel to a single moment in time |
| 50 | Travel to a related group of moments in time |
| 72 | Travel to any moment in time within 50 Billion Years, future or past |
| | **Travel In Time: Any Physical Location** |
| 50 | Travel to a single moment in time |
| 55 | Travel to a related group of moments in time |
| 77 | Travel to any moment in time within 50 Billion Years, future or past |

Generally speaking, Extra-Dimensional Movement does not give a character any enhanced movement in his home dimension — a character in New York cannot transport himself to Valhalla and then back to Tokyo. A character either returns to his home dimension in the same location from which he left it, or he only travels as far as he traveled in the alternate dimension. At the GM's option, if the character has paid the points to be able to travel to any location in any of the dimensions he can travel to, he can likewise return to any location in his home dimension.

### TIME TRAVEL

"Time" counts as a single dimension for purposes of Extra-Dimensional Movement, but it's separate from all the other dimensions — a character cannot travel through time by buying Extra-Dimensional Movement to travel to "all dimensions," he has to buy time travel separately.

To travel in time, a character must pay +20 Character Points (in addition to the base cost of 20 Character Points for Extra-Dimensional Movement). For that total base cost of 40 Character Points, the character can travel to a single moment in time, defined when the power is bought. Time travel occurs only in the physical dimension the character is in when he uses the power. For example, a character on Earth cannot time travel to Hell or Valhalla (though he could have two Extra-Dimensional Powers, one physical and one temporal, that in combination allowed him to do that).

If a character wants to travel to more than a single moment in time, he must pay more Character Points. The ability to travel to a related group of moments in time, in the past or the future, no matter how far removed in time from the present moment, costs +5 Character Points. The GM determines what constitutes a "related group"; examples typically include all instances of a particular date (*e.g.,* any July 4 in any year), or any date within a specific, limited span of time (*e.g.,* one specific year).

A character may want to travel to any moment in time within a particular timeframe, such as "within my lifetime" or "within 500 years, past or future, from the present moment." To do this, he buys the range across which he may travel. For +1 Character Point, a character may travel forward or backward in time by up to 1 Turn (12 seconds). Thus, if he were in Segment 6 of Turn 2 of a combat, he could travel to any Segment up to Segment 6 of Turn 3 (but no further into the future), or to any Segment back to Segment 6 of Turn 1 (but no further into the past). For each additional +1 point, he may expand his range of travel by one step down the Time Chart (see the accompanying Expanded Time Chart). Thus, to travel to any point in time within 50 Billion Years in the future or 50 Billion Years in the past costs +27 Character Points (for a total cost of 67 points for the power). If the character can only travel one direction in time (backward to the past, or forward to the future), halve this cost.

Regardless of how many moments in time a character can travel to, he can only time travel to a single physical location in the dimension he's in when he uses the power. By default, this location is defined as the location he's in when he activates the Power — if he starts in Chicago in 2004, he can travel back to 1636 or forward to 3312, but he'll still be in Chicago (or whatever it used to be/will become — which may prove hazardous for him!). For +2 Character Points, he may define his time travel as always taking him to the same location, no matter where he is when he uses Extra-Dimensional Movement — he always time travels to London, no matter where he is when he activates the Power. For +5 Character Points, he can go to a related group of physical locations in the same dimension (say, any place in England). For +10 Character Points, he can go to any physical location in the same dimension. However, characters cannot use this as a cheap form of worldwide Teleportation (*e.g.,* "I'll travel to two seconds from now in Tokyo!") — they must engage in what the GM considers legitimate time travel.

**Caveat**

Extra-Dimensional Movement is a "Stop Sign" power, and time travel doubly so. The time travel method outlined above is not intended as a combat

ability, or a way for a character to go back and "redo" the actions of the past few Segments or Turns just because they didn't turn out the way he wanted. If a character wants to have time-manipulation powers that work in combat, he should buy those as specific abilities with a "time manipulation" effect. The GM should carefully monitor all uses of Extra-Dimensional Movement in general, and time travel in particular, to prevent abuse or loss of game balance; as always, he should forbid any use of a power he considers improper or harmful to the game.

### OTHER USES

Characters can create "gates" to other dimensions or times by applying the rules for Gates under *Teleportation* (see page 234) to Extra-Dimensional Movement.

You can also use Extra-Dimensional Movement to simulate any situation in which a character is in a different state of being, cannot interact with the "real world," or is any place which is inaccessible to others. For example, a character with Shrinking could, theoretically, buy enough Shrinking to get inside molecules (the "microverse," so to speak). However, it's easier to buy this ability as Extra-Dimensional Movement to the microverse "dimension." Similar uses include stopping time (the character "travels to the dimension" where he's the only thing in the world not frozen in time); granting wishes (the character "travels to the dimension where he has received whatever he wished for"); the "virtual dimension" of cyberspace; creating an "impenetrable ward" to protect some place or object (the place or object is in another dimension, and thus generally cannot be affected by characters in this dimension); and the like. It may be necessary for a character to purchase special Senses or other powers for use only in the dimension(s) he travels to; if so, he can usually purchase these with a -1 (or greater) Limitation.

Extra-Dimensional Movement is extremely tricky, and can be difficult to use in a campaign setting. The GM should consider regulating Extra-Dimensional Movement in some fashion; otherwise characters will use it every time they get into trouble. For example, perhaps characters have to buy it in such a way as to make it unreliable — if the character misses a Skill or Activation Roll, he goes off course, to another dimension (or time). This Power is best used by the GM when it fits into his plans; otherwise it should be strictly controlled.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Increased Mass: For each +5 Character Points, the character can transport 2x normal human mass (100 kg) when using Extra-Dimensional Movement.

Safe Blind Travel (+¼): If a character uses Extra-Dimensional Movement and travels to a dimension where there's a solid object occupying his arrival point, roll on the Teleportation Damage Table (page 367). However, if the power has this Advantage, the character instead appears in the open space nearest to his target location large enough to hold him (though this may not be safe; the nearest open space may be right next to an angry dragon...).

## EXTRA LIMBS

Type: Special Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 5 Character Points to have any number of Extra Limbs

A character with Extra Limbs has one or more usable extra limbs. Some examples of Extra Limbs include a prehensile tail, extra arms, or a group of tentacles. For 5 Character Points, the character can have as many Extra Limbs as he wants, be it 1 or 100.

Extra Limbs have no direct effect on combat, but characters can use them to perform maneuvers not possible to bipedal humans (like holding someone with both hands and then punching him, or hanging from the ceiling by a tail). A character who uses Extra Limb(s) creatively can receive a bonus for Surprise maneuvers.

Having an Extra Limb does not, by itself, allow a character extra attacks in a Phase. However, he may buy Combat Skill Levels (or other Skills and Powers) to simulate his ability to attack more effectively with multiple limbs. Although Extra Limbs are as functional as human hands, all limbs but the primary limb are considered to be the "off hand." (If the character has Ambidexterity, all the limbs are considered to be the "good hand.") Extra Limbs does not cost END to use, but the additional limbs are visible, and the character must pay the normal END cost when using Strength with an Extra Limb.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Inherent: Extra Limbs are not Inherent *per se,* but are frequently bought with this Advantage to make them so.

### LIMITATIONS

Always On: Extra Limbs does not require the *Always On* Limitation to take the *Inherent* Advantage. In fact, characters rarely take this Limitation for Extra Limbs, even though they can't "turn them off," since the inability to deactivate them doesn't hinder the character in any way.

Limited Manipulation (-¼): Extra Limbs with this Limitation are not as functional as human hands. The character can use them to hit targets, and perhaps to pick up large or easily-grasped objects, but not to pick up more delicate objects or perform other types of relatively fine manipulation.

If the Extra Limbs cannot exercise the character's full STR or DEX, the character may take a -¼ Limitation on those Characteristics to reflect that fact. If the Extra Limbs are stronger than the character's normal limbs, the character may buy STR with the -½ Limitation *Only With Extra Limbs.*

### SUGGESTED DIMENSIONS

Here's a list of some of the dimensions characters can visit with Extra-Dimensional Movement:

Astral Plane

Ethereal Plane

Hell (or hells, depending upon conception and cosmology)

Heaven or heavens (ditto)

The Elemental Planes (air, earth, fire, water, other)

The Dreamscape (the world of dreams and nightmares)

Alternate Earths/ timelines

### POWER EXAMPLES: EXTRA LIMBS

Prehensile Tail: Extra Limb (1), Inherent (+¼) (6 Active Points); Limited Manipulation (-¼). Total cost: 5 points.

Steel Tentacles: Extra Limbs (4); OIF (-½) (total cost: 3 points) **plus** +30 STR, Only With Extra Limbs (-½), OIF (-½) (total cost: 15 points). Total cost: 18 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: FTL TRAVEL

Cosmic Flight: FTL Travel (1 million Light-Years/year, or about 1 LY/Turn) (50 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½). Total cost: 33 points.

Light Form Travel: FTL Travel (speed of light) (10 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½). Total cost: 7 points.

Starship Hyperdrive: FTL Travel (1 LightYear/6 Segments) (52 Active Points); OAF Immobile (-2), Extra Time (requires 1 Minute to engage hyperdrive engine, but engine thereafter does not require Extra Time; -¾), Requires A PS: Hyperdrive Operation Roll (-¼). Total cost: 13 points.

### FASTER-THAN-LIGHT (FTL) TRAVEL

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 10 Character Points to travel at the speed of light, +2 Character Points for ever x2 FTL velocity (see table)

A character with FTL Travel can travel as fast as, or faster than, light when in space. Some examples of FTL Travel include a starship's hyperdrive or a character who can transform himself into pure light. FTL Travel has a base cost of 10 Character Points, which allows the character to travel at the speed of light; 2x velocity costs +2 Character Points. FTL does not cost END to use.

Rules for Movement Powers do not apply to FTL Travel in quite the same way as they do to other Movement Powers. First, characters using FTL Travel are assumed to always be moving at Noncombat Movement velocities; they cannot slow down to Combat Movement. Second, FTL Travel does not have a "Turn Mode" like many Movement Powers; however, the GM should, as an approximation of a Turn Mode, assume that characters moving at FTL speed require enormous amounts of space to turn or reverse course — they cannot "turn on a dime" like characters can with, for example, Running. Third, normal acceleration/deceleration rules do not apply to FTL Travel; the GM should assume, again in an approximation of the standard rules, that it takes some time (at least a few Segments) to get up to full FTL speeds. Fourth, characters cannot make Half Moves while moving at FTL velocities, they must use their full amount of movement.

A character may only travel faster than light in space. He can *never* use this Power in an atmosphere, even if Desolidified.

## FTL TRAVEL TABLE

| Points | Velocity | Approximation |
|---|---|---|
| 10 | 1 Light Year/year | |
| 12 | 2 Light Years/year | |
| 14 | 4 Light Years/year | 1 LY/season |
| 16 | 8 Light Years/year | |
| 18 | 16 Light Years/year | 1 LY/month |
| 20 | 32 Light Years/year | |
| 22 | 64 Light Years/year | 1 LY/week |
| 24 | 125 Light Years/year | |
| 26 | 250 Light Years/year | |
| 28 | 500 Light Years/year | 1 LY/day |
| 30 | 1,000 Light Years/year | |
| 32 | 2,000 Light Years/year | |
| 34 | 4,000 Light Years/year | |
| 36 | 8,000 Light Years/year | 1 LY/hour |
| and so forth | | |

### FIND WEAKNESS

Type: Special Power/Sensory Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 10 Character Points for a base roll of 11-, one type of attack only; any group of attacks, +10 points; all attacks, an additional +10 points; +5 Character Points for every +1 to the roll

A character with Find Weakness has an uncanny ability to find a weakness in the defenses of a target, which has the effect of reducing the target's appropriate defense by half. For 10 Character Points, a character with this Power has a Find Weakness roll of 11-. Find Weakness does not cost END to use.

At its basic level, Find Weakness applies to only one of the character's Attack Powers or other methods of attack; the character must choose this attack when he purchases Find Weakness. For example, if the character had a bow and a sword, he would have to decide whether his Find Weakness works with the bow or the sword; it provides no benefit when he uses the other weapon. For +10 points, a character can use Find Weakness with a group of related attacks (for example, all martial arts attacks, all guns, all Fire Magic spells). For an additional +10 points, a character can use Find Weakness with all of his attacks. The character gets a +1 on his Find Weakness Roll for every +5 Character Points.

#### USING FIND WEAKNESS

To use Find Weakness, a character must take a Half Phase Action and make a roll. If the roll succeeds, the target's appropriate defense (see below) is reduced by half. If the roll fails, the target's defenses remain at full strength.

**Types Of Defense Affected**

When a character decides to use Find Weakness, he must choose one of these types of defenses he wants to Find Weakness in:

1. The target's Normal Defenses (PD or ED, including Damage Resistance). The character does not have to specify the exact type of Normal Defense.

2. The target's Resistant Defenses (such as Armor or Force Field). The character does not have to specify the exact type of Resistant Defense.

3. At the GM's discretion, any one of the target's exotic defenses (such as Mental Defense and Power Defense). Generally speaking, most special effects of Find Weakness probably have no effect whatsoever on Flash, Mental, or Power Defense (a -0 Limitation) — if a character wants to affect those defenses, typically he should buy Find Weakness with the *Does Not Apply Against Certain Types Of Defenses* Limitation to make it only apply against that one type of exotic defense.

The character can switch what he wants to apply his Find Weakness to from Phase to Phase.

For example, one Phase he could Find Weakness in the target's Resistant Defenses; the next he could Find Weakness in the same target's Normal Defenses. But he can only find the weaknesses in one type of defense at a time.

Even if the character switches from defense type to defense type, the standard -2 per additional roll penalty (see below) applies. For example, if a character Finds Weakness twice in a target's Resistant Defenses, and then wants to halve the target's Normal Defenses, the roll for halving the Normal Defenses would be at -4 (since it's the third Find Weakness roll made against the target).

A character may try to Find Weaknesses in all types of defenses, including Force Fields and Force Walls (but see above).

As always, the GM should take into account the circumstances, special effects, common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance. There may be situations where a GM's willing to expand the effects of Find Weakness a little, or times when he considers it necessary to reduce them.

**Repeated Attempts**

A character can try to Find Weakness on a target as often as he wishes. Each subsequent attempt to Find Weakness has a cumulative -2 penalty (second try -2, third try -4, and so on). If he ever fails to Find Weakness on a target, he may not try to find further weaknesses on that target at that time. Each successful use has a cumulative effect (second time defense is x¼, third time defense is x⅛, and so on).

**Modifiers To The Find Weakness Roll**

A character who prepares for a Full Phase before using Find Weakness receives a +1 bonus to his roll. (At the GM's option, this could even become +1 per Full Phase spent, allowing the character to spend a lot of time focusing on the target to, in effect, gain an "extra time" bonus.) Difficult circumstances, such as the target's unusual physique, impose penalties on the roll. The Range Modifier also applies.

A character may choose to apply his Overall Skill Levels, if any, to improve his Find Weakness roll. No other Combat Skill Levels, Penalty Skill Levels, or Skill Levels can be applied to Find Weakness. Enhanced Perception bonuses do not apply to Find Weakness. A character may buy the standard bonuses to Find Weakness (+1 to the roll for every +5 points) with a Limitation if he only wants them to cancel the Range Modifier or apply in specific situations.

## FIND WEAKNESS MODIFIERS

| Modifier | Circumstance |
|---|---|
| +1 | Preparing a Phase |
| -1 to -3 | Unusual or alien physique, totally unknown structure |
| -2 | Second try on same target |
| -4 | Third try on same target |
| Varies | Range Modifier |

**Other Restrictions**

Find Weakness only works for the character who has Find Weakness. The target's defenses remain at full strength against all attacks from all other characters.

Any weakness found only applies for that particular battle — the next time the character sees the target, he has to make his Find Weakness roll all over again if he wants to reduce the target's defenses. Conversely, if a character fails to Find Weakness on his target, he may try again when they meet in another encounter.

If the target of Find Weakness changes his form or shape via Multiform, Shape Shift, or any ability the GM deems similar, he stops a found weakness from affecting him. The character with Find Weakness has to use the Power again on the new form to find weaknesses in it. He starts over (repeated use penalties don't carry over from using Find Weakness on the first form), and the GM might allow a small bonus to the roll. However, if the target changes form back to his original form during that encounter, the weakness the character previously found in that form still applies.

The Hit Location rules have no effect on Find Weakness — it applies to halve the defenses on any Location the character cares to target. Nor is it necessary to roll "by Location"; one roll covers all Hit Locations.

The GM may impose any other restrictions on Find Weakness he believes are necessary to maintain common sense or dramatic sense, or to preserve game balance. For example, even if Find Weakness works with "All Attacks," he might not let a character apply Find Weakness if he tries to crash a car into the target, or triggers a hidden bomb.

**POWERS**

Defense Powers: Find Weakness can locate weaknesses in defenses that are not visible (either inherently [such as many special effects of Armor], or because they have the Advantage *Invisible Power Effects*). However, the GM may impose penalties on the roll, or make exceptions in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, or game balance.

Damage Reduction: Find Weakness has no effect on Damage Reduction unless the GM specifically permits this.

Desolidification: A character who's Desolidified can only find weaknesses in solid targets if his Find Weakness has the *Affects Physical World* Advantage.

Duplication: Finding a weakness on the base character does not extend to his Duplicates, nor does finding weakness in one Duplicate extend to the base character or to any other Duplicate. A character must Find Weakness on the base character and each Duplicate individually.

Lack Of Weakness: Characters cannot Find Weakness in Lack Of Weakness to reduce its effectiveness against later Find Weakness rolls in the same combat.

Tunneling: A character cannot use Find Weakness to halve the DEF of materials he Tunnels through.

### POWER EXAMPLES: FIND WEAKNESS

Holy Vengeance: Find Weakness 13- with all melee weapons (30 Active Points); Only Versus Undead/Demons (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

Super-Accuracy: Find Weakness 14- with all guns. Total cost: 35 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: FLASH

Spell Of Blinding Light: Sight Group Flash 10d6 (50 Active Points); OAF Expendable (sunstone; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 15 points.

Pepper Spray: Sight Group Flash 8d6 (40 Active Points); OAF (-1), No Range (-½), Does Not Work Against Desolidified Characters (-¼), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 12 points.

Stink Bomb: Smell/Taste Group Flash 8d6 (24 Active Points); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 6 Charges (-¾). Total cost: 8 points.

Shrieker Alarm: Hearing Group Flash 6d6, Trigger (when unauthorized personnel approach within 20 feet; +¼) (22 Active Points); OAF (-1), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 10 points.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Affects Desolidified: A character does not have to buy this Advantage for Find Weakness to use it to find weaknesses in a Desolidified target. However, he cannot exploit any weaknesses he finds unless he has an attack that affects the Desolidified target.

Autofire: Characters cannot buy this Advantage for Find Weakness. However, if a character Finds Weakness in a target, and then uses an Autofire attack against him, the halving of defense applies to every shot that hits. (The same is true for multiple-power attacks, Rapid Fire, Sweep, and the like.)

Usable On Others: No form of this Advantage allows another character to take advantage of the halving of defenses a character obtains from making his Find Weakness roll. All it does is allow the character granted Find Weakness to make his own Find Weakness rolls.

### LIMITATIONS

Costs Endurance: If a character applies this Limitation to his Find Weakness, once he stops paying END he no longer gains the benefits of Find Weakness — any defenses he's halved while the power was active are no longer halved against his attacks. If he re-activates the Power, he has to start finding weakness all over again (repeated use penalties don't carry over from the first use).

Does Not Apply Against Certain Types Of Defenses (-¼ to -1): Find Weakness with this Limitation only applies against specific types of defenses (whether defined as a Power ["does not work against Force Field"] or a special effect ["does not work against mystic defenses"]). If it just affects one type of defense, the Limitation is worth -1; two defenses, -½, three or more, -¼. The GM may adjust the value of this Limitation as appropriate.

Only Affects Certain Materials (-¼ to -1): Find Weakness with this Limitation only affects certain substances, such as metal or stone. The Limitation's value depends on how common the substance is. A character may not take this Limitation if the Find Weakness only applies to a single Attack Power that can only affect that substance.

| FLASH | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Standard Power/Attack Power/Sense-Affecting Power |
| Duration: | Instant |
| Target: | Target's DCV |
| Range: | 5" x Active Points |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | See Flash Summary Table |

A character with Flash can temporarily disable or "blind" an opponent's Senses (usually Sight Group senses). Some examples of Flash include blinding bursts of light, deafening shrieks of sound, pepper spray, or poking someone in the eyes.

Each 1d6 of Flash that affects a Targeting Sense Group costs 5 Character Points, regardless of how many Senses the Sense Group includes. Each 1d6 of Flash that affects a Nontargeting Sense Group costs 3 Character Points, regardless of how many Senses the Sense Group includes. If characters purchase half-dice of Flash (see page 114 for costs), a half die only adds a BODY to the Flash effect if it rolls a 6.

Flash normally affects a single Sense Group. Each additional Targeting Sense Group costs +10 Character Points; each additional Targeting Sense separately costs +5 Character Points. Additional Nontargeting Sense Groups cost +5 Character Points; additional Nontargeting Senses separately cost +3 Character Points. Flash costs END to use.

## FLASH SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost per 1d6 | Sense Group |
|---|---|
| 5 | Targeting |
| 3 | Nontargeting |
| **Cost** | **Extra Senses** |
| +10 | Targeting Sense Group |
| +5 | Targeting Sense (single) |
| +5 | Nontargeting Sense Group |
| +3 | Nontargeting Sense (single) |

### USING FLASH

To use Flash, a character must make an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls the Flash dice and counts the Normal Damage BODY. The total number of BODY rolled, minus the target's Flash Defense (if any), is the number of Segments the target's Sense(s) is (are) disabled. Begin counting the Segments in the Segment in which the character uses the Flash attack (even if the target's already had a Phase that Segment).

The target of a Flash is blinded (or deafened, unable to receive radio transmissions, or the like). He doesn't take STUN or BODY damage from the Flash. A Flashed character who cannot perceive his opponent(s) with a Targeting Sense suffers penalties to his DCV and OCV (see page 349).

The GM may wish to allow characters who are prepared for or expecting a Flash to take defensive actions (covering their eyes with their hands, or something similar) to reduce or eliminate the effects of the Flash. (Characters generally can't Abort to do this, since by definition that means they're not "prepared.") Obviously, whether such

actions succeed depends on the special effect of the Flash — a character who covers his ears won't be protected from a Sight Group Flash!

**Multiple Flashes**

If a character's affected by a Flash, generally he can't suffer any further effect from other Flashes of the same Sense Group. Once he's Flashed by the first Flash, he cannot perceive further Flash effects with the Flashed ("blinded") Sense until the first Flash wears off. The GM may waive this rule in light of special effects or other considerations, if appropriate.

**POWERS**

Adjustment Powers: Adjustment Powers can reduce or remove the effects of a Flash. See pages 187 and 354.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Autofire: Autofire Flashes cost an additional +1 Advantage (see *Autofire,* page 252). Autofire Flash is only useful against multiple targets; if used on a single target, the rules for multiple Flashes apply.

BOECV: A BOECV Flash does not require the *Does BODY* Advantage.

Continuous: Buying this Advantage for a Flash does not prevent a Flashed character from recovering his Senses, since the Flashed character's Sense is disabled and can't perceive the ongoing effect. Therefore the Flashed character recovers as normal, but as soon as he can perceive again is Flashed once more if his attacker has maintained the Flash effect.

Explosion: A Flash with this Advantage loses 1d6 of effect per hex out from the center of the Explosion.

Mental Defense: Mental Defense offers no protection against Flashes of the Mental Sense Group (unless the character takes a -½ Limitation on his Flash indicating that Mental Defense functions as, and if appropriate adds to, Mental Group Flash Defense).

**LIMITATIONS**

Does Not Work Against Desolidified Characters (-¼): Ordinarily, Flashes work against Desolidified characters — if the intangible character can perceive the solid world, he can be Flashed. However, some Flashes (such as pepper spray or poking someone in the eyes) have physical special effects. These Flashes do not work against Desolidified characters, since they require the attacker to physically touch his target, so they take this Limitation.

**DISADVANTAGES**

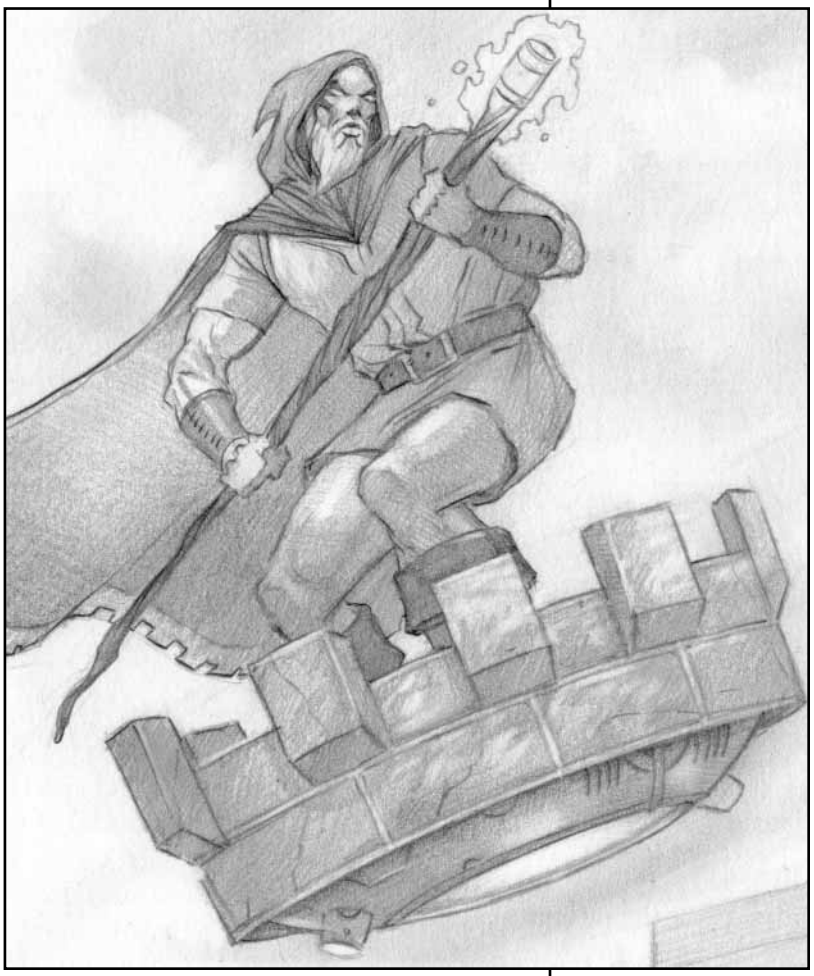
Vulnerability: If a character is Vulnerable to Flashes, multiply the number of BODY rolled by the Vulnerability multiplier before applying it to the character's Flash Defense (if any) to determine how long he's Flashed.

## FLASH DEFENSE

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Special Power/Defense Power |
| Duration: | Persistent |
| Target: | Self Only |
| Range: | Self |
| Costs END: | No |
| Cost: | 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Flash Defense to protect a single Sense Group |

A character with Flash Defense suffers less effect from Flashes. Some examples of Flash Defense include sunglasses (or similar devices), earplugs, or nictitating membranes that protect the eyes from bright light. One point of Flash Defense that protects a particular Sense Group against Flash costs 1 Character Point. A character can buy more than one type of Flash Defense to protect more than one Sense Group. Flash Defense does not cost END to use.

To use Flash Defense, the character subtracts one Segment from the number of Segments he would be Flashed for every 1 point of applicable Flash Defense. For example, a character with 5 points of Sight Group Flash Defense who's attacked with a Flash that has 6 Segments of effect is only Flashed for 1 Segment. Flash Defense is not Resistant, but characters can purchase Damage Resistance for it.



### POWER EXAMPLES: FLASH DEFENSE

Sunglasses: Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points) (5 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 2 points.

Earplugs: Hearing Group Flash Defense (3 points) (3 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 2 points.

Anti-Jamming Technology: Radio Group Flash Defense (10 points) (10 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 5 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: FLIGHT

Wings: Flight 12", Usable As Gliding (+¼) (30 Active Points); Restrainable (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

Jetpack: Flight 10" (20 Active Points); OIF (-½), Fuel Charge (1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Hour; -0). Total cost: 13 points.

Graviton Manipulation: Flight 15", x8 Noncombat Movement, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½). Total cost: 60 points.

Super-Speed: Flight 20", x16 Noncombat Movement (55 Active Points); Only In Contact With A Surface (-¼). Total cost: 44 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: FORCE FIELD

Personal Force Field: Force Field (10 PD/10 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½). Total cost: 30 points.

Spell Of Protection From Fire: Force Field (0 PD/20 ED); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Only Versus Fire (-½). Total cost: 8 points.

Omnishield Generator Belt: Force Field (5 PD/5 ED/5 Mental Defense/5 Power Defense) (20 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

## FLIGHT

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 2 Character Points for every 1" of Flight

A character with Flight can fly through the air, a vacuum, space, or most other three-dimensional environments (though not water or other liquids unless he buys an Advantage; see below). Some examples of Flight include wings, jetpacks, gravitic manipulation, boot rockets, and planes. Each 1" of Flight costs 2 Character Points.

With Flight, the character can move, hover in place, gain altitude, and so forth (he still must pay a minimum of 1 END per Phase of use, even if he just hovers). Flight costs END to use.

For general rules about movement in the *HERO System,* including Noncombat Movement and Turn Modes, see pages 122, 363.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Usable [As Second Mode Of Movement] (+¼): Characters with Flight often buy this Advantage as *Usable Underwater,* allowing them to fly through water (and possibly other liquids) instead of just gaseous three-dimensional environments. Another possibility is *Usable As Gliding,* which allows the character to conserve END in appropriate circumstances.

### LIMITATIONS

Only In Contact With A Surface (-¼): This Limitation represents a form of Flight that only works when the character touches a surface; it's appropriate for creating "speedster" characters in comic book superhero campaigns. The character can "fly" down roads, on water, up the sides of buildings, and so forth, but cannot use his Flight when not in contact with a surface of some sort. (He leaves tracks, if the surface is soft and durable enough to take them.) Other standard rules for Flight apply — the character has a Turn Mode when moving, subtracts one fewer die for Knockback purposes, and so forth.

## FORCE FIELD

Type: Standard Power/Defense Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Resistant Defense

A character with this Standard Power can create a field around himself that provides Resistant Defense. Some examples of Force Field include a starship's defensive energy shields, a superhero's personal force screen, or a spell of protection against fire. The character gets 1 point of Resistant Defense (PD, ED, Flash Defense [by Sense Group], Mental Defense, or Power Defense) for 1 Character Point. A character with a Mental Defense Force Field cannot add his EGO/5 to it, as he could with normal Mental Defense.

A character must choose the defense(s) his Force Field provides when he buys it, and cannot change them thereafter. The ratio of points in the various defenses stays the same, even when he uses his Force Field at lower power. For example, an 8 PD/12 ED FF used at half power provides 4 PD/6 ED. Force Field costs END to use.

A Force Field only protects the character with the Power. It doesn't protect anything or anyone the character carries (except his Foci) — the Force Field functions identically to protective clothing. Having a Force Field does not hinder any of the character's attacks.

Even though Force Field is a Constant Power, a character cannot apply it to himself, again and again, to increase the protection it provides. He can only be protected by one use of his Force Field at a time.

Typically a Force Field prevents a character from establishing skin-to-skin contact with other persons. The GM decides based on special effects, common sense, and dramatic sense.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Protects Carried Items: For +10 Character Points, a character's Force Field protects items he carries in his hands, including other persons. It does not apply to people the character Grabs, or who Grab him, unless the character chooses to apply it to them while carrying them. If a carried person attacks the character carrying him, the character does not get the benefit of his Force Field — the carried person is "inside" the protective barrier. The Force Field does not hinder or diminish the carried person's ability to make attacks against other persons.

### LIMITATIONS

Only Works Against Limited Types Of Attack: When purchased for Force Field, this Limitation only applies to that part of the Force Field that would protect against that type of damage; for example, *Only Versus Punches* can only be applied to the PD part of a Force Field, since an ED Force Field would not protect against punches anyway.

**FORCE WALL**

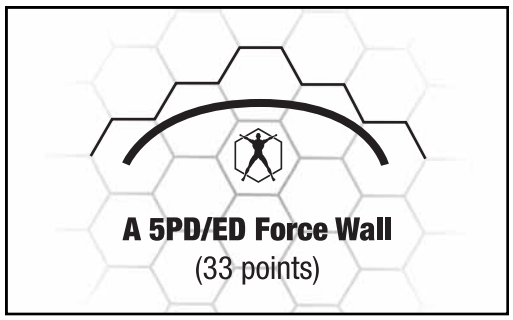
| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Standard Power/Defense Power |
| Duration: | Constant |
| Target: | Hex |
| Range: | 5" x Active Points |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | 5 Character Points for every 2 points of Resistant Defense; +2 Character Points for every +1" of length or height |

A character with Force Wall can create a defensive wall. Some examples of Force Walls include protective screens of energy, force domes, or walls of enchanted fire.

A Force Wall provides 2 points of Resistant Defense (PD, ED, Flash Defense [by Sense Group], Mental Defense, or Power Defense) for 5 Character Points. If a character purchases a Force Wall with Mental Defense, he does not get to add his EGO/5 to it, as he could with normal Mental Defense. A character must choose the defense(s) his Force Wall provides when he buys it, and cannot change them thereafter. The ratio of points in the various defenses stays the same, even when he uses his Force Wall at lower power. Force Wall costs END to use.

**The Size Of Force Walls**

At its base level, a Force Wall is 1" (three hex sides) long and 1" high. A character can increase the size of his Force Wall by +1" in length or height for +2 Character Points. At the GM's option, a character can alter the size of his Force Wall in combat as a Half Phase Action — for every +1" of height, the Force Wall is at -1" of length, or for every +1" of length, it is at -1" of height. The hexes protected by a Force Wall must connect, and must form a simple geometric pattern (like a line, square, or circle). If the ends of the Force Wall connect (in, say, a circle), the top and bottom are considered covered as well (though the character may "open" them if he wants to).




**USING FORCE WALL**

Characters can use Force Wall at Range. If a character wants to create a Force Wall at Range, he must make an Attack Roll against DCV 3 to place the Wall in the desired hex (the Range Modifier applies). Any characters behind the Force Wall when it's erected are protected by it (just as if they were standing behind a real wall).

Attacks treat Force Walls like real walls that have 0 BODY (see *Breaking Things,* pages 447-49; to create a wall which has both DEF and BODY, use *Entangle*). An attack (whether from the inside or the outside) must penetrate the Force Wall to continue to its target. If the BODY of the attack doesn't break the Force Wall, no STUN or BODY damage gets through. If the attack breaks the Force Wall, subtract the Wall's appropriate defense from the BODY and STUN damage of the attack and apply the remaining damage to the target normally (he may then use any other applicable defenses to reduce the damage further).

After a Force Wall is broken, it no longer provides any defense until the character activates it again (which requires a Zero Phase Action). The GM may rule, in the interest of fairness and game balance, that a character cannot re-create a Force Wall in the same Segment when it breaks, regardless of whether he has an Action available.

Example: *Arkelos is protected by a Force Wall (10 PD/10 ED). A fire elemental hurls a blast of flame at him that does 37 STUN, 9 BODY. Since the Force Wall provides 10 ED protection, the elemental's attack did not break through it, so Arkelos takes no damage whatsoever (not even the STUN). If the attack had done 37 STUN, 11 BODY, the Force Wall would have been penetrated and Arkelos would take 27 STUN, 1 BODY (minus other applicable defenses).*

A Force Wall acts like a real wall — attacks won't penetrate in *either* direction until the damage exceeds the Force Wall's appropriate defense. This means a character can't effectively shoot through his own Force Wall with attacks that do BODY damage (unless he wants to break the Wall, buys his attack with the Power Advantage *Indirect,* or uses Powers like Telekinesis that have inherently "Indirect" properties).

Force Walls are not inherently airtight. They do not prevent gases, mists, and the like from passing through them, nor do they cause an englobed character (see below) to suffocate. At the GM's discretion, a character can make a PD Force Wall airtight by Linking Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing) to it, and then it will block gases, vapors, and similar physical effects in most cases (the GM is, as always, the final arbiter of what a Froce Wall blocks, based on special effects, common sense, and dramatic sense).

Force Walls are usually immobile: once set up they stay in place. A character can make himself the center of his Force Wall; the Force Wall then moves with him. However, moving Force Walls have no STR — characters can't use them to push people aside or perform Move Throughs.

**POWER EXAMPLES: FORCE WALL**

Wall Of Fire Spell: Force Wall (0 PD/10 ED), Transparent (physical; +½), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) (44 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½) (total cost: 15 points) **plus** RKA 1d6, Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) (41 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), No Knockback (-¼), Linked (-½) (total cost: 11 points). Total cost: 26 points.

Questionite Shield: Force Wall (10 PD/10 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (75 Active Points); OAF (-1), No Range (-½), Self Only (-½). Total cost: 25 points.

Protective Energy Screen: Force Wall (6 PD/6 ED/6 Flash Defense/6 Mental Defense/6 Power Defense) (75 Active Points); OAF Bulky (Screen Generator; -1½). Total cost: 30 points.

Telekinetic Shield: Force Wall (8 PD/8 ED; 3" long and 2" tall). Total cost: 46 points.

**Multiple Force Walls**

Although Force Wall is a Constant Power, a character cannot use it multiple times to provide himself with multiple protection — with concentric circles (assuming the Force Wall is long enough) or rows of Force Walls, for example — unless the GM specifically permits him to. The GM should monitor any use of "stacked" Force Walls to ensure that they don't unbalance the game by allowing a character to provide himself with high levels of defense. If the power is constructed to prevent significant abuse (*e.g.,* each Force Wall costs a lot of END, or requires a lot of Extra Time to create), it presents less of a potential problem than if the character has a 0 END Force Wall he can create as a regular Action.

If the GM allows characters to create multiple Force Walls, to do so a character must take the appropriate Action and pay the END cost for each one created. Even if activating the Force Wall is a Zero Phase Action, the character can only create one Wall per Phase. If the character wants to create a Force Wall beyond one that's already established, the power must have the *Indirect* Advantage (to get past the initial Wall). Similarly, to "wrap" one Force Wall around another, the second Wall has to have enough inches of length to reach the entire distance (in the case of simply establishing one straight wall after another to, for example, block a corridor, this won't matter).

**Mental Defense And Power Defense**

Some Force Walls provide Mental Defense and/or Power Defense. To determine whether an attack with a Mental Power or a Power that works against Power Defense breaks through such a Force Wall, the attacking character counts the Normal Damage BODY on the dice rolled, even if the attack ordinarily does no BODY. Then apply that "BODY damage" to the Force Wall as normal to determine if the attack penetrates the Wall.

Example: *Doctor Destroyer has a Psiscreen Generator, defined as a Force Wall (8 Mental Defense). Mentalla attacks him with her Ego Attack 8d6 while he's protected by the Psiscreen. She rolls 6, 6, 5, 4, 3, 3, 2, 1, for a total of 30 STUN. Counting the "BODY," she comes up with 9, which is greater than 8. Her Ego Attack breaks through the Psiscreen and affects Destroyer, who'll have to "turn on" the Psiscreen again before it will offer him further protection. Had Mentalla only rolled 7 BODY, the Psiscreen would have blocked the entire Ego Attack.*

**Damage Transparency**

Usually a Force Wall is destroyed if it takes more BODY damage than it has in the appropriate defense. For example, a 20 PD/0 ED Force Wall is destroyed if it takes 1 BODY of Energy damage, unless it has the *Transparent* Advantage (see below). Force Walls that only provide "regular" defenses (PD and/or ED) are automatically Transparent to damage from attacks which apply to Mental Defense, Flash Defense, or Power Defense.

Force Walls that provide only Mental Defense, Flash Defense, and/or Power Defense are automatically Transparent to Physical and Energy damage. The "exotic" Force Walls are only destroyed if they take more "BODY" damage than they have defense from any attack that targets Mental Defense, Flash Defense, or Power Defense (the "BODY" done by the Power should be counted as Normal Damage BODY, even if the Power normally does not do BODY damage). They can purchase the *Transparent* Advantage to attacks against one (or more) of those defenses.

Force Walls that provide both a "regular" and an "exotic" defense can be destroyed by any type of attack (but can, of course, be bought *Transparent*).

Example: *Starburst has a Force Wall (10 PD/10 ED/10 Power Defense). Since his Force Wall provides an "exotic" defense (Power Defense), it can be broken by any "exotic" attack — not just attacks that work against Power Defense, but attacks that work against Mental Defense or Flash Defense. For example, a Mind Control 6d6 or Sight Group Flash 3d6 that does even "1 BODY" of damage breaks it.*

**Englobing Characters**

A character can englobe a target with a Force Wall that provides PD as a defense and is at least 2" long or tall. (The GM might allow a smaller Force Wall to englobe targets smaller than normal human size.) The character must make an Attack Roll against DCV 3 to hit the target.

A target englobed by a Force Wall may break through by exceeding the appropriate defense of the Force Wall. The Force Wall then goes down; restoring it requires the creator to make another attack. Depending upon what kind of defenses the Force Wall provides, an englobed character might be able to use his attacks on characters outside the Wall without breaking out.

Example: *Starburst uses his PD/ED Force Wall to englobe Mentalla. Mentalla can try to break out if she wants to. Since the Wall doesn't provide Mental Defense, Flash Defense, or Power Defense, she could use any power that works against those defenses against targets outside the Wall without any penalty.*

A Force Wall globe has DCV 3. The character trapped in the globe retains his full normal DCV if he's attacked directly (unless the GM rules otherwise), but he can't Dive For Cover or use other Maneuvers that require him to move 1" or more (unless the globe is large enough to permit that).

**Horizontal Force Walls**

At the GM's option, a character can create a Force Wall with horizontal instead of vertical orientation. This allows it to protect the PC against falling objects, deflect attacks from above, or shield the character from the rain. If the Force Wall provides PD, it could hold objects up (but characters should not be allowed to use this as a cheap substitute for other, more appropriate, powers such as Telekinesis, or Flight Usable By Others).





A horizontal Force Wall has a breaking point: if something heavy is placed on it, determine the STR needed to pick that object or person up, then use that STR to apply damage to the Force Wall every Segment. If the damage breaks through the Force Wall, the Force Wall collapses and everything on it falls.

**POWERS**

Tunneling: Characters cannot use Tunneling to Tunnel through Force Walls.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Opaque: Force Walls normally have no effect on Senses — although visible, they're completely transparent. A character can make his Force Wall opaque to one Sense for +5 Character Points, or opaque to one Sense Group for +10 Character Points.

Autofire: Characters normally should not purchase Autofire for Force Wall. If the GM allows this, Autofire Force Wall costs an additional +1 Advantage (see *Autofire,* page 252). Characters must use Autofire Force Walls on different targets or areas; they cannot create them in a row or concentrically to provide extra protection to a single target or area (unless the GM permits this; see above).

Backlash (+½): Characters can purchase this Advantage for Force Walls used to englobe other characters. It represents a Force Wall that reflects back any attacks made by the englobed character in an effort to break free. The damage done by the Backlash is the same as whatever was used to attack the effect with — Normal Damage for an Energy Blast, Killing Damage for an HKA, and so on. If an attack destroys the Force Wall, that attack isn't reflected. Attacks made by other characters to free the trapped character do not activate Backlash.

Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation (+¼): Ordinarily, a character can escape from an englobing Force Wall by Teleporting out of it. Characters cannot Teleport out of an englobing Force Wall with this Advantage — unless the Teleportation is Armor Piercing, which cancels out this Advantage. (Characters may buy multiple levels of Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation to prevent this if desired, or multiple levels of Armor Piercing to counteract that.)

Damage Shield: A character can use Damage Shield to create a Force Wall that does damage to anyone who touches it. He must buy an Attack Power with the *Damage Shield* Advantage, then Link it to the Force Wall (he can still use the Force Wall at Range, even though Damage Shields are normally No Range). Anyone who touches the Force Wall takes the appropriate damage. The Damage Shield does not damage a character when he breaks the Wall, even if the attack that breaks the Wall requires the character to touch it. To function in this manner, the Damage Shield must be Linked to the Force Wall; a character cannot buy a normal Damage Shield separate from his Force Wall and then apply it to the Force Wall whenever he desires.

Penetrating: If a Penetrating Killing Attack hits a non-Hardened Force Wall, it collapses the Force Wall, even if the BODY done by the Killing Attack would not otherwise break the Force Wall. If a Penetrating Normal Damage attack hits a non-Hardened Force Wall, but the BODY done by the attack isn't enough to collapse the Force Wall, the character protected by the Force Wall does not take any STUN damage.

### POWER EXAMPLES: GLIDING

Parachute: Gliding 6" (6 Active Points); OAF (-1), Limited Movement (character cannot gain altitude, and must move at least 12" downward for every 1" forward; -½), 1 Recoverable Continuing Charge (lasts until character hits the ground or 'chute is fouled; -¾). Total cost: 2 points.

Pass Without Trace: Gliding 6" (6 Active Points); Ground Gliding (-¼), No Noncombat Movement (-¼). Total cost: 4 points.

Glider Cape: Gliding 8" (8 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 4 points.

Personal Immunity: Buying Personal Immunity for his Force Wall does not allow a character to walk through and/or attack through his own Force Wall without hindrance. It simply prevents him from being englobed by it.

Transparent (+¼, +½): A character can make his Force Wall transparent to one category of attack (Physical, Energy, Mental, Flash, Power Defense) by buying the entire Force Wall with a Power Advantage (+½ for Physical or Energy; +¼ for other categories of attack). For example, to make a Force Wall Transparent to both Physical and Energy attacks is a +1 Advantage; making a Force Wall Transparent to all exotic attacks is a +¾ Advantage. The Force Wall must offer no protection (0 defense) against the type of attack to which it is Transparent. For example, a Force Wall which is *Transparent* to Energy attacks might be bought as 20 PD/0 ED; it could not provide any ED protection at all.

Characters can walk through a Force Wall that's Transparent to PD, or which doesn't provide PD protection, unless the GM sees fit to rule otherwise based on common sense, dramatic sense, or considerations of game balance.

#### LIMITATIONS

Always On: Making a Force Wall Always On does not cause it to instantly re-create itself after it's broken by an attack. The character must still take a Zero Phase Action to activate the Force Wall again.

Cannot Englobe (-¼): A Force Wall with this Limitation cannot be used to englobe targets. (It can still connect ends to protect an area from all angles, however.)

Feedback (-1): When a Force Wall with this Limitation takes damage, its creator takes the same amount, with the Force Wall's defenses applied as a Force Field. This occurs even if he uses the Force Wall to protect another character, or to englobe a target. For example, if an 18 PD Force Wall that had Feedback took 12 BODY and 48 STUN damage, the character would suffer 0 BODY and 30 STUN (to which he could apply his other defenses).

Nonresistant (-½): A Force Wall with this Limitation provides only Normal Defenses, not Resistant.

Only Works Against Limited Types Of Attack: As *Force Field,* above.

Restricted Shape (-¼): This Limitation indicates that the character must always create his Force Wall in the same shape (straight line, ring, square, or the like). He must define this shape when he buys the Power, and cannot change it thereafter.

Self Only (-½): A Force Wall bought with this Limitation only protects the character who creates it. Such Force Walls usually also take the Limitation *No Range* (-½). The Force Wall functions as normal, meaning the character has to buy Indirect for his STR if he wants to be able to touch or punch people through it without breaking it.

## GLIDING

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 Character Point for every 1" Gliding

A character with Gliding can glide through the air (or, at the GM's discretion, other three-dimensional gaseous environments). Some examples of Gliding include hanggliders, a superhero's glider-cape, or a spell that makes a character lighter than air. Every 1" of Gliding costs 1 Character Point. Gliding does not cost END to use.

Gliding has some restrictions. From the ground, a character starts with a velocity and altitude equal to his upward leap in inches. Gaining altitude is under the GM's control; doing it slowly by using thermal updrafts is usually easy. Gliding can be more useful if the character has some Leaping or other way to obtain some initial altitude. While in the air, a character must drop 1" per Phase to maintain his forward Gliding velocity. Gliding does not use normal acceleration rules; instead, acceleration is +1" velocity per 1" of altitude lost.

A Gliding character has some control over his movement, but not the total control provided by Flight. In appropriate situations (like when a character tries to parachute onto a small roof); the GM may require a character to make a DEX Roll or appropriate Skill Roll to make sure he Glides exactly where he wants to.

Characters can also use Gliding to move along the ground in some circumstances; see *Ground Gliding,* below.

For general rules about movement in the *HERO System,* including Noncombat Movement and Turn Modes, see pages 122, 363.

#### LIMITATIONS

Ground Gliding (-¼): This Limitation represents a form of Gliding that only works along the ground; the character cannot Glide through the air (or across the surface of water or other substances less firm than ground). The character does not have to drop 1" per Phase to maintain his forward velocity, and does not leave traces or tracks as he moves across the ground. A character's inches of Ground Gliding cannot exceed his inches of Running. Other standard rules for Gliding apply — the character has a Turn Mode when moving, subtracts one fewer die for Knockback purposes, and so forth. Ground Gliding typically represents such limited forms of movement as stealthy "pass without trace" walking (the character is walking on the ground, but so lightly that he leaves no tracks and does not set off seismic alarms).

**GROWTH**

Type: Size Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every +5 STR, +1 BODY, +1 STUN, -1" KB, x2 mass; 15 Character Points for every -2 DCV, +2 for PER Rolls made to perceive character, x2 height and width, and x2 reach (see Growth Table)

A character with this Size Power can increase his size. This increases his STR, BODY, STUN, mass, and height, and reduces his DCV and the Knockback he takes. Growth costs END as long as it is in use; if the character is Knocked Out or Stunned while Grown, his Growth immediately "turns off" unless it is *Persistent.* Growth is for characters who can *alter their size;* if the character is exceptionally large all the time, he can simulate that by buying various Powers with that special effect (see pages 126-27 or the Appendix, page 573).

## GROWTH TABLE

**Every 5 Points Of Growth Gives The Character:**
+5 STR (no additional Figured Characteristics)
+1 BODY (no additional Figured Characteristics)
+1 STUN
-1" Knockback (functions just like KB Resistance)
x2 mass

**Every 15 Points Of Growth Gives The Character:**
-2 DCV
+2 to all PER Rolls made by others to perceive the character
x2 height and width
x2 reach

### BENEFITS OF GROWTH

The Growth Table provides details on the benefits (and drawbacks) of Growth. However, the figures in the table are *guidelines,* not absolutes; the GM should feel free to alter them slightly based on special effects or to aid game balance.

**Reach**

Growth increases a character's reach. Normal characters (0 points in Growth) can only hit targets in their own hex or an adjacent hex. With enough Growth, a character can engage in HTH Combat with targets some distance away. Refer to the Growth Table for details.

Like the reach provided by Stretching, the reach provided by Growth has some inherently "Indirect" effects in appropriate circumstances. For example, a sufficiently tall Grown character could stand right in front of someone, then reach down and tap him on the back.

Reach provided by Growth does not reduce or otherwise affect the Range Modifier the character suffers, which is still calculated from where the character stands. However, the GM could, in his discretion, count the Range Modifier from the character's hand, if he feels that would be appropriate.

At no level does Growth automatically entitle characters to make Area Of Effect attacks with their large hands or feet. A character who wants that ability has to buy a naked *Area Of Effect* Advantage for his STR, Combat Skill Levels, or some other means of simulating larger-than-normal hands.

**Growth Momentum**

If the GM permits, characters with Growth can use growth momentum (page 219) just like Shrinking characters can... though they're going to have a lot harder time finding targets larger than themselves to use it on. The target has to be larger than or directly above the character. That includes beings taller than he is, overhangs on buildings (but not building walls themselves), ceilings, and possibly even characters using Flight who are directly above the character.

Growth-based growth momentum does +1d6 per -1 DCV the Grown character suffers. The character also gets to apply the extra STR he gains from Growing when determining the damage. If the character also has Shrinking and grows from a tiny size to human size, then uses Growth to become even taller, he can use the growth momentum from both Powers.

**Growth And Damage**

If a character takes damage while Grown and then returns to normal size, the damage taken first comes out of the BODY and STUN he gains from Growth. Any additional damage still applies to the character in his normal size. If the character Grows again before the damage would heal normally (see *Recovery,* page 424), the wounds reappear.

Example: *Tower has 60 points of Growth (+12 BODY, which, added to his normal BODY of 10, gives him a total of 22 BODY). While Grown, Tower is hit by a missile and takes 3 BODY after defenses are applied. He then returns to normal size and normal 10 BODY. Since the BODY he gains from Growth (12) is greater than the wound he suffered, he has no*

**POWER EXAMPLES: GROWTH**

Gargantuan Form: Growth (+60 STR, +12 BODY, +12 STUN, -12" KB, 400,000 kg, -8 DCV, +8 PER Rolls to perceive character, 32 m tall, 16 m wide). Total cost: 60 points.



## GROWTH TABLE

| Points Of Growth | Height (hexes) | Width (hexes) | Mass (KG) | BODY & STUN | DCV | PER Rolls Against | Additional Reach | STR | KB |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 2m (1") | up to 1m (½") | up to 100 | +0 | -0 | +0 | +0 | +0 | -0 |
| 15 | 4m (2") | 2m (1") | 800 | +3 | -2 | +2 | +1" | +15 | -3 |
| 30 | 8m (4") | 4m (2") | 6,400 | +6 | -4 | +4 | +2" | +30 | -6 |
| 45 | 16m (8") | 8m (4") | 50,000 | +9 | -6 | +6 | +4" | +45 | -9 |
| 60 | 32m (16") | 16m (8") | 400,000 | +12 | -8 | +8 | +8" | +60 | -12 |
| 75 | 64m (32") | 32m (16") | 3,200,000 | +15 | -10 | +10 | +16" | +75 | -15 |
| ...and so on | | | | | | | | | |

### OTHER GROWTH TRAITS

In addition to the effects described above, there are other effects common to humaniform characters who are taller than normal. These are bought as other Powers which are *Linked* (-½) to Growth. They include:

— Longer Stride: Running; the character's Running should roughly double for every 15 points of Growth he has. Similarly, the character may be able to leap further, climb more quickly, and so forth.

— Larger Hands: Combat Skill Levels with HTH Combat (or, at 60 Character Points' worth of Growth and above, Area Of Effect (One Hex) for the character's STR).

— Impressiveness: Increased PRE; the character should have about +5 PRE for every 15 points of Growth he has.

— Toughness: Many Grown characters are very tough. As a general rule of thumb, this sort of character should add +5 PD and ED for every 15 points of Growth he has.

*wound at normal height. If he were to Grow again before that wound would have healed, he would be down 3 BODY. If the missile had done 15 BODY (ouch!), Tower would be down 3 BODY (15-12) at his normal height.*

For greater accuracy (and complexity), figure out what percentage of a character's total BODY he lost while Grown, and then subtract that percentage from his BODY at normal size. In the example given above, Tower would have lost 1 BODY at normal size.

### DRAWBACKS TO GROWTH

Growth has drawbacks as well as advantages. For example, even with only 15 points of Growth, a character can't fit into normal buildings unless he crouches or destroys part of them. His size and extra mass may make it difficult for him to ride in cars. Like any other large target, a Grown character is easier to hit in combat and to see.

### POWERS

Stretching: If a character has Stretching in addition to Growth, the inches of Stretching add to Growth's reach, but Stretching noncombat doublings don't include Growth reach. For example, if a character has 60 points of Growth (8" reach) and 10" Stretching, he could reach 18" (8" + 10"), and if using Noncombat Stretching could reach 28".

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

If a character applies Advantages to his STR and has Growth, he must calculate the cost of the Advantages based on his total STR, including Growth bonuses. For example, if he has STR 30 and 30 points of Growth (+30 STR), calculate the cost of Advantages as if he had a 60 STR.

Reduced Endurance: If a character buys Growth with Reduced Endurance, he must still pay normal END costs for using the extra STR granted by Growth, unless he buys Reduced END separately for his STR.

### HAND-TO-HAND ATTACK

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Standard Power/Attack Power |
| Duration: | Instant |
| Target: | Target's DCV |
| Range: | No Range |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | +1d6 Hand-To-Hand Combat damage for every 5 Active Points with a mandatory -½ Limitation |

A character with Hand-To-Hand Attack (HA) does more than his normal amount of damage (1d6 for every 5 STR) in HTH Combat. Each die of HA adds to the character's regular damage from STR. Some examples of HA include clubs, especially powerful (or mystically enhanced) punches, or energized gauntlets that improve a character's punch. 1d6 of HA costs 5 Active Points, but you apply mandatory Limitations to this cost (see below).

### BUYING HAND-TO-HAND ATTACK

To buy an HA, a character spends 5 Active Points per 1d6, and applies any Advantages to derive an Active Point total. He then applies a mandatory -½ Limitation, *Hand-To-Hand Attack* (plus any other Limitations taken for the Power) to derive a Real Cost. This Limitation signifies that the HA damage only works if it adds to a character's damage dice based on STR (in essence, HA is just a Limited form of STR). It cannot function on its own, nor does it add to a character's STR in any other way or provide any Figured Characteristics. A character must use a minimum of ½d6 of his STR damage to use an HA.

### USING HAND-TO-HAND ATTACK

Hand-To-Hand Attack does not increase the damage from HKAs, NNDs, or the like — only the Normal Damage done by the character's STR. If a character cannot or will not use at least ½d6 of his STR damage, he can't use any of his HA dice. For example, if a character were tied up and couldn't use his STR to attack, he also couldn't use his HA. (If a character wants the ability to make a STR-



like attack without using his STR, he should buy an Energy Blast with the *No Range* Limitation.) A character cannot use his HA dice of damage by themselves; they have to add to at least ½d6 of damage done by STR.

Hand-To-Hand Attack damage adds to damage from Martial Maneuvers that do Normal Damage. For example, a character with an HA who performs a Martial Strike could add his HA damage to the attack. However, Extra DCs bought for Martial Arts do not add to a character's HA when the HA's used on its own.

Hand-To-Hand Attack damage counts as base damage done by STR for purposes of the "doubling damage" rule (page 405). For example, a character with STR 20 and HA +2d6 does "base damage" of 6d6, which he can double to 12d6 through various means. However, a character in a Heroic campaign with a weapon defined as an HA still cannot more than double the weapon's damage by applying STR.

Hand-To-Hand Attack costs END to use. An HA does not count as "STR" for purposes of the rule that a character only has to spend END once per Phase for all his uses of STR (page 34) — if a character uses an HA, he pays END for it, regardless of however else he uses STR that Phase.

With the GM's permission, a character can define an HA as an energy-based attack against which ED, rather than PD, applies. When a character uses such an HA, his regular HTH damage from STR adds to the energy-based attack in the normal manner, and it's all considered energy damage.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

See page 408 for rules about adding STR to Advantaged HAs.

Area Of Effect: If a character purchases Area Of Effect for an HA, calculate the size of the Area based on the HA's Active Points plus the value of the STR the character can use with the Area Of Effect HA. So, for example, a character with HA +6d6 (30 Active Points), Area Of Effect, and 30 STR creates a 6" Radius effect ((30 + 30)/10).

Damage Shield: If a character has an HA Damage Shield, he may still apply the *Hand-To-Hand Attack* Limitation to it.

Ranged: A character may not apply the Advantage *Ranged* to an HA (except possibly when building throwable HTH Combat weapons in Heroic campaigns). To build such an attack, use Energy Blast with the *Range Based On Strength* Limitation (and other Limitations, as appropriate), or buy the weapon as a normal HTH Combat weapon and use the Throwing rules to inflict damage with it as a thrown object.

### LIMITATIONS

Increased Endurance Cost, Reduced Endurance: If a character applies the *Increased Endurance Cost* Limitation to his HA, the END multiplier affects only it, not the END he spends from STR when using his HA. A character who has Reduced Endurance (0 END) on his Hand-To-Hand Attack still has pay END for the STR he uses with it (unless he's also bought his STR to cost 0 END).

## HEALING

Type: Adjustment Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: No Range
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 10 Character Points for 1d6 of Healing

A character with Healing can restore lost or reduced Characteristics and Powers to their starting values. Once restored, the Healed Characteristic or Power does not fade. Some examples of Healing include a wizard's spell that heals damage from sword-blows, a werewolf's ability to regenerate damage, or the power to purge the effects of disease from others. Each 1d6 of Healing costs 10 Character Points.

A character must define what Characteristic(s) or Power(s) his Healing affects when he buys the Power, and cannot change it thereafter. Healing can apply to more than one Characteristic or Power at once if it has the *Variable Effect* Advantage (page 111). Healing can Heal back BODY or other Characteristics lost in any manner, such as injuries, diseases, poisons, Drains, Transfers, and Susceptibilities. Healing costs END to use.

### USING HEALING

A character can only use Healing to restore Characteristics or Powers that have been lost or reduced by any cause. However, it restores those Characteristics and Powers to up to their starting values *permanently.* "Starting value" means the value the Characteristic or Power has when the character is at full health and power. For example, a character who has bought 20 BODY has a starting value of 20 for his BODY Characteristic, even if he begins a particular game session at, say, 8 BODY due to injuries previously suffered. Healing cannot boost Characteristics or Powers above their starting values (use Aid to do that), nor can it grant a character Characteristics or Powers he does not already have (that requires Transform).

To use Healing, roll the dice and count the total. The total represents the amount of Character Points added by Healing and applies directly to the Active Points of the Characteristic or Power being Healed. The points gained from Healing do not fade, though they can of course be lost again due to injury or other factors.

Using Healing constitutes an Attack Action and requires an Attack Roll (the Regeneration option listed below requires neither of these things). The GM may dispense with the Attack Roll in the case of a willing subject if he prefers. Power Defense does not interfere with Healing, unless the recipient of the Healing wants it to.

Healing can reverse the effects of Bleeding, Impairing, and Disabling (see pages 416-18). Any successful use of a Healing BODY stops Bleeding automatically, but wounds not fully Healed can still reopen. Using Healing BODY with the *Can Heal Limbs* Adder (see below) on an Impaired or Disabled area eliminates the effects of the Impairment/Disability when the wound is fully Healed; without that Adder, Healing BODY can repair the damage, but not the Impairing/Disabling effect.

### POWER EXAMPLES: HAND-TO-HAND ATTACK

Club: HA +4d6 (20 Active Points); OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½). Total cost: 8 points.

Energy Gauntlets: HA +6d6 (affects ED, not PD) (30 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½), OIF (-½), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 13 points.

Martial Arts Mastery: HA +6d6, Variable Advantage (+1 Advantages; +2) (90 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½). Total cost: 60 points.

The Steel Fist: HA +6d6 (30 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½), Extra Time (takes a Full Phase to turn the Power on when it is first activated; -¼), Increased END Cost (x2 END; -½). Total cost: 13 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: HEALING

Spell Of Healing: Simplified Healing 6d6, Can Heal Limbs (65 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 22 points

Vampiric Regeneration: Healing 3d6 (Regeneration; 3 BODY per Day), Resurrection (others can stop resurrection by burning the body, driving a stake through the vampire's heart, or cutting off its head and filling its mouth with holy wafers), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (100 Active Points); Self Only (-½), Extra Time + Increased Time Increment (3 BODY/Day; -2¾), Resurrection Only (-½). Total cost: 21 points.

Lycanthropic Regeneration: Healing 3d6 (Regeneration; 3 BODY per Turn), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (60 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼), Self Only (-½), Does Not Heal Damage Caused By Silver Weapons (-½). Total cost: 18 points.

Mending-Spell: Healing BODY 2d6 (20 Active Points); Only To Mend Broken Objects (-½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 8 points.

**Repeated Healing**

The *HERO System* rules do not allow free unlimited Healing — the automatic stacking of one Healing effect on another, again and again and again — because it would make Healing too potent, too unbalancing, and too damaging to the "feel" of the game.

As a default, a character with Healing can use his Healing on a character he has already Healed one Day (24 hours) after he last applied the Healing. (How the GM lets characters track wounds may affect this; see below.) When he does so, the maximum effect rules (see below) do not apply. The Healing takes effect as if he had not previously applied Healing — the entire effect rolled on the dice, regardless of any previous rolls, Heals the character. Characters can buy an Advantage, *Decreased Re-use Duration,* to reduce the span of time between uses of Healing (see below).

The GM may vary the default duration for re-use of Healing to suit the nature and feel of his campaign.

**Tracking Injuries**

For Healing purposes, typically a character's loss of BODY, STUN, or any other Characteristic or Power is treated as a single unit, regardless of how many different injuries he's suffered or how many different ways he suffered them. For example, if a character has lost 2 BODY to one wound, 3 BODY to a second wound, and 1 BODY to a fall, he's lost 6 BODY. Healing is applied to that 6 BODY as if it were one single loss of BODY, even though the loss came from three sources.

However, at the GM's option, characters can keep track of each individual injury or wound they receive. Healing can then be applied to each injury separately (which makes Healing much more powerful and effective). Standard rules for the maximum effect of Healing, and for applying multiple types of Healing, apply per individual wound.

Example: *In battle against a band of ogres, Hemdring suffers three wounds: one for 2 BODY and 10 STUN, one for 3 BODY and no STUN, and a whopper for 6 BODY and 18 STUN. Using the "per wound" method, his comrade, Brother Mikael the priest, can apply his Spell Of Wound-Curing (Simplified Healing 2d6) to each wound. Thus, the maximum he can apply to each wound is 4 BODY and 12 STUN.*

*For the first wound, Brother Mikael rolls 2 BODY, 7 STUN. That Heals all the BODY and leaves 3 STUN damage. For the second, he gets 3 BODY, 8 STUN, which Heals that wound entirely. For the last, he gets 2 BODY and 9 STUN, leaving 4 BODY and 9 STUN un-Healed. He cannot apply his Healing-spell to any of these wounds again (unless the GM allows him to roll again to achieve a higher effect), but if Hemdring suffers a fourth wound later in the day, Mikael can apply his Spell to that wound.*

The same rule affects separate Healing powers — after one day, another character with a Healing power (or the same character with a different Healing power) can apply his Healing without having to exceed the total rolled on the dice of the first Healing.

**Healing And Being Stunned**

The application of STUN via Healing does not counteract the effect of being Stunned — the character must still take a Phase to recover from being Stunned, even if he's gotten all his STUN back from Healing. However, at the GM's option, if (a) the STUN lost to the attack is completely restored by Healing, *and* (b) one additional die of Healing STUN (or Simplified Healing) is applied to "eliminate being Stunned," Healing can remove the need to recover from being Stunned.

### MAXIMUM EFFECT

The maximum number of Character Points that Healing can add to a specific Power or Characteristic equals the highest number the character could roll on his Healing dice. The character cannot increase this maximum using the general rules for Adjustment Power (page 106) or other means. Furthermore, after Healing is first applied to a character, subsequent uses of Healing must exceed the Healing effect of the first use before they can provide any more benefit, and can only provide further Healing to the extent their effects exceed the first effect.

Even if two different characters use separate Healing powers on the same character, the maximum number of points that can be Healed equals the largest maximum that can be rolled on either Power. So, one character with a Healing 2d6 can add 12 points to a target; two characters, each with Healing 1d6, can only add 6 points to a target. Furthermore, after the first character applies his Healing power, the second character has to exceed the Healing effect of the first character before he can provide any more benefit, and can only provide further Healing to the extent his effect exceeds the first effect.

Example: *The Medic has Healing BODY 4d6. Thus, he can Heal a maximum of 24 Character Points' worth of BODY damage. If he rolls his dice and gets 18, he Heals 9 BODY. If he wants to apply this Healing power again to the same character, he must roll more than 18 to have any effect. For example, if he rolls a 20, he Heals an additional 1 BODY.*

Since Healing has a defined maximum, situations may arise where characters use Healing again and again, trying for the maximum result on the dice. To speed game play and prevent this sort of dramatically inappropriate situation from arising, the GM may rule that if the character takes a defined amount of Extra Time (typically 1 Minute or 5 Minutes beyond the time normally required to use the Healing), he automatically gets the maximum result on his Healing dice. Alternately, the GM may allow this if the character makes his Required Skill Roll (if he has one) at a -3 penalty, or if he subjects himself to some other appropriate penalty.

## OPTIONS FOR HEALING

Gamemasters may use these options for Healing:

**Simplified Healing**

This option is usually used for Powers designed to heal the STUN and BODY damage from typical attacks. The total on the Healing dice Heals STUN damage, and the Normal Damage BODY on the Healing dice Heals BODY damage.

Example: *Arkelos has a Spell of Healing defined as a Healing BODY 6d6. His friend, the warrior Hemdring, takes 27 STUN, 4 BODY during a prolonged battle. Arkelos uses his spell and rolls 20 on the dice. That Heals 20 Character Points' worth of BODY, or 10 BODY, more than enough to Heal Hemdring's 4 BODY worth of wounds. Because the Spell of Healing is only a Healing BODY power, it does not Heal Hemdring's lost STUN.*

*Using the Simplified Healing option, Arkelos rolls his dice. The total is 20, with 6 BODY when counted like Normal Damage BODY. Therefore Arkelos Heals 20 STUN and 6 BODY worth of Hemdring's wounds.*

When using the Simplified Healing option, rules regarding the maximum effect of Healing and the effects of subsequent applications of Healing still apply. Gamemasters often combine the Simplified Healing option with the optional rules for tracking individual injuries.

**Regeneration**

Regeneration is an optional form of Healing BODY with the Standard Effect Rule which Heals 1 point of BODY damage per die. Regeneration is bought with the *Reduced Endurance (0 END)* and *Persistent* Advantages, and must take the Limitations *Extra Time* (1 Turn; -1¼) and *Self Only* (-½) (it can take other Limitations as appropriate, such as only working [or not working] against a certain type of BODY damage). The Power works automatically during every Post-Segment 12 Recovery, allowing the character to recover 1 BODY per die of Healing per Turn.

The default time period for Regeneration is once per Turn, as described above. Characters may Regenerate more slowly if they wish. Every step down the Time Chart is an additional -¼ Limitation, *Increased Time Increment,* that adds to the value of the base *Extra Time* Limitation. Characters cannot Regenerate more quickly than once per Turn. A character cannot buy Regeneration without the need for Extra Time, or with an Extra Time interval less than 1 Turn.

A character with Regeneration can accumulate the Regeneration effect again and again. The normal rules for the maximum effect of Healing do not apply. For example, if a character with Regeneration (Healing 1 BODY per Turn) suffered a 6 BODY wound, he could, over the course of six Turns, Regenerate all 6 BODY he lost, at the rate of 1 BODY per Turn. He's not restricted to Healing just 1 BODY.

Regeneration only applies to BODY. Characters cannot buy Regeneration to Heal other Characteristics or Powers, unless the GM so permits.

For a character to Regenerate, the majority of his body has to be reasonably intact; characters cannot Regenerate from single drops of blood or just a limb or two. The GM determines whether Regeneration works in a particular situation.

**Healing Inanimate Beings And Nonliving Objects**

Generally, the GM should limit Healing to living creatures and PCs (regardless of how the PC is defined — a robot PC could be Healed), unless some Limitation restricts this use. The GM also typically restricts the use of Healing BODY to forms of life relatively similar to the character using the Healing — a character's Spell Of Healing doesn't work on trees or insects, for example, only on people.

However, with the GM's permission, a character can buy Healing specifically for other types of creatures/objects. He defines the power with Limitations so it cannot affect normal beings or PCs. For example, a druid might have the ability to heal trees, defined as Healing BODY, Only Works On Trees (-2). A battle-mage might have a spell that repairs breached castle walls, defined as Healing BODY, Only Works On The Walls Of Bases (-1).

In the case of forms of Healing that repair complex broken objects, a character must have a relevant Skill so he understands what he's doing (for ordinary, uncomplicated objects, such as tables and dishes, no Skill is required). For example, to use Healing BODY, Siege Engines Only (-1), the character would need a WF for the type of siege engine he wants to Heal. To use a weapon- or armor-mending spell requires Weaponsmith and Armorsmith, respectively.

## POWERS

Flash: At the GM's option, a character may buy a form of Simplified Healing that uses the Standard Effect Rule to restore Senses temporarily lost due to Flash. Each "Normal Damage BODY" rolled on the Flash Healing dice removes 1 Segment of Flash effect. If a character has suffered the effect of Flashes of multiple Sense Groups, determine the total Segments' worth of Flash effect the Healing can remove. The character applying the Healing can then use those Segments to remove whichever Flash effects he wants, in whatever order he deems appropriate. If he fully removes one effect, he may apply any additional ("leftover") Segments of Healing to another Flash effect.

Transform: At the GM's option, a character can define his Healing as working versus Transform damage only. This does not qualify for a Limitation value, any more than Flash Healing does. He cannot define Regeneration as working versus Transform (and in any event such a power would probably be lost when the character was Transformed into a form that didn't have it). Transform Healing only works against Transforms that define the "heal back" method as "normal healing of BODY" or the like; it has no effect on a Transform that defines the healing method as, for example, "kissed by a princess."

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Can Heal Limbs: Ordinary Healing BODY cannot regrow lost or severed limbs — it can restore the damage from losing a limb (*i.e.,* in game terms, Heal the lost BODY), but not regrow the limb itself. For +5 Character Points, characters may regrow limbs with Healing (including optional forms). (For more information on severing limbs, see *Breaking Limbs,* page 412, and *Disabling,* page 417.)

Resurrection: STOP Ordinary Healing BODY cannot restore life to the dead. At the GM's discretion, for +20 Character Points, characters may use Healing BODY (including optional forms) to bring deceased characters back to life. If bought for the optional Regeneration form of Healing BODY, Resurrection allows a character to "return from the dead" without the help of an outside agency, though how long this takes is subject to the GM's discretion. A character doesn't need to apply the *Trigger* Advantage for Resurrection Healing to work on himself. It works as described even though the character is dead and thus technically unable to activate Powers.

Normal rules for recovery of BODY apply with Resurrection Healing. The Healing must actually Heal enough BODY damage (with one or more rolls, subject to the usual rules on maximums) to bring the deceased back to positive BODY (or at least stabilize him in the negative BODY range so he's not bleeding to death). In most cases, it's appropriate for the GM to rule that a deceased character can "stand back up" and function like a living being when he has at least 1 positive BODY (or has been stabilized in negative BODY) and 1 positive STUN.

A character buying Resurrection Healing must define a reasonably common way to prevent Resurrection from working (such as a stake through the heart, severing the head, burning the corpse, or the like); he cannot use the *Does Not Work On Some Damage* Limitation (see below) to simulate this effect.

A deceased's character's body must be healed or cured of whatever injury, disease, or other effect killed him before he's Resurrected, or else he'll probably die again quickly. For a typical injury or wound, a character would need his own Healing BODY Regeneration, some other form of Healing BODY, having the wounds stitched up, or the like, so that he didn't just bleed to death again after Resurrecting. In the case of a poison or disease, someone should administer an antidote or medicine to "cure" him (or so that he can cure himself as part of the Resurrection process). The GM determines what, if anything, is required to "heal or cure" the deceased.

When a character Resurrects to positive BODY, he has 0 STUN. He can then begin to take Recoveries in the normal manner.

Area Of Effect, Explosion: See page 110 for the general rules about applying these Advantages to Adjustment Powers. Even using the "per wound" tracking option, a character with Area Of Effect Healing (which requires the GM's permission) still can't Heal more than one wound per target per use. Area Of Effect Healing allows the Healing of one wound per person in the area per use.

Autofire: Autofire does not overcome the rule regarding the maximum number of points that can be Healed with the same or subsequent Healings. The total Healing effect the character can have is still limited to the maximum that could be rolled on the Healing dice in a single roll. With the "per wound" tracking method, using Autofire Healing to Heal multiple wounds on a single person is possible, but requires the GM's permission.

Cumulative: Characters cannot apply this Advantage to Healing; see page 111.

Decreased Re-use Duration (varies): The default rule is that a character can only use his Healing on a character he has already Healed one Day (24 hours) after he last applied the Healing. For a +¼ Advantage, *Decreased Re-use Duration,* the time between Healings moves one level up on the Time Chart (to 6 Hours, 1 Hour, and so on). However, characters cannot buy their Healing to be used more frequently than one Healing per Turn. For example, to be able to apply Healing every 5 Minutes would be a +1 Advantage.

Usable By Others: Characters cannot apply the *Usable By Others* Advantage to Regeneration Healing. Instead, they must construct a similar sort of ability using Healing and appropriate Power Modifiers (such as Uncontrolled and Others Only).

**LIMITATIONS**

Does Not Work On [Defined Type Of Damage] (-¼ to -½): Healing BODY works against not just normal injuries, but loss of BODY from other effects such as Drains. Healing with this Limitation does not work against one or more types of damage (whether defined by the type of Power that causes the damage, or the nature of the attack or phenomenon that causes damage). If the Healing does not work against any one type of damage, this Limitation is worth -¼; if it does not work against two or more types of damage, it is worth -½.

Extra Time: If a character wants to apply Extra Time to Healing, use the standard rules for the Limitation; the special rules for Increased Time Increment for Regeneration apply only to that option.

Resurrection Only (-½): Resurrection Healing with this Limitation can only be used to resurrect the dead; it cannot Heal characters who are still living.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Dependence, Susceptibility: Healing (including the optional Regeneration and Resurrection forms) works on damage sustained due to a Dependence or Susceptibility. However, it stands to reason that many (if not most) characters with Regeneration and/or Resurrection would specify as one of their "can't resurrect" conditions the taking of Susceptibility damage, and that many Regeneration abilities might take a Limitation that prevents them from working on Susceptibility damage.

**IMAGES**

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power/Sense-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Hex
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: See the Images Summary Table

A character with Images can create images other characters can perceive with their appropriate Senses (usually the Sight Sense Group). Some examples of Images include spells of illusion, holograms, and sound synthesizers.

Images costs 10 Character Points to affect a single Targeting Sense Group in a 1" radius (one hex); each additional Targeting Sense Group affected costs +10 Character Points, or +5 Character Points for an individual Targeting Sense. Images costs 5 Character Points to affect a single Nontargeting Sense Group in a 1" radius (one hex); each additional Nontargeting Sense Group affected costs +5 Character Points, or +3 Character Points for an individual Nontargeting Sense.

A character can increase the size (radius) of Images with a +¼ Advantage described below (this cost is the same regardless of which Sense Groups the Image affects, or how many it Image affects). An Image that's larger than one hex doesn't have to fill the entire space available. It can fill whichever of the hexes within its radius its creator wants it to.

Observers can attempt to perceive an Image as just that — an image, not real — by making a PER Roll. Characters can make their Images more realistic, and thus harder to detect as Images, for +3 Character Points for every -1 to observers' PER Rolls (this cost is the same regardless of which Sense Groups the Image affects, or how many it affects).

### USING IMAGES

To project an Image, the character decides what Image to produce, where to produce it, and what actions (if any) the Image will perform. He then makes a normal Attack Roll against DCV 3 to place the Image in the target hex.

All characters with Line Of Sight perceive the Image with the appropriate Senses. They do not have to be inside the affected area to perceive it. For example, an Image of a ball of light might only cover a 4" radius, but depending on local conditions other characters might be able to see it miles away. The GM may impose modifiers to a PER Roll for characters outside an Image's area of effect — sometimes "being on the outside looking in" may make it easier or harder to determine the Image isn't real.

**Perceiving The Image**

Characters who notice an Image may make a PER Roll, modified by any penalties paid for and any bonuses for the complexity of Image (see the Images Complexity Table). The more complex the Image, the greater bonus a viewer gets to recognize the Image as fake.

If an observer misses his modified PER Roll, he believes the Image is real. If an observer makes his modified PER Roll, he perceives the Image, but he also detects some flaw that makes him doubt the Image is real. Even if the observer isn't sophisticated enough to know about Images, he at least knows that what he perceives isn't right. Images that have been spotted as fake do not disappear; rather, the observer can tell the Image is fake and acts accordingly.

If the character wishes to copy something with his Image, he must make a successful INT Roll. If he succeeds, he's produced a creditable copy. If he fails, the copy contains imperfections. This may make the Image an obvious fake to observers, or it may simply grant a +2 (or more) bonus to their PER Rolls to detect that the Image is a fake.

An observer may have special knowledge that enables him to spot an Image as fake, even if the onlooker fails his modified PER Roll. For example, if the supervillain Mirage created an image of Defender tied to the front of a bus, anyone who knew Defender was on the other side of the country would be inclined to suspect trickery.

**Endurance And Perceivability**

Images costs END to use. Since it's a Constant Power, the Images created last as long as the character pays END.

Images is a partial exception to the rule that Powers that cost Endurance must be perceivable by three Sense Groups (see page 102). By definition, an Image must be perceivable by the Sense(s) it affects. It must be perceivable as emanating from the character creating the Image by the Sense(s) it affects, but not by any others (even if it only affects one or two Senses). Of course, a clever character can find

## IMAGES SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost | Sense Group |
|---|---|
| 10 | Targeting |
| 5 | Nontargeting |
| **Cost** | **Extra Radius (per x2 Radius)** |
| +¼ Advantage | Doubles size of Images for any type of Sense(s) (see text) |
| **Cost** | **Extra Senses** |
| +10 | Targeting Sense Group |
| +5 | Targeting Sense (single) |
| +5 | Nontargeting Sense Group |
| +3 | Nontargeting Sense (single) |
| **Cost** | **Decreased PER Roll** |
| +3 | Per -1 to the target's PER Rolls |

## IMAGES COMPLEXITY TABLE

| PER Roll Bonus | Image |
|---|---|
| +0 | Solid Simple Images (a stationary object; a single odor or musical note) |
| +2 | Simple Movements/ Sounds/ Smells/ Sensations (a ball rolling, a simple melody) |
| +4 | Complex Movements/Sounds/Smells/ Sensations (a man walking, a conversation, the smells of a hamburger) |
| +6 | Multiple, Interacting Images/ Sounds/ Smells/ Sensations (a football team in action, an orchestral symphony, the smells of Thanksgiving dinner). |

### POWER EXAMPLES: IMAGES

Flashlight: Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls (22 Active Points); OAF (-1), Only To Create Light (-1), No Range (-½). Total cost: 6 points.

Holograms: Sight Group Images, -1 to PER Rolls, Increased Size (8" radius; +¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (29 Active Points); IAF (Miniature Concealed Hologram Generator; -½). Total cost: 19 points.

Illusion Spell: Sight and Hearing Group Images, -3 to PER Rolls, Increased Size (8" radius; +¾) (42 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 14 points.

Throwable Tracking Bug: Images to Radio Group, +4 to PER Rolls, Increased Size (32" radius; +1¼), Usable As Attack (allows character to "stick" the Image to a target; +1), Range Based On STR (+¼),1 Continuing Recoverable Charge lasting 1 Week (stops functioning if it gets wet or experiences severe radio interference; +1) (76 Active Points); IAF (-½), Set Effect (detectable signal; -1), Image Only Perceivable On Special Radio Frequencies (-0). Total cost: 30 points.

ways to conceal the source of the Image with the Image itself, or through good timing. In some cases this may depend on special effects.

**Changing Images**

Normally, Images react in an appropriate manner to outside phenomena (unless the creator of the Image chooses otherwise). For example, an Image of a person, if shot with an arrow, starts to bleed. However, this may make it easier for observers to detect that the Image is, in fact, just an Image. For instance, if an Image starts to bleed, but the Image doesn't cover the Smell/Taste Group, a character with a heightened sense of Smell won't smell the blood, and thus will know something's wrong. Similarly, the reaction may involve more complex activity by the Image, which provides greater PER Roll bonuses to observers.

As noted above, one of the things a character has to decide when creating an Image is what actions (if any) the Image will perform. These can include doing nothing (*i.e.,* just being present is enough, as with an image of a pit or a statue), or it can take actions of great complexity (such as running and attacking, performing a symphony, or the like). The actions the character describes when he activates and uses his Image power take place without the need for him to devote any further Actions to "controlling" the Image.

If a character wants to make a simple or plausible alteration to an Image he's created, he may do so as a Zero Phase Action. Examples of this include making an Image of a person carrying a box put down the box (when the initial description of the Image did not involve putting it down), changing the gender of a person in the Image, or making an Image of a person carrying a bow fire an arrow. (Again, the change may involve more complex activity by the Image, which provides greater PER Roll bonuses to observers.) Images that are more difficult to change this way take a Limitation (see below).

For more radical changes, a character typically has to stop the existing Image and activate the power again to create a new Image. However, the GM may, in his discretion, allow extreme changes as a Half Phase or Full Phase Action.

**Line Of Sight**

Images to the Sight Group may or may not block a character's Line Of Sight through them, depending on special effects and the nature of the image created. Images make PER Rolls harder, but not impossible (that's what Darkness does). Images can make a character think he's seeing something that's not there. If he fails the PER Roll, he believes the Image is real, and it blocks his LOS if appropriate. For example, an illusion of a wall would block LOS beyond the wall, but an illusion of a group of men fighting probably would not.

If the character makes his PER Roll, he knows the Image is not real, and it doesn't block his LOS, even if the Image doesn't just "fade away." The GM could require him to make a PER Roll each Phase, using the Image's PER Roll modifier (if any), to maintain LOS, the same way he would if any other obstruction was interfering with the character's effort to maintain LOS.

**Causing Harm; The Touch Group**

Images cannot cause any physical effects and are totally intangible (unless bought to affect the Touch Sense Group). If a character buys Images to the Touch Group, then the Image created feels, to the touch, like what it seems to be. A big mass of ooze feels slimy, a brick wall feels hard and stony, a person's skin is warm and yielding to the touch.

However, an Image to the Touch Group has neither BODY nor DEF, and isn't "solid" *per se.* If attacked, it might (depending on special effects, the nature of the power, common sense, dramatic sense, and the GM's discretion) suddenly display a "wound." That might increase the complexity of the Image and make it easier for other characters to perceive that it's an Image. Or it might not react at all, which would definitely alert most characters that something's wrong.

A Touch Group Image cannot hold or support objects. If a character put a glass of water on the Image (Touch Group) of a table, the glass would seem to sit right there, unmoving. The Image would make it feel, to the touch, as if it were still there. But it would actually fall to the floor, since the Image isn't "solid" and won't hold anything off the ground. (The Image might, however, cover up the feeling of spilled water splashing on the character's legs, so that he wouldn't realize he'd gotten water on himself until the Image ended or he perceived it to be an Image.)

A Touch Image cannot cause a character harm. A character who runs into a Touch Images wall takes no damage; one stabbed with a Touch Images knife does not bleed. Depending on the nature of the Image, the character might *seem* to suffer a wound, but in fact he would not.

Nor can a Touch Images affect the world in similar ways. A Touch Images scissors might appear to cut a piece of paper, but in fact the paper remains whole, and could clearly be perceivable as a whole once it left the radius of the Images or the power was de-activated. A Touch Images person could do something like shake hands, but he can't pick things up or move things (though depending on how it's defined, the Image might make it look as if he could).

Typically, a character or object that exerts sufficient pressure on a Touch Image (like leaning against it, or throwing something at it) falls/passes through it, even though it "feels" solid. The GM should determine how much pressure a Touch Image can withstand based on the special effects involved, the situation, common sense, and dramatic sense, but in no event should a Touch Image have any sort of Telekinesis- or Flight-like effect. Having something like a ping-pong ball bounce off a Touch Images wall is perfectly plausible in some cases; having a character bounce off it is another thing entirely.

Naturally, all of this can become a little tricky and complicated. As always, the GM should apply a little discretion, common sense, dramatic sense, and knowledge of the special effects involved to make a fair and reasonable decision about any issue that arises.

**Easily-Perceived Images**

If a character can create an Image he wants others to perceive easily — such as the light from a flashlight (Sight Group Image) or the amplified sound of a megaphone (Hearing Group Image) — he may apply the Image's negative PER modifier as a *positive* modifier to other characters' PER Rolls. For example, if a character bought a megaphone as Hearing Group Images with a -4 PER Roll, he'd convert the -4 into a *+4* on all PER Rolls made to hear that Image.

**POWERS**

Darkness: If Darkness and Images (to create light) are used in the same area, the Darkness "wins" — it negates the effects of the light. If a character wants a light strong enough to overcome the Darkness, he needs to buy a Dispel/Suppress Darkness Linked to his Images.

**ADVANTAGES**

Autofire: Autofire Images does not cost an additional +1 Advantage (see *Autofire,* page 252). However, if multiple uses of Images overlap, their effects are not cumulative — their PER Roll modifiers, for example, do not add together.

A character does not have to buy Autofire to create multiple moving objects (or other sensations) within an Image; he simply defines the Image as containing the multiple objects. Of course, that makes the Image more complex, and therefore easier for an observer to perceive as an Image.

Increased Size (+¼): This Advantage increases the size of an Image. Each +¼ Advantage doubles the Image's radius (thus, an Image has a 2" radius for a +¼ Advantage, a 4" radius for +½, an 8" radius for +¾, and so on). Characters may purchase this Advantage multiple times.

**LIMITATIONS**

Difficult To Alter (-¼, -½): Some Images aren't easy to change (see above). For a -¼ Limitation, the character can only make simple changes as a Half Phase Action. For a -½, he can only make them as a Full Phase Action. If the GM lets characters make severe changes to an Image as a Half or Full Phase Action, such changes require double the indicated time if the Images has this Limitation.

Focus: Generating an Image through an Obvious Focus does not automatically spoil the Image, but may give an observer bonuses to his PER Roll (+1 or more) to detect that the Image is fake, if appropriate. The same may apply to *Gestures* and *Incantations.*

Linked: As mentioned above, Images cannot cause harm. However, a character could Link an Attack Power to his Touch Group Images power, thus creating Images so "real" that they can cause physical harm.

Only To Create Light (-1): Images to Sight Group with this Limitation can only create light. Characters use it to create flashlights, spotlights, and similar effects. Typically these Images are bought with a +4 PER Roll bonus to cancel out the -4 PER Roll penalty for "dark night."

Set Effect (-1): This Limitation represents a form of Images the character can only use to create a single Image. At the GM's option, its value may be reduced to -½ if the Image is particularly useful or powerful.





### POWER EXAMPLES: INVISIBILITY

Advanced Hiding In Shadows: Invisibility to Sight Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (30 Active Points); Requires A Stealth Roll (-½), Only Works In Shadows Or Darkness (-½). Total cost: 15 points.

Advanced Sneakiness: Invisibility to Hearing Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (15 Active Points); Requires A Stealth Roll (-½). Total cost: 10 points.

Ring Of Invisibility: Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (45 Active Points); IIF (-¼). Total cost: 36 points.

Stealth Plane Effect: Invisibility to Radio Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (20 Active Points); Always On (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

## INVISIBILITY

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Standard Power/Sense-Affecting Power |
| Duration: | Constant |
| Target: | Self Only |
| Range: | Self |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | See the Invisibility Summary Table |

A character with Invisibility can become unperceivable by one Sense Group (usually the Sight Sense Group). Some examples of Invisibility include a "stealth plane" that cannot be detected with radar, the ability to move absolutely quietly or to hide effortlessly in shadows, or a superhero's power to fade from sight.

Invisibility to one Targeting Sense Group costs 20 Character Points; each additional Targeting Sense Group costs +10 Character Points, or each additional Targeting Sense +5 Character Points. Invisibility to one Nontargeting Sense Group costs 10 Character Points; each additional Nontargeting Sense Group costs +5 Character Points, or each additional Nontargeting Sense +3 Character Points. (Characters should not normally buy Invisibility to the Touch Sense Group; simulate that ability with Desolidification.) Invisibility costs END to use.

Invisibility is a partial exception to the general rule that Powers that cost Endurance must be perceivable by three Sense Groups (see page 102). By definition, Invisibility cannot be perceived by any Sense(s) it affects, and thus doesn't have to meet the "perceivable by three Sense Groups" rule if it affects so many Sense(s) there aren't a total of three left — it only has to be perceived by the Sense Groups it doesn't cover.

## INVISIBILITY SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost | Sense Group |
|---|---|
| 20 | Targeting |
| 10 | Nontargeting |
| **Cost** | **Extra Senses** |
| +10 | Targeting Sense Group |
| +5 | Targeting Sense (single) |
| +5 | Nontargeting Sense Group |
| +3 | Nontargeting Sense (single) |

### EFFECTS OF INVISIBILITY

Invisible characters can't be perceived with the affected Sense(s). However, other characters may be able to locate them by using other Senses. For example, a character who's Invisible to Sight Group still makes noise when he moves, allowing other characters to hear roughly where he is.

Invisibility covers not only a character's person, but his clothing and any equipment he carries (including Foci and weapons; but see below). Anything larger remains perceivable. This may, in some instances, reduce or eliminate the negative modifiers for targeting the Invisible character.

**Fringe**

An Invisible character has a "fringe" around himself. Other characters may perceive the Fringe with a normal PER Roll with the affected Sense at a range of 1" or less. Invisibility can have No Fringe for an Adder, or a Fringe that's even easier to detect for a Limitation (see below).

The form a Fringe takes depends on the special effects of the Invisibility. It could be the literal fringe where light bends around the character, the character's glowing eyes, the fact that the character still casts a faint shadow, or anything similar that the GM permits.

### INVISIBILITY IN COMBAT

In combat, Invisibility often makes the character harder to hit, and can make it much easier for him to obtain bonuses for Surprise attacks. See *Other Combat Effects,* page 422, for details.

Invisibility does not automatically make a character's attacks or other powers Invisible as well (that requires the Advantage *Invisible Power Effects;* see page 261) — and using visible powers can expose an Invisible character's position.

Invisibility to Sight Group covers a character's fists when he punches someone (or the like) using just his STR (and related abilities, like Martial Arts). But it does not make his weapons-based attacks Invisible — that requires the *Invisible Power Effects* Advantage. As long as the character just holds the weapon and doesn't use it, his Invisibility covers it. As soon as he uses it, it and its special effects become visible for the Segment in which he uses it; thereafter his Invisibility covers it again until the next Segment he uses it.

Example: *Hemdring the Stern, SPD 4, has a magical Ring Of Invisibility (Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe). When he uses his Ring, he becomes Invisible; so do his clothing, armor, and sword. On Phase 3, when Hemdring attacks a goblin with his sword, the sword appears out of thin air and cleaves the goblin in two! (Other goblins who make a PER Roll can now attack Hemdring at only -1 OCV; see page 422.) At the end of Segment 3, Hemdring's sword fades from view, since it's once more covered by his Invisibility until he uses it to attack again.*

The GM may, at his option, rule that Invisibility covers attacks that are similar to punches. For example, an Invisible werewolf's claws should remain Invisible when he attacks.

Other characters may find creative ways to overcome a character's Invisibility. For example, throwing a blanket over an Invisible to Sight Group character would reveal his position. So would trapping him in an Entangle, splashing paint on him, spilling liquids or powders on the floor so he leaves footprints, and so forth. Depending on the situation, the special effects, and similar considerations, this may allow other characters to attack the Invisible character at full OCV or -1 OCV.

### POWERS

The rules above note that Invisibility doesn't generally cover perceivable Attack Powers. Invisibility also interacts with some other types of Powers. But remember, being Invisible should not mean a character gains access to a lot of *Invisible Power Effects* Advantages for free.





Typically Invisibility covers Body-Affecting Powers such as Stretching or Growth, preventing others from perceiving their use via the Sense Groups the Invisibility covers. The GM can make exceptions to this in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, and game balance. For example, a Duplicate wouldn't automatically be covered by the original character's Invisibility, and an Invisible character who uses Multiform to change shape into another form may no longer have access to his Invisibility.

Invisibility doesn't necessarily cover Movement Powers; it depends on special effects, common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance. Other characters normally can't see an Invisible to Sight Group's character's legs move when he Runs, or his wings flap when he flies, but they can hear the sound of his passage. Some forms of movement have highly visible effects (such as the fiery trail behind a fire elemental when he flies), and Invisibility probably doesn't cover those.

Similarly, in most cases Invisibility should cover Powers that are closely connected or related to a character's body, such as some uses of Force Field. As always, the GM should use his common sense, dramatic sense, and appreciation for game balance to ensure that a character who buys Invisibility gets a fair measure of effectiveness for the Character Points he spends, but doesn't gain a lot of benefits he hasn't paid for.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

No Fringe: Invisibility with this +10 Character Point Adder has no Fringe effect.

**LIMITATIONS**

Bright Fringe (-¼): Invisibility with this Limitation has a fringe that's easier to perceive than usual. Other characters can perceive the fringe from up to 8" away with a normal PER Roll with the affected Sense; if a character attempting to perceive the Invisible character is within 2", he makes his PER Roll at +2. A Bright Fringe normally cannot be perceived at all beyond 8".

Chameleon (-½): This Limitation represents a form of Invisibility (usually to Sight Group) that only works if the character remains motionless. In effect the character's Invisibility allows him to blend seamlessly into an appropriate background. If he moves, anyone can perceive him. If necessary, the GM may require the character to make EGO Rolls or DEX Rolls to remain motionless if surprised, a dangerous enemy stands near him, or the like.

Focus: If a character has an Obvious Focus that provides him with Invisibility, the Invisibility does not cover the Focus. Only Inobvious Foci are covered by the Invisibility they generate.

Gestures: Even though Gestures are normally supposed to be "clearly visible at a distance," a character who's Invisible to Sight Group can make Gestures without other characters seeing them or having them spoil his Invisibility.

Incantations: If a character speaks while Invisible to the Hearing Group, whether it's Incantations or normal speech, other people can hear him speaking.

Only When Not Attacking (-½): This Limitation represents a form of Invisibility that only works when the character remains peaceful and does not attack or threaten anyone. It's usually combined with Chameleon (see above).

### POWER EXAMPLES: HKA

These examples assume a character with STR 15.

Dagger: HKA 1d6 (up to 2d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (22 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum (6; -½), Real Weapon (-¼) (total cost: 8 points) **plus** Ranged (+½) for HKA 1d6 (8 Active Points); OAF (-1), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Range Based On STR (-¼) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 10 points.

Laser Sword: HKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1), No STR Bonus (-½). Total cost: 18 points.

Claws: HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR) (15 Active Points); Reduced Penetration (-¼), No Knockback (-¼). Total cost: 10 points.

## KILLING ATTACK — HAND-TO-HAND

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: No Range
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 15 Character Points for every 1d6 Hand-To-Hand Killing Attack

A character with Hand-To-Hand Killing Attack (HKA) can make an attack in HTH Combat that causes Killing Damage (see page 405). Some examples of HKA include claws, fangs, bladed weapons such as knives, and laser swords.

Each 1d6 of HKA costs 15 Character Points (adding a single point of Killing Damage to an HKA costs 5 points; adding a half die costs 10 points). A character must define his HKA as Physical or Energy damage (*i.e.,* whether it works against Resistant PD or Resistant ED; STR adds to the damage in either case). HKA costs END to use, plus END for any STR used to increase the damage.

To use an HKA, a character chooses a target and makes an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls his HKA dice. The total on the dice is the BODY damage done. Then he rolls another 1d6 and subtracts 1 (1d6-1, minimum of 1). He multiplies the BODY by that number — the *STUN Multiplier* — to determine the amount of STUN done.

A character may add +1d6 to his HKA for every 15 points of STR used with it (or, to put it another way, +1 Damage Class for every 5 points of STR used with it). However, he cannot do more than double the Damage Classes of his HKA (see page 405 for further information).

Examples: *Armadillo has powered gauntlets with claws that do HKA 1d6. He also has STR 50. Armadillo may do 1d6 Killing Attack for 1 END by using his HKA. He may do 2d6 Killing Damage for 2 END by using his HKA and 15 STR.*

*Arkelos has a knife (HKA ½d6, or 2 Damage Classes' worth of Killing Damage). His STR is 10. When using his knife, he can add his 10 STR for +2 Damage Classes, making it do 4 DCs damage (i.e., 1d6+1 HKA). If he had a 15 STR, he could still only add 10 STR, because he cannot do more than double the attack's base Damage Classes by using STR.*

Remember, a Killing Attack is just that — a *killing* attack. It's used to kill or maim other characters. Characters who don't want to seriously injure or incapacitate their opponents should choose another Power to build their attacks with. A character should never buy a Killing Attack simply because he hopes to obtain high STUN Multiplier rolls.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼): This Power Advantage increases the STUN Multiplier of a Killing Attack. Characters can purchase it multiple times, but must have the GM's permission to buy it more than once for any particular attack. It has no effect on Powers other than Killing Attacks.

When rolling the Killing Attack's STUN Multiplier, add +1 to the number rolled for every level of Increased STUN Multiplier purchased. In other words, roll 1d6, subtract 1 as usual, then add the bonus from Increased STUN Multiplier. (If you're using the optional Hit Location rules in your campaign, add the +1 to the STUN Multiplier determined from the Hit Location Table.)

Invisible Power Effects: If a character buys IPE for an HKA, he must also purchase IPE for any STR used to add damage to it. If IPE doesn't also cover the character's STR, the attack remains perceivable as normal.

No Normal Defense, AVLD: Killing Attacks with these Advantages only do STUN damage unless they're also bought with the Advantage *Does BODY.* If they're bought with one of these Advantages, then only the defined defense protects against both the STUN and BODY damage; other defenses (such as a character's innate PD and ED) have no effect.

Ranged: An HKA with this Advantage still gets STR bonuses to damage. This is a good way to build HTH weapons characters can throw (such as some axes). It's an exception to the general rule that a character must always use a Power's Advantages when he uses a Power.

### LIMITATIONS

Decreased STUN Multiplier (-¼): A Killing Attack with this Limitation, which characters can take more than once, tends to do less STUN than a regular KA. For every level of Decreased STUN Multiplier taken, add 1 to the number subtracted from the STUN Multiplier die. For example, one level of Decreased STUN Multiplier would result in a STUN Multiplier of 1d6-2; two levels (-½), 1d6-3; and so forth. (If you're using the optional Hit Location rules in your campaign, subtract 1 from the STUN Multiplier determined from the Hit Location Table.) Since *Power Does No STUN* is a -¾ Limitation (page 299), the maximum value Decreased STUN Multiplier can have is -½, no matter how many points it adds to the number subtracted.

No STR Bonus (-½): This Limitation signifies an HKA to which the character cannot add extra damage from STR or movement. It might represent, for example, a laser sword — since the lethality of such a weapon doesn't depend on the muscles powering it, STR should not add to the damage it does.

## KILLING ATTACK — RANGED (RKA)

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 15 Character Points for every 1d6 Ranged Killing Attack

A character with Ranged Killing Attack (RKA) can make an attack in Ranged combat that causes Killing Damage (see page 405). Some examples of RKA include bullets, arrows, lasers, flamethrowers, and throwing knives.

Each 1d6 of RKA costs 15 Character Points (adding a single point of Killing Damage to an RKA costs 5 points; adding a half die costs 10 points). A character must define his RKA attack as Physical or Energy damage (*i.e.,* whether it works against Resistant PD or Resistant ED). RKA costs END to use.

To use an RKA, the character chooses a target and makes an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls his RKA dice. The total on the dice is the BODY damage done. Then he rolls another 1d6 and subtracts 1 (1d6-1, minimum of 1). He multiplies the BODY by that number — the *STUN Multiplier* — to determine the amount of STUN done.

Remember, a Killing Attack is just that — a *killing* attack. It's used to kill or maim other characters. Characters who don't want to seriously injure or incapacitate their opponents should choose another Power to build their attacks with. A character should never buy a Killing Attack simply because he hopes to obtain high STUN Multiplier rolls.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼): See *Killing Attack — Hand-To-Hand,* page 194.

No Normal Defense, AVLD: See *Killing Attack — Hand-To-Hand,* page 194.

### LIMITATIONS

Decreased STUN Multiplier: See *Killing Attack — Hand-To-Hand,* page 194.

## KNOCKBACK RESISTANCE

Type: Special Power/Defense Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 2 Character Points for every -1" of Knockback

A character with Knockback Resistance reduces the Knockback he takes from attacks. Each -1" of Knockback Resistance costs 2 Character Points.

Knockback Resistance reduces both the inches traveled and the amount of damage done by Knockback. It applies to all attacks that do Knockback. Knockback Resistance does not cost END to use.

### POWER EXAMPLES: RKA

Laser Pistol: RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1), 2 clips of 12 Charges each (-0), No Knockback (-¼). Total cost: 20 points.

Lightning Bolt Spell: RKA 2d6, Indirect (always strikes the character from above, out of the sky; +¼) (37 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Only Works Under An Open Sky (-½). Total cost: 11 points.

Colt M1911A Semiautomatic Handgun: RKA 2d6-1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼) (34 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum (9; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage; -1), Beam (-¼), 2 clips of 7 Charges each (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼). Total cost: 9 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: KNOCKBACK RESISTANCE

Super-Dense Form: Knockback Resistance -5". Total cost: 10 points.

Improved Bracing: Knockback Resistance -10" (20 Active Points); Requires A STR Roll (-½). Total cost: 13 points.





## POWER EXAMPLES: LACK OF WEAKNESS

Well-Constructed Armor: Lack Of Weakness (-5) for Resistant Defenses (5 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 3 points.

Overcoat: Lack Of Weakness (-3) for Normal Defenses and Resistant Defenses (6 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 3 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: LEAPING

These examples assume a character with STR 20.

Spring-Boots: Leaping +20" (24" forward, 12" upward) (20 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

Acrobatic Leaping: Leaping +8" (12" forward, 6" upward) (8 Active Points); Requires An Acrobatics Roll (-½). Total cost: 5 points.

### LACK OF WEAKNESS

Type: Special Power/Defense Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 Character Point for every -1 to Find Weakness or Analyze rolls, must be bought by type of defense

A character with Lack Of Weakness is tough — it's harder for an opponent to find a weakness in his defenses (see *Find Weakness,* page 174). Some examples of Lack Of Weakness include armor that's so well-constructed it has no weak points or wearing an overcoat over your armor to conceal its weaknesses.

A character gets to apply a -1 to all opponents' Find Weakness rolls for one type of defense for 1 Character Point. He must buy Lack Of Weakness separately for his Normal Defenses (PD or ED, including Damage Resistance), his Resistant Defenses (such as Armor or Force Field), and, at the GM's discretion, for each of his exotic defenses (such as Mental Defense and Power Defense). Walls or other objects may have Lack of Weakness if they're especially well constructed. Lack Of Weakness does not cost END to use.

Characters can also buy Lack Of Weakness to protect against the *Analyze* Skill. Every -1 to all Analyze rolls costs 1 Character Point.

#### LIMITATIONS

Only Applies To One Type Of Defense (-1): If a character has more than one type of Normal Defense or Resistant Defense, but his Lack Of Weakness only applies to one type of defense in that category (say, only PD, not ED; or only the character's Armor, not his Force Field), it takes this Limitation.

### LEAPING

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 1 Character Points for every +1" Leap

A character with Leaping can leap great distances. Examples of Leaping include characters with super-strong leg muscles, a martial artist's phenomenal leaping ability, or spring-boots.

Each +1" of Leaping costs 1 Character Point. Purchased inches of Leaping add to a character's base inches of leaping from STR (1" forward, ½" upward for every 5 STR; see page 34). Leaping costs END to use, as does the STR used for the base leap (a character doesn't have to use his base inches from STR if he prefers not to, provided he has a reason for not doing so the GM finds acceptable). If a character makes a leap that takes multiple Phases to complete (see below), he only pays END once, in the Phase when he starts the leap

#### USING LEAPING

In combat, leaps are identical to Flight, except that the character must choose a target hex to land in when he begins his leap, and he cannot change direction in mid-leap. The target hex of a leap need not necessarily be another hex — the leaper could aim for a flying enemy or the "hex" right in front of an airplane, for example. In combat or other crucial situations, it's possible to miss the target location of a leap; the GM may require the leaping character to make an Attack Roll against DCV 3 (the Range Modifier applies) to hit the target hex (this takes no time). In noncombat, non-stressful situations, this isn't necessary.

A character may perform a Half Move with Leaping. A character can also leap Noncombat distances. This doubles the distance of his leap, but he's at ½ DCV, 0 OCV for the duration of the leap. As with a normal leap, the character must declare his target hex, and cannot change direction in mid-leap. The duration in Phases of such a leap equals the number of Noncombat doublings: every doubling adds a Phase to the duration of the leap; the character can take no Actions during this time. If the character leaps further than he can perceive, choosing a target hex will be difficult or impossible; he has to aim for a general area.

Example: *Tower has a 55 STR and has purchased 40 points of Leaping, for a total combat leap of 11+40 = 51". In addition, he has spent 20 points to increase the Noncombat multiple up to 32x combat distance. Tower can leap a total of 51 x 32 = 1632" in a single leap. That's five doublings, so the leap takes 5 Phases.*

Acceleration with Leaping, whether it's a single-Phase or multiple-Phase Leap, is the same as for any other form of movement.

#### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Sometimes a character wants to apply an Advantage to purchased Leaping. If he wants that

Advantage to also affect the inches of Leaping he receives for free, he must apply any Advantages to the cost of the Power *including the free points.* For example, if a character with STR 30 (Leaping 6" for free) buys Leaping +5" and wants all of his Leaping to be 0 END, he applies the +½ Advantage to 11 points (11" x 1 point each), even though he's only actually paying 5 points for Leaping (thus yielding a total cost to the character of [(11 x (1 + ½)) - 6 =] 10 points).

Accurate: Leaping with this +5 Character Point Adder is always accurate; the character need not make an Attack Roll to land in his target hex. Accurate has no effect on Diving for Cover via leaping.

Improved Acceleration/Deceleration: Characters ordinarily should not buy these Advantages for Leaping; the duration of long (Noncombat) leaps is as specified above.

MegaScale: Characters sometimes apply MegaScale for *really* long Leaps. A MegaLeap takes one Phase per unit of measurement defined by the MegaScale. For example, if a character bought MegaScale (1" = 1 km) for his Leaping, then the leap takes 1 Phase per kilometer. If it were 1" = 10 km, his leap would take 1 Phase per 10 km.

If a character uses MegaLeaping, he must be able to perceive his target hex to land there accurately. If he has no way to perceive over Mega-distances, or he misses his Attack Roll, the MegaScale effect applies to the game inches by which he misses the target. For example, if a character has MegaLeaping (1" = 1 km) and misses his Attack Roll by 2, he's off-target by 2", or 2 kilometers. (The GM may reduce this effect in the interest of dramatic sense or the like.)

Usable On Others: Characters cannot buy Leaping *Usable As Attack;* that effect requires Telekinesis.

**LIMITATIONS**

Forward Movement Only (-1): Leaping with this Limitation does not improve a character's vertical leap, only his forward leap. If the character tries to leap straight up, he cannot add any inches of Leaping with this Limitation to his leaping distance based on STR. Similarly, a character could buy Leaping, *Upward Movement Only* (-1).

**LIFE SUPPORT**

Type: Standard Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: See Life Support Table

A character with Life Support can operate in unfriendly or deadly environments without harm, and/or needs reduced resources to maintain his health and life. Examples of Life Support include gas masks, SCUBA gear, elixirs of eternal youth, and taking tiny doses of a poison to build up an immunity to its effects. The Life Support Table shows the Character Point cost for various types of Life Support.

Characters who do not breathe oxygen in their natural state can define the "default environment" they can breathe in (for example, a fish, by default, "breathes underwater"). Such characters do not have to buy *Expanded Breathing* to breathe in their default environment — instead, they have to buy that form of Life Support to breathe oxygen as a human would.

A character with a *Safe Environment* Life Support does not take damage from that type of environmental condition, or from a Change Environment that creates that condition. However, he still takes damage from attacks with that special effect due to the sudden system shock. For example, a character who can survive Intense Heat can walk around in the desert without suffering any discomfort or ill effects from the heat, and can tolerate a "Heatwave" created by Change Environment without harm, but still takes damage from fire- or heat-based attacks or being dunked in lava. See *Environmental Effects,* page 438, for further information.

Furthermore, a *Safe Environment* only means the character can survive the rigors of his surroundings. He cannot breathe unless he has bought that form of Life Support separately. Thus, to operate safely in a Vacuum costs 12 points (10 points for *Self-Contained Breathing* plus 2 points for *Safe Environment: Low Pressure/Vacuum*).

Total Life Support costs 45 Character Points. It includes *Self Contained Breathing* (10 points), *Diminished Eating* (3 points), *Diminished Sleep* (3 points ), and all the *Safe Environments* and *Immunities* (29 points).

**LIMITATIONS**

If a character buys multiple types of Life Support with a Limitation that applies to all the types, add them together and apply the Limitation to the overall cost. If different Limitations apply to different types, apply each Limitation individually, then add the Limited costs together to get a total cost for Life Support.

## GRANDFATHERING: LIFE SUPPORT

In the Fifth Edition, Life Support is much broader, offering characters a greater range of effects to purchase. Existing characters may want to rework their Life Support powers to better reflect the nature of those powers using the new rules, and should be allowed to do so. In most cases, if Life Support now costs a character more for the same effect, he should get the extra points for "free," as discussed in the Introduction; any savings accrue to the character, and he can spend them elsewhere.

## POWER EXAMPLES: LIFE SUPPORT

Gas Mask: Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing) (10 Active Points); OIF (-½), 1 Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour (-0). Total cost: 7 points.

Stim Pill: Life Support (Diminished Sleep: Need Not Sleep), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Day each (+0) (3 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 1 point.

Arctic Survival Suit: Life Support (Safe Environment: Intense Cold) (2 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 1 point.

# LIFE SUPPORT TABLE

| Cost | Effect |
|---|---|
| 1-4 | Extended Breathing: The character may hold his breath longer than normal. Ordinarily, characters who hold their breath must spend 1 END per Phase to do so. Every point of Extended Breathing allows a character to hold his breath for periods of time one step up on the Time Chart: for 1 point of Extended Breathing, he only spends 1 END per Turn; for 2 points, 1 END per Minute; and so forth (see page 424 for further information). Because the character is holding his breath, he may not take Recoveries. Extended Breathing does not affect the rate at which the character spends END for other things. |
| 5 | Expanded Breathing: The character may breathe in one type of unusual environment (underwater, in methane, and so on) |
| 10 | Self-Contained Breathing: The character's breathing is self-contained (he doesn't need to breathe at all). |
| 1-3 | Diminished Eating: Ordinarily, characters must eat and drink at least once every six hours. Diminished Eating increases the time periods during which the character can go without food and drink (and thus diminishes his need to excrete as well). |
| | 1 point: Character only has to eat once per week. |
| | 2 points: Character only has to eat once per year (or other time period). |
| | 3 points: Character does not have to eat at all. |
| 1-3 | Diminished Sleep: Ordinarily, characters must sleep about eight hours out of every 24. Diminished Sleep decreases the amount of sleep a character needs. |
| | 1 point: Character only has to sleep eight hours per week. |
| | 2 points: Character only has to sleep eight hours per year (or other time period). |
| | 3 points: Character does not have to sleep at all. |
| 2 | Safe Environment: Character is safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum |
| 1 | Safe Environment: Character is safe in High Pressure |
| 2 | Safe Environment: Character is safe in High Radiation |
| 2 | Safe Environment: Character is safe in Intense Cold |
| 2 | Safe Environment: Character is safe in Intense Heat |
| 1-5 | Longevity: The character ages more slowly than normal people (the base lifespan for all characters is assumed to be 100 years). For 1 point, the character ages at half normal rate (lifespan 200 years); for 2 points, at one-fourth normal rate (lifespan 400 years); and so forth. For 5 Character Points the character is immortal; he does not age at all. |
| 1-10 | Immunity: The character is immune to the effects of a particular drug, poison, disease, or similar substance. The exact cost depends upon the frequency and potency of the substance to which the character is Immune — the greater the effect of a substance, and the more often it is encountered, the more Immunity to it costs. Some suggested costs: |

| Cost | Substance |
|---|---|
| 3 | Alcohol (beer, bourbon, gin, whiskey) |
| 3 | Asphyxiants (chlorine gas, phosgene gas) |
| 3 | Bacterial Infections (anthrax, the plague, brucellosis, typhoid fever) |
| 3 | Blistering Agents (Vesicants) (mustard gas, Lewisite) |
| 2 | Common cold/flu |
| 1 | Fungal Infections (desert fever) |
| 3 | Haemotoxins (cyanide, cyanogen gas) |
| 2 | Malaria |
| 2 | Microbe Toxins (botulin, B, TZ) |
| 3 | Nerve Gases (Tabun, Sarin, Soman, VE, VM, VX) |
| 3 | Neurotoxins (poisons which kills by attacking the nervous system) |
| 2 | Neutralizing Agents (tear gas, itching powder, retching agents) |
| 3 | Ophidotoxins (poisons from serpents) |
| 5 | Phytotoxins (poisons derived from plants) |
| 1 | Rabies |
| 2 | Rickets Infections (typhus, purple fever, Queensland fever) |
| 3 | Tetanus |
| 4 | Viral Infections (smallpox, HIV, ebola and Lassa viral fevers, yellow fever) |
| 1 | Venom from any single rare poisonous plant or animal (*e.g.,* coral snake) |
| 2 | Venom from any single common poisonous plant or animal (e.g., black widow spider) |
| 3 | Venom from any single very common poisonous plant or animal (*e.g.,* rattlesnake) |
| 5 | Zootoxins (poisons derived from animals) |
| 10 | All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents |
| 10 | All terrestrial poisons and chemical warfare agents |

A character can buy whichever forms of Life Support he wants. He doesn't have to purchase some as a condition for purchasing others.

**LUCK**

Type: Special Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Luck

This Power represents a quality of fate that helps events turn out in a character's favor. Each 1d6 of Luck costs 5 Character Points. Luck does not cost END to use.

The GM may have a character make a Luck Roll when he (the character) is totally overwhelmed in combat, has no idea of how to find what he's looking for, is about to let an opponent escape, or any other time outrageous fortune could save him when he doesn't expect it. However, the GM should never let Luck rule a situation; he has full control over when, how often, and how much Luck helps a character. If it's necessary for an antagonist to capture a character, then he will, regardless of how much Luck the character has. Similarly, if a character does something really stupid, the GM should not feel compelled to let the character's Luck save him. In any case, Luck shouldn't come into play very often. Keep Luck as a pleasant surprise for the character, not something he depends on.

When the GM asks for a Luck roll, the player rolls 1d6 for every 5 Character Points of Luck his character has. Each "6" rolled counts as 1 point of Luck. The GM then decides what (if any) lucky event happens to a character. The more points of Luck the character rolled, the luckier he should be. The Luck Table provides some general guidelines to follow when determining the effects of Luck.

### OTHER WAYS OF USING LUCK

Besides the standard "count the 6s" method described above, other ways exist to simulate the effects of Luck in the game. They include:

—At the beginning of a game session, the player rolls his Luck dice and counts the Normal Damage BODY. The number of BODY equals the number of rolls the player may re-roll during that game to get a better result.

—At the beginning of a game session, the player rolls his Luck dice and counts the total. That total represents a number of points the player may add to or subtract from rolls throughout that game to get better results.

—At the beginning of a game session, the player rolls his Luck dice and counts the total. That total represents the number of individual dice the player may re-roll during that game to get a better result.

—As an optional rule, the GM can allow Luck to help characters who have Gambling. Every 6 rolled for Luck adds +2 to the Gambling roll.

In all cases where the GM uses Luck to allow a player to re-roll dice, re-rolls must achieve a better result than the original roll. The player may keep rolling (without sacrificing any more of his Luck-based re-rolls) until he gets a better result.

## LUCK TABLE

| Points of Luck | Possible Effects |
|---|---|
| 1 | The character might find a clue or gain information; the character's opponent could be momentarily distracted or stopped, giving the character a temporary advantage. |
| 2 | The character could accidentally happen upon someone important or stumble across someone he was looking for. The character's opponent could be troubled by a malfunctioning weapon or a stalled getaway car. |
| 3 | The character might be saved by the most miraculous of coincidences. He may stumble upon Mister Big accidentally, or have a terminal fall broken by a huge pile of rubber pads that just happen to be in the right place. The enemy's henchman could turn out to be a childhood friend. Incredible luck is possible. |
| 4 or more | Treat as 3 sixes, but with the possibility that some of the lucky events "rub off" and help the Lucky individual's friends. |

### LIMITATIONS

Charges: If a character buys Luck with Charges, he uses a Charge every time he makes a roll, whether the roll succeeds or not.




### POWER EXAMPLES: LUCK

Blessing Of The Moon Goddess: Luck 3d6 (15 Active Points); Only At Night When The Moon Is Visible (-1½). Total cost: 6 points.

Fortunes Of Battle: Luck 2d6 (10 Active Points); Only In Combat (-½). Total cost: 7 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: MENTAL DEFENSE

Iron Will I: Mental Defense (8 points plus (EGO/5)) (8 Active Points); Requires An EGO Roll (assumes an EGO Roll of 12- or 13-; -¾). Total cost: 5 points.

Psionic Shield: Mental Defense (10 points plus (EGO/5)) (10 Active Points); OIF (Helmet; -½). Total cost: 7 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: MENTAL ILLUSIONS

Illusionary Disguise: Mental Illusions 8d6 (40 Active Points); Self Only (-1). Total cost: 20 points.

Spell Of Myriad Phantasms: Mental Illusions 12d6 (60 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

Phobic Manipulation: Mental Illusions 12d6 (60 Active Points); No Conscious Control (only to force target to experience his greatest fear; -1). Total cost: 30 points.



## MENTAL DEFENSE

Type: Special Power/Defense Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 Character Point for every 1 point of Mental Defense

A character with Mental Defense is resistant to mental attacks — he can withstand some of the effects of Mental Powers (such as Ego Attack, Mind Control, or many Powers bought *Based On ECV*). Some examples of Mental Defense include psionic shields or extremely strong willpower.

Every 1 point of Mental Defense costs 1 Character Point, and the character may also add a number of points equal to his EGO/5 to those purchased. All characters start with 0 Mental Defense. Mental Defense does not cost END to use.

Each point of Mental Defense subtracts from the total rolled on the Effect Roll for Mental Powers before those Powers are applied to the character.

Example: *Jason Starward, with 13 EGO, buys 9 Character Points' worth of Mental Defense. His total Mental Defense is therefore 9 + (13/5) = 12 points. Later, an alien attacks Starward with Mind Control, and gets an Effect Roll of 35. Starward subtracts his Mental Defense, leaving 23 points of effect (35-12=23) to apply to his EGO.*

Like other Special Powers, Mental Defense is "on" at all times, unless the character chooses to turn it off.

Mental Defense is not Resistant, but characters may purchase Damage Resistance for it.

## MENTAL ILLUSIONS

Type: Mental Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DECV
Range: LOS
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1d6 Mental Illusions

A character with this Mental Power can project illusions directly into an opponent's mind. Some examples of Mental Illusions include psionic illusion powers and hallucination-inducing drugs. Each 1d6 of Mental Illusions costs 5 Character Points. Mental Illusions costs END to use.

### USING MENTAL ILLUSIONS

To use Mental Illusions, the character makes an ECV Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he defines the illusion he wants the target to perceive, and the GM determines what level of effect he needs on the Mental Illusions Effects Table to create that illusion. The character then makes a standard Effect Roll, subtracts the target's Mental Defense (if any), and compares the result to the Mental Illusions Effects Table. If the Effect Roll is not sufficient to reach the desired level, the attack has no effect, but it does alert the target. If the Effect Roll is high enough to achieve the desired effect, the illusion is established in the target's mind; the target won't know he's experiencing an illusion until he succeeds with a Breakout Roll.

On the target's first Phase after a Mental Illusion is established, he may attempt to see through or "disbelieve" the illusion by making a Breakout Roll. The target remains under the influence of the illusion (at the given level) until he succeeds with a Breakout Roll.

The target of a Mental Illusion receives a chance to make another Breakout Roll (with a bonus to the roll) if the illusion performs in a way that doesn't meet his expectations (for example, if an illusory loved one did not recognize him). At the GM's discretion, he receives additional bonuses to his roll if other persons try to "snap him out of it."

### DEGREES OF ILLUSION

When using Mental Illusions, characters can make cosmetic or major changes to a setting, completely alter that setting, or so deeply ensnare the victim in the illusion that he no longer interacts with the real environment.

**Cosmetic Changes**

Cosmetic changes to the setting include:

—changing colors

—making friends look like (but not act like) enemies

—minor changes to a person's or object's appearance (an illusory disguise; a moustache on the Mona Lisa; a wound appears that isn't really there; a handgun looks like a different model handgun)

—minor sensory changes (a dry object feels wet; a Mozart symphony sounds like a Beethoven symphony; a steak smells like fish)

—the creation of minor sensory effects (simple music appears out of nowhere, the walls begin to talk)

—minor objects (decorative items, non-dangerous or non-valuable objects) appear where none exist, or vanish if they're present

**Major Changes**

Major changes to the setting include:

—making friends look and act like enemies

—doubling the number of opponents a character's fighting

—changes in the weather (but not the overall environment or setting)

—major changes to a person's or an object's appearance (a human appears to be a non-humanoid alien; a handgun turns into a serpent)

—major sensory changes (a Mozart symphony sounds like two old women talking; a whole object feels broken; a steak smells like dung)

—the creation of major sensory effects (explosions, complex music)

—important objects (enemies, walls, pits, moving vehicles, weapons) appear where none exist, or vanish if present

**Completely Altering The Setting**

Completely altering the setting includes:

—complete changes to the environment (city streets become moonscapes, jungles, or deserts; all objects appear to be three feet left of where they really are)

—the target appears to be nowhere at all (in the middle of some blank, featureless area)

—all sensory input vanishes or is radically changed (a battlefield appears to be a peaceful meadow, the target's sense of balance, direction, and the like may be changed)

—major important objects (entire buildings, an army, a planet) vanish, or appear where they don't exist

**Interaction With The Environment**

For these first three levels of Mental Illusions, the victim still interacts with the real world: although a car appears to be a horse, the victim still bumps into it as a car. At the GM's option, any significant difference between what the victim perceives and what he "feels" may give him another chance to make his modified EGO Roll to disbelieve the illusion.

If a Mental Illusion achieves a designated EGO +30 result, the victim no longer interacts with his environment: the illusion is completely "in his head." In this case he only thinks he is, for example, walking forward or striking an opponent; he won't actually perform these actions. In fact, in most situations he simply stands still. Characters in this state are usually at ½ DCV.

## MENTAL ILLUSIONS EFFECTS TABLE

| Total rolled on Mental Illusion dice - Mental DEF is: | Effect |
|---|---|
| Greater than EGO | Cosmetic changes to setting |
| EGO + 10 | Major changes to setting |
| EGO + 20 | Completely alters setting |
| EGO + 30 | Character no longer interacts with real environment |

| Modifiers (can be applied at any level) | |
|---|---|
| -10 | Illusion matches target's Psychological Limitations |
| +10 | Illusion contradicts target's Psychological Limitations |
| +10 | Target will remember the illusion as being "real" after it has ended |
| +10 | Target takes STUN damage from illusory attacks |
| +20 | Target takes BODY and STUN from illusory attacks |

**Additional Rules**

Because Mental Illusions work on a character's mind, they affect all of his Senses, even Senses he has which the character creating the Mental Illusions doesn't know about.

Like Images, Mental Illusions react to the actions of the persons subject to them (unless the character using the Power doesn't want them to for some reason). For example, suppose a wizard confronts a troll with the Mental Illusion of a fierce warrior that's attacking it. If the troll "attacks" the warrior and "hits" it, the warrior appears to take damage. That doesn't necessarily impair the warrior's efficiency (*i.e.,* the power and effectiveness of the Mental Illusion), but if the illusion doesn't react appropriately, it may give the victim a chance to make a Breakout Roll.

**HARMFUL ILLUSIONS**

A character can take Normal Damage from a Mental Illusion. If the attacker declares his Effect Roll at +10, the victim can take STUN from illusory attacks; if at +20, the character can take BODY and STUN. The maximum Active Points in an illusory attack equals the Effect Roll achieved with the Mental Illusions dice or the Active Points in the Mental Illusions power, whichever is less. The defense against damage from illusions is the appropriate defense for the illusory attack: PD for an illusory fist, ED for an illusory laser beam, and so forth (at the GM's discretion, the victim may add any Mental Defense he has to such defenses). Illusory attacks never do Knockback (though an EGO +20 or better Mental Illusion could make the target *think* he's been Knocked Back).

An illusory attack can't inflict more damage than it could do logically — a .44 Magnum pistol can't do 20d6 damage, regardless of how many points the mentalist spent on Mental Illusions. Illusory attacks cannot have Advantages; they do straightforward damage.

A character under the effects of injurious Mental Illusions only takes damage on the Phases indicated by the attacker's SPD (a SPD 3 mentalist



who created a Mental Illusion could only use it to inflict damage on Phases 4, 8, and 12). To continue doing damage with a Mental Illusion beyond the first Phase in which a target is attacked with it, the character must maintain the illusion by paying END each Phase to keep it from deteriorating, and must use a Half Phase Action each Phase.

Damage from Mental Illusions is not applied until after the target has failed his Breakout Roll.

Example: *A Varanyi attacks Storvak (EGO 10) with the Illusion of a tropical jungle, complete with a large tiger who can inflict both STUN and BODY upon Storvak. This requires a base EGO +20 Effect Roll, since it will completely alter the setting. Additionally, it requires a +20 effect because the Illusion is able to inflict both STUN and BODY. Thus, the Varanyi must make an EGO +40 Effect Roll to succeed. After making his ECV Attack Roll, the Varanyi rolls his 11d6 of Mental Illusions. He rolls 37 — not enough to achieve the desired effect. The attack does, however, grab Storvak's attention. Storvak charges with blade drawn. The Varanyi decides to create the Illusion that he pulls out an energy pistol, fires, and hits Storvak. This is an EGO +10 effect, +10 more because the Varanyi wants the attack to do STUN. After making his ECV Attack Roll, the Varanyi rolls 40 on his Effect Roll. Since this is greater than Storvak's EGO +20, it's enough to establish the desired Illusion. Storvak fails his Breakout Roll and takes 40 (the points of effect rolled on the dice)/5 = 8d6 STUN damage against his Energy Defense.*

**LIMITATIONS**

Self Only (-1): This simulates a Mental Illusions power a character can only use to change his outward appearance (perhaps making him look like the target's beloved, a celebrity, or the like).

Limited By Senses (-¼ to -½): This Limitation represents a Mental Illusions power that for some reason cannot affect certain Senses. Inability to affect a Targeting Sense Group (typically, the Sight Group) is a -½ Limitation; inability to affect a Non-targeting Sense Group (*i.e.,* any other Sense Group, in most campaigns) is worth a -¼ Limitation per Sense Group.

**MIND CONTROL**

Type: Mental Power/Attack Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DECV
Range: LOS
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1d6 Mind Control

A character with this Mental Power can take control of another character's mind, and thus of his actions. Examples of Mind Control include psionic domination powers, some forms of brainwashing, and hypnosis. Each 1d6 of Mind Control costs 5 Character Points. Mind Control costs END to use.

To use Mind Control, the character makes an ECV Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he gives the target an order (the character must have some way to communicate the order to his target, whether by voice or other means; otherwise, he cannot establish Mind Control). The GM determines what level of effect the character needs on the Mind Control Effects Table to establish that control, based on how agreeable the target is to the command. The character then makes a standard Effect Roll, subtracts the target's Mental Defense (if any), and compares the result to the Mind Control Effects Table. If the Effect Roll is insufficient to reach the desired level, the attack has no effect, but it does alert the target. If the Effect Roll is sufficient to achieve the desired effect, the character establishes control over the target's mind; the target won't know he's experiencing Mind Control until he succeeds with a Breakout Roll.

The four basic levels of Mind Control are self-explanatory and are based on the orders being given. It's easier to Mind Control someone if the orders seem reasonable, and harder if they're poorly worded. The Mind Control rules make it fairly easy to set up small Mind Control effects, and harder to set up more sweeping ones. It's also easier to create a long-lasting, but inconsequential, Mind Control than a more comprehensive one.

### BREAKOUT ROLLS

On the target's first Phase after Mind Control is established, he may attempt to break free from the control by making a Breakout Roll. He remains under the influence of the control (at the given level) until he succeeds with a Breakout Roll.

A character receives a bonus of +1 to +3 and a chance to make another Breakout Roll if forced to perform an action prohibited by his Psychological Limitations. At the GM's discretion, he receives additional bonuses to his roll if other people are trying to "snap him out of it."

If a character is put under Mind Control at a given level, and the situation later changes to require a higher level of Mind Control, then the character gets the chance to make another Breakout Roll with a +2 bonus to his EGO Roll per level of change on the table. Thus, if a character was issued a command that only requires an EGO +10 effect, and the situation changed such that it now requires a +30 effect, the character gets to make another Breakout Roll with a +4 bonus to his EGO Roll. (On the other hand, if the situation changes so that the level of effect needed decreases, the victim does not suffer a penalty to his Breakout Roll.)

Example: *Mentalla uses Mind Control and commands Mighty Man to "Freeze!" Since Mighty Man is a brick and wouldn't really mind standing still, the GM determines this requires only an EGO +10 level of effect. Mentalla's Effect Roll is high enough to achieve this effect. However, if Mentalla then pulled out a .44 Magnum and shot at Mighty Man's DNPC, making Mighty Man stand still would require a higher level of control (EGO +30, the GM decides). This is two levels down the Mind Control Effects Table, and would give Mighty Man the chance to make another Breakout Roll at +4.*

When Mind Controlled, a character must use all of his available Phases unless ordered otherwise. He cannot voluntarily reduce his SPD to 2 to frustrate the character using Mind Control.

### REMEMBERING THE CONTROL

Victims of Mind Control may or may not know that they're being Mind Controlled while the Control is taking place; this is up to the Controller. To put the victim in a trance so he can't remember his own actions after the Control ends requires +10 points of effect. To make the victim believe after the Control ends that the actions were his own requires +20 points of effect. (Unless the Controller achieves this effect, when the Control ends the target knows he was the victim of Mind Control — though he may think he shook it off and that his actions were his own idea.) Other characters can convince the victim he was Mind Controlled, of course.

## MIND CONTROL EFFECTS TABLE

| Total rolled on Mind Control dice - Mental Defense: | Effect |
|---|---|
| Greater than EGO | Target will perform actions he's inclined to perform anyway<br>Target believes any statement which doesn't contradict prior knowledge |
| EGO +10 | Target will perform actions he wouldn't mind doing<br>Target will believe any statement that doesn't contradict reality under direct observation |
| EGO +20 | Target will perform actions he is normally against doing<br>Target will believe any statement that does not contradict strongly held personal beliefs or principles (such as Psychological Limitations) |
| EGO +30 | Target will perform actions he is violently opposed to doing<br>Target will believe statements that contradict strongly held personal beliefs or principles (including Psychological Limitations) or that contradict reality under direct observation. |

**Modifiers (can be applied at any level)**

| | |
|---|---|
| -5 | Order is worded in an exceptionally convincing manner |
| +5 | Order is poorly conceived or contradictory |
| -10 | Order matches target's Psychological Limitations |
| +10 | Order contradicts target's Psychological Limitations |
| +10 | Target will not remember actions |
| +20 | Target will remember actions and think they were natural |

### POWER EXAMPLES: MIND CONTROL

Basic Hypnosis: Mind Control 7d6 (35 Active Points); OIF (any watch, pen, or other object for the subject to focus on; -½), Hypnosis Only (cannot achieve full range of Mind Control effects; -½), No Range (-½), Extra Time (1 minute; -1½), Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Gestures (must wave focusing object in front of subject's eyes; -¼), Eye Contact (-½), Requires A PS: Hypnotist Roll (-¼). Total cost: 6 points.

Master Hypnosis: Mind Control 8d6 (40 Active Points); Hypnosis Only (cannot achieve full range of Mind Control effects; -½), No Range (-½), Extra Time (1 minute; -1½), Concentration (0 DCV; -½). Total cost: 10 points.

Cupid's Touch: Mind Control 10d6, Telepathic (+¼) (62 Active Points); Only To Control/Inflict Love (-1). Total cost: 31 points.

Fear Infliction: Mind Control 10d6, Telepathic (+¼) (62 Active Points); Set Effect (run away as fast as you can; -½). Total cost: 41 points.

Example: *Hypnos attacks his nemesis Mighty Man (EGO 13) with Mind Control. He makes his ECV Attack Roll, and orders Mighty Man to attack a small puppy. The GM decides Mighty Man is violently opposed to doing this, so the Mind Control requires an EGO +30 level of effect. Hypnos rolls his 12d6 Effect Roll, achieving 48 points' worth of Mind Control; Mighty Man has no Mental Defense, so the desired effect is achieved.*

*On his next Phase (before he has to attack the puppy), Mighty Man tries to break out. Because Hypnos exceeded the level of effect needed to successfully Mind Control Mighty Man by 5 points, the hero's Breakout Roll is at -1, making it an 11-. He rolls a 9, so he breaks free of the Mind Control. Mighty Man then uses his Phase to dispose of two of Hypnos's henchmen who are bent on causing the puppy harm.*

#### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Telepathic (+¼): This Advantage represents a form of Mind Control that doesn't require verbal communication (*i.e.,* which has telepathic contact built in). This only allows communication of the command; the character cannot read the target's mind.

#### LIMITATIONS

Set Effect (varies): A Mind Control with this Limitation only allows a single command (for example, "fall in love with me"). The value of the Limitation depends on how limited the Set Effect is. Some examples include: Only To Control/Inflict Emotions (Empathy) (-½); Only To Control/Inflict A Single Emotion (-1); "Go Home" Only (-½); "Go Home" Only in a Particular Situation (-1). The GM has the final say on how limiting a set command is; most are worth -½.

## MIND LINK

Type: Mental Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Target's DECV
Range: LOS (see text)
Costs END: No
Cost: See Mind Link Summary Table

A character with Mind Link, a variant of Telepathy, can set up a specific link with a receptive (willing) mind, thereby allowing instant mental communication. (Characters who want to be able to read minds or communicate with unwilling subjects should buy Telepathy.) Mind Link does not cost END to use.

The cost of Mind Link depends upon several factors:

The Minds Involved: It costs 5 Character Points to be able to establish a link with one specific mind. The character must choose this individual when he buys the Link; it can be anyone — a human, an animal, a sentient computer, or the like — but he can't change the specific mind after he chooses it. The ability to establish a Mind Link with a specific group of people (like a family or a pantheon) costs +5 points. The ability to establish a Mind Link with any willing target costs an additional +5 points.

Number Of Minds: A character can usually only maintain a Mind Link with one person at a time (even if he can establish the Link with anyone in a group). He can double the number of minds for every +5 points.

Distance: Mind Link is usually limited to a single planet. If it can reach any distance, it costs +5 points; if it can reach into any dimension as well, it costs an additional +5 points.

Example: *The eight members of the Vlandry family can all communicate with each other mentally, regardless of distance or what plane of existence they're on. The total cost of this Mind Link for each member is 10 points (for a specific group), +15 points (for eight targets), +10 points (to work across any distance or dimension), for a total of 35 Active Points. However, since the Link only works with family members who have Mind Link themselves, a -1 Limitation is applied, for a final Real Point cost of 17 points to each Vlandry.*

#### USING MIND LINK

To establish a Mind Link, the character must have Line Of Sight to the target and must succeed with an ECV Attack Roll to set up the Link (this requires an Attack Action, meaning a character can only Link with one person per Phase). The target must be completely willing (ECV 0), otherwise the Link fails outright.

Once established, Mind Link does not require Line Of Sight, and is only broken when either party wants to "hang up." Since Mind Link is Persistent, if the character establishing the Link is Knocked Out, the other characters in the Mind Link can maintain it. When the character who was Knocked Out

## MIND LINK SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost | Minds Involved |
|---|---|
| 5 | Character can Link with a single mind, defined when he buys the power |
| 10 | Character can Link with any one mind in a group of minds, defined when he buys the power (*e.g.,* everyone in a family; everyone on a superteam) |
| 15 | Character can Link with any one mind |

| Cost | Number Of Minds In Link At Once |
|---|---|
| +0 | Character can only Link with one mind at a time |
| +5 | Character can Link with two minds at once |
| +10 | Character can Link with four minds at once |
| +15 | Character can Link with eight minds at once |

...and so forth (+5 points per x2 minds)

| Cost | Range |
|---|---|
| +0 | Mind Link has planetary range |
| +5 | Mind Link has an unlimited range in this dimension |
| +10 | Mind Link has an unlimited range in this dimension and can reach into other dimensions |

wakes up, he can rejoin the Link by establishing LOS with anyone in the Link and making an ECV Attack Roll against ECV 0.

Any character in a Mind Link who has a Mental Power can use it through the Link against any other character in the Link. Such attacks do not require an ECV Attack Roll (they automatically hit), but making one requires an Attack Action. Of course, since a character must voluntarily accept a Mind Link, such "attacks" are rarely violent (unless the subject was tricked into accepting the Mind Link).

A character Mind Linked with another character (the "subject") does not use the subject's Senses. He receives the mental impressions of those Senses — he knows the character sees a particular building, or smells the odor of gasoline — but he does not himself see the building or smell gasoline. If a mentalist wants to use a subject's senses this way, he should buy Clairsentience Linked to his Mind Link, with the -1 Limitation *Only To Use Subject's Senses.*

Typically, every character in a Mind Link can "hear" everything that's "said" to any other character in the Link. The GM may allow a character to make an EGO Roll to "talk" only with one person without the others overhearing; this usually requires a Half Phase Action.

Mind Linked characters are not automatically aware of each others' location. They may transmit that information to each other if they desire, however. Like Telepathy, Mind Link does not suffer from a language barrier (see page 231).

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

No LOS Needed: This +10 Character Point Adder allows a character to establish a Mind Link with certain other characters, regardless of whether LOS exists between them. The character can do this with a number of persons equal to his INT/5, and he must define these persons in advance (typically they're his teammates, comrades, siblings, or the like). Changing one of the "slots" to a different person usually requires time, effort, and LOS (or even touch). The effective "range" of this form of Mind Link is usually limited to planetary distances, but may be greater in some genres.

Psychic Bond: Some characters, such as true loves or twins, may have a permanent mental link, known as a Psychic Bond, with each other. Characters with a Psychic Bond can communicate telepathically at any time, regardless of whether they're within Line Of Sight. The effective "range" of the Bond is usually limited to planetary distances, but may be greater in some genres. A Psychic Bond with a single person costs +5 Character Points to Mind Link. A Psychic Bond is permanent and cannot be severed except with a Mental Transform or similar methods. A character can buy multiple Psychic Bonds for a single Mind Link power, if desired, but the people he's Bonded to aren't also Bonded to each other (unless they buy their own Mind Link and Psychic Bond separately).

### LIMITATIONS

Feedback (-1, -2): This Limitation signifies that whatever pain a character in a Mind Link feels, the character who possesses the Power also feels. In game terms, the damage done to any person in a Mind Link feeds back through the Link and affects the character with the Power. At the -1 level, Feedback channels STUN damage only; at -2, Feedback channels both STUN and BODY. The character's Mental Defense applies against the Feedback damage (which is considered Normal Damage, even if it's caused by a Killing Attack). The character takes the full damage rolled on the dice, not the damage suffered by the target after he applies his defenses.

Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1): A character can only use Mind Link with this Limitation to communicate with other persons who have also purchased that form of Mind Link. This does not allow the character to communicate with anyone who has *any* form of Mind Link, just those who have the same Mind Link as he does.

### POWER EXAMPLES: MIND LINK

Closed Radio Link: Mind Link, specific group of up to any 8 minds, No LOS Needed (35 Active Points); OAF (-1), Only Can Be Maintained With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), Flashed As Radio And Hearing Groups, Not Mental Group (-½). Total cost: 10 points.

Brotherhood Of Taramak's Mental Bond: Mind Link (any four minds of priests belonging to the Brotherhood of Taramak), No LOS Needed. Total cost: 30 points.

**POWER EXAMPLES: MIND SCAN**

Psychic Sight: Mind Scan 12d6. Total cost: 60 points.

Psychic Viewing Crystal: Mind Scan 10d6 (50 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 25 points.

**MIND SCAN**

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Mental Power/Sensory Power |
| Duration: | Constant |
| Target: | Target's DECV |
| Range: | Special (see text) |
| Costs END: | Yes (see text) |
| Cost: | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 Mind Scan; +2 Character Points for every +1 ECV with Mind Scan |

A character with this Mental Power can mentally search an area to find another mind. Each 1d6 of Mind Scan costs 5 points; +1 OECV with Mind Scan (an Adder) costs 2 points. Mind Scan costs END to use (see below).

Mind Scan is a Sense (part of the Mental Sense Group). It operates in "360 Degrees" (in the sense that it searches an entire area at once) and is a Targeting Sense for other Mental Powers (and, at EGO +20, for other attacks as well).

Even though Mind Scan is a Constant Power, it does not cost END to maintain. A character with Mind Scan only has to pay END when he makes an ECV Attack Roll with his Mind Scan. However, since Mind Scan is Constant, he must keep it "turned on" — for instance, if it's in a Multipower, he cannot switch the slots. If the Mind Scan is turned off then the lock-on is broken.

**USING MIND SCAN**

To use Mind Scan, the character defines the area (of any size) he wishes to scan. He makes an ECV Attack Roll versus the DECV of the target mind. However, his OECV suffers a penalty based on the number of minds in the search area, as indicated on the Mind Scan Modifiers Table.

**Familiar And Unfamiliar Minds**

The character should receive a bonus (+1 to +5) if he's searching for a familiar mind. Familiar minds include: anyone with whom he's previously had any contact via Mind Control, Mind Link, Mind Scan, or Telepathy; persons to whom he's emotionally close (friends, family members, and so forth); and persons with whom he has frequent association (co-workers and the like). The bonus to the ECV Attack Roll depends upon the level of familiarity: a parent (or any close family member) or spouse would probably be +5; a distant relative seen only once or twice a year might be +2 to +3; a former girlfriend the character hasn't seen in years might be +1 to +3. At the GM's option, a character might also receive a +1 or greater bonus to his ECV Attack Roll if he's searching for a mind so unique, strange, or powerful that it "stands out" from all the minds around it (this might include the minds of other characters with Mental Powers).

Conversely, a character should suffer an OECV penalty (-1 to -5) if he's searching for a mind that's unfamiliar or very alien to him. Unfamiliar minds include anyone with whom he has never had mental contact or lengthy physical association (no matter how well that person is described or how much the character knows about him) and particularly alien or bizarre minds.

With the GM's permission, a character can buy Penalty Skill Levels to counteract the penalties imposed on Mind Scan (one type of PSL suffices to cover both the "number of people" and "unfamiliar minds" penalties).

**Locking On**

If the ECV Attack Roll fails, the character cannot make any contact with the target.

If the ECV Attack Roll succeeds, the character knows the general location and presence of the target. He declares the desired Mind Scan level and makes a standard Effect Roll using the Mind Scan Effects Table. If the Effect Roll is not enough to reach the desired level, the Mind Scan has no effect — the character cannot contact the target mentally, and does not establish a "lock-on," but the target knows someone's mentally scanning for him. If the Effect Roll is enough to achieve the desired effect, the character has "locked on" to the target with Mind Scan. The target is entitled to make Breakout Rolls in the usual manner. Whether the Breakout Roll succeeds, the target knows someone's searching for him with Mind Scan (even if the character with Mind Scan chooses to do nothing other than establish the lock-on).

After a character fails a Mind Scan Effect Roll, he may make Mind Scan ECV Attack Rolls in later Phases to once again try to establish a lock-on. Since he now knows the "general location and presence" of the target mind, he's subject to the modifier two steps better on the Mind Scanning Modifiers chart (assuming the target has not left the general area).

If a Mind Scan Effect Roll is enough to allow a character to use Mental Powers on the target, using Mental Powers requires a separate Attack Action — a character cannot mentally attack the target in the same Phase in which he establishes the lock-on (not even using a multiple-power attack). All standard rules for the Mental Power apply; for example, using Mind Control through a lock-on requires the character to have some way to communicate his orders to the target.

## MIND SCAN MODIFIERS TABLE

| Number of People | OECV Modifier |
|---|---|
| 1 (Freelance Game Designer) | 0 |
| 10 (Small Gaming Company) | -2 |
| 100 (Theater) | -4 |
| 1,000 (Apartment Building; Gaming Convention) | -6 |
| 10,000 (Small Town) | -8 |
| 100,000 (Large Town; Super Bowl) | -10 |
| 1,000,000 (Major Metropolis) | -12 |
| 10,000,000 (State) | -14 |
| 100,000,000 (Large Country) | -16 |
| 1,000,000,000 (Continent) | -18 |
| 10,000,000,000 (Large Planet) | -20 |
| ...and so forth | |

| Other Circumstances | OECV Modifier |
|---|---|
| Familiar mind | +1 to +5 |
| Unfamiliar or alien mind | -1 to -5 |
| Strange, unique, or powerful mind | +1 or more |

Once established, a Mind Scan lock-on is a two-way circuit. If the character can mentally attack his target, his target can mentally attack him; if he knows where his target is, his target knows where he is. Two characters can carry on a long-distance mental duel through Mind Scan. However, having a lock-on to a target doesn't tell the character anything about him (or vice-versa), such as his Skills, powers, personal history, motivations, or the like.

**Range**

Mind Scan does not have a standard "range" per se, and is not subject to the Range Modifier — a character in New York City can, for example, Mind Scan the city of Los Angeles without suffering any Range Modifier. However, Mind Scan's range is not actually unlimited. In general the GM should limit Mind Scan to planetary ranges — a character on Earth can Mind Scan anywhere on Earth, but not on the Moon or Mars. (Of course, in some genres, such as Science Fiction, the GM may allow Mind Scans of greater range, and characters can always MegaScale their Mind Scan to achieve greater ranges if they wish; see below.)

**Counting Minds**

A character can use Mind Scan to determine the number of sentient minds in an area, without Scanning for any particular mind. To do this, he declares his target area and makes a Mind Scan ECV Attack Roll against DECV 3 (including modifiers for the number of people in the target area). If the roll succeeds, he knows how many sentient minds are in that area, plus or minus 10%. If the roll fails, the GM should give the character incorrect (possibly wildly incorrect) information about the number of minds in that area.

## POWERS

Movement Powers: If the target of Mind Scan leaves the scanned area after a lock-on is established (say, by Teleporting or using some other high-speed Movement Power), the character with Mind Scan must make an unmodified EGO Roll. If he makes the roll, he maintains the lock-on, provided the target does not move himself beyond the "range" of the Mind Scan (for example, by Teleporting to the other side of the galaxy). If he fails, the lock-on is broken, and he has no idea where the target has gone (at the GM's option, a second EGO Roll might give the character a vague idea where his target has gone).

Teleportation: An EGO +20 Mind Scan result is generally enough for a character to Teleport to the target's "exact location" without suffering the risks of Teleporting blind, but the final decision is up to the GM based on the circumstances, common sense, dramatic sense, special effects, and considerations of game balance.

## MIND SCAN EFFECTS TABLE

| Total rolled on Mind Scan dice - Mental DEF is: | Effect |
|---|---|
| Greater than EGO | Mentalist can establish Mind Link or use first level of Telepathy (communication). He also knows in which direction the target is located. |
| EGO +10 | Mentalist can use all Mental Powers (including most BOECV powers) on target, and can estimate the general distance to the target. |
| EGO +20 | Mentalist knows the exact location of the target. He can attack with all attacks. If he wishes to attack the target with a non-Mental Power, the attack must be able to reach the target, and the Range Modifier applies. |
| **Modifiers (can be applied at any level)** | |
| +20 | Mind Scan is undetectable by target |

## ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Roll Bonus: As mentioned above, a character can buy bonuses to his Mind Scan ECV Attack Roll as an Adder. Every +1 OECV with Mind Scan costs 2 Character Points.

Based On ECV: A BOECV power may be used through a Mind Scan lock-on, provided the BOECV power isn't subject to the normal Range Modifier.

MegaScale: Mind Scan is automatically considered to have MegaScale at the +1¼ level because it can search for minds on a planet. It may be bought up from there at the usual rate of +¼ per step on the MegaScale Table.

One-Way Link (+1): Normally Mind Scan is a "two-way circuit" — the target can use Mental Powers against the character through the Mind Scan link, just like the character can use them against the target. Mind Scan with this Advantage only works one way; the character can mentally attack his target, but the target cannot mentally attack him back.

Transdimensional: Characters can buy Transdimensional for Mind Scan without also buying Indirect.

## LIMITATIONS

Cannot Attack Through Lock-On (-½ to -1½): This Limitation represents a form of Mind Scan that the character cannot use to attack a target, only to locate him. For a -½, neither the character nor his target can use the link to attack each other mentally, but they can communicate using Telepathy or Mind Link. For -1, neither the character nor his target can use the link either to attack each other mentally or to communicate. For -1½, the character cannot use the link to attack or communicate, but his target can mentally attack him or communicate with him through the link.

### POWER EXAMPLES: MISSILE DEFLECTION AND REFLECTION

Shield: Missile Deflection (arrows/projectiles), Range (adjacent hexes, +½) (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), Activation 14- (-½), Will Not Work Against Heavy Missiles (-¼). Total cost: 5 points.

"It's All In The Reflexes": Missile Deflection And Reflection (thrown objects; back at attacker) (25 Active Points); Requires A DEX Roll (assuming DEX Roll of 14-; -½). Total cost: 17 points.

Psychokinetic Barrier: Missile Deflection (all Ranged attacks), Range (+1). Total cost: 40 points.

## MISSILE DEFLECTION AND REFLECTION

Type: Standard Power/Defense Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 5 Character Points to Deflect thrown objects, 10 Character Points to Deflect arrows or projectiles, 15 Character Points to Deflect bullets and shrapnel, 20 Character Points to Deflect all ranged attacks. To Reflect Attacks back at attacker costs +20 points; to Reflect attacks at any target costs an additional +10 Character Points

A character with Missile Deflection And Reflection can block or otherwise avoid Ranged attacks. Some examples of Missile Deflection include blocking Ranged attacks with a shield, a special technique for dodging out of the way of an attack, or a character who's so tough Ranged attacks simply "bounce off" of him when he's prepared for them. Missile Deflection And Reflection does not cost END to use.

### BUYING MISSILE DEFLECTION

For 5 Character Points, a character can Deflect thrown objects. For 10 Character Points, a character can also Deflect arrows, sling stones, and other non-gunpowder projectiles. For 15 Character Points, a character can Deflect any physical projectile, including bullets, shrapnel, artillery shells, and the like. For 20 points, a character can Deflect any Ranged attack that can be Deflected. This includes, but is not limited to, Energy Blasts, Ranged Killing Attacks (RKAs), most attacks with the Advantage *Ranged,* and many NND and AVLD attacks (see below).

**Improving The Missile Deflection Roll**

A character can purchase bonuses to his OCV with Missile Deflection as 2-point Combat Skill Levels. These are standard CSLs subject to the usual rules for CSLs (such as restrictions on Limiting them). With the GM's permission, characters can put these CSLs in a Power Framework slot with Missile Deflection.

A character can also apply 8-point Combat Skill Levels and 10-point Overall Skill Levels to improve his OCV with Missile Deflection (he cannot apply 5-point CSLs).

The OCV bonus from CSLs only applies to the Deflection roll. If a character also has Missile Reflection, he gets no OCV bonus for Reflecting.

## MISSILE DEFLECTION AND REFLECTION SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost | Missile Deflection |
|---|---|
| 5 | Character can Deflect thrown objects |
| 10 | Character can also Deflect non-gunpowder projectiles (*e.g.,* arrows, sling stones) |
| 15 | Character can also Deflect bullets and shrapnel (*i.e.,* any physical projectile) |
| 20 | Character can also Deflect any Ranged attack that can be Deflected (see text) |
| **Cost** | **Missile Reflection** |
| +20 | Character can Reflect attacks he can Deflect back at his attacker |
| +30 | Character can Reflect attacks he can Deflect at anyone |

A character can buy 2-point Combat Skill Levels to improve his OCV with Missile Deflection (but not Reflection).

### USING MISSILE DEFLECTION

Missile Deflection functions like a Block in HTH Combat: it takes a Half Phase to perform; it is an Attack Action; the character must declare it before the attacker rolls his Attack Roll; characters can Abort to Missile Deflect.

To Deflect, the character must make an Attack Roll against the incoming attack. The character makes the roll using his OCV against the attacker's *OCV,* not DCV — the character with Missile Deflection must roll less than or equal to (11 + his OCV - attacker's total OCV). However, unlike Block, Missile Deflect has no effect on the order of action in combat (see page 383).

A successful Missile Deflection roll means the character takes no damage. A Deflected attack typically does not cause any damage to other characters or the locale. A failed Missile Deflection roll doesn't mean the attacker automatically hits the character; he still has to succeed with an Attack Roll against the character's DCV, as usual.

A character who successfully Missile Deflects can Deflect additional attacks made against him. He may make these additional attempts to Deflect in the same Phase or later Segments before his next Phase (this does not count as Aborting to Missile Deflect; it's just an extension of the initial Deflect). Each additional roll is made at a cumulative -2 penalty (second Deflection -2, third Deflection -4, and so on). If the character misses any of his Deflects, he cannot Deflect further attacks. If the character uses Missile Deflection to attempt to Deflect an attack in a Segment in which he does not have a Phase, he cannot Abort in that Segment.

Example: *Sidewinder, a SPD 4 superhero, faces a group of gun-toting thugs. In Segment 6, two thugs shoot at him. Rather than risk being riddled with bullets, he uses his Missile Deflection (base 14- roll). His first Missile Deflection roll is at 14-, and his second at 12-; he makes both rolls. A third thug shoots him in Segment 7. Although Sidewinder does not have a Phase in Segment 7, he can keep Missile Deflecting, this time at 10-. He rolls a 10 and barely Deflects that bullet. Then, also in Segment 7, a fourth thug shoots Sidewinder with a flamethrower. Ordinarily Sidewinder would Abort to Dive For Cover out of the way of the flame, since he cannot Missile Deflect it (it's an Area Of Effect attack). However, because he's already Missile Deflected in Segment 7 he cannot Abort in that Segment. Sidewinder's about to get toasted.*

**Non-Deflectable Attacks**

Missile Deflection does not work against the following attacks:

—attacks that target the character's EGO (such as Ego Attack, Mind Control, other Mental Powers, and many BOECV powers)

—attacks that target his hex (such as an Area Of Effect or Explosion)

—Entangles (unless the GM rules otherwise)

—attacks the character doesn't perceive (Alternately, the GM might allow the character to try to Deflect an attack he can't perceive using the rules for lack of Senses in Ranged Combat to reduce his OCV.)

—any type of HTH Combat attack (including Move By/Through and Ranged powers with the *No Range* Limitation)

The GM may expand or waive these rules in light of special effects. For example, if an Area Of Effect attack or Entangle is carried in a bullet or grenade, the GM should probably let the character Deflect it (and the attack should take the *Can Be Missile Deflected* Limitation; see page 114).

**Deflecting With Large Objects**

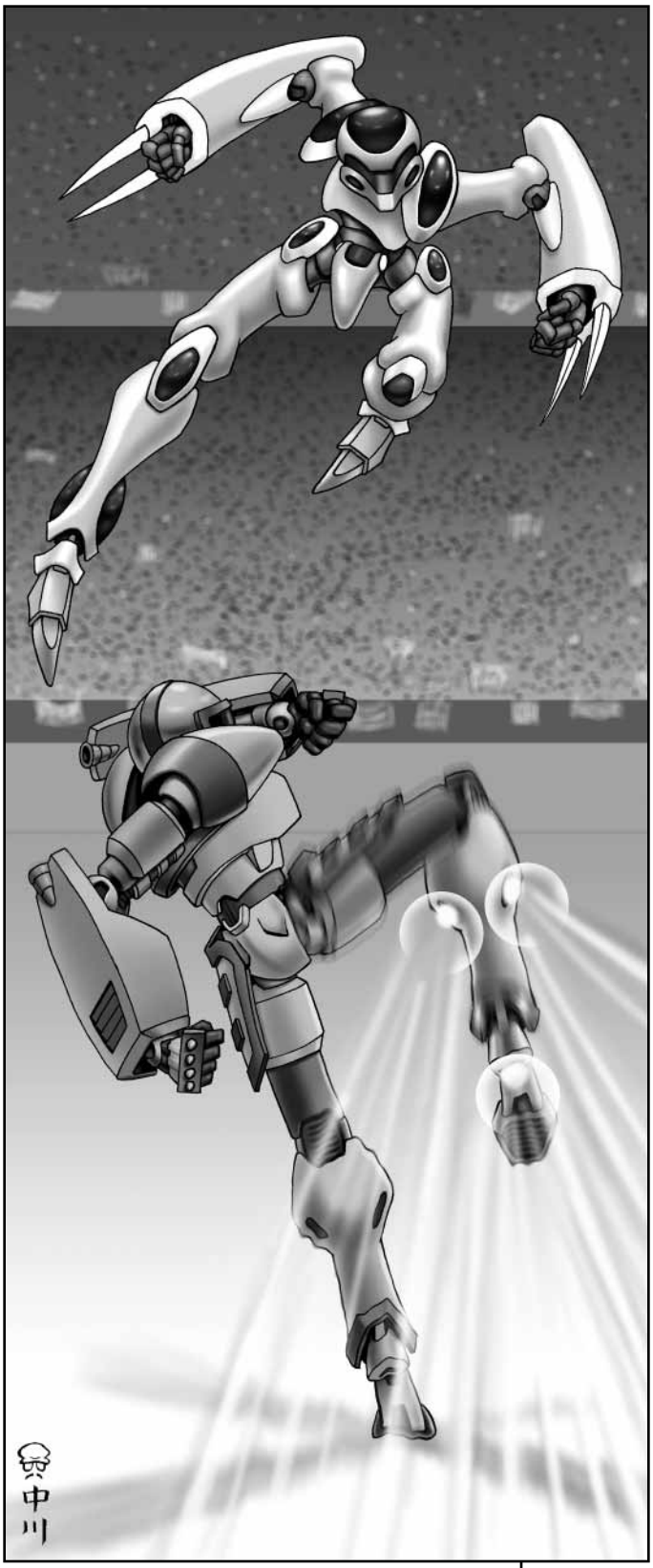
At the GM's option, characters who are strong enough to pick up large objects (such as cars, trees, and the like) can use them to aid their Missile Deflection. The character receives an OCV bonus with his Missile Deflection equal to the object's DCV penalty based on Size. Thus, using a typical automobile (-2 DCV due to Size) would add +2 to the character's OCV for purposes of Deflecting attacks.

**MISSILE REFLECTION**

A character with Missile Deflection normally Deflects incoming attacks in a random direction (typically causing no harm to any character or object in the area). But some characters have the ability to Reflect attacks at other characters.

For +20 Character Points, a character can Reflect back at the attacker any attack he can Deflect. To do this, the character must first succeed with a Deflection roll, as described above. He then Reflects the attack back at the attacker, using his normal OCV (this occurs immediately after the Deflection and is an Action that takes no time). Combat Skill Levels bought for his Missile Deflection roll do *not* increase his OCV with the Attack Roll to hit the target with the Reflected attack; the Range Modifier and other appropriate modifiers apply. For an additional +10 points (total of +30 points), the character can Reflect incoming attacks at any target.

A character can never Abort to Missile Reflection, but can continue to Reflect additional attacks in Segments after his Phase just like Missile Deflection (the same OCV penalty applies). A character can never Reflect attacks not targeted directly at him. A character with Reflection can choose just to Deflect an attack (in which case he can Abort to Deflect); he doesn't have to Reflect it.



Example: *Michiko, a ninja assassin, buys Missile Deflection against thrown objects for 5 points, with +3 to her Deflection Roll for +6 points and Reflection for +20 points (Total Cost is 5 + 6 + 20 = 31 Character Points). Michiko can now Deflect or Reflect thrown attacks, but cannot affect other types of attacks. Later, in combat, a guard with a 5 OCV throws an axe at Michiko. She has a Held Action and decides*

*to try to Reflect the axe. Michiko has a 6 OCV, and has +3 with the roll, so she must roll 11 + (6 + 3) - 5 = 15 or less to succeed. Michiko rolls a 12, which succeeds. Michiko now tries to Reflect the attack at the guard. Michiko is OCV 6, and the guard is DCV 5. Michiko rolls an 8, hitting the guard squarely. Michiko continues on her mission unruffled.*



**POWERS**

Constant Powers: If a character Missile Deflects a Constant attack, the first roll Deflects it entirely. He doesn't have to make further Deflection rolls in later Phases; it's as if the attacker missed him.

Sense-Affecting Powers: If a character is unable to perceive an attack due to a Flash, Darkness, or the like, he cannot Missile Deflect it (see above).

Stretching: Even if a character has Stretching (or reach from Growth), he can only Deflect or Reflect attacks aimed directly at him (unless he buys the *Range* Advantage for his Deflection, as described below, or the GM permits otherwise).

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Area Of Effect: Characters cannot apply *Area Of Effect* to Missile Deflection as a way of Deflecting any attack passing through the defined area, unless the GM specifically permits this. In any event, applying Area Of Effect to Missile Deflection does not allow characters to Missile Deflect Area Of Effect/Explosion attacks.

Autofire, Rapid Fire: When a character wants to Missile Deflect an Autofire attack that has hit him multiple times, he makes a normal Missile Deflection roll. If he makes the roll exactly, he Deflects one of the hits. For every 2 points by which he makes the roll beyond that, he Deflects another hit.

If the character Deflecting the attack gets attacked by another character that same Phase, his Deflection roll suffers a -2 for the second attack, -4 for the third, and so forth. The penalty doesn't derive from the number of Autofire shots Deflected, because the character only made one Deflection roll. For Rapid Fire or the like, the penalty depends on the number of separate Attack Roll-based attacks Deflected. For example, to Deflect a three-shot Rapid Fire involves one normal Deflection roll, a second roll at -2, and a third at -4. (A Deflected attack does not count as a "miss" for purposes of determining whether the attacker has to stop his Rapid Fire.) If another character attacked the Deflecting character, an attempt to Deflect his attack would be at -6.

Based On Ego Combat Value: As stated above, characters cannot normally use Missile Deflection And Reflection against Mental Powers. However, at the GM's option, if the Power is bought with this Advantage, a character can use it on Mental Powers, but not on non-Mental attacks. It uses the character's OECV against the OECV of his attacker to "Block" incoming attacks. Standard rules for Missile Deflection And Reflection otherwise apply.

Missile Deflection At Range (+½, +1): A character can purchase Missile Deflection so he can Deflect attacks not aimed directly at him. (If the character also has Reflection, the Advantage applies only to the Deflection part of the Power, since characters cannot use Reflection at Range). For a +½ Power Advantage, he can Deflect attacks directed at targets in any adjacent hex (for example, he could protect a comrade standing next to him). (The GM may reduce this to +¼ if the Missile Deflection has a restricted Range, such as only to the extent of a character's Stretching). For a +1 Power Advantage, he can Deflect attacks at Range; the Range Modifier applies to these Deflection rolls. The maximum range is (5" x Active Points in Missile Deflection).

Uncontrolled: A character can only buy Uncontrolled for Missile Deflection (and/or Reflection) if he defines a reasonably common and obvious way to bypass or turn off the Missile Deflection (he receives no Limitation for this). Furthermore, if the Missile Deflection does not cost END, the character must define a time limit for the power (typically no more than one Turn), after which it stops working. The GM must approve all forms of Uncontrolled Missile Deflection.

Standard rules for Missile Deflection apply to Uncontrolled Missile Deflection. For example, if the character fails to Deflect an attack, the power stops working and has to be re-activated (even if it has END left to fuel it, in which case the character loses the remaining END in the pool). Additionally, the penalties for multiple Deflection carry over from Phase to Phase. For example, a character sets up Uncontrolled Missile Deflection on his Phase in Segment 3. In that same Segment, he Deflects three shots (at -0, -2, and -4 OCV, respectively). On his Phase in Segment 5, if he has to Deflect two more shots, his roll suffers a -6 and -8 OCV penalty.

**LIMITATIONS**

Charges: The rules for Uncontrolled (see above) also apply to Continuing Charges.

Linked: Even if a character has to buy his Missile Deflection and Reflection separately (because they have different Power Modifiers, for example), he cannot Link the two of them together. By definition they only work "together."

Will Not Work Against Heavy Missiles (-¼): Missile Deflection with this Limitation doesn't work against attacks that involve physical projectiles too heavy for the character to lift. If the projectile weighs more than the character can lift with his STR (without Pushing), he cannot Deflect it. This Limitation represents forms of Missile Deflection that literally involve blocking or deflecting projectiles; Missile Deflection with the special effect of "dodging" shouldn't take it, since an object's weight has no effect on a character's ability to move out of its way. Typically this Limitation is worth -¼, but at the GM's option it may be worth more if the character is unusually weak.

**MULTIFORM**

Type: Standard Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points in the most expensive form; 2x the number of forms for +5 Character Points

A character with this Standard Power can change his original form into one or more other forms, each with its own abilities, personality, and Characteristics. Examples include a werewolf's ability to switch between human and lupine forms, a character whose suit of armor can "reconfigure" itself into many different types of armor; and a wizard's ability to assume the form of any animal. Multiform does not cost END to use.

**BUYING AND BUILDING ALTERNATE FORMS**

The player must choose one of his character's forms to be the *true form.* The true form can be any of the character's forms, depending upon character conception. The other form(s) bought with Multiform are his *alternate form(s).* The character's true form can have more points than his alternate forms, or his alternate forms can have more points than his true form (before or after accounting for the points the true form pays for Multiform). In other words, the true form does not have to be the most expensive of the character's forms, and the relationship of the costs of the forms does not affect Multiform's cost. As always, the GM should monitor the situation to prevent abuse.

The cost for Multiform, which only the true form pays for, is 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points the most expensive alternate form is built with (including points from Disadvantages). The character may pay +5 Character Points for every up to two times the number of alternate forms of equal or lesser cost (*i.e.,* 5 Character Points for up to x2 alternate forms, 10 Character Points for up to x4 alternate forms, and so on). The cost of the true form has no effect on the cost of the alternate forms, nor does the existence of the true form affect the calculation of how many alternate forms the character buys for +5 points.

Example: *Storvak, a strange alien built on 350 points, can assume four different animal forms — a tyrannosaur (400 points), a cheetah (275 points), an eagle (200 points), and a fish (150 points). The base cost of his Multiform is 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points his most expensive form (the tyrannosaur) is built with — 400/5, or 80 points. For 4x the number of forms, he pays +10 points, for a total of 90. His true form, the alien form, pays this cost.*

A character's forms do not get to "share" anything for free. If a character's true form has some resource or object, such as a Base or a Vehicle, his alternate forms also have to pay for it if they want to use it. Otherwise, it disappears or somehow becomes inaccessible to them. Typically, the most logical solution is for the GM to require the alternate forms to buy the resource as well. In general, all forms should pay for other things they have in common, such as certain Skills for some characters.

Each form a character can change into is as free-willed as the original character. The player must have a complete character sheet for each form (or some other way to keep track of the abilities and experiences of each form). Forms may have different abilities, personalities, or Disadvantages than the true form or each other, if the player so desires (the character's personality often remains the same from form to form, and in any form he retains the memories from other forms unless he has the *Multiform Amnesia* Psychological Limitation described below). If the forms happen to buy the same abilities or Skills, that's simply the nature of the different forms; characters may not take a Limitation or Disadvantage for this, nor may a character buy an ability or Skill once and somehow "share" it with all of his forms.

**Base Points And Disadvantages**

A character's forms are built on the same Base Points as the true form (or fewer points, if the player so desires). Each form that's built on more points than its Base Points must take sufficient Disadvantages to balance out its cost, just like building any other character. However, it may be appropriate, or even required, to take some Disadvantages to define the alternate form properly, regardless of whether the alternate form gets any points for them.

Gamemasters should carefully evaluate the Disadvantages taken by a character's forms. Disadvantages a character can eliminate or reduce by changing shape may be worth fewer (or no) points because their effect is so easily negated. For example, ordinarily a Distinctive Feature should carry over from form to form — if the true form has Distinctive Feature, "Striking Blue Eyes," then all forms should have the same blue eyes. In situations where this is not applicable, the Distinctive Feature should normally be bought as *Easily Concealed* (or, at most, *Concealable With Effort*), since the character can hide the Feature by changing forms.

Alternately, with the GM's permission a character could buy an alternate form with fewer Disadvantage points than it would ordinarily require by paying for the points not balanced by Disadvantages as part of the cost of Multiform. The cost is 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points not balanced by Disadvantages *in addition to* the normal cost of the Multiform.

Example: *A character buys an alternate form built as a Standard Superheroic character (200 Base Points, plus 150 points from Disadvantages, for a total of 350 points). This costs 70 Character Points. However, he wants the alternate form to be built on 400 points — but without having to take another 50 points' worth of Disadvantages. With the GM's permission, the character pays the standard cost of a 400-point alternate form — 80 Character Points — and*

**POWER EXAMPLES: MULTIFORM**

Werewolf Forms: Multiform (assume 300-point wolfman form or 225-point wolf form; true form is 150-point human form) (65 Active Points); Can Only Change Forms At Night (-1). Total cost: 32 points.

Vari-Armor: Multiform (reconfigure powered armor suit into any of eight different other "forms," each built on 300 points) (75 Active Points); OIF (-½), Extra Time (takes 1 Turn to change forms; -¼). Total cost: 33 points.

Dracoform Amulet: Multiform (change shape into 500-point dragon) (100 Active Points); OAF (-1), Independent (-2), 1 Charge (-2), Personality Loss (1 Hour; -1). Total cost: 14 points.

## MULTIFORM, SHAPE SHIFT, AND DUPLICATION

Multiform is related to, but different from, Duplication and Shape Shift. Duplication allows the character to create extra bodies or selves, some of which may be different from the original character (but none of which have inherent shapechanging powers unless they buy them). Shape Shift allows a character to change his form, but not his powers or abilities. Multiform does not create new bodies, but does allow a character to assume different forms, which may or may not have different personalities and abilities than the true form. When building body alteration powers, players should carefully evaluate these three Powers to determine which one is best suited to create the ability desired.



*then also pays for not having any Disadvantages to balance the last 50 points' worth of alternate form. That costs another (50/5 =) 10 Character Points, for a total of 90 points for a 400-point alternate form with 200 Base Points, 150 points from Disadvantages, and 50 additional points.*

**Power Frameworks**

Multiform is a Standard Power, and therefore characters can buy it in Power Frameworks unless the GM or some other rule forbids them to. In regards to Multipower, since the tradeoff of a Multipower — not getting to use all the powers at once at full power — is a lot like Multiform (which, when used, prevents the character from using any of the powers in his other form), some GMs may not consider this balanced and non-abusive, and so forbid it.

Characters can take Multiform in appropriate Variable Power Pools, but given the ease with which they can buy extra alternate forms, the GM may want to require special justification for them to do so. If a character does put Multiform in a VPP, he should use the basic cost of the alternate form each time, without any doubling the number of alternate forms. In this situation, the VPP construct essentially takes the place of the "+5 points doubles the number of forms" rule.

### CHANGING FORMS

Multiform itself allows a character to change his form. He does not have to purchase Shape Shift or some other Power to do so. A character with two or more alternate forms can shift directly between any two forms without having to use the true form as an intermediary. Changing from one form to another requires a Half Phase Action.

Similarly, a character's alternate forms do not also have to buy Multiform so he can change shape back to the true form. It's assumed the true form's Multiform remains "active" even though he's in alternate form and allows him to change back to his true form (or other forms) using the standard Multiform rules (unless Accidental Change, Personality Loss, or the like affect his ability to change). Each form doesn't have to purchase Multiform.

No other power or ability remains "active" when a character switches from one form to another — the abilities of the former form cease to function, and those of the new form have yet to be activated (unless they are Persistent, in which case they'd "turn on" as soon as the changing of form is complete unless the GM rules otherwise). The character has to activate his new form's powers using the standard rules for doing so — but since changing forms is a Half Phase Action, and activating powers is a Zero Phase Action, usually this isn't any problem.

**Changing Forms And Damage**

When a character shifts forms, the STUN and BODY damage he's taken and the END he's used do not disappear — they carry over to the next form. For this reason, shifting from a form with lots of BODY to a form with few BODY is dangerous, possibly even fatal. For greater accuracy (and complexity), figure out what percentage of a character's total BODY, STUN, or END he lost while in one form, and then subtract that percentage from the appropriate Characteristic in his current form.

Example: *Storvak's tyrannosaur form has 35 BODY; his fish form only has 5 BODY. If he takes 30 BODY damage in his tyrannosaur form, and then shifts to fish form, he'll die — the fish does not have 30 BODY which it can take as damage. Using the alternate rule, 30 is 86% of 35, so the fish would suffer 4 BODY (5x.86) worth of damage.*

### EXPERIENCE POINTS

Alternate forms do not earn Experience Points in the usual fashion. Normally, only the true form receives Experience Points. If he wants his forms to improve along with him, he must spend some of his Experience Points to improve his Multiform power. When he does so, he must decide what they go toward. He could use them to increase the number of forms, for example, in which case he just expands his options without increasing the "strength" of any form.

If a character spends points with the intention of increasing the "strength" of (points used to build) the forms he can change into, each 1 Character Point he spends on Multiform increases the points in the most expensive form by 5 Character Points. That effect cascades down, increasing the points in every other form by 5 as well (assuming that's appropriate and desired — some forms might, and should, stay exactly as they are, without ever improving, over the course of a character's career). The alternate forms do not have to take additional Disadvantages to balance out the new points received.

Spending Experience Points to improve an alternate form requires a certain amount of common sense and consideration for game balance. In effect this rule quintuples the effectiveness of some Experience Points spent on Multiform, which could lead to unbalancingly powerful forms. A player should have a good reason for wanting to increase the strength of his Multiforms this way, and the GM should review the power before approving the expenditure. As a good rule of thumb, the GM may want to permit a character to spend no more than 1 Experience Point of every 6 he earns on his Multiform. That way, the true form improves by 5 points for every 5 points his Multiform(s) improve by.

### PERKS

Followers, Vehicles, and Bases: If a character buys an alternate form that has one of these Perks, the cost of the Multiform includes the full cost of the Perk that the alternate form pays (*i.e.,* the item's total cost divided by 5). For example, a character who wants to Multiform into a 300-point character with a 200-point Computer (costing him 40 points) pays 68 points (340/5) for the alternate form.



**POWERS**

Adjustment Powers: If an attacker Drains, Suppresses, or Transfers a character's Multiform power, apply the effects of the Adjustment Power as evenly as possible to reduce the Multiform power in a logical and reasonable manner (keeping special effects, common sense, and dramatic sense in mind). In some cases, simply removing the ability to change into one or more particular forms may make sense (if so, the GM randomly determines which forms the character loses). In others, it may make more sense to apply the Adjustment Power to the total cost of each form — for example, if the Adjustment Power removes 20 points of effect, reduce each form by 20 points, figuring out in a reasonable manner which powers or abilities each form loses.

If a character is already in an alternate form and the ability to change into that one form is removed, the character spontaneously reverts to his true form. If the entire Multiform power is removed, it locks the character into that alternate form until the Adjustment Power's effects fade. Since the alternate form doesn't pay for Multiform himself, the GM must look at the true form's character sheet to determine the cost of the power.

If a character has an Adjustment Power that boosts or improves his Multiform power (such as Absorption, Aid, or Transfer), it works like any other positive Adjustment Power — it adds points directly to the Multiform. Since Multiform works by having every point spent on it count as 5 points for purposes of building the alternate form, that means every point added likewise increases the points available to build the alternate form with by 5. Obviously, this could quickly become abusive; most GMs probably would not allow it.

Mental Powers: If a character has a Multiform that lets him switch to something other than human, that may or may not change his class of mind. If the alternate form retains human intellect and the like, then he's still got a Human mind. If not (for example, if the character became completely animal-like when in animal form, to the point where his INT and EGO drop to the animal's levels, or he loses his personality to the effects of the *Personality Loss* Limitation), then his mind may belong to a different class when he's in alternate form. Alternately, a character's mind could fall into both classes; he can take that as a 5-point Physical Limitation (page 121).

Duplication: See page 155 regarding the interaction of Multiform and Duplication.

Transform: If a character with Multiform is in one of his alternate forms and another character Transforms him into something else, he remains in that "something else" form until the Transform wears off — essentially locking him into that shape — if the Transform actually has some significant effect on his physical form. Most Major Transforms do, of course, and many Minor Transforms do so as well. A Cosmetic Transform, on the other hand, may just carry over from form to form. For example, if an evil witch Transformed Menagerie (who can assume several animal shapes) to make her pink, then perhaps the GM would allow Menagerie to change back into human form... but she remains bright pink. The GM should determine the exact effects, based on considerations of game balance, common sense, and dramatic sense.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Instant Change: A character with this +5 Character Point Adder can shift forms as a Zero Phase Action.

Usable On Others: Characters should not purchase this Advantage for Multiform to force another character to change shape. To change another person's shape as an attack, buy Transform.

**LIMITATIONS**

Generally speaking, Limitations on Multiform such as *Costs Endurance, Gestures,* or *Incantations,* apply to all changing of forms. If a character takes Costs Endurance for his Multiform power, then any change of form (true form to alternate, alternate to true, alternate to alternate) costs END. If he takes Gestures, any change requires the appropriate waving of the hands (though that might change to paws if he shifts to an animal form or the like). As always, common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance should apply. If it doesn't make sense for a character to Gesture to change back (from, say, a serpent form that has no hands), it may be easiest and most sensible for the GM not to require Gestures for a change back. In that case the GM might reduce the value of the Limitation slightly.

Some Limitations on Multiform (like *Personality Loss*) have to remain "in effect" when the character's in his alternate form, and you can extend that logic to many other Power Modifiers. In some cases, the GM may want, or allow, the character's alternate forms to take a Disadvantage (such as Accidental Change or Physical Limitation) to reflect this.

Charges: If a character takes Charges for Multiform, they indicate the number of times the character may change shape and change back again. For example, Multiform with two Charges would allow the character to change shape, then return to his true form, then change shape again and return to his true form again.

Costs Endurance (-½, -1): When worth -½, this Limitation means the character must pay END when he changes forms, but not thereafter (the form he changes into pays the END). When worth -1, it means he must pay END not only to change forms, but to stay in the form he's changed into. The form changed into pays the END cost for the change and for remaining in that form. When the character runs out of END, is Stunned, or is Knocked Out, he automatically changes back to his true form at the end of the Segment.

Focus: If a character buys Multiform with the Limitation *Focus,* he must have the Focus in all his forms. If it's taken away from him while he's in an alternate form, he reverts to his true form. He cannot apply the *Focus* Limitation to all the abilities of the alternate forms. However, the GM may allow him to apply Focus to some of those abilities based on special effect or the like.

If one of the character's forms has a power bought through a Focus that some or all of his other forms don't have, technically the Focus "vanishes" when the character changes forms. But if the character loses his Focus, he can't get it back simply by changing forms and then reverting to the form that has the Focus — he's got to recover it just as characters normally do with lost Foci. Whoever took the Focus keeps it, but when the character's not in the form that has the Focus power, the Focus remains inert and unusable (unless the GM rules otherwise). When the character shifts back to the form with the Focus, it becomes usable again by the person who has possession of it.

Personality Loss (varies): This Limitation represents a type of Multiform in which the character has a difficult time retaining his personality and changing back to his true form (or any other form). The character can stay in his alternate form for up to a set time period (see table) with no difficulty. After that time period passes, he must make an "Activation Roll" of 14- to retain his normal personality and the ability to change back to his true form. For every step down the Time Chart thereafter, the roll decreases by 1 (to 13-, 12-, and so on). If the character ever fails the roll, he's trapped in his current form and assumes its personality in place of his own; thereafter he can only recover his true personality and form with outside help.

Once the character changes back to his true form and personality, the "Activation Roll" "resets" to 14- again, provided the character spends at least a day in his true form. If the character assumes the alternate form during that day, the roll picks up at whatever level it left off.

Reversion (varies): Because Multiform is Persistent, a character who's Stunned or Knocked Out does not normally revert to his true form. With this Power Modifier, he does, at the end of the Segment. If the character's true form is weaker than his alternate form, this is a -½ to -1 Limitation (depending on just how much weaker the true form is). If the true form is more powerful, it's a +½ to +1 Advantage. If the two forms are of roughly equal power, it's a -0 Limitation.

Visible: Characters cannot take this Limitation for Multiform. Although Multiform is a Standard Power that costs no END, it is normally visible.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Accidental Change: Characters with Multiform can take this Disadvantage, but if so, all forms should normally purchase it (though the conditions triggering each form's change may differ).

Psychological Limitation: A character with Multiform who does not retain the memories of one form when in another form can take the 15-point Psychological Limitation, *Multiform Amnesia* (Common, Strong) for each form.

## PERSONALITY LOSS TABLE

| Value | Time Period Before First Roll |
|---|---|
| -2 | 1 Turn |
| -1¾ | 1 Minute |
| -1½ | 5 Minutes |
| -1¼ | 20 Minutes |
| -1 | 1 Hour |

...and so on

## POWER DEFENSE

Type: Special Power/Defense Power
Duration: Persistent
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: No
Cost: 1 point of Power Defense for every 1 Character Point

A character with Power Defense is especially resistant to Drains, Transfers, Transforms, and related attacks. The character can, at his option, also apply Power Defense against Aid. Each 1 point of Power Defense costs 1 Character Point.

When an attack against which Power Defense applies is used on the character, he subtracts his Power Defense from the attack. Any remaining points of effect in the attack apply normally to him. Power Defense does not cost END to use.

Example: *The Necromancer uses a Drain STR 2d6 against Arkelos (who has 5 points of Power Defense.) The 2d6 total 7, Arkelos subtracts his 5 points of Power Defense from the attack, and loses only 2 Character Points of STR.*

Power Defense is not Resistant, but characters may purchase Damage Resistance for it.



## RUNNING

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 2 Character Points for every +1" Running

A character with Running (also called Ground Movement) can run faster than normal. Each +1" of Running costs 2 Character Points; this adds to the character's normal 6" of Running. Running costs END to use (even the 6" Running characters get "for free"; see page 33).

For general rules about movement in the *HERO System,* including Noncombat Movement and Turn Modes, see pages 122, 363.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Sometimes a character wants to apply an Advantage to purchased Running. If he wants that Advantage to also affect the inches of Running he receives for free, he must apply any Advantages to the cost of the Power *including the free points.* For example, if a character buys Running +3" and wants all of his Running to be 0 END, he applies the +½ Advantage to 18 points (9" x 2 points each), even though he's only actually paying 6 points for Running (thus yielding a total cost to the character of [(18 x (1 + ½)) - 12 =] 15 points).

### LIMITATIONS

Only On Appropriate Terrain (-½ or more): This Limitation reflects a form of Running (usually involving a wheeled Focus of some sort) that only works on appropriate terrain. A skateboard, for example, generally requires paved ground; it won't work on unpaved or rough ground. Reduce the character's Running by half or more (up to loss of all extra inches of Running) when he uses it on inappropriate terrain. Typically this Limitation is worth -½, but its value may increase depending on how common the inappropriate terrain is.

## POWER EXAMPLES: POWER DEFENSE

Talisman Against Sorcery: Power Defense (20 points) (20 Active Points); OAF (-1), Only Protects Against Magic (-½). Total cost: 8 points.

Chemical Resistance: Power Defense (12 points) (12 Active Points); Only Protects Against Chemicals/Poisons/Drugs (-½). Total cost: 8 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: RUNNING

Super-Running: Running +24" (30" total), x16 Noncombat. Total cost: 63 points.

Skateboard: Running +4" (10" total), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (12 Character Points); OAF (-1), Only On Appropriate Terrain (-½). Total cost: 5 points.

Rocketboots: Running +12" (18" total) (24 Active Points); OIF (-½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily refueled, 1 Hour; -0). Total cost: 16 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: SHAPE SHIFT

Basic Shapeshifting: Shape Shift (Sight and Touch Groups, any shape). Total cost: 33 points.

Advanced Shapeshifting: Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, and Touch Groups, any shape), Cellular, Imitation, Instant Change. Total cost: 61 points.

Scent Manipulation: Shape Shift (Smell/Taste Group), Imitation, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (22 Active Points); Extra Time (takes 1 Minute to alter scent; -¾). Total cost: 13 points.

Super-Disguise: Shape Shift (Sight Group and Touch Group; any humanoid form), Imitation, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (49 Active Points); OIF (makeup and disguise supplies; -½), Requires A Disguise Roll (-½), Extra Time (minimum of 1 hour needed to prepare disguise; -1½). Total cost: 14 points.

**SHAPE SHIFT**

Type: Standard Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: See Shape Shift Summary Table

A character with Shape Shift can change his form as perceived by one or more Sense Groups without altering his powers or other abilities. Examples of Shape Shift include a character who can change his shape to copy other peoples' features, a powerful illusion-spell that can change a person's appearance, or a character who can transform himself into many different inanimate objects.

The cost for Shape Shift depends on whether the change affects a Targeting or Nontargeting Sense Group. For 10 Character Points the character may change into a single other shape as perceived by a Targeting Sense, chosen when the Power is purchased. This form of Shape Shift is the most common, and is usually chosen to affect the Sight Group (the character's shape looks different). Additional Targeting Sense Groups cost +5 Character Points each. For 5 Character Points, the character may change into a single other shape as perceived by a Nontargeting Sense — for example, he can alter the way his shape feels (Touch Sense Group) or smells (Smell/Taste Sense Group). Additional Nontargeting Sense Groups cost +3 Character Points each.

To change into a group of no more than four predefined shapes affecting the purchased Sense Groups costs +5 points; to change into a limited group of shapes (humanoids, animals, cars) costs +10 points. To change into any shape or form costs +20 points.

When a character buys Shape Shift to affect multiple Sense Groups, he must buy the most expensive Sense Group first, then buy the less expensive ones with the "additional Sense Groups" cost.

#### SHAPE SHIFT BY SENSE GROUPS

A character defines Shape Shift by the Sense Groups that can perceive the alteration in his shape.

**The Sight Group**

Shape Shift (Sight Group) allows a character to change his form as perceived by the Sight Group. This would let him

—change his coloration (which may, in the GM's option, provide a slight bonus to some Stealth and Concealment rolls)

—look exactly like someone else without the need for the *Disguise* Skill (if the Shape Shift has the *Imitation* Adder)

—look like a snake, but not feel, sound, or smell like one

In the latter example, the character looks like a snake, but doesn't feel, sound, or smell like one. Anyone who touches him realizes he's not a snake. Depending upon the nature of the power and the special effects, they may touch the snake and its scales feel like human skin or cloth. Or, they might reach down and somehow "feel" the human form behind the Sight Group Shape Shift. A Sight-only Shape Shift works best for characters who only want to change some visible aspect of themselves, generate a change defined as a potent illusion, or the like.

## SHAPE SHIFT SUMMARY TABLE

| Cost | Sense Group |
|---|---|
| 10 | Targeting |
| 5 | Nontargeting |
| **Cost** | **Additional Sense Groups** |
| +5 | Additional Targeting |
| +3 | Additional Nontargeting |
| **Cost** | **Additional Shapes** |
| +0 | Character can change into a single shape |
| +5 | Character can change into up to four predefined shapes |
| +10 | Character can change into a Limited Group of shapes |
| +20 | Character can change into Any Shape |

**The Touch Group**

Shape Shift (Touch Group) allows a character to change his form as perceived by the Touch Group. This would let him

—make his skin feel like some other substance — scales, cloth, rock, or the like

—alter his actual physical shape or mass distribution (though his total mass would not change), thus allowing him to, for example, slip out of bonds, radically alter his form, or within reason to fit through openings a human-shaped being cannot fit through (the classic meaning of "shifting shape")

Shape Shift (Touch Group) only allows a character to alter his size or mass by about +/-10%. To make greater changes in size or mass, the character should buy Growth, Shrinking, or Density Increase Linked to Shape Shift.

**The Hearing Group**

Shape Shift (Hearing Group) allows a character to change his form as perceived by the Hearing Group. This would let him

—not sound like himself (for example, to trick a voice-tracking program)

—appear different to Senses such as Active Sonar (Hearing Group) (see below)

—sound exactly like someone else without the need for the *Mimicry* Skill (if the Shape Shift has the *Imitation* Adder)

**The Smell/Taste Group**

Shape Shift (Smell/Taste Group) allows a character to change his form as perceived by the Smell/Taste Group. This would let him

—change his scent (for example, to throw tracking dogs off his trail)

—duplicate someone else's scent to fool a biochemical security system (if the Shape Shift has the *Imitation* Adder)

**The Radio Group**

Shape Shift (Radio Group) allows a character to change his form as perceived by the Radio Group (including Radar). This would let him

—alter the "energy signature" given off by his superpowers

—duplicate someone else's "energy signature" (if the Shape Shift has the *Imitation* Adder)

If a character has Shape Shift (Touch Group), but not (Radio Group), and another character perceives him with Radar, the Radar typically only tells the character using it where the Shape Shifted character is, and his general shape/configuration (in Shifted form). Radar can't pick up fine details, so Shape Shift (Touch Group) usually suffices to "fool" it. The *Discriminatory* modifier allows the Radar user to tell the general nature of the Shape Shifted character (organic versus inorganic, solid versus liquid, humanoid in shape, and the like). The *Analyze* modifier provides a more definite answer, but still only general information (*e.g.,* the Shape Shifted being is a mammal, the Shape Shifted being is made of gold, or the like). (Generally, this all applies to Sonar as well, though in that case it's usually the Hearing Group, not the Radio Group, that's involved.)

**The Mental Group**

Shape Shift (Mental Group) allows a character to change his form as perceived by the Mental Group. This means his mind "looks" different to anyone who uses a Mental Sense to perceive his mind. Trying to perceive him with Mind Scan would generally be pointless; he "looks" like some other mind. Telepathy at the "surface thoughts" level would "see" a different mind, but at levels beyond that could still perceive the character's deeper thoughts, memories, and so forth — Shape Shift doesn't change those, and doesn't allow a character to change his Psychological Limitations or class of mind. With the *Imitation* Adder, a character with Shape Shift (Mental Group) can make his mind "look" like another person's mind, at least on the surface level described above.

As these rules and the *Basic Shape Shifting* and *Advanced Shape Shifting* example powers in the sidebar indicate, most Shape Shift-based powers should affect both the Sight Group and the Touch Group at a minimum. However, characters can use Shape Shift for other Sense Groups to create all sorts of interesting powers and abilities.

## USING SHAPE SHIFT

A character may freely shift his shape as often as desired; switching shapes takes a Half Phase Action. Shape Shift costs END to use, both to shift shapes and to stay in a shifted shape. If the character is Knocked Out or Stunned while in shifted shape, his Shape Shift immediately "turns off" unless it's Persistent.

Shape Shift does not automatically allow a character to change shape so that he resembles a specific person. To do this, the character must either buy the Skill *Disguise* and succeed with a Disguise roll, or must pay for the *Imitation* Adder (see below). However, Shape Shift does allow a character to imitate gross features (hair color, eye color, and the like) without any roll. The character may even Shape Shift his body so that his skin resembles clothing, though he could not imitate precise styles of clothing without a Disguise roll or Imitation, and anyone who touched the clothing would realize it wasn't cloth (unless his Shape Shift affects the Touch Group).

Shape Shift is related to, but different from, Multiform. Shape Shift allows a character to change his form, but not his powers or abilities. Multiform allows a character to change his powers and abilities, and his form as well if he so desires. When building powers related to changing shape, players should carefully evaluate these two Powers to determine which one is best suited to create the ability desired.

## CHARACTERISTICS

Comeliness: Depending upon special effects and the nature of the power he's constructed, Shape Shift (Sight Group and/or Touch Group) allows a character to alter his COM if he has the *Imitation* Adder — he can change his COM to match that of whoever he's imitating.

Additionally, using either of those forms of Shape Shift, a character can alter his COM by +/- 5 points (that's 5 points of COM, not 5 Character Points' worth of the Characteristic). The *Makeover* Adder (see below) expands this capability.

## ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Cellular: Shape Shift ordinarily only affects the character's outward appearance (broadly speaking). His basic identifying characteristics — DNA, fingerprints, retina prints, and the like — remain unchanged. With this +10 Character Points Adder, Shape Shift works down to the most minute levels of a character's body. His DNA, fingerprints, retina prints, and so forth all change (though the character needs Imitation to make them mimic those of someone else).

Imitation: This +10 Character Points Adder allows a character to shift shape to resemble specific persons. The change only affects the purchased Sense Groups (for example, Shape Shift affecting the Touch and Smell/Taste Groups with Imitation would allow the character to feel and smell exactly like someone else, but not to look exactly like him). The resemblance is extremely accurate; even those who know the imitated character well are unlikely to detect the deception (minimum of -3 to PER Rolls to determine that the character is not who he appears to be).

Instant Change: A character with this +5 Character Points Adder can shift shape as a Zero Phase Action.

Makeover: For this +5 Character Points Adder, a character with Shape Shift (Sight Group and/or Touch Group) can alter his COM within the range of standards the GM defines for the campaign (for

example, if the GM says the maximum COM is 50, the character can't Shape Shift to have 60 COM). Given the benefits of negative COM for Presence Attacks, the GM may wish to restrict negative COM to -10 or -20, maximum.

Usable On Others: Characters should not purchase this Advantage for Shape Shift to force another character to assume a different shape. To change another person's shape as an attack, buy Transform.

**LIMITATIONS**

Affects Body Only (-½): Shape Shift normally affects not just the character's form, but his clothes, Foci, small items he regularly carries, and so forth. (The GM determines what Shape Shift will and won't affect, if necessary.) Shape Shift with this Limitation only affects the character's actual body; his clothes and equipment remain unchanged. Characters may only take this Limitation if they regularly wear clothes, carry equipment, and the like.

Limited Effect (-¼): Shape Shift with this Limitation only affects one or two Senses in a Sense Group, rather than the entire Sense Group. Other Senses in the Sense Group can still perceive his normal form (assuming they could ordinarily perceive his normal form). For example, Shape Shift (Sight Group) might take this Limitation to affect only Normal Sight — the character's heat signature (as viewed with Infrared Perception [Sight Group]) wouldn't change.

Typically, a character only takes this Limitation for a Shape Shift that affects one Sense Group. If he buys it for one affecting multiple Sense Groups, the GM may require him to apply it only to that part of the power that affects the Sense Group the Limitation restricts.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Generally speaking, characters cannot use Shape Shift to eliminate Disadvantages — Shape Shift (Touch Group) doesn't let a character grow an extra leg or eye to cancel out Physical Limitations like *One-Legged* or *Has One Eye;* Shape Shift (Mental Group) doesn't let a character change his Psychological Limitations. Changes that radical typically require Multiform. However, the GM can allow some leeway, such as the temporary elimination of Easily Concealable Distinctive Features, if that seems dramatically appropriate and not unbalancing. Similarly, a change in appearance may temporarily alleviate (or shield the character from) some Hunteds, Rivalries, and Social Limitations.

## SHRINKING TABLE

| Points of Shrinking | Height | Mass | PER Rolls Against | DCV | KB |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 2m | 100 kg | 0 | +0 | +0 |
| 10 | 1.9-1m | 99-12.5 kg | -2 | +2 | +3 |
| 20 | .9-.5m | 12.4-1.6 kg | -4 | +4 | +6 |
| 30 | .4-.25m | 1.5-.2 kg | -6 | +6 | +9 |
| 40 | .24-.125m | .19-.025 kg | -8 | +8 | +12 |
| 50 | .124-.064m | .024-.0032 kg | -10 | +10 | +15 |
| 60 | .063-.032m | .0031-.0004 kg | -12 | +12 | +18 |

**SHRINKING**

Type: Size Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 10 Character Points for every x½ Height, x⅛ mass, -2 DCV, +3" Knockback, and -2 to all PER Rolls made against character, and +2d6 damage for growth momentum

A character with Shrinking can decrease in size, making it more difficult for other characters to attack or perceive him. For every 10 Character Points, the character gets the following benefits:

—x½ height

— x⅛ mass

—+2 DCV

—other characters suffer a -2 to all PER Rolls made to perceive him (see below)

Additionally, the character takes +3" of Knockback for every level of Shrinking he has. (This Knockback modifier only increases the total distance traveled when the character suffers Knockback; it doesn't increase the damage he takes from Knockback.)

The Shrinking Table provides details on the benefits and drawbacks of Shrinking. However, the figures in the table are *guidelines,* not absolutes; the GM should feel free to alter them slightly based on special effects or to aid game balance.

Example: *Shrinker buys 40 Character Points' worth of Shrinking. When Shrunk, she has a +8 DCV, and she adds +12 to Knockback (thus, when rolling Knockback, add 12 to the amount of BODY done by the attack, only for the purpose of determining how far Shrinker is Knocked Back). If Shrinker is hiding or being stealthy, anyone attempting to perceive her must make a PER Roll at -8.*

*While Shrunk, Shrinker is hit with an Energy Blast that does 38 STUN, 10 BODY. The GM rolls 2d6 for Knockback and gets a 5, meaning she would normally take 5" Knockback (10 BODY - the 5 rolled). Because she is Shrunk, she must add +12", meaning she will be Knocked Back 17"! However, she only takes 5d6 damage from the Knockback if she hits something.*

**USING SHRINKING**

Shrinking costs END as long as it's in use. If the character is Knocked Out or Stunned while Shrunk, his Shrinking immediately "turns off" unless it's Persistent. Shrinking is intended for characters who can *alter their size;* a character who's exceptionally small all the time can simulate that by buying various Powers and Disadvantages with that special effect (see pages 126-27).

One of the main advantages of Shrinking is the ability to get into places or hide behind things where normal people can't fit. The GM should allow Shrinkers to use their small size in inventive ways during an adventure. On the other hand, Shrinkers



also suffer from some significant restrictions; their reach, for example, is often much less than that of a normal person.

Shrinking does not affect a character's STR, movement, or other abilities — they're just as powerful when he's Shrunk as when he's normal height. Characters whose STR and powers decrease proportionately to their size should take a -¼ Limitation, *Reduced By Shrinking,* on any such Characteristic or Power. As a general rule of thumb, Characteristics and Powers should lose about 5 Active Points' worth of effect per 10 Character Points in Shrinking. (Alternately, a character could define the loss of STR or other Powers as a mandatory Side Effect for Shrinking; see page 307.)

**Perceiving Shrunk Characters**

The PER Roll penalty for perceiving a Shrunk character applies to all standard Sense Groups other than the Mental Sense Group. It does not apply to Senses not assigned to a Sense Group, such as Combat Sense and Danger Sense.

The PER Roll penalty for perceiving a Shrunk character doesn't make a character difficult to perceive all the time — it's not a limited form of Invisibility. Unless the character deliberately tries to be difficult to perceive, others can perceive him normally regardless of his size. For example, if he's in combat and/or using a perceivable Power of some sort, others can perceive him normally (*i.e.,* without a penalty based on his size). Only when the character hides, uses Stealth (or Concealment to hide himself), or otherwise tries to remain unperceived does the PER Roll bonus have any effect. (To simulate the PER Roll bonus for characters who are very small all the time, buy bonuses to Stealth and/or Concealment.)

**Growth Momentum**

A character with Shrinking may add his *growth momentum* to his punch damage — the Shrunk character literally grows up underneath the jaw of his opponent, "uppercutting" his foe as he grows. This adds +1d6 of damage to the character's punch per point of DCV gained from being Shrunk. Of course, after using growth momentum, the character remains normal size at least until his next Phase, when he can Shrink down again. A character can't use growth momentum on someone the same size as, or smaller than, he is.

A character cannot use growth momentum to add to the damage caused by a Move By/Through, or the like. Once the character begins his Move Through/By, he's in the middle of an Attack Action and cannot perform a Zero Phase Action to turn off his Shrinking and become larger. A "growth momentum attack" is a special sort of Strike characters with Shrinking can perform, it's not a modifier that applies to any attack.

**Held Items**

When a character Shrinks, any small personal objects he's carrying (including any weapons or Foci) shrink with him. Larger objects he's carrying do not — he immediately "drops" them, and they remain their normal size. The GM determines what constitutes a "small personal object"; a briefcase or bag of loot from a robbery might qualify, whereas a big television set or another person would not.

A Shrunk character cannot drop objects onto, into, or near other characters in the expectation that they'll become normal size and damage other characters. Such an "attack" has no effect unless the character buys it as a power.

**LIMITATIONS**

Easily Perceived (-¼): Shrinking with this Limitation imposes no negative modifiers on other characters' PER Rolls to perceive the Shrunk character.

No Growth Momentum (-¼): Shrinking with this Limitation does not allow a character to do damage with growth momentum.

**POWER EXAMPLES: SHRINKING**

Insect Size: Shrinking (.032 m tall [about 1 inch], .0004 kg mass, -12 to PER Rolls to perceive character, +12 DCV, takes +18" KB). Total cost: 60 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: SKILLS

Lockgun: Lockpicking 12- (9 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 4 points

Advanced Autopilot: Combat Piloting 14- (13 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½). Total cost: 5 points.

Autodoc: Paramedics 20- (25 Active Points); OAF Immobile (-2). Total cost: 8 points.



## POWER EXAMPLES: STRETCHING

Long Pike: HKA 2d6 (30 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 15 points) **plus** 2" Stretching, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), Only To Cause Damage (-½), No Velocity Damage (-¼) (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 20 points.

Ki Punch: Stretching 6", Does Not Cross Intervening Space (+¼) (37 Active Points); Always Direct (-¼), Only To Cause Damage (-½), Range Modifier Applies (-¼), No Velocity Damage (-¼). Total cost: 16 points.

Elastic Body: Stretching 8" (total cost: 40 points) **plus** Desolidification (40 Active Points); Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½) (total cost: 27 points). Total cost: 67 points.

## SKILLS

Type: Special Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: Per the cost of the Skill

With GM's permission, a character can purchase Skills as Powers, with Power Modifiers. The cost is computed as if the Skill were a Power. Skills as Powers do not cost END to use, unless the Skill normally costs END to use.

Example: *Chen Kwai wears a gem which tells him how to fight. He purchases his Martial Arts with the Limitation, Inobvious Accessible Focus (Gemstone). However, if he ever loses the gem, he becomes unable to use Martial Arts.*

If a character buys a Characteristic-Based Skill through a Focus, then the appropriate Characteristic is assumed to be 0. For example, an enchanted glove with the Skill *Sleight Of Hand* would have a 0 DEX, and the base Skill Roll would be 9 + DEX/5 = 9-. (A character who buys a Background Skill on a Focus gets the standard 11- roll for 2 Character Points, but Background Skills bought as Powers do not get any benefit from Skill Enhancers the character has.)

If a Skill provides something "free" to a character (such as Combat Driving, which gives a character a "free" Transport Familiarity), it provides the "free" ability even when bought as a Power, unless the GM rules otherwise.

There are special rules for buying various types of Skill Levels with Limitations (see *Combat Skill Levels,* page 53, *Penalty Skill Levels,* page 67, and *Skill Levels,* page 70).

## STRETCHING

Type: Standard Power/Body-Affecting Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1" of Stretching (2" Noncombat)

A character with Stretching can stretch his body, make HTH attacks at a distance, and reach for things that are a long distance away from him. Some examples of Stretching include a character with an elastic body, a weapon with a long reach, or a robot with mechanical servos that allow it to elongate its arms. Each 1" of Stretching costs 5 Character Points.

### USING STRETCHING

The number of inches of Stretching a character purchases represents the total amount of Stretching his body can use at any one time. If he uses all of his Stretching to Stretch one body part, he can't Stretch any others; if he uses half of it on one body part, half of it remains for another body part; and so on.

A character's base inches of Stretching assume he maintains full OCV and DCV. If he's willing to be 0 OCV and ½ DCV, he can Stretch twice as far ("Noncombat Stretching," so to speak).

A character with Stretching may make HTH Combat attacks against targets within the reach of his Stretching. For example, a character with Stretching 8" could make HTH Combat attacks against targets within 8" of the hex he's standing in. These attacks are not made "at Range" and do not suffer the Range Modifier — the character is considered to be in HTH Combat.

The reach provided by Stretching does not reduce or otherwise affect the Range Modifier the character suffers for Ranged attacks. The GM should still calculate that from where the character stands. However, the GM could, in his discretion, count the Range Modifier from the character's hand, if he felt that would be appropriate.

Stretching allows a character to reach around walls or obstacles, reach over or around a target to hit it from behind even though the character is standing in front of it, and so forth. Thus, Stretching is inherently *Indirect* (see page 260) in some respects.

Stretching does not improve a character's movement capabilities — he cannot, for example, run faster or squeeze under doors. To simulate these special effects, the character should buy Running and/or Desolidification with appropriate Limitations.

Stretching costs END to use. Additionally, the character must also pay the END cost for any STR used while Stretching (for instance, if he punches someone at a distance).

#### Grabbing And Moving Objects

Typically, a character with Stretching can both Stretch to his full distance and then retract back to his normal "shape" in a single Phase. However, there may be instances where the GM wants the character to remain Stretched, at least until the end of the Segment — for example, because it's possible

someone would attack a Stretched limb.

A character with Stretching can reach out, Grab a character or object that's within the range of his Stretching (even if it's outside normal HTH Combat range), and pull it to him (assuming he has the STR to move it). Assuming the target is an object, this typically takes a Full Phase Action. It only requires a Half Phase Action if the total of (inches Stretched + inches the character has to pull the object) is less than or equal to half his Stretching. If the target is a person or the like, the GM may rule that making the Grab ends the Stretching character's Phase. However, since characters can Grab and Squeeze, or Grab and Throw, most GMs allow characters with Stretching to Grab and Drag To Myself as part of one Attack Action. The GM may allow a Grabbed character to have an Action that takes no time to brace himself or use STR to resist being dragged.

A character with Stretching can reach out, Grab a large, solid object (such as a tree, the edge of a roof or cliff, or the like), and pull himself up to it (assuming he has the STR to lift himself). This typically requires a Full Phase Action. It only requires a Half Phase Action if the total of (inches Stretched + inches the character pulls himself) is less than or equal to half his inches of Stretching.

**Stretching "Velocity" Damage**

A character with Stretching can use all of his inches of Stretching in a Phase. There's no "velocity" or "acceleration" to Stretching that limits the number of inches of Stretching a character can use to "move" part of his body in a given Phase.

To reflect the momentum of Stretching, when a character uses Stretching to make a direct attack on a target, he may add a number of Damage Classes equal to 1 Damage Class for every full 3" of Stretching. For these purposes Stretching *does* have an "acceleration" — a Stretching character can add 5" of "velocity" per hex for these purposes. (For example, if a character has Stretching 10", he can gain a maximum of +3d6 damage, but he has to "accelerate" at 5" per hex for 2" to reach his full bonus damage.) The character cannot gain Stretching "velocity" bonus damage if he uses Stretching to attack indirectly (for example, if he Stretches his fist in an arc over a target's head to hit the target in the back). See pages 406-07 for more information.

**POWERS**

Missile Deflection: A character with Stretching and Missile Deflection cannot automatically use his Missile Deflection up to the "reach" of his Stretching, unless the GM specifically permits this. He's restricted to the normal use of Missile Deflection.

Shrinking: A character can combine the "velocity" bonus damage from Stretching with growth momentum damage from Shrinking (or Growth).



**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Improved Noncombat Stretching: A character may double the range of his "Noncombat Stretching" for +5 Character Points. Characters can buy this Adder multiple times.

Does Not Cross Intervening Space (+¼): One drawback to Stretching is that it leaves parts of the character's body (usually the arms) open to attack. While an arm is Stretched across a battlefield, another character may try to cut it off or hurt it in some way. Stretching with this Advantage doesn't have that problem, because it doesn't involve literally elongating one's body. Instead, the character's Stretching doesn't physically cross the intervening space between him and the target he wants to attack or touch. For example, a character who buys Stretching to simulate a mystic martial arts punch he can use at distance takes this Advantage. So does a character who "Stretches" by creating two dimensional portals, reaching into Portal A, and having his hand come out of Portal B. A character cannot use Stretching with this Limitation to reach out, Grab someone, and drag him to the character, nor to reach out and drag himself to a place, except with the GM's permission.

Indirect: Since Stretching has some inherently Indirect properties, a character with Stretching can effectively treat many Ranged attacks as Indirect, by Stretching the emitting body part (or the hand holding the weapon) before attacking (unless the GM forbids this for some reason).

Transdimensional: Since Stretching has some inherently Indirect properties, a character can buy Transdimensional for it (assuming the GM permits him to).

**LIMITATIONS**

Always Direct (-¼): Stretching with this Limitation loses its Indirect aspects; it only works in a straight line.

Cannot Do Damage (-½): A character cannot use Stretching with this Limitation to punch or otherwise cause damage to another character at a distance. He could Grab a character, but not Squeeze or Throw him afterward.

Focus (varies): A character often buys Stretching through a Focus (such as a long pole or a linegun) to have an object that lets him reach far away from themselves. In this case, the character's body does not actually stretch or elongate, and any attacks made against the "Stretched" part of his "body" damage the Focus, not the character.

Limited Body Parts (-¼ or more): This Limitation represents a form of Stretching that only works on a certain part of the character's body (typically the arms or hands). It's typically worth -¼, but the GM may increase this if appropriate.

No Noncombat Stretching (-¼): A character cannot use Stretching with this Limitation to Stretch for Noncombat distances.

No Velocity Damage (-¼): Stretching with this Limitation gets no extra damage for its "velocity." Characters often use this Limitation to represent long-hafted weapons or other objects that extend their reach.

Only To Cause Damage (-½): A character can only use Stretching with this Limitation to punch or cause damage. He cannot use it to Grab targets, pick up objects, or perform other tasks at a distance.

Range Modifier Applies (-¼): Stretching with this Limitation is subject to the Range Modifier when used in HTH Combat.

## SUMMON STOP

Type: Standard Power
Duration: Instant
Target: N/A
Range: No Range
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 1 Character Point for every 5 Character Points in Summoned being; 2x number of Summoned beings for +5 Character Points

A character with Summon can summon a being from another location or plane of existence, or create certain types of beings or objects. Some examples of Summon include the ability to conjure demons from the pits of Hell, the power to summon animals from a nearby forest, necromantic zombie-creation spells, and "Instant Martians" pellets (just add water!).

**BUYING AND CREATING SUMMONED BEINGS**

The basic cost of Summon is 1 Character Point per 5 Character Points in the being to be Summoned (including any points gained from Disadvantages and any Experience Points the being has). The minimum cost is 1 Character Point, regardless of how few points the Summoned being is built on. The amount of Character Points the character who buys Summon is built on has no bearing on the cost of Summon. For example, to Summon a single Average Person (page 345) costs 1 Character Point; a Competent Normal, 15 points; a 1,000-point demon prince, 200 points. A character can double the number of beings he Summons for every +5 Character Points spent (these points do not count towards the Summoned beings' point totals).

Typically characters must build Summoned creatures using the same Base Points and Disadvantages guidelines as player characters in the campaign. However, some beings are so powerful that they have Experience Points in addition to their Base Points. The GM can permit a character to Summon such beings without justifying their total cost with Disadvantages. This is particularly appropriate when the Summoned being is predefined by the GM or taken from a Hero Games product, rather than being built by the player. The GM may refuse to allow a character to Summon a being the GM considers too powerful or potentially unbalancing.

Example: *Arkelos (a wizard built on 150 Character Points) has a Spell of Shadow Elemental Summoning that allows him to Summon four shadow elementals. The GM tells him shadow elementals are built on a total of 515 points (75 Base Points, 100 points from Disadvantages, and 340 Experience Points). Therefore the base cost to Summon four shadow elementals is ((515/5 = 103) + (x4 beings = +10)) 113 points. Fortunately, Arkelos has some Limitations he can apply to reduce that cost!*

If the GM doesn't want to spend the time and effort to build a Summoned being, he may use a standard character sheet out of a Hero Games

product, or let the player design it. In the latter case, the GM should closely monitor the player's work to make sure the Summoned being fits his (the GM's) conception and standards and is not unbalancing. The GM must approve all Summon powers and Summoned beings after he examines them for campaign suitability and balance. Characters should not be allowed to Summon hordes of powerful, easily-controlled creatures unless there are equally powerful restrictions on this ability (such as lots of Limitations on the power; additionally, all Summoned beings should have appropriate Disadvantages, even if they get no Character Points for them).

If a character puts Summon in a Power Framework, uses it to Summon a being, and then switches the Framework to another slot, the Summoned being does not vanish. It remains and continues to act as normal. The character must still make EGO Rolls to control it (if necessary).

**Types Of Summoned Beings**

Summon normally allows a character to Summon a specific type of creature — a wolf, for example, but not a dog, fox, or lion. The Summoner may pay extra Character Points to Summon creatures from broader groups (see *Expanded Class,* below). Characters should not use Summon as a cheap form of Teleportation, nor as a way to Summon an individual so the Summoner can kill him. A character should only use Summon to Summon a type or class of being, not a specific being (unless the GM gives permission and the character pays for the appropriate Advantage; see below).

With the GM's permission, a character can use Summon to "create" inanimate objects defined with Character Points (such as Vehicles and Bases). The cost depends on the total cost of the object, not its total cost divided by 5 (if that's the standard method used to buy it). The character must apply the *Amicable* Advantage (see below) at the Slavishly Loyal (+1) level, since he has full control over the object. Additionally, if he Summons the same specific Vehicle every time (or the like), he must pay for the *Specific Being* (+1) Advantage (see below), unless the GM rules otherwise.

Example: *A battledrone of the Imperial Star Army can create a "hoverbike" to travel across the battlefield. It buys this ability as Summon Hoverbike. The hoverbike has a total cost of 200 points. Therefore the cost to Summon the hoverbike is ((200/5) x (1 + 1 + 1) =) 120 Character Points.*

Characters may not use Summon to substitute for another Power. For example, he cannot Summon a group of swords and hand them out to his friends; that's HKA, Usable By Others. As always, common sense, dramatic sense, and the GM's discretion apply.

**USING SUMMON**

Summon costs END to use. Summon is an Instant Power, so a character only has to pay END in the Phase when he activates/uses the Power — he doesn't have to continue paying END to keep the Summoned being in existence or with him.

Using Summon requires a Full Phase. This includes the time to perform the EGO Roll Versus EGO Roll Contest to control the Summoned being (see below). (For game purposes, the Contest takes place in the Phase when the character uses Summon, even though the being has not yet oriented itself; see below.)

When a character uses Summon, the Summoned being appears in the nearest unoccupied space where it will fit (Summoning a whale requires a lot of room!). The Summoned creature can choose to leave at any time, unless compelled to remain (beings from other planes of existence, such as demons or gods, are assumed to have the power to return home on their own; terrestrial beings use whatever methods of movement or travel they have available).

**When A Summoned Being Can Act**

When a Summoned being first appears, it's Stunned and disoriented, and cannot act. It must use its first available Full Phase to recover from being Stunned and reacquire its bearings before it can act. For example, a SPD 3 lion Summoned in Segment 6 must use its first Full Phase, the one in Segment 8, to recover and reorient. A Summoned being cannot recover and reorient in the Segment in which it was Summoned; it must wait until its first Phase in any later Segment. For example, if Arkelos Summons a SPD 6 shadow elemental in Segment 8, the elemental can't recover and reorient on its Phase in Segment 8 — it has to wait and reorient on its Phase in Segment 10. A Summoned being cannot Abort to a defensive Action during the time it's waiting to recover from being Stunned and orient itself.

**Controlling Summoned Beings**

Just because a character has Summoned a being doesn't mean he can control that being. Summoned beings regard their Summoner neutrally. To exert control over a Summoned being, the Summoner must either somehow persuade it to do what he wants (a great opportunity for roleplaying) or defeat it in a Skill Versus Skill Contest using EGO Rolls. The Summoner's roll suffers a penalty of -1 per 10 Active Points in Summon. If the Summoner wins the contest, the Summoned being must obey him for a number of tasks equal to the Summoner's EGO/5. After it has performed that many tasks, another Skill Versus Skill Contest takes place, with the Summoned being receiving +1 to his roll. If the Summoner wins, the Summoned being must perform another EGO/5 tasks, but its next EGO Roll gets a +2 bonus, and so on.

If the Summoned being ever wins the EGO Roll Versus EGO Roll Contest, the Summoner loses control of it permanently (he can no longer attempt rolls to control the being). It may flee, attack, return from whence it came, or do whatever else it wishes. A Summoner who does not want to engage in this

**POWER EXAMPLES: SUMMON**

Create Vampire Spell: Summon 300-point Vampire, Loyal (+1/2) (90 Active Points); OAF Expendable (black candles and a golden bowl filled with human blood, Very Difficult to obtain; -1½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Requires Recently Deceased Body (-½), Requires A Necromancy Roll (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

Call Of The Wild: Summon 150-point Animal, Any Animal (+½), Loyal (+½) (60 Active Points); Summoned Being Must Inhabit Locale (-½), Arrives Under Its Own Power (-½). Total cost: 30 points.

Demonhorde Spell: Summon 125 150-point Demons, Any Lesser Demon (+¼), Friendly (+¼) (97 Active Points); OAF (Demonstone Amulet; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Extra Time (20 Minutes; -2½), Requires A Demonology Roll (-½). Total cost: 18 points.



battle of wills can spend extra Character Points to make Summoned beings amicably disposed towards him (see *Amicable,* below). Alternately, a character can save Character Points by making the Summoned being automatically hostile, requiring the Summoner to persuade it to do his bidding by force, bribery, or other means (see *Antagonistic,* below).

The GM decides what constitutes a "task" for purposes of Summon. For combat, each Phase of fighting usually equals one task. For ordinary household chores, carrying loads, or pulling wagons, each day of service normally qualifies as one task. Keep common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance in mind.

Summon assumes the Summoner has the means to communicate instructions to the Summoned being via speech and make himself understood. If he wants to communicate mentally, he needs to buy Mind Link, Telepathy, or the like. If the Summoned being does not automatically understand the character (*e.g.,* if language barriers might intervene), the character may take a -0 Limitation on his Summon.

**Banishing Summoned Beings**

To force a Summoned being to return home, a character must use a Dispel, Drain, or Suppress to overcome the Active Points in the Summon power (see below), or otherwise persuade or coerce the being to leave. Typically a character may automatically "banish" an *Amicable* Summoned being simply by asking/instructing it to leave (the GM may also allow a character to order a being to "leave" or "go home" as one of its tasks).

**Number Of Summoned Beings**

Generally, the most beings a character who has Summon can have Summoned at one time with a specific Summon-based power equals the maximum number of beings he can Summon with that power at once, regardless of how many times he uses the Summon. For example, if a character can Summon 16 lions, 16 is the most he can have Summoned at any one time, whether he uses the Summon once or several times. If he already has ten lions Summoned, he can only Summon six more; if he has all 16 lions, he cannot Summon any more until some of the ones he has leave or die. However, at the GM's option, a character can use his Summon Phase after Phase without restriction — he can Summon enormous numbers of beings, regardless of how many he can Summon at any one time.

A Summoned being no longer counts against the total number of Summoned beings a character can have in existence at once when it dies or the character loses control of it (or initially fails to establish control). As long as the character can control the being (*e.g.,* it still owes him tasks after losing an EGO Roll Versus EGO Roll Contest), or has some chance to reassert control (*e.g.,* the being's been Mind Controlled, but could break free), it counts against his total. If a being's been forcibly removed from its Summoner's presence (for example, it's been kidnapped), the GM may rule that it no longer counts against the total and has become free-willed. The GM has the final say as to the status of a Summoned being.

**POWERS**

Adjustment Powers: If a character has an Adjustment Power that boosts or improves his Summon power (such as Absorption, Aid, or Transfer), that power works like any other positive Adjustment Power — it adds points directly to the Summon. Since Summon works by having every point spent on it count as 5 points for purposes of building the Summoned creature(s), that means every point added likewise increases the points available to build the Summonee(s) with by 5. Obviously, this could quickly become abusive; GMs should examine any such powers carefully before allowing them.

Desolidification: Summon requires the *Affects Physical World* Advantage if a Desolidified character wants to Summon solid beings while Desolidified. If the character can only Summon other beings who are permanently Desolidified (*e.g.,* ghosts), he does not need Affects Physical World, but the GM can require it if he feels that's necessary to maintain game balance (such as if the Summoned being can easily affect solid beings).

Dispel: As mentioned above, characters often use Dispel as a way of "banishing" a Summoned being. An attacker may target Dispel Summon at either the Summoned being or at the character who used Summon. In the latter case, only the character's Power Defense matters; in the former case, use either the character's or being's Power Defense, whichever

## TASKS TABLE

| Advantage | Number Of Tasks |
|---|---|
| Friendly (+¼) | EGO/4 tasks |
| Loyal (+½) | EGO/3 tasks |
| Devoted (+¾) | EGO/2 tasks |
| Slavish (+1) | EGO/1 tasks |

| Modifier | Number Of Tasks |
|---|---|
| ¼ more Advantage | x2 as many tasks |

is most appropriate. An attacker may use Dispel Summon at any time — the same Segment the being appears in, the next Phase, a minute later, the next day, or what have you. However, the GM may rule that at some point Dispel Summon no longer works because the Summoned being has "acclimated" to his current location or plane of existence.

Drain, Suppress: Drain Summon and Suppress Summon are less common methods of "banishing" Summoned beings. Both require the attacker to "remove" or "cancel out" all the Active Points in the Summon before the Summoned being vanishes. In the case of Suppress, once the character stops maintaining the effect, the Summoned being automatically re-appears in the same condition as when it "left." The rules for Power Defense and time considerations for Dispel also apply to Drain and Suppress.

### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Affects Desolidified: Characters do not have to buy Affects Desolidified for Summon to Summon beings who can become Desolidified, or who are permanently intangible (*e.g.* ghosts).

Amicable (+¼ to +1): The standard Summoned being typically regards the Summoner neutrally, and must be brought to heel with an EGO Roll Versus EGO Roll Contest. If the Summoner purchases this Advantage, the Summoned being is friendlier. He requires no EGO Roll to control it — it wants to help the Summoner and do his bidding, within limits. For a +¼ Advantage, the Summoned being is *Friendly* (similar to a Moderate Psychological Limitation). For a +½ Advantage, the Summoned being is *Loyal* (similar to a Strong Psychological Limitation). For a +¾ Advantage, the Summoned being is *Devoted* (similar to a Total Psychological Limitation). Of course, unreasonable requests for assistance can strain the loyalty and devotion to duty of even a Devoted being. Generally, a character who abuses or takes gross advantage of an Amicable Summonee loses the benefits of that Advantage until he makes amends. However, for a +1 Advantage, the Summoned being is *Slavishly Devoted* to the Summoner and will do whatever he asks without question or complaint (this is perfect for Summoned zombies or robots).

The number of tasks an Amicable Summoned being performs before leaving depends on the level of the Advantage (see accompanying table). For each additional +¼ Advantage, the character can double the number of tasks an Amicable Summoned being performs before leaving. The GM can have an Amicable Summoned being perform more or fewer tasks, if appropriate.

Expanded Class (+¼ to +1): Ordinarily, Summon only allows a character to Summon a specific type of being (for example, wolves, imps, or air elementals). With this Advantage, the Summoned being can be from a broader group. For a +¼ Advantage, the Summoned being can be from a Very Limited Group (canines, lesser demons, elementals). For a +½ Advantage, the Summoned being can be from a Limited Group (animals, demons, elemental beings). For a +1 Advantage, the Summoned being can be any type of being. Any Summoned being must still fit within the point limits of a particular Summon power — the power to Summon a 200-point demon from the "any lesser demon" category doesn't allow the Summoner to Summon a 300-point Fire Demon, even if Fire Demons are a type of "lesser demon."

If the Summoner can Summon more than one being at a time, every being Summoned doesn't have to be of the same type if the Summoner can Summon from an Expanded Class. For example, a spell to conjure 128 lesser demons doesn't have to Summon only imps at any one time — it could conjure a mixed horde of imps, firelings, scratchets, and similar fiends. Similarly, the character could vary the Summoned creatures slightly, to provide individuality, but the variations must balance in terms of Character Points. For example, one demon could be slightly stronger, but also slightly stupider (+3 STR, -3 INT); another could be quicker but weaker (+2 DEX, -2 STR, -2 CON). The GM must approve all such variations.

Invisible Power Effects: Characters do not have to buy this Advantage for Summon to Summon beings who can become invisible, or who are permanently invisible.

Personal Immunity: Characters cannot buy Personal Immunity on Summon to prevent a Summoned being from attacking or harming them.

Specific Being (+1): STOP A Summon power with this Advantage can Summon a specific individual, whether that individual is defined generically (the King of Valdoria) or by name (King Arkon of Valdoria). In general, the GM should only allow this Advantage when the Summoned being is deceased (Summoning his spirit through necromantic powers) or has been precisely located with some other power.

A Summoned specific being appears in his current condition at the time of Summoning. If he's injured, he'll be injured; if he's sleeping or Knocked Out, he's asleep or unconscious; and so forth. If the specific being is killed, the character permanently loses the Character Points spent for the ability to Summon him (though the GM may allow the character to convert the power into the ability to Summon the specific being's ghost, spirit, or the like).

Transdimensional: This Advantage is not required to Summon beings from other planes of existence.

Weak-Willed (+¼, +½): The Summoned being is unusually weak-willed and cannot resist the Summoner's attempt to control it very well. For a +¼ Advantage, the Summoned being receives -2 to all of its EGO Rolls; for +½, it receives -4. A character



cannot take this Advantage for Summon if he buys it with *Antagonistic* (see below).

**LIMITATIONS**

Antagonistic (-¼ to -¾): The opposite of *Amicable,* this Limitation simulates a Summon power that Summons creatures who are unfriendly to the Summoner. The Summoner is considered to have failed the EGO Roll contest, and must use force, bribery, or other means to get the Summoned being to do what he (the Summoner) wants. The Summoned being's antagonism towards the Summoner, and thus the strength of his reaction (fleeing versus fighting, for example), depends on the value of the Limitation. For a -¼ Limitation, the Summoned being is *Annoyed* (similar to a Moderate Psychological Limitation). For a -½ Limitation, the Summoned being is *Hostile* (similar to a Strong Psychological Limitation); it may attack the Summoner. For a -¾ Limitation, the Summoned being is *Violent* (similar to a Very Strong Psychological Limitation) and will almost certainly attack the Summoner.

Arrives Under Own Power (-½): This Limitation represents a Summon power that does not immediately bring the Summoned being to the Summoner; instead, the Summoned being is irresistibly "called" to the Summoner at the location where the Summon power was used, and must proceed there at once at reasonable speed under its own power. If the Summoner leaves the area where he used Summon before the Summoned beings arrive, the effect of the Summon is immediately cancelled.

Charges: If a character buys Summon with Charges, each Charge can Summon up to his maximum number of beings. The character may choose to Summon fewer, but that doesn't allow him to "bank" the remainder for later; the Summoning of any number of beings uses up one Charge. The rules regarding how many Summoned beings a character can have in existence at once still apply. If, for example, a character has a spell that Summons four imps, and the spell has eight Charges, he can only have four imps in existence at once, regardless of how many Charges he uses or has left.

Fewer Tasks (-¼ or more): At the GM's option, a character can reduce the number of tasks he can require a Summoned being to perform: for a -¼ Limitation, the being only performs EGO/10 tasks when it loses an EGO Roll Versus EGO Roll Contest; for a -½ Limitation, EGO/20 tasks; and so forth.

Strong-Willed (-¼, -½): The Summoned being is unusually strong-willed, and resists the Summoner's attempt to control it better than most. For a -¼ Limitation, the Summoned being receives +2 to all of its EGO Rolls; for -½, it receives +4. A character cannot take this Limitation for Summon if he buys it with *Amicable* (see above).

Summoned Being Must Inhabit Locale (-½): Often combined with *Arrives Under Own Power,* and like it frequently used to Summon wild animals, this Limitation simulates a form of Summon that only works if the Summoned being naturally inhabits the area where Summon is used. For example, if a wizard tries to Summon wolves with a spell that has this Limitation, but no wolves live nearby, the spell fails even if properly cast.

**SUPPRESS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Adjustment Power/Attack Power |
| Duration: | Constant |
| Target: | Target's DCV |
| Range: | 5" x Active Points |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Suppress |

A character with Suppress can partially or wholly neutralize another character's Characteristics and/or Powers. Some examples of Suppress include a mystic spell that interferes with a character's ability to move, or a neuro-energy field that inhibits the use of all mutant powers. Each 1d6 of Suppress costs 5 Character Points.

### USING SUPPRESS

To use Suppress, the character makes an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls and totals the Suppress dice, then subtracts the target's Power Defense (if any). The remaining total is the number of Active Points of the target's Characteristic or Power that stop working.

Suppress costs END to use. It remains in effect as long as the attacker pays END. When the character stops paying END, all points that have been Suppressed immediately "return" to the affected character. If a power is completely Suppressed (it has no Active Points left), then the power has been "turned off"; the victim has to restart it when the Suppress is removed.

Suppress normally applies to only a single power: for example, a character could only Suppress Summon or Energy Blast. A character can purchase an Advantage for his Suppress to expand its scope (see page 111).

Suppress can be used to Suppress any Characteristic or Power, even Suppress, though this can become confusing. There is no limit to the amount of Character Points a character can Suppress from his victim; he may use the same Suppress repeatedly on the same target, provided he still has points left to Suppress in the Power or Characteristic, and can afford the END cost. (Similarly, the effect of multiple characters using different Suppresses of the same Characteristic or Power is cumulative.) The character must succeed with a separate Attack Roll for each use of Suppress; maintaining a Suppress on a character does not cause him to lose Character Points on each of his attacker's Phases (but see *Continuous,* below).

Example: *Andarra has an Enervator Ray Helmet (Suppress STR 2d6, costing 2 END). While on the planet Dennerax IV, she uses it on a STR 20 rampaging slime-beast. She succeeds with her Attack Roll, then rolls 8 on her Suppress dice. The slime-beast's STR is reduced by 8 points, to 12. As long as Andarra keeps paying the 2 END for the Suppress on each of her Phases, the slime-beast's STR remains at 8 points below normal.*

*In her next Phase, Andarra decides the slime-beast is still too strong for her liking. She hits it again with the Enervator Ray, and this time rolls 6 on her Suppress dice. The slime-beast has now lost a total of 14 points of STR, giving it a STR of 6. Its STR remains at 6 as long as Andarra pays the END cost to maintain the Suppress... and since she's used it twice, she has to pay 4 END per Phase (2 END per use) to maintain it.*

*While maintaining the Enervator effect on the slime-beast, Andarra is attacked by its mate! She zaps the female slime-beast with the Ray and rolls a 12. The female slime-beast now has STR 8 as long as Andarra pays END to maintain the effect. Andarra's now paying a total of 6 END per Phase to maintain all her uses of Suppress.*

### SUPPRESSION FIELDS

When bought with the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages, Suppress can, at the GM's option, be used to create "suppression fields" where particular types of powers won't work, or only work at diminished effectiveness. (The best example from literature would be areas in Fantasy worlds where magic doesn't work.) Ordinarily, a Suppress (of, say, Energy Blast) that covers an area only affects the use of Energy Blast by another character if he generates the Energy Blast within the affected area; a character outside the area can use Energy Blast to affect the character with Suppress without losing any of the Power. However, the GM can rule that a Suppress that covers an area affects all of the defined Characteristics and/or Powers regardless of whether they're generated within the area or simply pass into or through it. In this case, the character does not have to target any specific person with his Suppress; he need only successfully place the field where he wants it with an Attack Roll against the DCV 3 of the target hex.

Example: *Arkelos wants to create an Enchantment Nullification Field. He buys the following: Suppress Magic 10d6 (Standard Effect Rule: 30 Active Points), all Powers with a Magic special effect simultaneously (+2), Area Of Effect (15" Radius; +1). When he activates the field, all magic within the affected 15" radius area is reduced in effectiveness by 30 Active Points. Magic that originates in or passes into/through the affected area (such as a Lightning Bolt Spell cast at Arkelos from 30" away) also suffers this reduction.*

If a character is inside a Suppression Field and uses the Characteristic or Power the Field Suppresses, his Power Defense (if any) applies to reduce the Field's effect. If he's outside the Field and fires into or through it, his Power Defense does not reduce the Field's effect.

### CHARACTERISTICS

Body: A character who has positive BODY and is Suppressed into negative BODY does not lose more BODY in Post-Segment 12.

### POWER EXAMPLES: SUPPRESS

Spell Of Diminished Enchantments: Suppress Magic 4d6, all Powers with a magic special effect simultaneously (+2) (60 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Side Effects (spellcaster suffers identical effect; -1). Total cost: 15 points.

Energy Dampening Field: Suppress Energy Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (3" Radius; +1) (60 Active Points); OAF (Dampening Staff; -1). Total cost: 30 points.

Power-Draining Cuffs: Entangle 3d6 (standard effect: 3 BODY), 6 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+½) (67 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), Set Effect (Hands Only; -1), Does Not Prevent Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), No Range (-½), Must Follow Grab Or Target Must Be Willing (-½), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Can Be Escaped Automatically With Modified Lockpicking Roll (-½) (total cost: 10 points) **plus** Suppress 6d6, all Powers of defined special effect simultaneously (+2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, Powers are restored instantly when cuffs removed or shorted out; +½) (105 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 52 points). Total cost: 62 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: SWIMMING

Jetski: Swimming +10" (12" total) (10 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½), Surface Only (-1), Fuel Charge (1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Hour; -¼). Total cost: 3 points.

Swimfins: Swimming +4" (6" total) (4 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 2 points.

If reduced to negative his BODY solely due to Suppress, a character "dies" for all intents and purposes, but comes back to life when the Suppress ceases to apply.

If a character is in negative BODY numbers due to a wound, and a Suppress adds to that effect, he keeps bleeding from the wound on Post-Segment 12 and will eventually die for real.

If a character has lost some BODY due to a wound, but not enough to put him into the negatives, and Suppress takes him into the negatives, he does not bleed on Post-Segment 12, and will "come back to life" after the Suppress is removed if it takes him to negative his BODY.

Stun: If a character Suppresses more of a target's STUN than the target has CON, the target is Stunned. The target gets to recover from being Stunned (not Recover the lost STUN) per the usual rules.

#### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Continuous: Although Suppress is already a Constant Power, characters can apply this Advantage to it to make it continue to affect a target, Phase after Phase, without having to make another Attack Roll.

Damage Shield: A character who applies this Advantage to Suppress not only has to pay END each Phase he has the Damage Shield turned on, he has to pay END separately for each person affected to maintain the Suppress effect. For example, suppose a Damage Shield Suppress costs 5 END, and four people have struck and been affected by the Shield. The character must pay a total of 20 END per Phase to maintain all those effects, plus 5 END per Phase to keep the Damage Shield active (for a total END expenditure of 25 per Phase).

Reduced Endurance: If a character buys a Suppress to 0 END, he must specify some reasonably common way for an affected character to regain his Suppressed Characteristic or Power (this recovery of power occurs at once when the victim meets the condition). For example, the victim of a Suppress defined as an Energy Dampening Field might reverse its effects if he plugs the affected item into a battery or other power source for "recharging."

## SWIMMING

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Movement Power |
| Duration: | Constant |
| Target: | Self Only |
| Range: | Self |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | 1 Character Point for every +1" of Swimming |

A character with Swimming can swim on or through water and other liquids. Some examples of Swimming include swimfins, undersea creatures who can propel themselves through the water at tremendous speeds, and boats. Each +1" of Swimming costs 1 Character Point; these inches add to the base 2" that most characters start with. Swimming costs END to use.

For general rules about movement in the *HERO System,* including Noncombat Movement and Turn Modes, see pages 122, 363.

#### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Sometimes a character wants to apply an Advantage to purchased Swimming. If he wants that Advantage to also affect the inches of Swimming he receives for free, he must apply any Advantages to the cost of the Power *including the free points.* For example, if a character buys Swimming +6" and wants all of his Swimming to be 0 END, he applies the +½ Advantage to 8 points (8" x 1 point each), even though he's only actually paying 6 points for Swimming (thus yielding a total cost to the character of [(8 x (1 + ½)) - 2 =] 10 points).

#### LIMITATIONS

Surface Only (-1): Swimming with this Limitation only allows the character to move along the surface of the water, not beneath it. Characters often use it to create boats and similar watercraft.



## SWINGING

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 1 Character Point for every 1" of Swinging

A character with Swinging can swing great distances from a line. The character can also move upwards by climbing or pulling himself up a swingline. Some examples of Swinging include jungle characters who cross the jungle by swinging from vines, trained acrobats with lineguns or grapnels, and arachnid-based superheroes who create their own "webs" to swing from. Each 1" of Swinging costs 1 Character Point. Swinging costs END to use.

### USING SWINGING

To use Swinging the character must attach his swinglines to tall objects such as buildings, trees, or cliffsides. The GM usually shouldn't worry about this restriction in modern urban environments — there are always tall structures around somewhere. However, if the GM wished to be strict, or if the character is in a flat environment, it would be reasonable to reduce the character's velocity or disallow Swinging altogether.

A character's inches of Swinging indicate how many inches he can Swing per Phase, not per swing. For example, a character with Swinging 8" could swing over a 20" chasm (assuming a long enough swingline and an appropriate place to attach it to) — it would just take him more than a single Phase to do it. While making a multi-Phase Swing, the character may take no other Actions until he has completed the Swing.

At the GM's option, a character may climb his swinglines or use them to carry himself straight upward at a rate equal to half his Swinging (for example, if he had 10" of Swinging, he could move upward at 5" per Phase).

For general rules about movement in the *HERO System,* including Noncombat Movement and Turn Modes, see pages 122, 363.

### LIMITATIONS

Focus: Most characters buy Swinging with this Limitation. However, characters don't have to buy Swinging with Focus. Swinging without Focus allows a character to produce as many swinglines as he needs.

The rules don't impose any restriction on the length of swinglines a character can create or have. The GM should decide how much swingline is appropriate for a character.

## TELEKINESIS

Type: Standard Power/Attack Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Target's DCV
Range: 5" x Active Points
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 3 Character Points for 2 points of Telekinetic STR

A character with Telekinesis ("TK") can manipulate objects at a distance. Some examples of Telekinesis include psychokinesis (manipulating objects with mental force), precise manipulation of gravitic (or similar) forces, and a magical spell that allows a wizard to move huge blocks of stone effortlessly. Each 2 points of Telekinetic STR costs 3 Character Points. A character cannot buy 0 or 1 STR Telekinesis; he must buy at least 2 points of Telekinetic STR.

Characters normally should not buy their STR with the Power Advantage *Ranged;* they should buy TK instead.

### USING TELEKINESIS

Except where noted otherwise, a character can use Telekinetic STR any way he could use normal STR — it can pick things up, Grab characters, "squeeze" something, throw things (the same distance a character with that amount of STR could throw the object with a "Running Throw"; see page 35), or "punch" an opponent.

To use Telekinesis for any purpose, a character has to succeed with an Attack Roll to "hit" the object (meaning pick it up/Grab it/"punch" it). There's no way for a character to move an object or person without "hitting" it first.

Telekinesis costs END to use, and is subject to the Range Modifier.

**Moving And Manipulating Objects**

Telekinesis can move an object a number of inches per Phase equal to the number of inches the Telekinetic STR could throw the object with a Running Throw. However, there's no action/reaction with TK, so a character can't pick himself up with Telekinesis (or pick up an object he's standing on and move himself that way) or grab a flying character and be dragged along. (He could, however, pick someone up and move that person as he moves, just like a person with Flight can carry an object as he flies.)

Telekinesis is inherently Indirect (see page 260) in some ways. In other words, while it always originates with the character, it can "touch" or pick up objects from any direction (not just on the side facing the Telekinetic character), can move objects in any direction, and so forth. It can work through a window or a Force Wall without having to break the intervening obstacle, at no reduction in STR. However, despite its Indirect aspects, a character cannot use TK to, for example, bypass a character's personal defenses (like a suit of armor) to attack him directly. The exact extent of what Telekinesis can do is always up to the GM.

Base Telekinesis is inherently clumsy. The character can manipulate great force, but not with any fine control. He can flip most switches and

### POWER EXAMPLES: SWINGING

Grapnel & Rope: Swinging 8" (8 Active Points); OAF (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½). Total cost: 3 points.

Jungle Vines: Swinging 10" (10 Active Points); OIF (vines of opportunity; -½), Requires A PER Roll (character cannot generate his own swinglines, but must locate appropriate vines to swing from; -½). Total cost: 5 points.

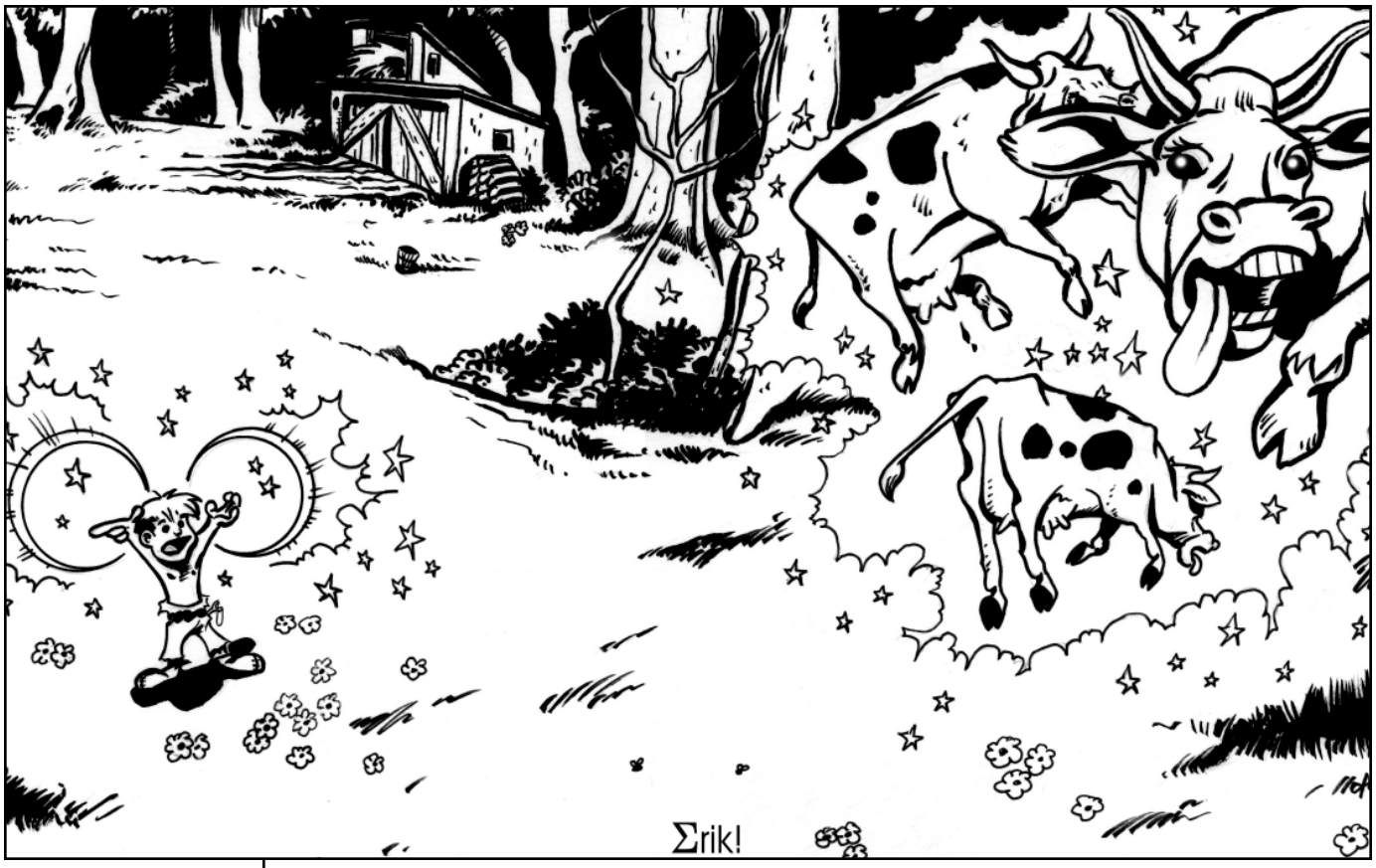
### POWER EXAMPLES: TELEKINESIS

Force Kinetics: Telekinesis (50 STR), Fine Manipulation, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼). Total cost: 106 points.

Psychokinesis: Telekinesis (30 STR), Fine Manipulation, Based On EGO Combat Value (+1). Total cost: 110 points.

Telekinetic Arm: Telekinesis (10 STR), Fine Manipulation. Total cost: 25 points.

Water Manipulation: Telekinesis (40 STR), Affects Porous (70 Active Points); Only Affects Water (-½). Total cost: 47 points.






punch some buttons, but can't, for example, hit a single key on a keyboard, pick a lock, or do precision tasks that requires a DEX Roll. To be able to do fine work, he must buy the *Fine Manipulation* Adder (see below). The GM may relax this rule in noncombat situations, when the character has time and can concentrate on what he's doing.

**Grabs And Other Telekinetic Attacks**

A Telekinetic Grab works just like a normal Grab: it requires an Attack Roll; it imposes a -1 OCV, -2 DCV modifier on the character's Attack Roll; it affects two limbs; victims try to escape from the Grab using their STR (including any bonuses, such as from Martial Escape; this method applies even if the victim's held up in the air or the like); the character can use it to Squeeze or Throw the Grabbed person; it reduces the Grabbed person's DCV. However, it does not reduce the Telekinetic's DCV or his OCV to attack characters other than the Grabbed character the way a normal Grab does. (See *Grab,* page 387-88.)

A character with Telekinesis can use it to Grab multiple people in successive Phases — one person in his first Phase, a second in his next Phase, a third in his next Phase, and so on. He's not restricted to only using the Telekinesis on one person at a time, or to the number of persons he could Grab using his own limbs. Of course, he has to pay END for each separate use of Telekinesis.

Other than Grab and "punch" (Strike), a character cannot use Telekinesis to perform any other Combat Maneuvers. However, at the GM's option, he can use it to perform any Combat Maneuver for which he has paid Character Points, though he must have the *Fine Manipulation* Adder to perform maneuvers requiring finesse (such as Nerve Strike). For purposes of using them with Telekinesis, characters may "buy" Standard and Optional Combat Maneuvers for 3 Character Points each. But regardless of this, characters cannot use Telekinesis to perform Move Bys/Throughs.

A character can use Telekinesis to wield weapons, but unless he has paid points for the weapon or bought the appropriate Weapon Familiarity, he suffers the standard -3 OCV penalty for Unfamiliar Weapon. The GM may also, in his discretion, impose an additional penalty (-1 OCV, typically) to represent the differences in fighting with a weapon in-hand and a weapon in-Telekinesis. Characters cannot apply Combat Skill Levels bought for use with a particular weapon or weapons while wielding those weapons with Telekinesis.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Affects Porous: Characters cannot ordinarily use Telekinesis to pick up liquids. They can do so if they buy this +10 Character Point Adder. The amount of liquid a character can pick up depends on his telekinetic STR and the weight of the liquid. A character may use Affects Porous Telekinesis to shape the picked-up liquid into crude forms (such as squares, spheres, or humanoid shapes); to actually sculpt the water requires Fine Manipulation and PS: Sculptor.

Fine Manipulation: Telekinesis with this +10 Character Points Adder can do fine work, like pushing a single key on a keyboard. (It does not allow the character to manipulate objects on the microscopic level, or the like.) The character must make a roll of 9 + (Active Points in Telekinesis/5) or less, with

a Range Modifier, to do fine work successfully. (Include the points spent on Fine Manipulation when calculating the character's roll.)

Area Of Effect: If a character has Area Of Effect Telekinesis, generally you should calculate the amount he can lift over the overall area, not per hex. For example, if a character with Telekinesis (60 STR), Area Of Effect (9" Radius) tries to telekinetically scoop up some sand, the weight of sand he picks up depends on his telekinetic STR — he picks up 100 tons of sand, not 100 tons per hex — and the sand comes more or less equally from all the affected hexes. However, if a character uses Area Of Effect Telekinesis to Grab or "punch" lots of people, his full telekinetic STR (or STR damage) applies to each victim.

Once the victim of an Area Of Effect Telekinesis breaks loose from a Grab, he can exit the affected area without hindrance. If he doesn't do so before the attacker's next Phase, the attacker can Grab him again per the standard rules on Constant area-affecting powers.

Based On EGO Combat Value: Telekinesis bought BOECV is known as *Psychokinesis.* It works on Line Of Sight and is not subject to the Range Modifier (unless used to throw an object at a target, in which case you should calculate the Range Modifier from the point where the character picks the object up). It is visible and can also be perceived with Mental Awareness. For purposes of using Psychokinesis, calculate the character's OCV from his EGO, not his DEX, but the target's DCV still derives from his DEX.

No Normal Defense: Characters cannot apply this Advantage to Telekinesis (unless the GM permits this and defines the exact effects of the power).

Transdimensional: Since Telekinesis has some inherently Indirect properties, a character can buy Transdimensional for it (assuming the GM permits him to).

**LIMITATIONS**

Affects Whole Object (-¼): If a character's Telekinesis affects all parts of the target, then he buys it with this Limitation. The character cannot use this type of Telekinesis to squeeze or punch a target, but can use it to Grab.

No Range: Normally characters should not purchase this Limitation for Telekinesis; buy extra STR (perhaps with Limitations) instead.

Only Works On Limited Types Of Objects (-½ to -1): Telekinesis with this Limitation only works on certain types of objects. For example, an earth elemental might have Telekinesis that *Only Works On Earth/Stone;* if there happens to be something else in the earth (such as a pool of water), the character can't pick that up at the same time. If the Telekinesis can only affect a Limited Group of objects (earth/stone or ferrous objects, for example), the Limitation's worth -½. If it can only affect a Very Limited Group of objects (granite, raw iron), it's worth -1.

## TELEPATHY

Type: Mental Power
Duration: Instant
Target: Target's DECV
Range: LOS
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1d6 of Telepathy

A character with Telepathy can read or send thoughts. Some examples of Telepathy include classic mind-reading or ESP abilities, the ability to determine what a person is thinking by observing him closely, and some truth drugs. Each 1d6 of Telepathy costs 5 points. Telepathy costs END to use.

**USING TELEPATHY**

To use Telepathy, the character makes an ECV Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he declares the desired Telepathy level, makes a standard Effect Roll, subtracts the target's Mental Defense (if any), and compares the result to the Telepathy Effects Table. If the Effect Roll isn't sufficient to reach the desired level, the attack has no effect, but it does alert the target. If the Effect Roll is sufficient to achieve the desired effect, the character has established mental contact with the target, who may make a standard Breakout Roll. If the Breakout Roll succeeds, the Telepathy fails, but the target is aware of the attempt to read his mind. If the Breakout Roll fails, each Phase thereafter the Telepath can search for one fact, or get the answer to one question; the target will be aware of the fact that someone is reading his mind with Telepathy.

A character cannot use Telepathy to alter or remove another character's memories or Psychological Limitations. Doing that requires Mind Control (for short-term effects) or Transform (for long-term or permanent effects).

Telepathy does not depend on language; a Telepath may communicate and read from mind to mind regardless of whether he speaks a language in common with the person he's mentally communicating with. However, in some cases, such as particularly odd or unusual minds, the GM might require a character to achieve +10 points of effect to communicate clearly, despite the lack of a language barrier.

**Levels Of Telepathy**

The Telepathy Effects Table indicates the Effect Roll needed to achieve each of the four levels of Telepathy: surface thoughts; deep, hidden thoughts; memory; and subconscious.

### POWER EXAMPLES: TELEPATHY

Deductive Observation: Telepathy 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); Requires A Deduction (or SS: Psychology) Roll (-½), Extra Time (5 minutes; -2), Concentration (½ DCV; -¼), Must Closely Observe Subject (Including Facial Expressions) During The Five Minutes (-½), Can Only Read Surface Thoughts (-½), Receive Only (-½). Total cost: 11 points.

Mindreading: Telepathy 12d6. Total cost: 60 points.

Truth Serum: Telepathy 12d6 (60 Active Points); OAF Fragile (easily diluted or spilled drug; -1¼), Receive Only (-½), Based On CON (-1), No Range (-½), Incantations (questions must be asked; -¼), Language Barrier (subject being interrogated must be able to understand the questions asked of him; -½). Total cost: 12 points.



## TELEPATHY EFFECTS TABLE

| Total rolled on Telepathy dice - Mental DEF is: | Effect |
|---|---|
| Greater than EGO | The telepath can read or send surface thoughts |
| EGO +10 | The telepath can read deep, hidden thoughts |
| EGO +20 | The telepath can read into the target's memory |
| EGO +30 | The telepath can read into the target's subconscious |
| **Modifiers (can be applied at any level)** | |
| +20 | Telepathy cannot be detected by target |

Surface thoughts include the target's current sensory impressions and thoughts. Extremely important personal facts (the target's name, his spouse, facts central to his vision of himself) are usually considered surface thoughts. This may include some high-level Psychological Limitations (usually those worth 20 points or more).

Deep, hidden thoughts include any thoughts currently in the target's head but not on the "surface" of his mind. Examples usually include most Psychological Limitations; the "to-do lists" most people have in the back of their minds; the target's birthday; secrets the target knows (including those taken as Social Limitations); unexpressed emotions or emotions not currently in the forefront of the mind (such as his love for his spouse). The target's greatest fears and desires are also usually considered deep, hidden thoughts.

Memories are just that — sensory impressions of past events and feelings "recorded" in the character's mind. At the GM's option, it may be more difficult to locate a memory the older it gets (PER Rolls may be required to locate desired memories, for example, using the Time Chart as a "Range Modifier," as described under *Clairsentience*). The Effect Roll might also be modified if the target suffers from a neurological disease that affects memory, has an Eidetic Memory, or has only a dim or fragmentary recollection of something.

The target's subconscious includes thoughts and memories repressed below the level of deep, hidden thoughts. Memories of horrible abuse experienced by the target might be one example. An amnesiac's forgotten experiences or a multiple personality's "other" personalities also constitute "subconscious" thoughts in most cases.

**Unconscious And Sleeping Minds**

A character can use Telepathy on an unconscious mind. However, an unconscious target has no surface thoughts or deep, hidden thoughts; the telepath can only read the target's memories or subconscious thoughts. Sleeping minds are a slightly different matter. Sleepers' surface thoughts are whatever dreams they are currently experiencing. They have no other surface thoughts and no deep, hidden thoughts; the Telepath can still read their memories and subconsciousnesses. At the GM's option, Telepaths who read a dreamer's surface thoughts can enter into or manipulate the dreamer's dream at will; alternately, this may require Mental Illusions. Sleeping or unconscious minds have an ECV of 0, but still have any Mental Defense they would while awake.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Autofire: Instead of applying the standard rule for Autofire continuing-effect Mental Powers (page 120), GMs instead may allow a character with Autofire Telepathy to find multiple facts or have multiple questions answered per Phase. He can find one fact or answer one question per Phase for every hit achieved with Autofire Telepathy.

**LIMITATIONS**

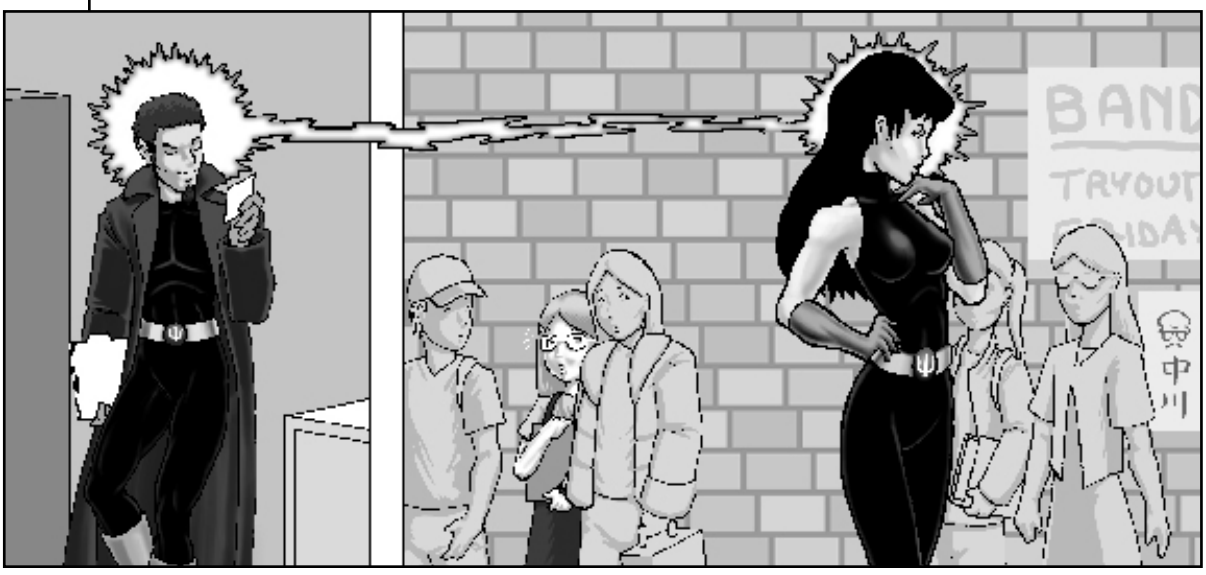
Broadcast Only; Receive Only (each -½): Ordinarily, a Telepath can both send and read thoughts. These Limitations represent forms of Telepathy that can only broadcast or only read thoughts.

Communication Only (-¼): Characters can only use Telepathy with this Limitation to send and receive thoughts. They cannot read someone's mind against that person's will or extract thoughts from him that he doesn't wish to send.

Empathy (-½, -1): Empathy is a form of Telepathy that can only read emotions. If the Telepathy works on all emotions, the Limitation is worth -½; if it only works on a single emotion, it's worth -1.

Empathy only allows a character to *read* a target's emotions. He cannot project emotions into the target's mind or change the target's emotions; that requires empathic Mind Control.

Language Barrier (-½): This Limitation simulates a form of Telepathy that depends on language. The character can only communicate and read thoughts in languages known to him; if he has no language(s) in common with his target, he cannot communicate mentally with, or obtain information from, him.



**TELEPORTATION**

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Movement Power |
| Duration: | Instant |
| Target: | Self Only |
| Range: | Self |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | 2 Character Points for every 1" Teleportation; 2x mass for every +5 Character Points; Fixed Locations for 1 Character Point each; Floating Fixed Locations for 5 Character Points each |

A character with this Movement Power can move from one point to another without physically traveling through the space in between the two points (typically the character "disappears" at the first point and "reappears" at his desired destination). Some examples of Teleportation include: stepping into another dimension at one point in this dimension, traveling through the other dimension, and stepping back into this dimension at the desired location; and transforming one's body into energy, moving to the desired point, and retransforming. Each 1" of Teleportation costs 2 Character Points. Teleportation costs END to use.

## USING TELEPORTATION

Normally a character can only Teleport himself (regardless of how much he weighs), his clothes, and his personal effects (including Foci), though he may choose to leave any such items behind. He can Teleport more mass if he buys the *Increased Mass* Adder (see below). If a character wants to Teleport other people (or inanimate objects) without going along with them himself, he must buy his Teleportation with the *Usable As Attack* Advantage (see below and page 275).

A character who's Grabbed or Entangled may use Teleportation to escape from such restraints. If Grabbed, he cannot carry the character Grabbing him along with him unless the Teleportation is Usable As Attack (see page 235). A character with Teleportation who Grabs a character cannot then Teleport and carry the Grabbed character with him unless he has enough Increased Mass to handle the extra weight and the GM permits this.

Characters cannot use Teleportation to perform Move Throughs or Move Bys. Characters cannot Abort to Teleport, but can Abort to Dive For Cover with Teleportation.

### Noncombat Teleportation

Teleportation has a Noncombat Movement mode like other Movement Powers. Noncombat Teleportation (including any Teleportation with the *MegaScale* Advantage) takes one extra Phase, regardless of how far the character Teleports. The character remains at his "starting point" at half DCV, 0 OCV for the extra Phase, then Teleports to his destination; he can do nothing else during this time. He remains at 0 OCV, ½ DCV until he gets his next Phase after Teleporting, or until a later Segment when he chooses to Abort to a defensive Action.

A character using Noncombat Teleportation isn't restricted to moving in even increments of Combat Movement — he can Teleport to any location within his maximum range. For example, character has Teleportation 20", x16 Noncombat, doesn't have to move in increments of 20". He can Teleport anywhere from 1" to 20" using Combat Movement, and anywhere from 21" to 320" as Noncombat Movement.

### Perceiving The Target Location; Misteleporting

A character can Teleport to any location he can perceive with a Targeting Sense, as long as it's within the number of inches he can Teleport. If it's difficult to perceive the location, the GM may require a PER Roll (possibly with a Range Modifier or other modifiers to simulate existing conditions). If the roll succeeds, the character may Teleport normally. If it fails, he must make an Attack Roll (against DCV 3) at -1 for every point the roll was missed by to Teleport to the proper location. (The GM might reduce the penalty slightly if the character can perceive the target location with a Nontargeting Sense.) The Attack Roll is part of the overall Teleportation; it doesn't require any extra time or Actions. If the character is using Noncombat Teleportation, he retains his full normal OCV solely for purposes of targeting his destination; he doesn't have the usual OCV 0 when using Noncombat Movement.

If the Attack Roll fails, the character lands "off-target" by 1" in a random direction for every 1 point the roll failed by. This may result in his Teleporting into a solid object, which can have dangerous consequences (see page 367). Similarly, if a Teleporter cannot perceive his target location at all and is simply guessing where it is, he must make an Attack Roll (against DCV 3) at -5 to move to his target hex successfully. If the roll fails, he lands "off-target" as described above.

Viewing a location on television (or by similar means) does not count as perceiving it with a Targeting Sense.

## FIXED LOCATIONS

A character with Teleportation can memorize a *Fixed Location* for 1 Character Point. He can safely Teleport to any of his Fixed Locations even if he cannot perceive them with a Targeting Sense, provided they're within his range.

A Fixed Location doesn't have to be immovable — it could be a living creature, a particular airplane seat, or the hex two hexes behind the Teleporter, for example — but it must be a physical location and can never change. However, the character can purchase a *Floating Fixed Location* for 5 Character Points. This is identical to a Fixed Location, but may be changed. To change a Floating Fixed Location, the character must study the new location for a full Turn. (He cannot study a new location via Clairsentience, unless the GM so permits.)

If a character tries to Teleport to a Fixed Location (Floating or not) that's out of his range, his Teleportation fails to work. He must still spend END, and uses a Full Phase in attempting to Teleport.

Characters cannot buy Fixed and Floating Fixed Locations in Power Frameworks. They must be bought separately from Teleportation itself. They

## POWER EXAMPLES: TELEPORTATION

Advanced Teleportation: Teleportation 20", No Relative Velocity, Position Shift, Armor Piercing (+½). Total cost: 82 points.

Escape Clause: Teleportation 10", MegaScale (anywhere on Earth; +1¼) (45 Active Points); Incantations (-¼), 1 Charge (-2), Only To Fixed Location (-1) (total cost: 11 points) **plus** 1 Fixed Location (home sweet home). Total cost: 12 points.

Television Teleportation: Allows character to Teleport to any location he can see on TV (this assumes the GM allows the character to establish LOS with Clairsentience). Teleportation 10", No Relative Velocity, MegaScale (anywhere on Earth or the Moon; +1½) (total cost: 75 points) **plus** Clairsentience (Sight Group), Targeting Sense, MegaScale (same; +1½) (75 Active Points); Can Only See Through Television Cameras (-1) (total cost: 37 points). Total cost: 112 points.

can be bought with Power Modifiers, if appropriate. If a character has multiple forms of Teleportation, his Fixed and Floating Fixed Locations work with all of them.

When a character Teleports to a Fixed or Floating Fixed Location, its Active Points add to the Active Points of his Teleportation for purposes of determining the END cost of his Teleportation. Any Reduced Endurance bought for the Teleportation likewise applies to the Locations.

**VELOCITY AND FACING**

A character cannot remove or change his velocity by Teleporting — if he's moving at 30" per Segment when he Teleports, he continues to move at 30" per Segment when he completes his Teleport, regardless of where he Teleports to. (Thus, Teleporting out of a speeding car or during a long fall can harm a Teleporter.) Similarly, adding velocity when Teleporting (by, for example, teleporting into a moving vehicle from a stationary position) can be dangerous. A character who wants to Teleport safely into a vehicle or other object that's moving faster than he is must have the *No Relative Velocity* Adder (see below) (or, at the GM's option, make a DEX Roll, possibly with a negative modifier equal to the vehicle's Velocity-Based DCV; see page 364). Otherwise he takes STUN damage as if he had performed a STR 0 Move Through at the vehicle or object's velocity that did no Knockback.

Example: *Cheshire Cat wants to teleport into a bus traveling at 30" per Phase. Since he's standing still, he takes (velocity/3) = 10d6 STUN damage from Teleporting into a moving object.*

Unless he pays for an Adder (see below), a character cannot change the direction he's facing or move from a prone to a standing position by Teleporting. His facing and body positioning at the end of his Teleport are the same as it was when he began.

**GATES** ⚠

Characters can use Teleportation to create "Gates" — fixed "teleportation fields" that Teleport anything that can fit in them and doesn't exceed their weight limit. To create a Gate, a character must buy Teleportation with the Advantages *Area Of Effect (One Hex), Usable On Others,* and *Continuous.* To be truly effective, a Gate needs Mega-Scaling or a lot of extra Noncombat Movement multiples (thus requiring an extra Phase to use) and Increased Mass; to carry truly large objects, it needs lots of extra mass and a larger *Area Of Effect* (to make the Gate wide enough for large objects to go through).

A Gate has the -½ Limitation *Gate. Gate* simulates the fact that a Gate works on both ends and in both directions: while it's open, anyone of the proper size and mass can move through it to the other side (which opens into some far-away location). Furthermore, the Gate can be seen through, and characters can attack through it with the same Range Modifier as if they stood immediately on the other side of the Gate. A Gate is open from both sides — characters can go through it (and see through it) from either side. A character cannot pinpoint exactly where his Gate will open onto unless he buys a Fixed Location or Floating Fixed Location for it.

Creating a Gate takes one extra Phase if the character uses it to travel Noncombat or Mega-Scaled distances. If not, creating one requires a Half Phase Action (if the Gate allows travel of no more than half its inches of Teleportation) or a Full Phase Action (if the Gate allows travel of more than half its inches of Teleportation).

Example: *Cheshire Cat buys a Gate ability: Teleportation 10", x2,000 Noncombat Multiple (20,000", or about 25 miles), x16 mass , Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Continuous (+1), Usable Simultaneously (creator and one other person can use Gate at once; +½) (285 Active Points); Gate (-½) (total cost: 190 points). He also buys a Fixed Location (his house) for 1 point. So, whenever he's within 25 miles of his house, he can spend an extra Phase and open up a Gate that takes him home.*

*In need of quick escape from a bank heist gone bad, the Cat uses his Gate. Unfortunately for him, the Gate opens up on his house to reveal that the cops are already there, waiting for him! In fact, there's one cop 16" from where the Gate opened. Cheshire Cat decides to attack him. He launches an attack through the Gate, applying the standard Range Modifier for 16".*

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Increased Mass: This Adder allows a character to Teleport more than the normal amount of mass. For each +5 Character Points he can Teleport 2x normal human mass (100 kg) (thus, for +5 points, 200 kg, +10 points, 400 kg, and so forth). The character does not have to be able to carry this additional mass; he only has to touch it. If the additional mass is additional persons, those persons have to want to be Teleported; involuntarily Teleporting someone requires the *Usable As Attack* Advantage.

No Relative Velocity: This +10 Character Point Adder represents a form of Teleportation that compensates for relative velocity. It compensates for any amount of velocity without the need for any further Advantages or Adders. For example, if a character is moving at 65 miles per hour when he Teleports, he can reappear at the end of his Teleport traveling 0 miles per hour, or any other speed up to 65 miles per hour. Teleportation with this Adder allows a character to Teleport into a moving vehicle, or to the ground while falling, without suffering any damage.

If a character has Teleportation Usable As Attack, he cannot buy this Advantage for it to "add" velocity to a target Teleported as an attack.

Position Shift: For this +5 Character Points Adder, a character can use Teleportation to change position/facing or go from prone to standing as a Zero Phase Action. He can also change facing in

mid-Teleport when making a Half Move or Full Move with Teleportation.

Armor Piercing: Characters can apply this Advantage to Teleportation to overcome the *Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation* Advantage. Characters may purchase Armor Piercing multiple times to counteract multiple layers of Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation.

Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation (+¼): Characters apply this Advantage to walls, Entangles, and other barriers to prevent characters from Teleporting through them. A character cannot Teleport through any barrier that Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation unless he buys his Teleportation with the Advantage *Armor Piercing*. Characters may purchase Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation multiple times to overcome Armor Piercing.

Characters cannot apply this Advantage to STR or Telekinesis without the GM's permission.

Hardened: Defenses with this Advantage don't stop Teleportation; that requires the *Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation* Advantage.

MegaScale: Characters often apply MegaScale to Teleportation to create *really* long-range Teleportation powers. A character using MegaTeleportation can Teleport to any location between his minimum distance (whatever he defines 1" as equaling) and his maximum distance; he doesn't have to Teleport in even 1" increments. However, if the character doesn't have some way to perceive his target location, he runs the standard risk of misteleporting. If he misteleports, the MegaScale also applies to the inches he goes off-target.

> Example: *Cheshire Cat has Teleportation 10", MegaScale (1" = 1,000 km, can scale down to 1" = 1 km). He can use it to Teleport anywhere from 1 km away (the minimum distance of his MegaTeleportation) to 10,000 km away (his maximum range). He could Teleport to a location 2 km away, or 3,578 km, or 7,500.3586 km — anywhere from 1 km to 10,000 km away. However, he has to be able to perceive his target location. If he can't, and he misteleports, the x1,000 km MegaScaling applies to how far "off target" he is. For example, if he's off target by 3", he's 3,000 km away from where he wants to be!*

If a character with MegaTeleportation has a Fixed or Floating Fixed Location, he can Teleport to that location safely, whether he can perceive it or not. However, if a character's Floating or Fixed Floating Location is closer than the shortest range increment of his MegaTeleportation, he cannot Teleport there unless the GM specifically permits him to. Similarly, if a character's highly familiar with a location (he's been there a lot, or has spent a lot of time there), the GM may let him MegaTeleport to it safely even though he can't perceive it. As always, the GM should keep special effects, common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance in mind.

Unless the GM forbids him to, a character could use MegaTeleportation to Teleport far away, then Teleport back to a position just a few hexes away from where he originally left from, effectively sidestepping MegaScale's rule about using powers at personal scale. However, standard rules for perceiving the target location still apply, and in any event the character has to spend a total of four Phases (one extra Phase for each use of the power) and be at ½ DCV to do this.

Safe Blind Teleport (+¼): This Advantage represents a form of Teleportation that protects the character (and any objects or persons he carries) if he Teleports into a solid object. He never suffers damage if he Teleports into a solid object; instead, he reappears in the nearest open space to his target location large enough to hold him (though this may not be safe; the nearest open space may be right over, say, a lava pit).

Transdimensional: Characters cannot buy this Advantage for Teleportation; use Extra-Dimensional Movement to travel to other dimensions and realities.

Usable On Others: If a character wants to Teleport other people (or inanimate objects) without going along with them himself, he must buy his Teleportation with the *Usable As Attack* Advantage. When teleporting other persons and objects, the Teleporter must Teleport the whole person or object; he cannot, for example, Teleport a person but not his armor, or only half of a dragon. (He could, however, Disarm someone by Teleporting a weapon or other object out of the victim's grasp, though he probably suffers an OCV penalty for targeting such a small object.) If his Teleportation cannot Teleport the entire weight of the target person or object, it will not work.

As indicated on page 275, normally a Usable As Attack power is only usable as an attack, not for its normal purpose. However, at the GM's option, as described on page 233, if a character with Teleportation Usable As Attack is Grabbed, he can use it to Teleport himself and a person Grabbing him at once.

**LIMITATIONS**

Can Only Teleport To Fixed Locations (-1 or -½): Characters can only use Teleportation with this Limitation to Teleport to a character's Fixed Locations. If the character only has Fixed Locations, it's worth -1; if the character has any Floating Fixed Locations, it's worth -½.

Must Pass Through Intervening Space (-¼): This Limitation represents a form of Teleportation that requires the character to actually pass through the intervening space physically. This can be a problem if barriers or other obstacles prevent the character from moving through that space. Characters cannot use Teleportation with this Limitation to escape from Entangles.

## POWER EXAMPLES: TRANSFER

Spell Of Necromantic Vitalization: Transfer 3d6 (target's CON to character's STUN), Ranged (+½), Delayed Return Rate (5 Character Points per 20 Minutes; +¾) (101 Active Points); OAF (Necromancer's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Necromancy Roll (-½), Only Works On Characters At 0 BODY Or Below (-½), Transferred Points Return Immediately When Target Dies (-½). Total cost: 25 points.

Mutation Leeching Gauntlet: Transfer 2d6 (target's mutant powers to character's mutant powers, proportionately), Can Transfer Maximum Of 32 Points, all mutant powers simultaneously (+2) (120 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation 14- (-½). Total cost: 60 points.

### TRANSFER

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Adjustment Power/Attack Power |
| Duration: | Instant |
| Target: | Target's DCV |
| Range: | No Range |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | 15 Character Points for every 1d6 Transferred Active Points |

A character with Transfer can temporarily take points from an opponent's Characteristic or Power and add those points to one of his own Characteristics or Powers. Each 1d6 of Transfer costs 15 Character Points.

#### USING TRANSFER

To use Transfer, the character makes an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls his Transfer dice. The total on the dice, minus the target's Power Defense (if any), is the number of Active Points of an opponent's Characteristic or Power that are Transferred. Transfer costs END to use.

When the character purchases Transfer, he specifies what Characteristic(s) or Power(s) it drains Character Points from and which Characteristic(s) or Power(s) receive the Transferred points. He may not change these thereafter unless he buys the *Variable Effect* Advantage (page 111). He may choose to set up a ratio of Character Points between different Characteristics or Powers (for example, half the points go to END, half to STR). He may Transfer the Character Points to a different Characteristic or Power than they were taken from — for example, a character could Transfer points from an opponent's STR to his own STUN. He may apply the *Variable Effect* Advantage to what he can give points to, rather than what he takes points away from (thus, being able to vary what he drains *and* what he gives points to requires two *Variable Effect* Advantages).

The points gained from Transfer return to the character they were taken from, and fade from the Transferor, at the rate of 5 Character Points per Turn. The character can delay the return rate with the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage (page 111). The delay applies only to the return to the victim or the fading from the character (the character must specify which one when he buys the Advantage, and cannot change it thereafter); if the character wants it to apply to both, he has to buy the Advantage twice.

See page 106 regarding the maximum amount of Active Points a character can Transfer at any one time. This maximum applies both to what the character drains from his targets, and what he gains from them. When he reaches this maximum, the Transfer won't work again until some of the Transferred points fade (a Transfer cannot operate just as a Drain when it's not possible to Transfer points). After some of the Transferred points fade, he can use the Transfer again, but still only up to the maximum which he could roll on the dice.

Example: *Firelord wants to Transfer 4d6 Character Points of an opponent's fire-based Powers to his fire-based Powers, but only one Power at a time, so the total cost is 60 x (1 + ¼) = 75 points. Firelord can Transfer a maximum of 24 points. When Firelord attacks Firewing, he decides to Transfer Firewing's Energy Blast points into his (Firelord's) ED Force Field. Firelord rolls 15 on his 4d6. Firewing loses 15 Active Points (3d6) from his Energy Blast. Because Firelord Transfers the points to a defense, he only gets half value, and thus improves his Force Field by 8 Character Points. These points return to Firewing the rate of 5 points per Turn (Firelord loses 2 points and Firewing gets back 5).*

*Suppose Firelord attacks Firewing and Spark at the same time. First he uses his Transfer on Firewing as described above, and Transfers 15 Active Points' worth of Energy Blast from Firewing. Since he can Transfer a maximum of 24 points, if he then uses his Transfer on Spark the maximum number of points he can Transfer is 9 (15 + 9 = 24), even if he rolls higher than 9 on his Transfer dice. After a Turn passes and 5 of the 24 points Transferred from Firewing and Spark fade, Firelord can use his Transfer again, but only up to 5 points of effect (which returns him to his maximum of 24).*

If a target takes extra effect from a Transfer (for example, he's Vulnerable To Transfers, or has an Elemental Control that's affected by the Transfer, or the Transfer can affect two or more Characteristics at once), the character using the Transfer does *not* gain any extra points from the Transfer. He only gets what he rolled on the dice; any extra points the target loses are incidental.

A character can be Stunned by a Transfer that removes more STUN than he has points of CON, or Knocked Out if he loses all of his STUN. A Transfer that removes enough BODY to reduce a character to the negative of his starting BODY total kills that character (the Transferred points still fade from the Transferring character at the standard rate; just because he killed a target with a Transfer BODY doesn't mean he gets to keep the points).

#### ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS

Area Of Effect: If a character has an Area Of Effect Transfer, he rolls the effect on his Transfer dice and determines the amount. All targets within the Area lose that amount of points, but the character only gains the points from the Transfer one time (as if he'd targeted a single person).

#### LIMITATIONS

PD (or ED) Applies (-1): This Limitation represents a form of Transfer against which a character's PD (or ED) in any form (Characteristics, Armor, or the like) offer defense. If the character has Power Defense as well, it adds to his PD (or ED) for purposes of resisting Transfer.

**TRANSFORM** STOP

| | |
|---|---|
| Type: | Standard Power/Attack Power |
| Duration: | Instant |
| Target: | Target's DCV |
| Range: | 5" x Active Points |
| Costs END: | Yes |
| Cost: | 5 Character Points for every 1d6 Cosmetic Transform; 10 Character Points for every 1d6 Minor Transform; 15 Character Points for every 1d6 Major Transform |

A character with Transform can change a target into something else, or impose a lasting change on it. Some examples of Transform include spells that turn handsome princes into ugly toads, the ability to inflict permanent blindness on people, or the power to turn things to stone. Characters use Transform to simulate any attack that has a long-term or permanent effect (other than injury or death) on the target. Transform costs END to use.

### BUYING TRANSFORM

The cost of Transform depends on how radical the Transformation is.

Cosmetic Transforms have no impact on how the target functions, but merely change its appearance; they cost 5 Character Points per 1d6. Examples of Cosmetic Transforms include changing someone's hair color or making passable food into better fare.

Minor Transforms work minor changes on the target's functions; they cost 10 Character Points per 1d6. Examples of Minor Transforms include making an opponent break out into a rash (minor penalties [no more than -2] to OCV and DEX-Based Skills), rendering inedible food edible, or turning a dagger into a sword.

Major Transforms work major changes on the target's functions; they cost 15 Character Points per 1d6. Major Transforms include any Transform which completely or fundamentally alters the target — making gold coins out of copper ones, rendering a person blind or permanently paralyzed, turning a person into a stone statue, transforming air into food (or creating any other object out of thin air), turning a handsome prince into an ugly toad, or making a character grow wings.

### USING TRANSFORM

To use Transform, the character makes an Attack Roll. If he succeeds, he rolls the Transform dice, counts the total, and subtracts the target's Power Defense (if any). If the remaining total is equal to or greater than twice the target's starting BODY (*i.e.,* the BODY he has when fully healed), the target is Transformed.

If the total is less than twice the target's starting BODY, he suffers no ill effects from the Transform (though his appearance may alter slightly, as described below, which alerts him to what's happening). However, the target must keep track of the "damage" he's taken from that Transform. If the character attacks him later with the same Transform, the additional Transform "damage" adds to the previous "damage" to determine whether a Transformation occurs. When the accumulated Transform damage equals twice the target's starting BODY, the Transformation takes place. Transform "damage" from different Transforms does not add together; the victim keeps track of "damage" from each Transform separately. There's no restriction on how much Transform damage a character can take, either from a single Transform or multiple Transforms.

Transforms that only affect one part of the target's body (for example, a blinding Transform that only affects the eyes) still must work against the entire BODY of the target, not just the BODY of the part affected. This does not apply if (a) the character accepts the standard Attack Roll penalty and any negative modifiers for targeting that Hit Location (positive modifiers, such as doing extra BODY for hitting the Head, do not apply), (b) the power's special effects would allow the character to target the Power in this fashion, and (c) the GM permits this. Otherwise standard Hit Location modifiers for targeting discrete parts of the body do not apply to Transforms, since they obtain no advantage for such "targeting."

Example: *Arkelos purchases a 5d6 Major Transform (human into frog). This costs (5 x 15 =) 75 Character Points. He later attempts to use his Transform against a target with 15 BODY and 5 points of Power Defense. On his first attack, he rolls 22 BODY, which does (22-5) = 17 BODY of Transform "damage" to the target. Since this is not equal to or greater than twice the target's BODY, the Transformation does not occur. On his second attack, Arkelos rolls an 18, causing (18-5 =) 13 BODY of Transform "damage" to the target. Although this is not equal to or greater than twice the target's BODY by itself, it adds to the existing 17 BODY of Transform "damage" for a total of 30 points. This is twice the target's starting BODY, so the target is Transformed into a frog.*

### THE COST OF TRANSFORM

The *HERO System* bases the cost of Transform on the cost of Ranged Killing Attack. The logic is that if a character does enough damage to kill someone or destroy something, he might as well Transform it into something else. Even when a Transform creates something more useful than a dead opponent (such as an opponent who's the character's slave), usually the cost of the power and/or other factors balance out this seeming usefulness (such as the chance that the slave-opponent will recover from the Transform somehow and attack the character in a murderous rage). Thus, a Major Transform costs 15 Character Points per d6, and lesser Transforms cost proportionately less.

### THE TARGET'S BODY

The success of a Transform attack depends partly on how much BODY the target has. The GM determines the target's BODY. Chapter Three lists BODY scores for many non-living targets; the GM can use the list as a guideline for determining the BODY of objects not listed on it. In the case of objects that cannot be said to have "BODY" *per se* (such as the writing on a page), the GM can simply assign the object a BODY of 1, or rule that any use of an appropriate Transform on the object automatically succeeds.

## TRANSFORM SUMMARY TABLE

| Type | Cost per 1d6 | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Cosmetic | 5 Character Points | Changes object's appearance only, not its function: changing someone's hair color, making passable food into better fare |
| Minor | 10 Character Points | Minor changes in the target's functions: rendering inedible food edible, turning a dagger into a sword |
| Major | 15 Character Points | Major changes in the target's functions, or completely and fundamentally altering the Target: turning base metals into gold, transforming a living being into a stone statue, rendering a person blind or permanently paralyzed, turning a handsome prince into a frog. |

### POWER EXAMPLES: TRANSFORM

Instant Change: This is the classic superhero ability to change clothing into a costume, and vice-versa. It uses the Standard Effect Rule. Because the character merely Transforms his own clothing, no Attack Roll or Effect Roll is necessary, and Instant Change should be considered a Zero Phase Action. Cosmetic Transform 2d6 (one set of clothing being worn into one costume and vice-versa; method of healing back varies based on character) (10 Active Points); Limited Target (clothes being worn; -½). Total cost: 7 points (or, to Transform a worn costume into any clothing, add Improved Results Group (+¼) (12 Active Points); total cost 8 points).

Man Into Frog Spell: Major Transform 5d6 (humans into frogs, heals back if target is kissed by a princess) (75 Active Points); OAF (Wand Of Transformation; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Limited Target (humans; -½). Total cost: 21 points.

Psionic Surgery: Minor Transform 6d6 (remove or change a target's memories, heals back normally), Based On ECV (+1), Works Against EGO, Not BODY (+¼) (135 Active Points); Limited Target (human memories; -1). Total cost: 67 points.

Beastman Spell: Major Transform 5d6 (humans into any type of animal, heals back normally), Improved Results Group (any animal; +¼) (94 Active Points); OAF (Wand Of Transformation; -1), Limited Target (humans; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 27 points.

*Suppose Arkelos's target escapes after the first attack. The target's now walking around partly Transformed into a frog. Assuming Arkelos has defined his Transform as healing back normally, the target heals back his REC in Transform "damage" per month. If his REC is 4, and a month goes by, he's healed 4 points of the "damage" Arkelos's spell did. If Arkelos then finds the target and attacks him again, he has to Transform 17 points of BODY (30 [15x2]- the 13 BODY which remain Transformed from the first attack) to turn the target completely into a frog.*

When Transform does not succeed completely with a single attack, the effects of the incomplete Transform "damage" can be perceived. To use the "human into frog" example above, Arkelos's first attack caused his target to shrink slightly, become green-skinned, and develop some froglike features. This causes no game effects — no loss or alteration of Characteristics, Powers, and the like (not even Comeliness) — but does alert the target as to what's going on. Only after his second attack was the Transform complete. This gives the target the chance to realize he's being Transformed and to try to stop it. Of course, the nature of this "damage" depends on the type of Transform being used: the partial changes caused by a Cosmetic Transform may only barely be perceivable, whereas those caused by a Major Transform may be more pronounced and easily perceived.

#### TARGETS AND RESULTS

When buying Transform, the character must specify what he can Transform targets into. Thus, he might be able to Transform "targets into toads," but could not Transform "targets into cats." The character may purchase an Advantage to broaden the scope of what he can Transform targets into (see below).

The basic target of any Transform is "anything." If a character wants to restrict the target group, he may take the *Limited Target* Limitation on the Power (see below).

#### BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT

For purposes of Transform, all targets possess three traits: Body, Mind, and Spirit. Body is the target's physical body or substance. Mind is the target's sentience, intellect, self-awareness, and the knowledge he possesses. Spirit is the target's soul, spiritual aspects/qualities, and personality. Unliving, inanimate objects, such as stones, possess neither Mind nor Spirit; usually only living beings possess those traits. Most Transforms work solely against Body.

A single Transform can only affect one of these three traits. For example, a Transform can affect a target's Body (change a person into a chair), but cannot take away his Mind or Spirit (the chair will still be sentient, alive, and have a human spirit). To Transform more than one trait (for example, changing a man into a demon, which affects his Body and his Spirit), a character must buy two or more Linked Transforms. To Transform a target's Mind, a character must use a Mental Transform (one with the *BOECV* Advantage; see below).

Transform cannot deprive a target of life, nor grant an unliving thing life (see *Transform And Other Powers* for ways to do this). Even if a target's Transformed into something that seems dead (such as a stone statue), he's just trapped in that form, alive. (Whether he needs Life Support to keep from starving to death, and the like, is up to the GM; in many cases, the character simply remains in "stasis," and does not die, as long as the Transform is in effect and he remains intact.)

**Transforming The Spirit**

A Spirit Transform normally works against BODY, like most other Transforms. Spirit Transforms do not necessarily require the *Based On ECV* Advantage, though many have it, and in some cases the GM may require it. As an option, the GM may allow the Transform to work against PRE instead of BODY, using PRE to represent the strength of a character's Spirit. If so, he may want to require characters to take a -½ (or greater) Limitation, since PRE is cheaper than BODY and characters tend to have more of it.

#### CREATING OBJECTS

A character can use Major Transform to create objects, but the GM must carefully regulate this ability. For example, a Spell of Water Creation would be a Major Transform (air/nothingness into water), with the amount of water created based on the BODY rolled on the Transform dice (say, four liters per BODY). However, characters ordinarily shouldn't be allowed to create extremely useful things, like money, enchanted items, or anything that could unbalance or adversely affect the campaign. The GM might allow characters to create such objects with Transform, but only if they purchase appropriate Skills to give them knowledge of what they're doing (for example, to Transform rocks into computers, the character must know Computer Programming). A character cannot use Transform to copy existing objects accurately unless he knows the Skill *Forgery* (and possibly other relevant Skills as well — such as KS: Art Of DaVinci to Transform a blank canvas into a copy of the *Mona Lisa*).

**Transform And Wealth**

As a good rule of thumb, whenever a character uses Transform to create anything of great value (such as gold, gems, or artwork), multiply the BODY Transformed by $1,000. That tells you how much wealth was created or value added. For example, if a character can Transform Air Into Gold (Major Transform 2d6) and rolls 10 for his effect, he's got about $10,000 worth of gold (in modern terms). However, the GM should treat any such creation or enhancement of wealth *very* cautiously — such Transforms should reverse themselves quickly, and PCs should not be allowed to use them to wreck the local economy or buy whatever they want.

**ADDING OR REMOVING ABILITIES**

A Transform can take away or alter a target's Skills, Powers, Disadvantages, and/or other abilities, or grant a target Skills, Powers, Disadvantages, and/or other abilities it does not have. For example, Transforming a superhero into a frog deprives him of his powers. The GM should regulate this aspect of Transform carefully, and approve any use of Transform that takes away or grants abilities.

If a Transform can grant abilities, the character must specify which abilities it grants when he buys the Power, and cannot change them thereafter. If the Transform has the *Improved Results Group* Advantage, the GM must approve a list of abilities the Transform can grant; characters cannot buy Transforms that can give the target any ability the character chooses. On the other hand, characters can buy Transforms that remove all of a character's powers or abilities — for example, Transforming a superhero into, say, a frog or a chair by definition means a "normal" frog or chair, without any superpowers the target may have had.

Abilities granted through Transform are typically accompanied by some corresponding Disadvantages or drawbacks to compensate for them, but this is not required. When a Transform adds Character Points to a target, if the total of the accompanying Disadvantages equals or exceeds the total points granted to the target, the Transform works normally (it does not become easier). However, one-fifth of any points not compensated for by new Disadvantages adds to the target's BODY, point for point, to determine how difficult it is for the character to accomplish the Transform. (In short, add [[Points Added-Disadvantages Added]/5] to the target's BODY.) Transforms that remove existing abilities do not suffer this modifier.

Example: *The wizard Kasdrevan wishes to Transform four of his servants (10 BODY each) into gargoyles to guard his castle. This means they gain wings (Flight), claws (HKA), and scaly skin (Armor). The cost of these new abilities is partially offset by a Disadvantage that comes with them (Distinctive Features); however, the abilities cost 40 more points than the Disadvantage. One-fifth of these points add to the servants' BODY for purposes of determining how hard it is to Transform them — meaning the servants are considered to have 18 BODY, not 10, for purposes of Transform (so Kasdrevan has to achieve 36 points of effect with his Transform to complete the Transformation).*

**Transform And Skills**

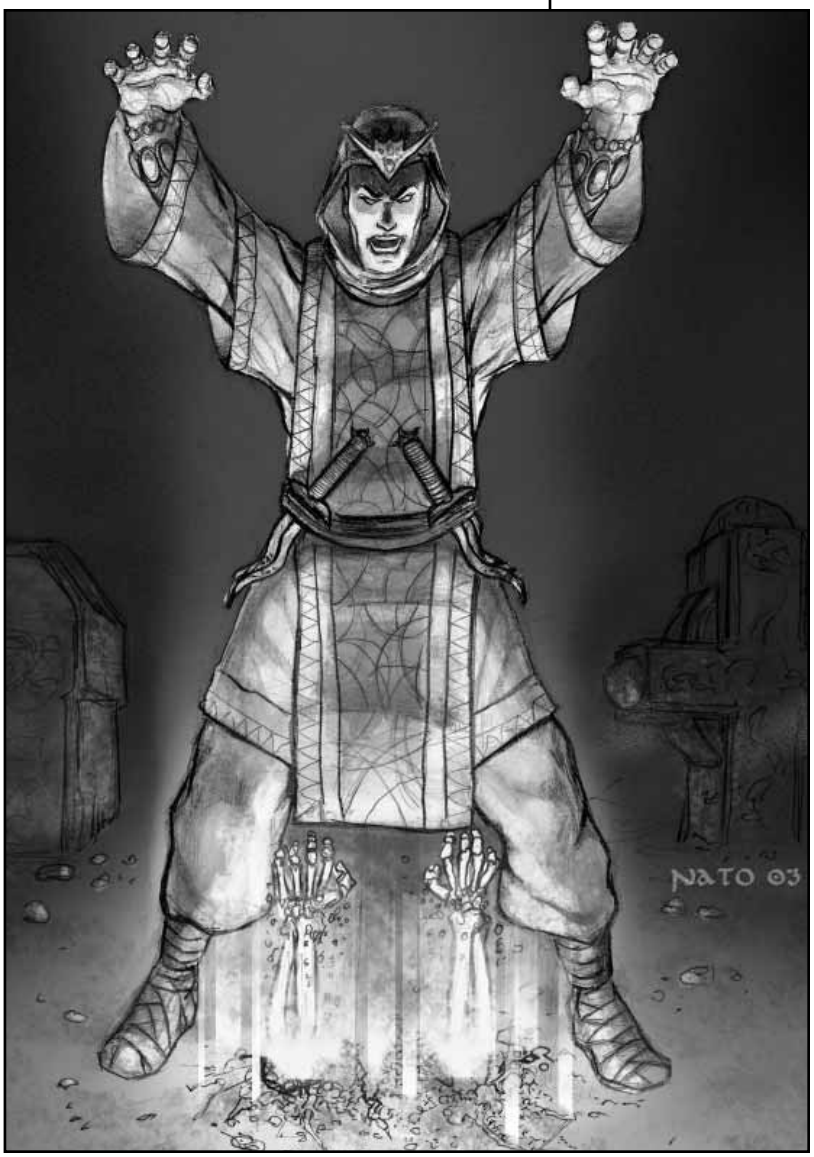
Transforms that grant the target abilities — for example, Transforming a man so he grows wings (he gains Flight) or becomes wealthy (he gains Money) — cannot grant a Skill to a target unless the character using the Transform knows that Skill himself, and cannot grant the Skill at a higher level than he knows it.

**Transform And Disadvantages**

One popular use of Major Transform is to inflict Disadvantages (mainly Psychological Limitations, Social Limitations, Susceptibilities, Unluck, or Vulnerabilities) on another person. At the GM's option, a character who wants to do this has to use the rules for granting powers, above. That way, inflicting a severe Disadvantage on a victim requires more effort than giving him a trivial one. (The GM may apply the same rule to removing Disadvantages, which is sort of like granting a character an ability.)

The GM should not apply this rule to Physical Limitation in the case of Transforms that inflict some sort of physical restriction or handicap. If a character can Transform Sighted Person Into Blind Person, he just needs to do normal Transform damage, not Transform damage plus the points for a 25-point Physical Limitation *Blind,* to render the target sightless. (The GM may grant other exceptions).

A Transform that removes, changes, or adds one or more Psychological Limitations is a Transform of the target's Mind, and thus must be a Mental Transform (one with the *BOECV* Advantage; see below). The GM may also apply this rule to other Disadvantages that involve the character's mental state, such as many Enrageds/Berserks.



**TRANSFORM AND OTHER POWERS**

Characters should not use Transform to simulate other Powers. For example, characters normally should not use Transform to create swords out of thin air — that's better simulated as the special effect of an HKA (possibly *Usable On Others*).

Characters cannot use Transform on themselves. Changing one's own shape is either a special effect of certain powers, or requires Multiform, Shape Shift, or the like.

Characters cannot Transform inanimate objects into living beings — that's a special effect of Summon. A chair Transformed into a frog becomes a frog, but a dead one.

Transforms cannot kill characters by Transforming them into "dead people," unliving objects, creatures that cannot survive very long, or fragile objects that the character then breaks. Characters should use NND Killing Attacks and similar Powers to do that.

Transform does not hurt the target. To create a "harmful Transform," a character should Link an Attack Power to his Transform.

**HEALING FROM TRANSFORM**

When a character buys Transform, he must define a way for the target to regain its normal form (he may not change this method later, unless he buys the *Variable Healing Methods* Advantage; see below). There are many possibilities.

If the target is a character or living being, he may heal back the BODY taken from the Transform at the same rate as BODY damage suffered from an injury. When the character heals back all of the Transform BODY, he reverts to his normal form. The victim only has to heal back the Transform damage needed to Transform him, not the total amount of Transform damage rolled.

Example: *Witchcraft uses her Major Transform 4d6 (humans into frogs) against Blowtorch (BODY 10, REC 7, no Power Defense). Her first effect roll is 18, not quite enough to fully Transform the flamethrower-wielding villain. Her second roll is a 11, enough to turn Blowtorch into a frog. If Witchcraft has defined the healing condition of her Transform as "target heals back normally," Blowtorch reverts to human form when he heals 20 BODY — he doesn't have to heal 29 BODY, even though that's how much Witchcraft rolled in total.*

If the target is a character or an object, the character with the Transform power may define an all-or-nothing method for reversing the Transformation. This means the target must be treated in some identifiable way, and when so treated immediately reverts to his normal form. The classic example of this is that a prince Transformed into a frog changes back if a princess kisses him.

If a Transform attack is stopped before a complete Transformation occurs, the victim must heal whatever effects the Transform had normally. For example, if an evil wizard half Transforms a character with BODY 10, REC 10 into a frog before the character's friends slay him (the wizard), the character has to spend a month (the time it would normally take him to heal 10 BODY of damage) "healing" from the Transform. During that time he'll gradually become taller, less green-skinned, and less frog-like until he's a normal human once more.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Area Of Effect, Explosion: Transforms with these Advantages must Transform all targets within the area into the same object; different targets cannot be Transformed into different objects.

A character does not need to apply Area Of Effect to his Transform to Transform a large target, such as a building. As long as the target is a discrete entity with a BODY Characteristic (or to which the GM can assign a BODY rating using the rules in Chapter Three), the character can Transform it. The GM might let a character target a large amount of something (such as "the ground"), and then use the information in Chapter Three regarding how much BODY a hex of that substance has to determine how much of it each use of the Transform affects.

Based On Ego Combat Value: Transforms bought with the *BOECV* Advantage are referred to as *Mental Transforms.* They must also take the Power Modifier *Works Against EGO, Not BODY* (this may be an Advantage or a Limitation, depending upon which Characteristic is normally higher in the campaign; typically, it's a +¼ Advantage). They also usually take a *Limited Target* Limitation (see below).

Other than working against EGO, Mental Transforms work the same as normal Transforms. Characters can use them to perform "Psionic Surgery" (the removal or alteration of memories, Mental Powers, Psychological Limitations, some Enrageds/Berserks, and the like; this may be a Cosmetic, Minor, or Major Transform depending upon the importance and point value of what's changed or removed). They can also simulate "Mind Transference," the ability to transfer one's mind into another character's body.

Does BODY: A Transform with the *BOECV* or *No Normal Defense* Advantage does not require this Advantage.

Improved Results Group (+¼ to +1): Ordinarily, Transform only Transforms the target into a single object, defined when the Power is bought (for example, a frog, a tomato, or a stove). For a +¼ Advantage, the character can Transform the target into a Limited Group of objects (animals, foods, household appliances). For a +1 Advantage, the character can Transform the target into Anything.

Partial Transform (+½): As described above, characters can perceive Transform "damage" before the character suffers the full effect of the Transform, but this has no game effect (no loss of Characteristics, for example) — it's just the way the Power works visually. A Transform with this Advantage *does* have gradual game effects before it's fully effective. A Minor Transform with this Advantage inflicts a full Cosmetic Transform when it does Transform damage equal to half of the BODY

needed to fully Transform the target. A Major Transform inflicts a full Cosmetic Transform when it does Transform damage equal to one-third of the BODY needed to fully Transform the target, and a full Minor Transform when it inflicts Transform damage equal to two-thirds the BODY needed to fully Transform the target.

A character who has a Transform with the *Partial Transform* Advantage can stop using it on the target after he achieves a partial Transformation. For example, even if he's using a Major Transform, he can decide to stop after achieving just a Cosmetic or Minor Transform. If the Transform is defined as "target heals back normally," the target has to heal back his full BODY to reverse this partial Transformation, not just what the character rolled on the Transform dice. Transforms without Partial Transform cannot do this (unless the GM permits them to).

Variable Healing Method (+½): Ordinarily, a character with Transform defines the method of "healing" from his Transform when he buys the Power, and may not change it thereafter. However, a Transform with this Advantage can have a different method of healing defined each time it's used.

**LIMITATIONS**

All Or Nothing (-½): A Transform with this Limitation does not have a cumulative effect — it must completely Transform the target with one attack. If it fails to do so, any further uses of the same Transform do not add to the "damage" already done, so the target need not keep track of Transform "damage" he takes.

Focus: If a character attempts to use Transform on another character's Focus, the Focus has, at a minimum, 1 BODY per point of DEF for purposes of resisting Transform. Large (Bulky or Immobile) Foci may have many more BODY than that. Unbreakable Foci have Power Defense equal to 2x their DEF solely for purposes of resisting Transform.

Limited Target (-¼ to -1): Ordinarily, the target of a Transform is "anything." However, many Transforms have a much more limited range of targets. If the target group is Slightly Limited (sentient beings, animals), this is a -¼ Limitation. If the target group is Limited (humans, cats), this is a -½ Limitation. If the target group is Very Limited (princesses, tigers), this is a -1 Limitation.

"Air" or "Nothingness" (the typical "targets" for Transforms that create objects "out of thin air") do not count as Limited Targets.

Rapid Healing (-¼ or more): A character can define a Transform with the healing condition of "target heals back normally" as healing back more quickly than the target's REC per month. For each step up the Time Chart (REC per Week, REC per Day, REC per 6 Hours, REC per 1 Hour, and so forth), the Transform receives a -¼ Limitation.

## TUNNELING

Type: Movement Power
Duration: Constant
Target: Self Only
Range: Self
Costs END: Yes
Cost: 5 Character Points for every 1" Tunneling through 1 DEF material per Phase; +3 Character Points for +1 DEF

A character with Tunneling can move through the ground or other substances by creating a tunnel roughly his own size. Some examples of Tunneling include the ability to burrow through the ground rapidly, a super-strong character's ability to use his mighty muscles to tear through any wall or substance effortlessly, or a gigantic drilling vehicle. Each 1" of Tunneling through 1 DEF material costs 5 Character Points (thus, for 25 points a character can Tunnel 5" through DEF 5 material); the ability to Tunnel through every +1 DEF costs 3 Character Points.

For general rules on movement and Movement Powers in the *HERO System*, including Noncombat Movement and Turn Modes, see pages 122, 363. It's possible for a character to Tunnel more quickly than he can walk. Tunneling costs END to use.

**USING TUNNELING**

When a character uses Tunneling, he normally leaves the tunnel open behind him; he can automatically fill it in if he buys an Adder (see below). Unless filled in by the character when made, a tunnel remains in existence until filled in, collapsed, or otherwise changed or destroyed. Tunneling works a lasting physical change on the environment, in much the same way that an Energy Blast used against an inanimate object can inflict lasting destruction. Deactivating Tunneling does not cause a character's tunnels to vanish.

Even if the character fills the tunnel in behind him, it's still obvious someone has used Tunneling to penetrate the substance. To Tunnel without leaving any such traces, the character should buy *Invisible Power Effects* for his Tunneling (or buy Desolidification with a "Tunneling without trace" special effect).

A character using Tunneling does not need Life Support to Tunnel (he's assumed to keep an air pocket around him), but cannot perceive in front of him unless he has special Senses that allow him to perceive through whatever he's Tunneling through.

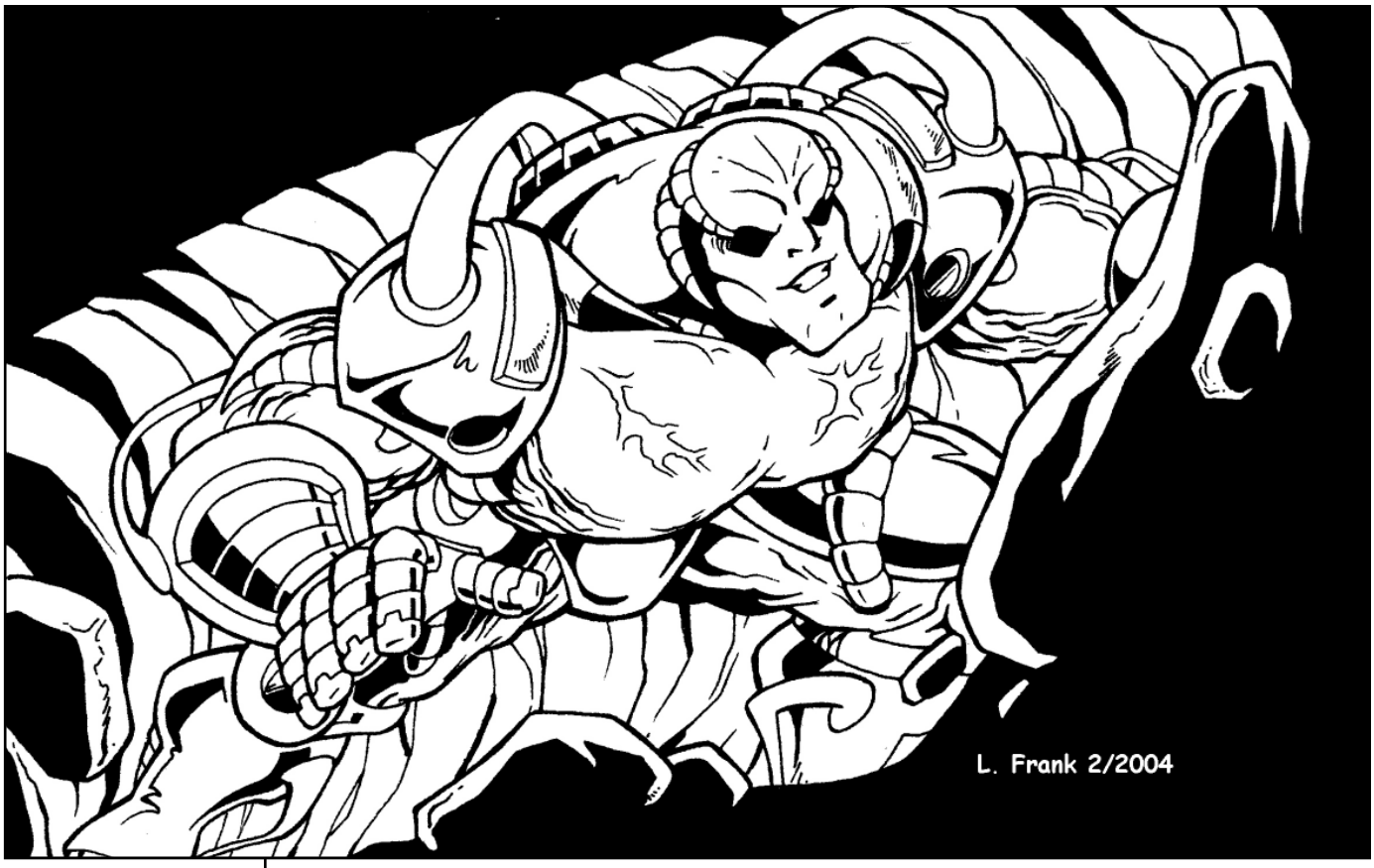
**Restrictions On Tunneling**

Characters cannot use Tunneling on living creatures to cause damage. Characters cannot use Tunneling to Tunnel through a vehicle (though a GM might allow a character to use Tunneling on the side of a large vehicle, such as to tear through the back of a tractor-trailer truck). Characters may not Tunnel through air or liquids; Tunneling only works on solid substances, such as soil.

**POWER EXAMPLES: TUNNELING**

Super-Strength Smash-Through: Tunneling 1" through 15 DEF material (47 Active Points); Requires A STR Roll (-½), Walls Only (-½). Total cost: 23 points.

Mole Machine: Tunneling 12" through 12 DEF material (60 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½), Fuel Charge (1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Hour; -0). Total cost: 24 points.




**POWERS**

Entangle: A character trapped in an Entangle cannot use Tunneling to escape from it. However, at the GM's option, a character outside the Entangle could use Tunneling to break open the Entangle and free the trapped character. Characters can use Tunneling to Tunnel through barriers created with Entangle.

Find Weakness: Characters cannot use Find Weakness to halve the DEF of substances they Tunnel through.

Force Wall: Characters cannot Tunnel through Force Walls, unless the GM permits this.

**ADVANTAGES AND ADDERS**

Fill In: A tunnel created by Tunneling with this +10 Character Points Adder can be filled in behind the character.

If Tunneling has Fill In, the filling in occurs automatically as the character tunnels (it doesn't require any extra Actions or time). Other persons can, with the Tunneler's permission, follow him and use the tunnel as well, but they must remain in the same hex as him (unless the GM permits otherwise in the interest of common sense and dramatic sense). A character cannot follow the Tunneling character against the Tunneling character's will before he fills it in; if that's attempted, the tunnel simply closes on the hapless follower (the GM can determine the effects of that as he sees fit).

A character who buys Fill In doesn't have to use it if he doesn't want to — he *can* fill in the tunnel behind him, but he's not *required* to — unless his Tunneling has both Fill In and the -0 Limitation *Fill In Always Occurs*.

AVLD, No Normal Defense: Characters may not apply the *Attack Versus Limited Defense* or *No Normal Defense* Advantages to Tunneling as a cheap way of Tunneling through any substance regardless of its DEF.

Hardened: Hardened walls (and other substances) have +25% DEF per level of Hardened for purposes of moving through them with Tunneling.

**LIMITATIONS**

Limited Medium (-½, -1): Characters can only use Tunneling with this Limitation to move through specified types of substances. If it only works on a Limited medium (soil and rock only; walls only), the value is -½; if it only works on a Very Limited medium (stone walls only), the value is -1.

# POWER MODIFIERS

You can build effective characters using only Powers and Skills. However, with Power Modifiers, you can make your characters both more effective and more individualized. There are three types of Power Modifiers: Power Advantages, Power Limitations, and Power Frameworks.

Power Advantages make Powers more useful, but increase the Character Point cost for the Power. Power Limitations restrict Powers, but decrease their cost. Power Frameworks affect the way a character groups his Powers together and how he can use them.

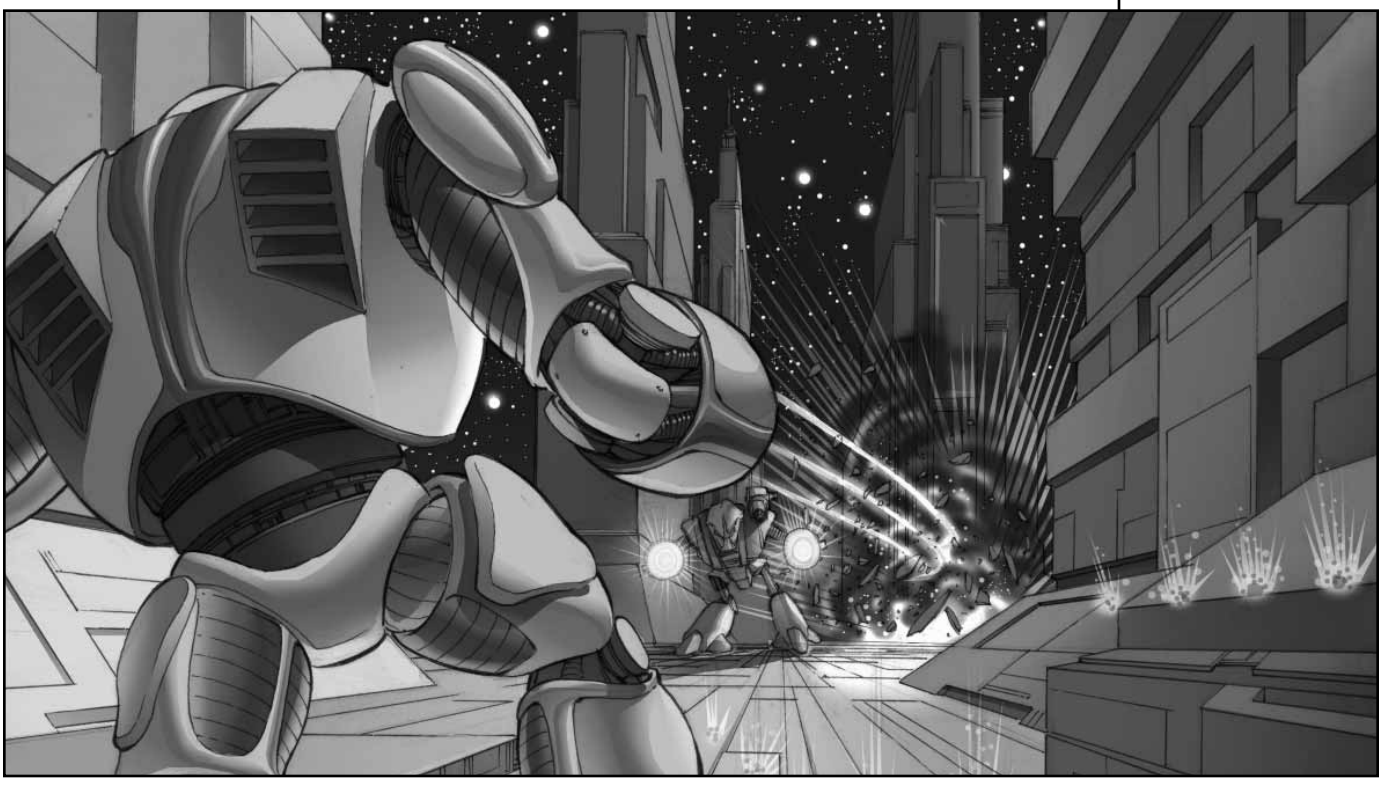
By combining Powers and Power Modifiers, you can create any type of ability or power. Your first characters may not need any Power Modifiers. Later, you may use a Modifier or two to "customize" a character's abilities. Finally, when you're comfortable with the Powers and Power Modifiers, you can use the Power Modifiers to create highly intricate characters with very specific and unusual abilities. Using Power Modifiers makes creating characters a more complex process, but the reward — more detailed, flexible characters — is worth it.

When you write them on a character sheet, list Power Advantages with a plus (+) and Power Limitations with a minus (-). These symbols do not actually affect the Modifiers, they just make them easier to tell apart. Frameworks don't need a symbol, since they're independent from the Powers.

Although Advantages and Limitations are listed with a plus and a minus, that doesn't mean you should add the Advantages and subtract the Limitations to get a total. Apply the total Advantages and total Limitations separately to the cost of each Power.

Example: *Lisa is creating a knife for her thief character. She wants to buy an HKA 1d6 with the Advantage Armor Piercing (+½) and the Limitation Obvious Accessible Focus (-1). She cannot subtract the Advantage from the Limitation to get a total -½ Limitation (which would make the knife cost 10 points). Instead, she must first apply the Advantage (for an Active Point cost of 22) and then the Limitation (for a Real Point cost of 11).*

The section on *Special Effects* at the beginning of the Powers (page 96) also applies to Power Modifiers. In fact, Power Modifiers are often more important for representing special effects than the Powers are themselves! For example, lots of characters can have Ranged Killing Attacks, but a character who wants his RKA to be a laser might simulate the laser's cutting power by adding the Advantage *Armor Piercing.*



# POWER ADVANTAGES



Power Advantages modify ordinary Powers to make them more useful and effective. These modifications increase the Active Point cost of a power. Many special effects are best simulated by a Power with a Power Advantage — for example, a grenade is an Energy Blast or RKA with the Power Advantage *Explosion.*

### ADDERS

Closely related to Advantages are *Adders,* which are listed with individual Power categories or Powers. These are small additional costs to a Power that increase its flexibility and usefulness, such as Improved Noncombat Movement for Movement Powers. Unlike Advantages, which increase the base power's cost by multiplying it, Adders add directly to the cost of a power (for example, each extra x2 Noncombat Movement costs +5 Character Points). Adders increase a power's Active Point cost (and thus how much END it costs to use it); you add them to a power's cost before applying Advantages.

Unless noted otherwise, the rules for buying and using Advantages generally apply to buying and using Adders.

## BUYING POWER ADVANTAGES

Each Power Advantage has a multiplier value that you use to figure the Active Points in a Power plus Advantage. The Active Points tell you roughly how powerful an ability is compared to other powers. The Active Point cost of a Power with Power Advantages equals:

**Active Point Cost = Base Cost x (1 + total value of all Advantages)**

Example: *Sniper wants to buy a Ranged Killing Attack 2d6 with the +½ Power Advantage Armor Piercing. Sniper's Killing Attack has an Active Point cost of 30 x (1 + ½ =) 45 Points.*

You apply Advantages to Powers after applying all Adders and other modifiers that increase the Power's cost. For example, if a character has Teleportation 10", x4 mass (a +10 Adder) and wants to make the Power *Armor Piercing,* apply the Advantage after adding in the +10 points, making the final cost ((20 + 10) x 1½ =) 45 points.

Sometimes a character buys a Power that he gets some of for free — like Running (he gets 6" for free) or Mental Defense (he gets EGO/5 for free upon purchase). If he wants an Advantage that he applies to the Power to also affect what he's received for free, he must apply any Advantages to the cost of the Power *including the free points.* For example, if a character buys Running +3" and wants all of his Running to be 0 END, he applies the +½ Advantage to 18 points (9" x 2 points each), even though he's only actually paying 6 points for Running (thus yielding a total cost to the character of 15 points).

Unless another rule forbids it, a character can put an Advantage on only *part* of a power, thus creating a "partially Advantaged Power." As always, the GM may rule that a character can't do this if he thinks it would be abusive, slow down game play, or the like.

## Naked Power Advantages

Normally, you must attach a Power Advantage to a Power, but sometimes you can create interesting abilities with just a "naked" Power Advantage — in other words, an Advantage that's not attached to a Power. (A character could also have a naked Power Adder; the same rules apply.) Examples include:

—the ability to apply the Autofire Advantage to any firearm of up to RKA 3d6 — the character is so good at shooting guns that he can fire any gun very rapidly and accurately

—buying Armor Piercing for a character's STR, so that he can attack with a "spearhand punch" instead of a regular punch when he wants to

### NAKED ADVANTAGE BASICS

Naked Power Advantages are considered Special Powers (and therefore may not be bought in Power Frameworks without the GM's permission). Naked Advantages are distinct, full-fledged Powers with their own special effects, and may have other Advantages or Limitations applied to them (such as Reduced Endurance); Advantages applied to the naked Advantage have no effect on the base power. Since a naked Advantage is a distinct Power, a character does not always have to use it the way he does Advantages bought as part of a power (see below).

A naked Advantage typically only has a duration of Instant, even if the base Power is Constant, Persistent, or Inherent. The character may purchase an appropriate Advantage to change the naked Advantage's duration (or the GM might grant an exception based on the nature of the ability being constructed, the Advantages used, and/or the Power to which the Advantage is applied).

A naked Advantage typically has the same target and range as the base power to which it's applied. The

GM may vary this based on the nature of the ability being constructed, the Advantages used, and/or the Power to which the Advantage is applied.

Naked Advantages cost END at the standard rate of 1 END per 10 Active Points in the ability. The exception to this is a naked *Reduced Endurance* Advantage, which automatically costs 0 END. The GM may make other exceptions, if desired.

**TYPES OF NAKED ADVANTAGES**

There are two types of naked Advantages: naked Advantages bought to apply to any one of a group of powers (like the Autofire example above); and a naked Advantage bought to apply to a specific power (like the STR example above).

**Group Naked Advantages**

For the first type of naked Advantage, the character defines the maximum Active Points the Advantage can apply to. This total must account for any Advantages the base power has. The character does not also have to buy the base power's Advantages or Limitations for the naked Advantage; the power functions as it would normally, with the naked Advantage adding in. The character "applies" the naked Advantage to the defined Active Point total, then subtracts the defined Active Point total, to determine the naked Advantage's cost.

Example: *Renegade wants to have the ability to apply Autofire to any pistol, to represent his ability to rapidly and accurately squeeze off multiple shots. He defines his "Quick Shot" ability with a naked Advantage: Autofire (3 shots; +¼) for any non-Autofire firearm of up to 60 Active Points. This costs him 15 points: ((60 x (1 + ¼)) - 60). He can apply this ability to any firearm that's built on 60 Active Points or less, regardless of how those 60 Active Points are derived. He could apply it to a firearm defined as an RKA 4d6, an RKA 2½d6 Armor Piercing, an RKA 2d6 Explosion, or the like — all of which have 60 Active Points or less. However, he couldn't apply it to a firearm defined as an RKA 3d6 Armor Piercing, or an RKA 5d6 — they have more than 60 Active Points.*

*For example, if he applies his "Quick Shot" power to an RKA 2½d6 Armor Piercing, the base power temporarily becomes an RKA 2½d6 AP, Autofire (3 shots). Even though the RKA itself costs no END, the naked Advantage, as a separate power, costs END (1 END, since it's a 15-point power). Renegade could make it cost 0 END by applying Reduced Endurance (+½), which would increase the cost of the naked Advantage to 22 points, but would have no effect on the base power.*

**Single-Power Naked Advantages**

Characters calculate the cost of a naked Advantage for only one power differently. In that case, recalculate the cost of the base power as if it normally had the naked Advantage. After you have that new cost, subtract the cost of the base power to determine the cost of the naked Advantage. All Advantages and Limitations applicable to the base power automatically apply to and/or function with the naked Advantage, but do not alter its cost. (Reduced Endurance is an exception — as discussed above, a naked Advantage has a normal END cost unless the character buys Reduced Endurance for it separately.)

Example: *Dweomer has a Spell Of Sublime Attack: Energy Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Armor Piercing (+½) (80 Active Points); OAF (wizard's staff; -1), Incantations (-¼) (total cost: 35 points). He decides he wants to create another spell, the Spell Of Augmentation, that applies the Advantage* Penetrating *(+½) to the Spell Of Sublime Attack. He buys this as a naked Advantage. The power with Penetrating added would cost 100 Active Points, 44 Real Points. 44 - 35 = 9 points, so the naked Advantage costs him 9 points. The* Focus *and* Incantations *Limitations automatically apply to the naked Advantage, and do not reduce the cost. The naked Advantage costs 1 END to use. If Dweomer wants to apply a separate Advantage or Limitation to the naked Advantage, he starts with a base cost of 9 points.*

**Other Rules**

Generally, a character cannot purchase a naked Power Advantage or Adder that adds to any slot in a Power Framework, but this depends on the nature of the powers and special effects involved and the GM's judgment regarding game balance, common sense, and dramatic sense. For example, a character with the "Quick Shot" naked Advantage described above who had a Multipower of different guns could apply the naked Advantage to any of those guns. On the other hand, an energy projector with the same Multipower, but no *Focus* Limitations, probably shouldn't be allowed to do that, since there are no restrictions on the use of the naked Advantage.

## Choosing A Lesser Effect

When buying an Advantage, a character may choose a lesser effect than the full effect the Advantage grants, if desired. He makes this choice when he buys the Advantage, and cannot change it thereafter (unless the GM permits him to). Examples include:

—buying an Area Of Effect that would give the power a 6" Radius, but choosing to define it as only a 3" Radius

—buy Increased Maximum Range for a power, but defining it as only increasing the power's range by x3, instead of the standard x5

—buying MegaScale to increase 1" to 10,000 km, but defining it as 1" = 3,500 km instead

A character who chooses a lesser effect for an Advantage does not receive any reduction in the cost of the Advantage, or any Limitation. He pays the standard cost for the Advantage, but chooses to define it as having a less than maximum effect in the interest of properly creating the ability he wants.

# USING POWER ADVANTAGES

A Power with a Power Advantage is a distinct power — it's "new," completely different from that Power without that Advantage.

## ADVANTAGES ARE MANDATORY

A character must always use the Advantages purchased for a Power at full strength whenever he uses that Power. For example, a character cannot buy an Energy Blast, Armor Piercing and use the EB without its AP effect, or buy a Drain STR 5d6, Area Of Effect (5" Radius) and use the area at only 2".

As always, the GM may grant an exception to this rule if doing so seems appropriate on the basis of common sense, dramatic sense, special effects, or considerations of game balance. For example, many HTH Combat weapons are built with the Advantages *Range Based On STR* so characters can throw them if necessary — but obviously they don't *always* have to throw them. Similarly, Flight with the *Usable As Swimming* Advantage doesn't always have to be used underwater.

Even if the GM allows a character to not use an Advantage, the Advantage still applies for purposes of determining the END cost for using the power (unless the GM rules otherwise). Furthermore, if the Power is in a Multipower in a Flexible slot, the character must allocate the reserve points for the Advantage if the GM rules he doesn't have to use that Advantage.

### Adders

On the other hand, Adders are *not* mandatory, unless the Power is Always On. If a character's Teleportation has Increased Mass, he doesn't always have to carry that much weight (or even all the weight indicated by the full extent of the Adder). If his Force Wall is Opaque, it doesn't always have to be (but it does have to be all opaque or all transparent; he can't make it half-and-half, or have transparent "windows"). If the Power is in a Multipower in a Flexible slot, the character doesn't have to allocate the reserve points to the Adder if he's not using it. However, even if a character doesn't use an Adder, the Adder still applies for purposes of determining the END cost for using the power (unless the GM rules otherwise).

The GM should always keep the nature of the Power and its special effects in mind when applying these rules. It may be appropriate to always require a character to apply a particular Adder to a particular power. For example, some special effects for Invisibility, No Fringe, might logically prevent characters from ever making their fringe show up.

If a character doesn't use an Adder, he may *not* devote the "unused points" to increasing the basic effect of the power. The points spent on the Adder are simply wasted for that particular use of the power.

## ADVANTAGES AND ENDURANCE

The END cost of a power depends on the Active Points in the power — the base power and all Advantages (though a power that normally doesn't use END won't use END just because it has a Power Advantage). Exceptions are noted in the text. (These rules apply to powers with Adders as well.)

## EVALUATING ADVANTAGES

When evaluating a power with Advantages, the GM must use careful judgement to make sure play balance is maintained — after all, an Advantage makes a power more powerful. For a good estimate of how powerful a Power is, the GM should compare its Active Cost to the Active Cost of other Powers without any Advantages.

Example: *Dave examines a character with an Energy Blast 10d6, Armor Piercing (+½) to see if the character fits into his campaign. The total Active Point cost of the power is 50 x (1 + ½) = 75 points. Dave has a campaign limit of 60 Active Points for Attack Powers for beginning characters. Therefore the AP EB is too powerful. He asks the player to reduce the EB to 8d6 with Armor Piercing to fit into the campaign.*

The value of an Advantage may shift from campaign to campaign, either because of the Advantage's level of utility (or lack thereof) in a genre or because the GM wants to encourage or discourage its use. For example, in most campaigns, the Advantage *Transdimensional* should be fairly expensive, since it greatly increases a power's usefulness and strength. However, in a dimension-hopping campaign, the GM might want characters to purchase this Advantage for a lot of their Powers, so he would lower the cost to make it a more attractive purchase. For further information on altering the value of Advantages and creating new Advantages, see Chapter Seven.

## APPLYING ADVANTAGES FOR SPECIFIC EFFECTS

The Advantages Summary Table provides a basic description of the general effects of various types of Advantages. For notes about the application and interaction of specific Advantages with specific Powers, please refer to the individual Power and Power category descriptions earlier in this chapter. Those descriptions also provide some Advantages applicable specifically to individual Powers or Power categories that aren't listed here.

# ADVANTAGE SUMMARY TABLE

| Advantage Name | Description |
|---|---|
| Affects Desolidified | Power can affect Desolidified characters |
| Area Of Effect | Power affects everyone within a defined area, targets DCV 3 |
| Armor Piercing | Only half of target's defenses apply against the attack |
| Attack Versus Limited Defense ⚠ | Power works against non-standard defense, but only does STUN damage |
| Autofire | Power can fire up to 5 shots |
| Based On ECV | Power works like a Mental Power |
| Charges | Power has a large number of uses per day |
| Cumulative ⚠ | Power's effects accumulate until reaching designated total |
| Damage Shield | Power surrounds character, affects anyone touching him |
| Delayed Effect | Character can prepare power in advance |
| Difficult To Dispel | Power is harder to Dispel or Suppress |
| Does BODY STOP | STUN only power can do BODY damage |
| Does Knockback | Power can do Knockback |
| Double Knockback STOP | Power is more likely to do Knockback |
| Duration Advantages | Improve power's duration |
| Explosion | Power affects everyone within a defined area, targets DCV 3, but becomes less effective as it spreads outward |
| Hole In The Middle | Area-affecting power has a "safe zone" in the center |
| Indirect ⚠ | Power strikes targets from unusual angle(s) |
| Invisible Power Effects | Power cannot be perceived |
| MegaScale STOP | Power has a much larger range, area, or velocity |
| No Normal Defense | Power ignores conventional defenses and has all-or-nothing effect, but only does STUN damage |
| Penetrating ⚠ | Attack always does some damage regardless of defenses |
| Personal Immunity | Power doesn't affect character who uses it |
| Range Advantages | Improve power's range, or make it work better at range |
| Ranged | Makes non-ranged power work at range |
| Reduced Endurance | Power costs less (or no) END |
| Sticky | Power also affects people who touch original victim |
| Time Delay | Power works on a "timer" |
| Transdimensional STOP | Power can affect targets in other dimensions |
| Trigger | Character can activate power immediately under designated conditions |
| Uncontrolled STOP | Power can maintain itself without conscious thought or effort from character |
| Usable On Others STOP | Character can grant power to other characters |
| Variable Advantage STOP | Character can change the Advantages on the power |
| Variable Special Effects STOP | Character can change power's special effects |

# POWER ADVANTAGE DESCRIPTIONS

## AFFECTS DESOLIDIFIED

Value: +½ (affects all special effects of Desolidification); +¼ (affects only a single, defined, special effect of Desolidification)

A Power with Affects Desolidified can affect a character who is Desolidified — a rather rude surprise for most Desolidified characters. It can also affect normal objects and characters. Characters can also use Affects Desolidified to create walls that Desolidified characters cannot pass through.

If an Affects Desolidified attack can affect any form of Desolidification, regardless of its special effect, the Advantage has a value of +½. If it can only affect one special effect of Desolidification, defined when the Advantage is bought (such as "body of pure energy"), Affects Desolidified is worth +¼.

## AREA OF EFFECT

Value: +½ for Area Of Effect (One Hex); +1 for Area Of Effect (Radius, Cone, Line, or Any Area); -¼ less Advantage for Nonselective Target; +¼ additional Advantage for Selective Target; +½ additional Advantage for Conforming; +1 additional Advantage for Mobile

Powers with Area Of Effect affect all targets in an area. The character must choose the type and size of Area Of Effect he wants when he purchases the Power, and cannot change it thereafter (or alter it from use to use during the game). See page 101 regarding applying Area Of Effect to Powers that normally target a hex to change the shape of the area they affect.

### USING AREA OF EFFECT POWERS

To use an Area Of Effect power, a character targets the center of the area on a hex (which has DCV 3). Then he makes an Attack Roll with any modifiers that apply (including the Range Modifier). If the Attack Roll succeeds, the Area Of Effect centers on the target hex. If the Attack Roll fails, the center of the Area Of Effect misses the target hex (see *Combat Modifiers,* page 375). If the Power has No Range, the center of the Area Of Effect is the

### POWER EXAMPLES: AFFECTS DESOLIDIFIED

Ghostrending Sword: HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR), Affects Desolidified (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (30 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 15 points.

Darkness Blast: Energy Blast 10d6, Affects Desolidified (light-based special effects only; +¼). Total cost: 62 points.

Necromancer's Chains: Entangle 4d6, 4 DEF, Affects Desolidified (+½) (60 Active Points); OAF Expendable (link from a chain used to hold a condemned man, Difficult to obtain; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Necromancy Roll (-½). Total cost: 18 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: AREA OF EFFECT

Dragon's Breath: RKA 3d6, Area Of Effect (20" Cone; +1¼) (101 Active Points); No Range (-½), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 50 points.

Fire Bolt: RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (12" Line; +1) (60 Active Points); No Range (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

Mystic Arrow Spell: RKA 2d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex Accurate; +½), Armor Piercing (+½), No Range Modifier (+½) (75 Active Points); OAF (wizard's staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 25 points.

Power Maelstrom: Drain STUN 3d6, Personal Immunity (+¼), Area Of Effect (4" Radius; +1). Total cost: 67 points.

Prismatic Blast Spell: Energy Blast 6d6 + Sight Group Flash 4d6, Area Of Effect (5" Radius; +1), Selective (+¼) (112 Active Points); OAF Expendable (prism, Difficult to obtain; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Side Effects (Sight Group Flash 6d6; -½). Total cost: 30 points.

Shadowsphere: Darkness to Sight Group 5" radius, Alterable Size, Mobile (+1). Total cost: 110 points.

character himself, unless noted otherwise below; he takes full effect unless he's somehow protected (such as if he buys the *Personal Immunity* Advantage for the power).

If a character uses an Area Of Effect power against a target so large that it has a DCV lower than 3 (such as a castle), he may make his attack against the target's DCV instead of DCV 3. This does not apply to characters who have DCV 0 because they're unconscious, severely Presence Attacked, or the like. Regardless of a target's size, it only takes damage from a single use of an Area Of Effect attack once (not once per hex, or the like).

An Area Of Effect power affects all the characters in the area. Unless the rules note otherwise, it affects them all the same. For example, with an Area Of Effect Energy Blast, the character rolls damage once and each victim takes that damage (he doesn't roll once per victim), and Area Of Effect Mind Control must give the same order to all victims. Characters cannot avoid Area Of Effect attacks by Dodging or Missile Deflecting them, but can do so by Diving For Cover (see page 393).

The area of an Area Of Effect power derives from the Active Points in the Power with all Power Advantages *other than* Area Of Effect applied — the Character Points spent on Area Of Effect are not considered. Characters cannot Spread Area Of Effect attacks (see page 380).

Example: *Pulsar spends 30 Character Points on his Energy Blast, getting 6d6. If he bought a +1 Area Of Effect (total cost: 60 points), he calculates the area covered by the attack using the original 30 Character Points. Thus, Pulsar could attack in a 3" Radius circle, a 12" Line of hexes, a 7" Cone, or whatever option he chose when he bought the power.*

*Next, Pulsar spends 45 Character Points on an Energy Blast 6d6, Armor Piercing. He wants to make it an Area Of Effect (Line) attack. There are 45 Active Points in the power (not including the Area Of Effect Advantage). Therefore the attack would cover a (2 x (45/5) =) 18" Line of hexes.*

If a character buys an Area Of Effect Power with the Advantage *Autofire,* he must increase the value of Autofire by +1 (see page 252).

#### AREA OF EFFECT TYPES

The forms of Area Of Effect characters can choose from are: One Hex; Radius; Cone; Line; and Any Area.

**Area Of Effect (One Hex)**
Value: +½ for One Hex; at the GM's option, +¾ for One Hex Doubled (2")

This Area Of Effect covers a single target hex; it has no effect on the surrounding hexes. An Area Of Effect (One Hex) is 1" tall as well as 1" wide and deep.

Area Of Effect (One Hex) is a +½ Power Advantage. With the GM's permission, the character can double the radius for an additional +¼ Advantage — thus, for +¾, a character could build a Power that affects the hex he's in and all six hexes surrounding him (a 2" radius). Characters cannot use this option if it would result in a power that affects the same area as Area Of Effect (Radius) for a cheaper cost.

Accurate: For a -0 Limitation, *Accurate,* a character can define an Area Of Effect (One Hex) as automatically targeting only a single person, regardless of how many there are in the hex. This makes the Power work against DCV 3 without having to affect possible large numbers of persons. The Range Modifier applies to Accurate attacks normally.

Targets may Dodge Accurate attacks; they do not have to use Dive For Cover to avoid them. The bonuses from the Dodge (or Martial Dodge) add to the base DCV 3, and the character can apply relevant Combat Skill Levels to increase his DCV if he wants. He may not apply defensive CSLs unless he Dodges or takes some other defensive action. Similarly, if he wants to obtain any bonuses from Concealment or the like, he has to Dodge or take other active steps to get them.

With the GM's permission, a character may target a specific Hit Location with an Accurate attack. The normal Hit Location OCV modifier applies to the base DCV 3, effectively negating much of the benefit of Accurate.

**Area Of Effect (Radius)**
Value: +1 for a 1" Radius for every 10 Active Points in the power; double the Radius for each additional +¼

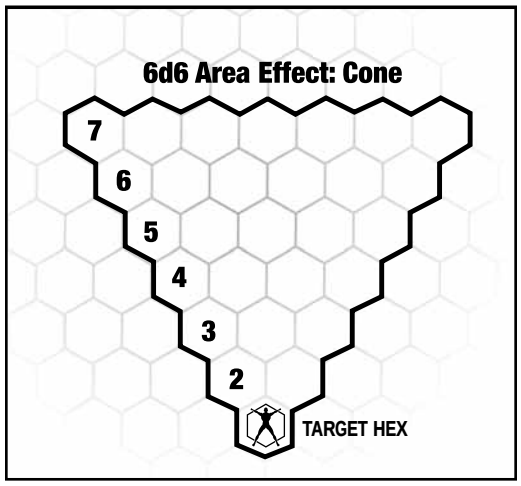
This Area Of Effect covers a radius of hexes based on the target hex. The area is 1" in radius in all three dimensions for every 10 Active Points in the power not counting the *Area Of Effect* Advantage. A 1" radius thus has a one hex "footprint," a 2" radius has a 7-hex footprint, a 3" radius has a 19-hex footprint, and so on. An Area Of Effect (Radius) is spherical, reaching "up" and "down" in addition to the four cardinal directions.

*Area Of Effect (Radius)* is a +1 Advantage. A character can double the radius for each additional +¼ Advantage.

**Area Of Effect (Cone)**
Value: +1 for a Cone with sides (1"+ (1" for every 5 Active Points in the power)) long; double the length of the sides for each additional +¼

This Area Of Effect covers a 60 degree cone that radiates out from the target hex. The size of the Cone depends on the length of the sides, which equals 1"+ (1" for every 5 Active Points in the power [not counting the *Area Of Effect* Advantage]). Thus a 2" cone has a 3-hex footprint; a 3" cone has a 6-hex footprint, and so on. Like Area Of Effect (Radius), an Area Of Effect (Cone) is three-dimensional.

When used, an Area Of Effect (Cone) must have one of its "points" pointing directly at the character using it; it cannot be turned "sideways" or at any other angle unless the character buys the *Indirect* Advantage for the Power. The cone's target hex is the hex at the very end of the point that points toward the character, not the hex in the




center of the cone. If a Power with Area Of Effect (Cone) is bought with the Limitation *No Range,* then its "target hex" is the hex immediately in front of the character (the character takes no damage from the attack).

*Area Of Effect (Cone)* is a +1 Power Advantage. A character can double the length of the sides for every additional +¼ Advantage.

**Area Of Effect (Line)**
Value: +1 for a Line 2" long for every 5 Active Points in the power; double the length, width, or height of the Line for each additional +¼

This Area Of Effect covers a straight line of hexes, based on the target hex. The length of the Line equals 2" for every 5 Active Points in the power (not counting the *Area Of Effect* Advantage). A 2" line is 2 hexes, a 4" line 4 hexes, and so on. An Area Of Effect (Line) is 1" tall.

The target hex for an Area Of Effect (Line) is the first hex in the line, not the hex in the center of the line. If an Area Of Effect (Line) is bought with the Limitation *No Range,* then its "target hex" is the hex immediately in front of the character (the character takes no damage from the attack).

*Area Of Effect (Line)* is a +1 Advantage. A character can double the length, width, or height of the Line for each additional +¼ Advantage.

**Area Of Effect (Any Area)**
Value: +1 for a 1" Any Area for every 10 Active Points in the power; double the number of hexes for each additional +¼

This Area Of Effect covers a variable shape — the character determines the shape when he uses the power. All hexes affected must be adjacent to at least one other affected hex. The hexes may form a line, ring, triangle, square, or other simple shape. The total number of hexes equals 1" for every 10 Active Points in the power (not counting the *Area Of Effect* Advantage). An Area Of Effect (Any Area) is 1" tall (though some of the hexes may be "stacked" on top of others to increase this height). The player must decide which hex within a given shape hits the target hex when he uses the Area Of Effect. A character using an Any Area power cannot "superimpose" one of the hexes on the same target hex twice so the target(s) in that hex takes double effect.

*Area Of Effect (Any Area)* is a +1 Advantage. A character can double the number of hexes (or the height of all hexes) for each additional +¼ Advantage.

**AREA OF EFFECT OPTIONS**

After a character chooses the shape of his Area Of Effect, he may want to alter how targets in the area are affected. For normal Area Of Effects, hitting the area is enough — all targets in the area suffer the effect unless they successfully Dive for Cover (or use some other means, such as Desolidification, to avoid damage). However, not all Areas Of Effect work this way. The following options provide some alternatives, as well as other modifiers for Area Of Effect powers. These options affect both the cost of the Area Of Effect and how large it is.

**Nonselective**
Value: ¼ less Area Of Effect Advantage

When using an Area Of Effect power with this reduced Advantage, the character must make multiple Attack Rolls. First, he rolls to hit the area with his Area Of Effect. If he hits it, he must then make a separate Attack Roll against every target in the area (at that target's normal DCV; the character suffers any relevant modifiers to his OCV, such as the Range Modifier). A Nonselective Area Of Effect is worth ¼ less than a normal Area Of Effect (Nonselective Area Of Effect (One Hex) is a +¼ Power Advantage; all other Nonselective Areas Of Effect are +¾ Advantages).

If a Nonselective Area Of Effect power is Constant, the attacker has to make an Attack Roll against each person in the affected area every Phase. However, this doesn't count as an Attack Action; it's part of "maintaining" the Constant Area Of Effect, like paying END, and takes no time.

Characters may take Nonselective Target as a separate -¼ Limitation for Powers that inherently affect an area, such as Change Environment, Darkness, and Images.

Example: *Kasdrevan has bought a Sight Group Flash Attack 8d6 with Nonselective Area Of Effect (Radius). This costs 40 x (1 + ¾) = 70 Character Points, and affects a 4" radius area.*

*While fighting some trolls, Kasdrevan uses his Flash. First he rolls to target the center of the radius. If that roll succeeds, he must make an Attack Roll (with all applicable modifiers) against each target in the radius. Any target hit by this second roll is Flashed. If Kasdrevan misses the hex, he must roll to find out where the Area Of Effect was centered (see page 393), and then make an Attack Roll against any targets in the new area.*

**Selective**
Value: +¼ more Area Of Effect Advantage

When using an Area Of Effect power with this additional Advantage, the character must make multiple Attack Rolls. First, he rolls to hit the area with his Area Of Effect. If he hits it, he must then make a separate Attack Roll against every target

in the area whom he wishes to hit (at that target's normal DCV; the character suffers any relevant modifiers to his OCV, such as the Range Modifier). In other words, he can ignore "friendlies" in the area and only affect enemies with his attack. Selective Target is an additional +¼ Advantage that characters can apply to any shape of Area Of Effect. An Area Of Effect power may not have both Selective Target and Nonselective Target.

If a Selective Area Of Effect power is Constant, the attacker cannot alter whom the power affects every Phase. If he wants to change who's affected, he has to deactivate the power and use it again. If a character enters the area after the power's been established, and the attacker wants to affect him, he must make an Attack Roll to do so; this takes no time.

Characters can buy Selective Target as a separate +½ Advantage for Powers that inherently affect an area, such as Change Environment, Darkness, and Images. Characters cannot buy Selective for Powers that don't affect an area (such as Invisibility).

**Conforming**
Value: +½ more Area Of Effect Advantage

Normal Areas Of Effect do not conform to the space they affect; they expand out to their limits and, if blocked, affect whatever blocks them. For example, suppose a wizard has a Fireball spell (RKA 2d6, 6" Radius). He casts it into a corridor that's 3" wide. The Fireball fills an area equal to 6" (up and down the corridor) by 3" (the limits imposed by the corridor's walls, though the damage from the Fireball may be enough to destroy the walls so the Fireball can expand to its full area, albeit with its damage in the areas beyond the walls reduced by the DEF+BODY of the walls).

An Area Of Effect power with this additional +½ Advantage conforms to the area in which it's used, and won't damage the walls (or other objects) that form that area's boundaries. (A Force Wall does not count as a "boundary" for Conforming purposes, unless the GM rules otherwise.) If the boundaries do not allow the Area Of Effect to expand out to its full size, the force of the attack is channeled in whatever direction it *can* go. For example, the Fireball described above, if it had this additional Advantage, would not blast down the corridor's walls, but would be channeled by the walls so that it filled more of the corridor than just 6". The GM determines how far a Conforming Area Of Effect reaches, in what direction(s), and the other exact effects of this Advantage.

Characters can buy Conforming as a separate +½ Advantage for Powers that inherently affect an area, such as Change Environment, Darkness, and Images.

**Mobile** 
Value: +1 more Area Of Effect Advantage; up to x2 the power's rate of movement for each additional +½

Ordinarily a Constant area-affecting power cannot move once established, unless it has the *No Range* Limitation so that it "sticks to" the character generating it and moves as he moves. (see page 101), or the *Usable As Attack* Advantage so a character can "stick" it to a target and have it move as the target moves. However, characters may sometimes want to create Areas Of Effect they can move. This requires the additional +1 Advantage *Mobile.*

A character can move a Mobile power at a rate of up to 6" per Phase. Moving it any distance (from 1" to its full range) counts as an Attack Action. As it sweeps over an area, the standard rules for Constant area-affecting powers apply (see page 99). The power can move in up to three dimensions, not just along the ground (*i.e.,* it can "fly"). The character can up to double the power's rate of movement for each additional +½ Advantage (7-12" for +½, 13-24" for +1, and so on).

All Mobile powers automatically have No Range (even if they're built with Powers that usually have Range). Characters may apply the Advantage *Ranged* (+½) to them, though.

At the GM's option, a character can place a Mobile power on an object, then have the power move as the object moves. The GM may increase the cost of the Advantage in this case, if appropriate.

Characters can buy Mobile as a separate +1 Advantage for Powers that inherently affect an area, such as Change Environment, Darkness, and Images.

**Two-Dimensional**
Value: ¼ less Area Of Effect Advantage

An Area Of Effect that normally covers three dimensions (such as Radius or Cone) can be made only 1" high with this option, which reduces the value of Area Of Effect by ¼. Characters can take Two-Dimensional as a separate -¼ Limitation for Powers that inherently affect an area, such as Change Environment, Darkness, and Images.

## ARMOR PIERCING

Value: +½

An Armor Piercing power is more effective at cutting through, or otherwise penetrating, a target's defenses. An Armor Piercing attack acts against one half (½) of the defense it normally acts against — the damage for the attack is rolled normally, but only half of the target's defense subtracts from the damage.

Characters typically purchase Armor Piercing for attacks that cut through armor easily — lasers, extremely sharp swords, and the like. However, it can simulate any attack that can penetrate, bypass, or ignore the effects of defenses. For example, a war maul isn't able to cut through armor at all — but it's so powerful that when it strikes a target, that target's defenses offer little protection against the damage the maul causes. You can simulate this by purchasing Armor Piercing for the maul, even though it doesn't actually "pierce" the armor.

The Power Advantage *Hardened* (page 115) allows the target to ignore the effect of Armor Piercing. Characters can buy Armor Piercing multiple times, but can never reduce the defense below half. The only effect of multiple Armor Piercing is to negate Hardened (though a defender could buy Hardened several times).




## ATTACK VERSUS LIMITED DEFENSE

Value: +1½ for attacks which ordinarily apply to regular defenses such as PD or ED; +¾ for attacks which ordinarily apply to exotic defenses like Mental Defense or Power Defense

A power with Attack Versus Limited Defenses ("AVLD") is affected by only limited or unusual defenses. Such a power may be directed against Mental Defense, Flash Defense (of a given Sense Group), or Power Defense (or any other defense the GM allows) instead of its normal defense. The character must choose the defense when he purchases the power, and cannot change it thereafter.

AVLDs only do STUN damage, unless the character also purchases the Advantage *Does BODY* for them or the GM permits otherwise. The GM must approve all powers bought with AVLD. For instance, a character could buy an Energy Blast 4d6, AVLD (Power Defense). Targets would apply their Power Defense instead of their ED when resisting the STUN of the Blast.

The cost of AVLD varies depending upon the defense ordinarily applied to reduce the effects of the power. If the power ordinarily applies to regular defenses such as PD, ED, Armor, or a PD or ED Force Field, AVLD is worth +1½. However, if the power ordinarily applies to an exotic defense (such as Mental Defense, Flash Defense, or Power Defense), then using AVLD to switch it to another exotic defense is only a +¾ Advantage. Furthermore, AVLD only costs +¾ if the defense against it is extraordinarily common (moreso than the defense ordinarily applied against the power) or is simply a limited form of the power's standard defense.

If a character buys an AVLD attack with the Advantage *Autofire,* he must apply an additional +1 Advantage to Autofire.

### POWER EXAMPLES: ARMOR PIERCING

.41 Semiautomatic Pistol with Armor Piercing Ammunition: RKA 1½d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (37 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum (9; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage; -1), 12 Charges (-¼), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼). Total cost: 10 points.

Eversharp Sword: HKA 1d6+1, Armor Piercing (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (40 Active Points); OAF (-1), Independent (-2). Total cost: 10 points.

Focused Energy Beam: Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+½). Total cost: 60 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: AVLD

Contact Knockout Gas Grenades: Energy Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (7" Radius; +1), AVLD (Power Defense; +1½) (105 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 35 points.

Corrosive Acid: Energy Blast 2d6, AVLD (PD Force Field; +1½), Does BODY (+1), Continuous (+1) (45 Active Points); OAF (vial of acid; -1), 2 Continuing Charges (1 Turn; -1). Total cost: 15 points.

Stunning Light Blast: Energy Blast 6d6, AVLD (Flash Defense, + 1½). Total cost: 75 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: AUTOFIRE

9mm Submachine Gun: RKA 1d6+1, Autofire (5 shots; +½) Charges (4 clips of 30 Charges each; +½) (40 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum (12; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage; -1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼). Total cost: 11 points.

VIPER AutoBlaster: Energy Blast 10d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½), 60 Charges (+½) (100 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 50 points.

Throwing Blades: HKA 1 point (up to ½d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½), Autofire (3 shots; +¼), Range Based On STR (+¼) (10 Active Points); OAF (-1), 9 Charges (-¼), No KB (-¼). Total cost: 4 points.

### AUTOFIRE

Value: +¼ for the ability to fire a maximum of 2-3 shots; +½ for ability to fire a maximum of 5 shots; up to 2x the maximum for each additional +½ Advantage; Autofire costs an additional +1 if the power is not applied against normal defenses or if the power does not require a normal Attack Roll; the value of Reduced Endurance is doubled for any Autofire power

A character can use a power with Autofire to hit a target more than once in a single Phase. Autofire also allows the character to perform certain Combat Maneuvers he cannot perform with normal attacks (see page 397). Autofire typically is only applied to Attack Powers, but can be applied to any Power a character could use offensively against another character or that the GM allows it to be applied to. Telekinesis, Summon, and many other Powers normally don't work with Autofire; the GM determines whether Autofire works with an unusual Power, and if so what the effect is.

Basic Autofire is a +¼ Advantage if the character can fire a maximum of 2-3 shots per Phase. It's a +½ Advantage if the character can fire a maximum of 4-5 shots. You can up to double this 5 shot maximum for each additional +½ Advantage. The number of shots bought for Autofire is the *maximum* a character can fire; he can always choose to fire fewer shots (even just one shot).

Characters can use Autofire attacks on either a single target or multiple targets. See page 376 for rules for using Autofire attacks.

A character must pay Endurance (or use up Charges) for each shot he takes; the END cost can become enormous. For example, an RKA 3d6, Autofire (5 shots) has 67 Active Points, so it costs 7 END per shot! For this reason, characters often buy Autofire powers with the *Charges* Power Modifier or an Endurance Reserve. If a character buys the Advantage *Reduced Endurance* for an Autofire power, he must pay twice the normal value (buying an Autofire power to ½ END is a +½ Advantage; buying it to 0 END is a +1 Advantage).

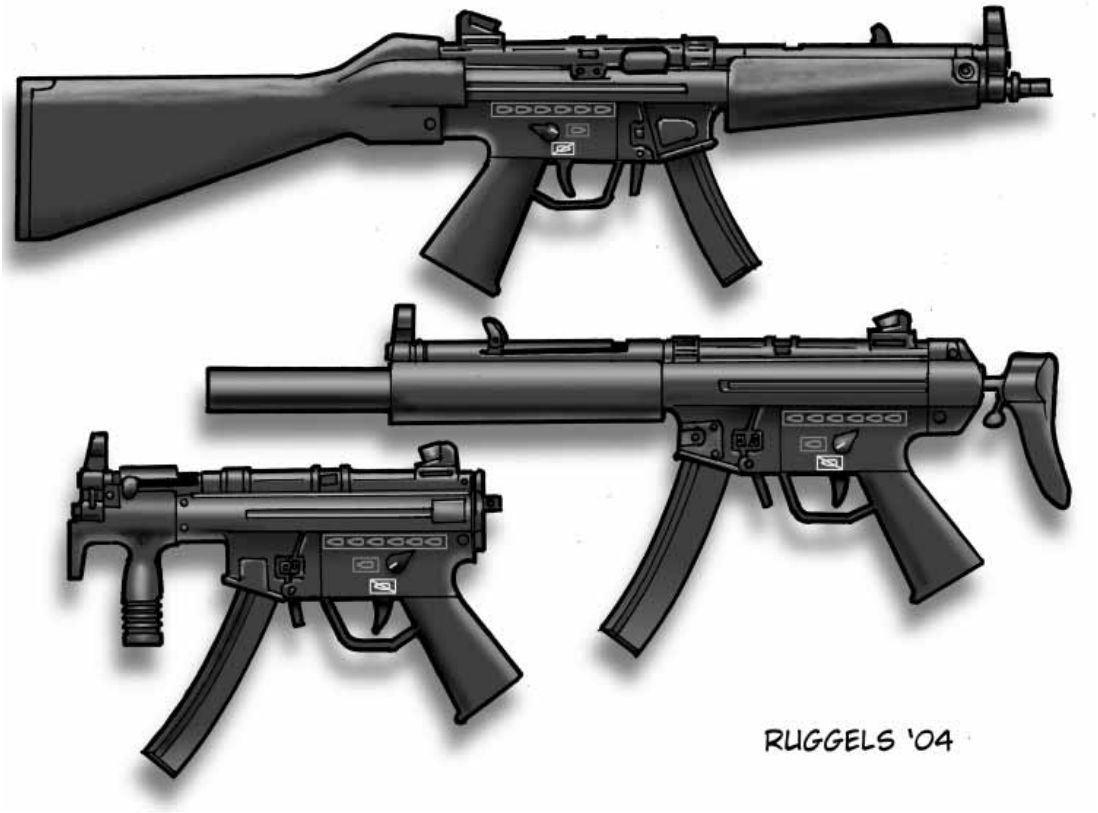
Each hit from a Autofire attack applies separately against the target's defenses. To calculate Knockback from an Autofire attack, use the BODY of the largest attack and add +1 BODY for each additional hit. An Autofire Constant attack affects the target with the same number of shots that hit him the first time in later Phases.

**Especially Effective Autofire**

Autofire is designed primarily for Energy Blast and RKA. Characters can buy it for other Attack Powers, and even other Powers, but with some special rules.

If an attack doesn't require a normal Attack Roll or isn't applied against normal defenses, Autofire costs an additional +1 Advantage. This includes, but is not limited to, Ego Attack, Drain, Transfer, Transform, most attacks that affect an area (either inherently, or because they have the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages), AVLDs/NNDs, and the like. Similarly, if the GM believes a Power with Autofire would be extremely useful or likely to unbalance the game at its normal cost, he may increase the cost by +1 (or more).

If a character buys a power with several of the Advantages that add the +1 "surcharge" to Autofire, he only has to pay the surcharge once (not once per Advantage).



## BASED ON EGO COMBAT VALUE

Value: +1 for basic BOECV; ¼ less Advantage if target can choose whether standard defenses or Mental Defense applies; +½ more Advantage if character can choose whether standard defenses or Mental Defense applies; ¼ less Advantage if normal Range Modifier applies

Powers that are Based On ECV ("BOECV") use an Attack Roll based on ECV rather than on normal Combat Value. They suffer no Range Modifier and work on Line Of Sight if they're Ranged (BOECV does not automatically make a non-Ranged power Ranged). If a BOECV power is subject to a normal Range Modifier, the Advantage is worth ¼ less. BOECV powers can be perceived with Mental Awareness.

Any BOECV powers that are modified by defenses (such as Energy Blast or Drain) can apply either to their standard defense, or to the character's Mental Defense, at the attacker's option (he must make this choice when he buys the power, and cannot change it thereafter). If the power is affected by either defense (chosen by the target when he is attacked), BOECV is worth ¼ less Advantage. If the attacking character can choose which defense the BOECV power applies to each time he uses it, the Advantage is worth +½ more.

All BOECV attacks do STUN damage only unless the character also pays for the *Does BODY* Advantage (see page 256) or has special permission from the GM. Even if a BOECV power can do BODY damage, it can't affect beings without minds (such as Automatons or inanimate objects) unless the GM rules otherwise.

Even though a power with BOECV is based on ECV, it's not a Mental Power *per se*. Unlike normal Mental Powers, a power with BOECV is automatically visible if it would be normally, and does not provide a character with Mental Awareness (see page 163). BOECV powers aren't subject to the "classes of minds" rules (unless the GM rules otherwise).

Although Mental Powers ordinarily affect Desolidified characters, this does not necessarily hold true for BOECV powers. BOECV powers that involve the mental manipulation of physical force (for example, most BOECV Energy Blasts or RKAs) can't affect Desolidified characters unless the character buys the *Affects Desolidified* Advantage for the power. BOECV powers that don't involve physical force (for example, most BOECV Drains) probably can affect Desolidified characters in the same way a normal Mental Power does. The GM should determine whether a BOECV power affects Desolidified characters; in some cases, inability to affect Desolidified characters may make the Advantage worth ¼ less.

## CHARGES

Value: Varies (see Charges Table, page 284)

Because a power with Charges uses no END, a power with a lot of Charges is actually better than a normal power, and must be bought with a Power Advantage. For more information, see *Charges,* page 284.

## CUMULATIVE ⚠

Value: +½; 2x the amount of points that can be added for each additional +¼

This Advantage allows the character to add successive effect rolls to one another, so that he can use a small amount of dice in a power again and again, slowly building up to the point where he achieves enough power to have a real effect on the target. Continuing-effect Mental Powers and some types of Adjustment Powers are the sort of abilities for which Cumulative is most suitable, but characters can buy it for any power that involves applying a number rolled on the dice (whether a total or the Normal Damage BODY) to a defense to determine a specified effect.

Each time a Cumulative power is used against the same target within a discrete time frame (typically, one combat or one game "scene," but possibly as long as one adventure or one day, if the GM so permits), the amount rolled on the effect roll is added to the total effect roll already rolled. The appropriate defense, if any, applies to each separate roll. If necessary, the character must declare the effect he wishes to achieve when he first rolls the dice. The character must make an Attack Roll each time he uses the power (even if it's a Constant Power), unless he buys the *Continuous* Advantage for the power.

The maximum amount of points a character can add to a Cumulative power equals the maximum he could roll on the dice. He can double this maximum for every additional +¼ Advantage.

Example: *Witchcraft purchases Mind Control 2d6 with Cumulative (total cost 15 points). Since this only allows her to accumulate 12 points of effect (the maximum which could be rolled on 2d6), she increases the maximum to 96 (x8 points) by paying for another +¾ (making the total cost of the power 22 Active Points). She uses this power on Ogre (EGO 10) during a combat. The first time she hits him with it, she declares she's going to command him to "Go to sleep" (a +30 effect in this situation). She rolls 8 on her 2d6. The next hit, she rolls 6, which adds to the 8 for 14. Witchcraft may keep rolling and adding until she achieves her effect, hits her limit of 96 points of effect, or until Ogre pounds her into mush.*

*If Ogre had 5 points of Mental Defense, he could apply it to each of Witchcraft's Effect Rolls. Thus, the first roll would only total 3 points of effect, and the second 1, for a total of 4.*

Characters cannot apply Cumulative to Powers whose primary purpose is to cause STUN and/or BODY damage (or the like), such as Drains, Energy Blasts, and RKAs. The damage caused by such Powers is, in essence, already "cumulative."

### POWER EXAMPLES: BOECV

Agony Infliction Helmet: Drain STUN 3d6, BOECV (character can choose whether Power Defense or Mental Defense applies; +1½), Ranged (+½) (90 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 60 points.

Mental Blast: Energy Blast 8d6, BOECV (Mental Defense applies; +1). Total cost: 80 points.

Mind Razor: RKA 2d6, BOECV (Mental Defense applies; +1), Does BODY (+1). Total cost: 90 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: CUMULATIVE

Creeping Control: Mind Control 3d6, Cumulative (+½), Increased Cumulative Points (120 points; +¾). Total cost: 34 points.

Mental Search And Locate: Mind Scan 2d6, Cumulative (+½), Increased Cumulative Points (96 points; +¾). Total cost: 22 points.

Power Drain: Dispel Energy Powers 15d6, any energy power (Energy Blast, Force Field, Force Wall, and some forms of Flight and RKA) one at a time (+¼), Cumulative (+½). Total cost: 79 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: DAMAGE SHIELD

Fiery Shield: HKA 1d6, Damage Shield (does damage in HTH Combat (+¾), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (49 Active Points); No STR Bonus (-½) (total cost: 33 points) **plus** RKA 1d6, Continuous (+1), Uncontrolled (can be doused with water, sand, and the like; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, lasts for the lesser of 5 Phases or until doused; +½) (45 Active Points); No Range (only works on targets who touch, or are touched by, the Fiery Shield; -½), Linked (RKA may be used in any Phase in which Damage Shield is in use; -¼) (total cost: 26 points). Total cost: 59 points.

Life-Leeching Aura: Drain BODY 2d6, Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½). Total cost: 50 points.

Electrification Field: Energy Blast 8d6, Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½), Armor Piercing (+½) (120 Active Points); OIHID (Powered Armor Suit; -¼). Total cost: 96 points.



## DAMAGE SHIELD

Value: +½; additional +¼ to do Shield's damage to targets with HTH attacks other than Grab

This Advantage allows a character to set up a field around himself that causes damage to any target who comes into contact with it. A Damage Shield affects anyone who hits or Grabs the character, or is Grabbed by him.

### BUYING DAMAGE SHIELD

To create a Damage Shield, a character buys any Attack Power and applies this Advantage to it. The power must be Constant (either inherently or because he has purchased *Continuous* for it). If the Attack Power is normally Ranged, it automatically becomes a No Range power when Damage Shield is purchased for it; the character does not get to apply the Power Limitation *No Range.* Characters cannot apply Damage Shield to Powers other than Attack Powers without the GM's permission.

### USING DAMAGE SHIELD

Any attacker who makes a successful HTH Combat attack against a character with a Damage Shield takes the damage (and possibly Knockback) from the Shield. This includes a HTH attack that would have hit the character, but which the character Blocks in such a way that the attacker comes in contact with the Damage Shield. At the GM's option, attackers may be able to insulate themselves from the effects of the Shield by attacking the character with an object (such as a staff or a chain), but this depends on the situation and the special effects involved. Alternately, a GM may apply the damage from the Shield against any hand-to-hand Focus an attacker uses (such as a sword) or against both the Focus and the character.

A single target can take damage from a Damage Shield once for each Attack Roll the character with the Shield makes, and once for each Attack Roll the target makes. Thus, the target only takes the Shield's damage once if the attacker uses Autofire or a multiple-power attack against him (or vice versa), since that only involves one Attack Roll. The attacker could potentially suffer the damage multiple times (once for each hit) if he uses Sweep on the character to hit him multiple times. If the character and his attacker both hit each other in the same Segment, the attacker takes the Shield's damage twice (once per Attack Roll) (assuming the Damage Shield is of the type that can affect another character through HTH Combat attacks other than Grabs; see below).

If multiple attackers all strike the character at once, they each take the Shield's damage. If the character makes one Attack Roll to hit multiple persons (as with an Autofire attack or Sweep used against multiple targets), each person hit takes the Shield's damage once (if the character makes multiple Attack Rolls to hit one of the targets more than once, that target takes damage from the Shield the number of times the character hits him).

A character with a Damage Shield can also do the Shield's damage to a target by Grabbing him. A Grabbed character takes the damage from the Shield every time the attacker has a Phase. This is in addition to normal STR damage from being squeezed; the Shield's damage applies separately to the target's defenses.

A character with a Damage Shield normally cannot do the Shield's damage to another character by attacking him in HTH Combat with a Maneuver other than a Grab (say, by punching him). However, a Damage Shield will damage other characters when used that way if the character pays an additional +¼ for the Advantage.

A Damage Shield costs END every Phase it remains active. However, a Damage Shield, does not continue affecting the victim after contact between the character and victim is broken. To make the effect of the Damage Shield continue after the character is let go (or lets go), the character should buy an appropriately-constructed Linked power.

A Damage Shield provides no defense against attacks. Characters who want defenses should buy Force Field, Armor, or other Defense Powers. The victims of a Damage Shield apply their defenses to its damage in the usual manner.

### MENTAL DAMAGE SHIELD

Characters can also use Damage Shield to create a *Mental Damage Shield.* In this case, a character buys an Ego Attack (or other Mental Power) with the *Damage Shield* Advantage (this removes the Range from the Power, as usual). If someone hits the character with a Mental Power, the attacker suffers the damage from the Shield; he continues to suffer damage from the Shield for every one of the character's Phases during which he maintains mental contact with the character. The Shield's effect automatically hits the attacker; all the character has to do is roll the damage for the Shield.

A Mental Damage Shield is entirely "in the head" — it has no effect on non-mental combat or on characters who physically touch, or are physically touched by, the character with the Mental Damage Shield. At the GM's option, if a character wants to buy a Mental Damage Shield that affects both mental and physical attackers, it costs an additional +½.

**DELAYED EFFECT**

Value: +¼; double number of powers character can have in use or activated at once for each additional +¼

This Advantage allows a character to go through any lengthy preparations needed to turn on a power, then keep that power "ready" before using it. In other words, the character performs his normal activation procedure with all applicable Limitations (such as Concentration, Extra Time, Gestures, Incantations, and so forth). When he's finished, he can either use the power normally or he can "store" it in his head. This stored power takes up a "slot," counting against the total number of powers the character can have functioning at one time.

Characters can only use Delayed Effect in campaigns where the GM sets a limit on the number of powers a character can have activated or in use at one time — for example, in a Fantasy campaign where the GM has decided wizards can only have INT/5 spells turned on or ready at any one time. It is not recommended for Superheroic campaigns.

INT/5 isn't the only way to determine how many powers a character can have activated or in use at one time. Some other possibilities include: total Active Points activated or in use at one time; another Characteristic (such as EGO) divided by 5 (or some other number); and a flat limit (of, say, 6 powers).

Regardless of the method used to limit the number of powers a character can use at one time, he can double that number for every additional +¼ Advantage. He must take this additional Advantage for every power for which he purchases Delayed Effect. For example, if the character's limit is five powers, for an extra +½ Advantage he can use 20 powers at once.

The character can save his stored power and use it at any future time. The power stays "ready" as long as he wants, even if he goes to sleep or is Knocked Out (though it typically fades away if he dies). A power cannot be Dispelled or Drained while it is stored. (If the power is built into a Universal Focus, such as a magic potion, it may even remain ready for use by others if the character is killed, but might then be subject to Dispels and Drains.) If the character wants to "let go" of a Delayed Effect power, he may do so at no penalty (the power just dissipates and doesn't activate).

Using a stored power only requires a Half Phase Action and the character has his full DCV, regardless of any Limitations taken on the power. The character pays the END cost for the power when he prepares it, not when he uses it (in other words, when he uses the power, he doesn't have to pay END). Other Limitations also affect the preparation of the power, not its use — for example, if the power requires Gestures, the character only has to gesture during the preparation. However, if an Attack Roll, Required Skill Roll, Activation Roll, or similar roll is necessary, the character must make that roll when he uses the power.

Once a character uses a stored power (or all Charges of a stored power), he has to prepare it again before he can use it again. He can "stack" more than one of the same power — for example, if a character wanted to have several Fireball Spells ready, he could cast and store that spell several times (up to the limit imposed by the GM).

This useful Advantage works well for, among others, spellcasters in Fantasy campaigns. Since it in effect allows a character to minimize the impact of some of the Limitations on his powers, GMs should examine any power with Delayed Effect carefully to make sure it doesn't unbalance the game.

## DELAYED EFFECT AND TRIGGER

Delayed Effect and Trigger are similar in many ways. Both allow a character to prepare a power in advance and then use it later. However, there are some important differences between them.

A power prepared with Delayed Effect has been prepared, but not yet activated and used. A power built with Trigger has been prepared and activated, but not yet used (Trigger lets a character delay the final use of the power until a set precondition is met). Thus, Delayed Effect powers can't be Drained or Dispelled — they don't "exist" yet — but powers with a set Trigger can be, since they "exist" but haven't been used.

Another difference between the two is that Trigger only works when a particular precondition occurs. Once a Trigger is set, the conditions that set it off can't be changed. On the other hand, a character can use a Delayed Effect power without having to satisfy a precondition.

Buying Triggered or Delayed Effect powers through a Focus raises certain questions — what happens if the character is Knocked Out or dies? Can he give the item to another character and let him use it? The individual Advantage descriptions address these issues to some extent, but in the end it often depends on the special effects of the power and the GM's common sense and dramatic sense interpretation. A spell stored in a wizard's head probably just fades away if he dies. But if he's used Delayed Effect or Trigger to create an enchanted elixir, that elixir may remain potent, and usable by other characters, even after he dies.

If a power with Delayed Effect or Trigger is bought in a Multipower or Variable Power Pool, the necessary reserve or pool points must be assigned to the power's slot while the power is being prepared. Once the preparations have been made and the power is ready for use, the character can switch his reserve or pool to another slot without deactivating the Delayed/Triggered power or causing it to fade.

### POWER EXAMPLES: DELAYED EFFECT

Ice Storm Spell: Energy Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (4" Radius; +1), Delayed Effect (+¼) (67 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

Sunburst Spell: Sight Group Flash 8d6, Delayed Effect (+¼) (50 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 14 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: DIFFICULT TO DISPEL

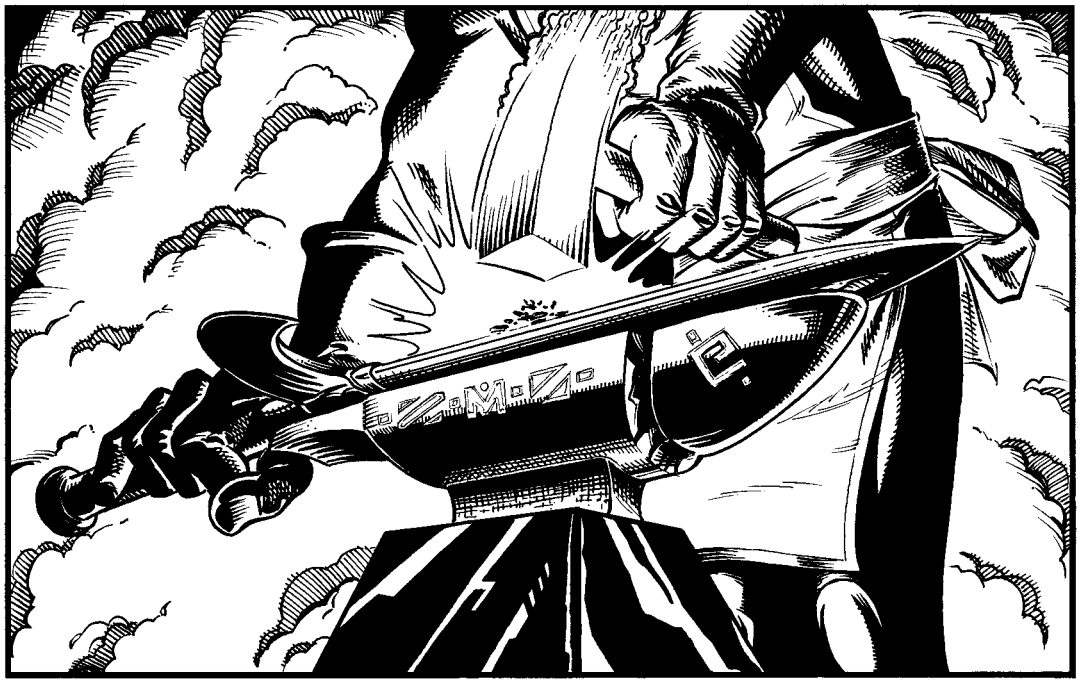
Magic Circle of Protection: Force Field (10 PD/10 ED), Difficult To Dispel (x4 Active Points; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (40 Active Points); OIF Immobile (-1½). Total cost: 16 points.

Demon-Summoning Spell: Summon 500-point demon, Difficult To Dispel (x2 Active Points; +¼) (125 Active Points); OAF (Conjuror's Staff; -1), Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total cost: 29 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: DOES BODY

Crimson Agony Poison: RKA 4d6, NND (defense is appropriate LS: Immunity; +1), Does BODY (+1) (180 Active Points); OAF Fragile (easily spilled or diluted liquid; -1¼), Gradual Effect (20 Minutes, 1d6 per 5 minutes; -1), No Range (-½), No KB (-¼), 1 Charge (-2). Total cost: 30 points.

Mind Ripper: Ego Attack 4d6, Does BODY (+1). Total cost: 80 points.



#### DIFFICULT TO DISPEL

Value: Each +¼ doubles a power's Active Points for purposes of resisting Dispel or Suppress

A power with this Advantage is exceptionally difficult to Dispel or Suppress. Each time a character takes this Advantage for a power, it doubles the Active Points in that power (not including the points spent on this Advantage) for purposes of determining the effects of Dispel. Thus, a power with 40 Active Points bought with Difficult To Dispel has 80 Active Points for the purpose of resisting Dispel. Characters may purchase Difficult To Dispel more than once.

Suppress affects a Difficult To Dispel power a little differently. Suppress still applies normally to a power with Difficult To Dispel — it still Suppresses points in the power — but the Advantage reduces its effect. If a power has one level of Difficult To Dispel, halve the effect of a Suppress; if two levels have been bought, reduced the effect to one-quarter normal; and so forth. (This does not apply to Drain, Transfer, or any other Power, just Suppress.)

Example: *Arkelos tries to use his Suppress Magic 6d6 to Suppress a rival wizard's Mageflame power (defined as an Energy Blast 10d6). Unfortunately, the Mageflame is bought with one level of Difficult To Dispel (+¼). Arkelos rolls an effect for his spell and gets 25. Normally that would remove 25 Character Points' worth of the power (5d6 of the EB, or half its power). However, since the Mageflame has one level of Difficult To Dispel, the effect of Arkelos's Suppress is halved, so he only subtracts 13 Character Points' worth of the power (2d6).*

#### DOES BODY

Value: +1

This Advantage allows Attack Powers that ordinarily do only STUN damage — such as Ego Attacks, AVLDs, and NNDs — to do BODY damage as well. (In other words, the *Does BODY* Advantage allows the attack to *also* do BODY, not just to do BODY instead of STUN.) The BODY damage done is counted as it would normally be counted for the attack (*e.g.,* by counting the Normal Damage BODY for a Normal Damage attack, by adding up the total rolled on the dice for a Killing Attack). The attack also does Knockback; calculate Knockback from the attack in the normal manner. Characters cannot apply Does BODY to attacks such as Flashes that don't do STUN damage.

#### DOES KNOCKBACK

Value: +¼

This Advantage enables an Attack Power that normally doesn't do Knockback to do Knockback. The attacker should count the Normal Damage BODY on the effect dice (even if the attack doesn't do BODY damage), then roll normally to determine the Knockback (if any).

Example: *Hypnos wants to buy a mental attack so powerful that it knocks the target backwards. He buys an Ego Attack 4d6, Does Knockback (50 Active Points). Later he uses this power to attack Defender. He hits, rolling 3, 4, 4, and 6 on his dice, so he inflicts 17 STUN damage on Defender. Counting the Normal Damage BODY, he has 5, so he rolls his 2d6 for Knockback and compares them to 5 BODY. Fortunately for him, he rolls a 3, so his attack does 2" Knockback to Defender.*

## DOUBLE KNOCKBACK STOP

Value: +¾

A power with this +¾ Advantage has a greater chance of doing Knockback, and when it does Knockback, usually does much more than a power without it. When a character makes a successful attack with a power that has Double Knockback, the amount of BODY is doubled for the purposes of determining Knockback before the Knockback Roll is made (see *Knockback,* page 418). (If the Power, or an Advantage on the power, allows the character to add or subtract points of BODY for Knockback purposes, add points of BODY before applying the doubling, but subtract points after doubling.) This increases both the distance of, and damage caused by, Knockback. Characters can only buy Double Knockback once for any given power.

Example: *The supervillain Tsunami has a Wind Blast (Energy Blast 7d6) which does Double Knockback (cost: 61 Active Points). Tsunami hits Defender with his Wind Blast and rolls 9 BODY. To determine Knockback, Tsunami doubles the BODY to 18, then rolls 2d6 to determine Knockback. He rolls a 4, doing 14" Knockback. Defender flies back into a wall and takes 14d6 damage. Good doesn't always win.*

At the GM's option, characters can buy *Does x1½ Knockback* as a +½ Advantage.

## DURATION ADVANTAGES

Value: +1 for Continuous; +½ for Persistent (power must already have 0 END cost); +¼ for Inherent (power must already be 0 END, Persistent, and usually Always On)

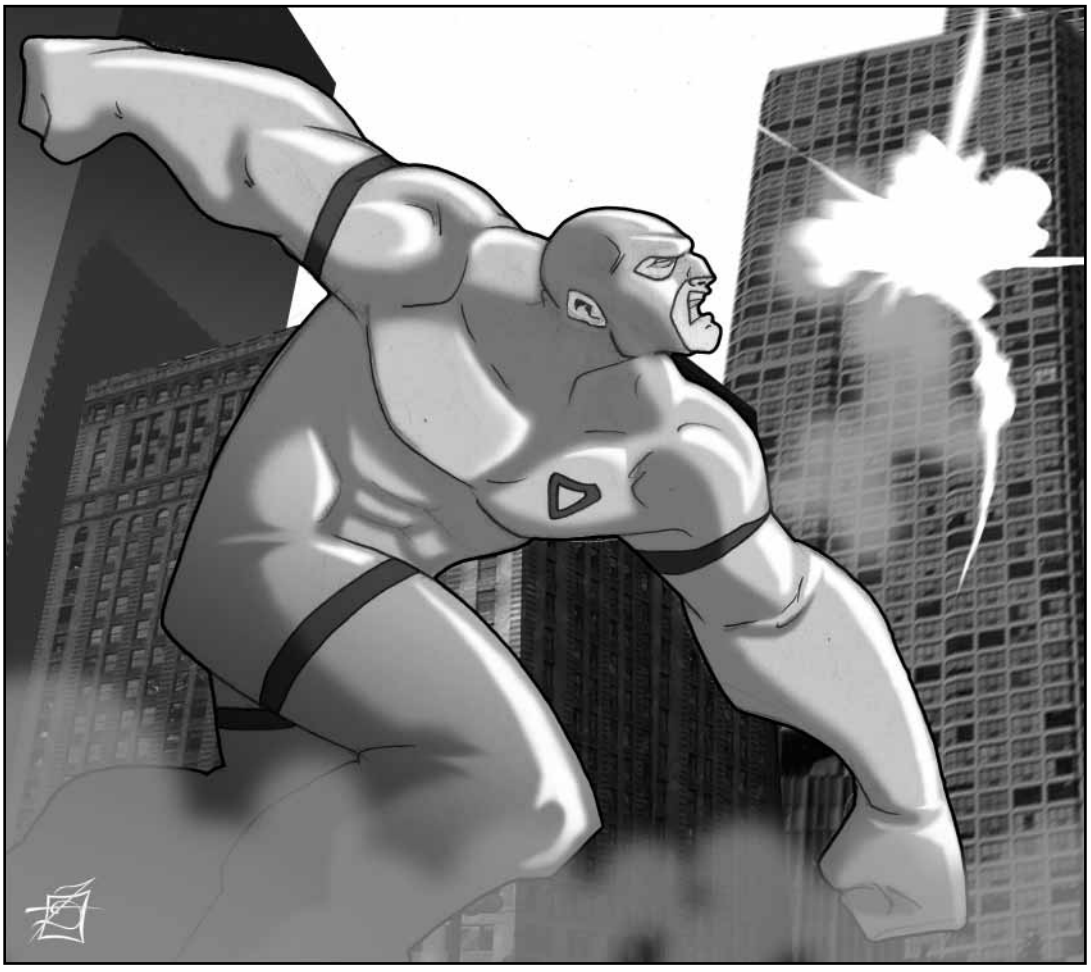
These Advantages improve a power's duration.

**Continuous**
Value: +1

This +1 Advantage allows a character to use an Attack Power (or other Instant Power) on a continuing basis without having to make a new Attack Roll every Phase against the same target. In other words, this Advantage converts an Instant Power into a Constant Power, and all rules governing Constant Powers apply to it (see page 98).

**Persistent**
Value: +½

An Instant or Constant Power with this +½ Advantage becomes a Persistent Power — it remains "turned on" even though the character is unconscious. The power must first cost no END, or be bought to *Reduced Endurance (0 END).* A Persistent Power costs 0 END to maintain, and remains turned on until the character consciously decides to turn it off or dies. (See page 100 for more information on Persistent Powers).



### POWER EXAMPLES: DOES KNOCKBACK

Impressive As All Get Out: Does Knockback for Presence Attacks of up to 20d6. Total cost: 25 points.

Leech Blast Pistol: Drain STUN 4d6, Ranged (+½), Does Knockback (+¼) (70 Active Points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-¾). Total cost: 25 points.

Deafening Shriek: Hearing Group Flash 6d6, Does Knockback (+¼). 22 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: DOUBLE KNOCKBACK

Water Blast: Energy Blast 9d6, Double Knockback (+¾). Total cost: 79 points.

Mega-Punching: Does x1½ Knockback (+½) on 60 STR. Total cost: 30 points.

Cosmic Energy Eyebeams: Energy Blast 14d6, Double Knockback (+¾) (122 Active Points); OIF (Cosmic Ray Helmet; -½). Total cost: 81 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: DURATION ADVANTAGES

Pain Induction: Ego Attack 2d6, Continuous (+1). Total cost: 40 points.

Energy Shield: Force Field (10 PD/20 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (60 Active Points); OIF (Energy Shield Belt; -½). Total cost: 40 points.

Ghostly Essence: Desolidification, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Inherent (+¼). Total cost: 90 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: EXPLOSION

40mm Fragmentation Grenade Round: RKA 2½d6, Explosion (+½), Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼) (70 Active Points); OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 28 points.

Fireball Spell: RKA 3d6, Explosion (-1 DC/2"; +¾) (79 Active Points); OAF (Ruby Talisman, -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Fire Magic Roll (-½), Side Effects (1d6+1 RKA; -¼). Total cost: 24 points.

Glue Grenade Mk. II: Entangle 4d6, 4 DEF, Explosion (lose 1 BODY and 1 DEF per 2"; +¾) (70 Active Points); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 6 Charges (-¾). Total cost: 23 points.

Example: *Defender flies a lot in combat, and he doesn't like the idea of plummeting to the ground if he happens to get Knocked Out while he's in the air. So, he buys his Flight as Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) and Persistent (+½). Now, if he's Knocked Out, he continues to fly until he wakes up. The special effect is that his powered armor's onboard computer engages "autoflight mode" when it detects that he's unconscious.*

Persistent is similar to Uncontrolled (see below), in that both allow a power to continue to function while the character who generated it is unconscious. However, if Persistent is bought for a Constant Power, it does not remove the necessity to maintain Line Of Sight on that Power, or allow the character to maintain the Power while switching to another Multipower slot (Uncontrolled does those things). Generally, GMs should be wary of Attack Powers and other offensive powers bought Persistent — Uncontrolled usually better represents an attack that continues to affect the character for a long time. Persistent typically works best for Defense Powers and other non-offensive powers.

**Inherent**
Value: +¼

A power with this +¼ Advantage, which can only be applied to Persistent Powers, is more than just Persistent — it's a natural, inherent part of the character's being. As such, it cannot be Aided, Dispelled, Drained, Suppressed, Transferred, or the like. Examples include a ghost's intangibility (Desolidification), many types of Extra Limbs, and all of a character's innate Senses. The power must cost 0 END (either naturally, or because it's bought to *Reduced END (0 END)*), be Persistent (either naturally or because that Advantage was purchased for it), and if applicable have the Limitation *Always On.*

At the GM's option, a character with an Inherent Power might be able to turn the power "off" temporarily by paying END. For example, a ghost with Inherent Desolidification might be able to assume corporeal form for short periods by paying END. The END cost for doing this should vary, but should be expensive enough that the character cannot keep the power turned off for more than about a Turn.

**EXPLOSION**

Value: +½; the Explosion loses a DC (or 5 Active Points) 1" more slowly for every additional +¼

A power with this +½ Advantage covers an area with an explosive effect. The character defines a target hex for the center of the Explosion, then makes an Attack Roll to target that hex (DCV 3) with the attack. If the power has No Range, the center of the Explosion is the character himself (he takes the full effect).

A character doesn't have to make additional Attack Rolls to hit targets within the blast radius of an Explosion. If the attack hits the target hex, all characters within the area covered by the Explosion are affected by the attack automatically (roll the damage or effect once and apply it to all of them; don't roll once for each target). However, the targets of an Explosion can use Dive for Cover (page 393) to get away from an Explosion.

At the GM's option, a character can shape his Explosion like a Cone (loses 1 DC per 2") or a Line (loses 1 DC per 3") for the same +½ value, and can buy the *Selective* and *Nonselective* additional Advantages listed under *Area Of Effect* for Explosions. Unless the text or the GM indicate otherwise, most rules about Areas Of Effect (such as characters not being able to Spread them) apply to Explosion.

### CALCULATING EXPLOSION DAMAGE

With an Explosion, the full effect of the base power occurs in the target hex. The damage done by or effect of the power decreases by one Damage Class (see *Determining Damage,* page 403) or 5 Active Points in the power for every 1" distance from the target hex. You always subtract the largest 1d6 rolled first, followed by the next largest, and so on until you've subtracted all the dice. For every additional +¼ Advantage, the DCs fall off 1" more slowly. Thus, for a total Advantage of +¾ (+½ for the Explosion and an additional +¼ to "lengthen" the damage) a character can have an Explosion which loses 1 DC per 2"; for +1, an Explosion which loses 1 DC per 3"; and so on.

Example: *Kasdrevan has an Energy Blast 8d6, Explosion (60 Active Points). He attacks with this power and hits his target hex. For damage he rolls 1, 2, 3, 3, 4, 5, 6, 6. The target hex takes 1+2+3+3+4+5+6+6 = 30 STUN and 0+1+1+1+1+1+2+2 = 9 BODY. Someone 2" away from the target hex would take the same damage, less the two sixes: 1+2+3+3+4+5 = 18 STUN and 0+1+1+1+1+1 = 5 BODY.*

If a character wants to use Combat Skill Levels to increase the damage of an Explosion attack, the CSLs increase the damage done by the highest die. That means they only affect targets in the very center of the Explosion, since the highest die is the first one removed as the Explosion decreases in effectiveness.

**Non-Standard Attacks**

Explosion most often applies to Energy Blast, making it easy to determine the effects of the Advantage — just subtract one die per hex out from the center. Determining the damage done by an Explosion for attacks that don't cost 5 Character Points for 1 Damage Class requires a little more effort.

For Killing Attacks, where each die of damage is three DCs, the GM can choose one of two methods. The first is to subtract one die, starting with the highest die, for every 3" of expansion (full dice for 3", -1 die for the next 3", and so on). The second is to subtract 2 points of damage for every 1" of expansion. Alternately, he could try to calculate DCs by subtracting points and half-dice, but that can take a lot of time.

For Entangles, the typical method is to remove 1 BODY and 1 DEF for each hex out from the center. If the GM's willing to take a little more time, he can instead subtract 1 BODY or 1 DEF, alternating, from the Entangle for each hex.

For a Flash, the attack loses 1d6 of effect per hex, regardless of the cost per die.

For Explosions with other Advantages, the standard rule applies — each hex out from the center subtracts one Damage Class. See page 404 for rules regarding how to calculate DCs for an Advantaged power. For an NND, for example, each DC amounts to ½d6, so you'd subtract ½d6 for each hex out from the center of the Explosion.

**HOLE IN THE MIDDLE**

Value: +¼ if the hole has a fixed size, or +½ if the size of the hole can be changed each time the power is used

Characters can apply this Advantage to any power that affects an area — Darkness, Change Environment, powers bought with the Advantages *Explosion* or *Area Of Effect,* and the like. A power with this Advantage has a hole in the center where the power has no effect. For +¼, the character must define the size of this hole when he buys the power (it can be any size and shape the character wants). For +½, the character can alter the size and shape of the "hole" each time he uses the power, or even make it disappear altogether. The size of the hole is usually static, but it moves with the character if the area of effect moves with the character.

Example: *Arkelos wants to be able to talk to his friends without anyone else hearing. He buys a Silence Field — Darkness that affects the Hearing Sense Group, with a 3" radius. He then buys the Power Advantage Hole In The Middle (+¼) for the Silence Field, defining it as the one hex in the center of the Silence Field. Now Arkelos and his friends can sit in the middle of the Field and converse without fear of being overheard.*



**POWER EXAMPLES: HOLE IN THE MIDDLE**

Energy Burst: Energy Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (4" Radius; +1), Hole In The Middle (1 hex in center; +¼) (90 Active Points); No Range (-½). Total cost: 60 points.

Fogweaving Spell: Change Environment (create fog) 8" radius, -4 to Sight Group PER Rolls while within area, Hole In The Middle (can be changed each time; +½) (43 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (while casting; -¼), Incantations (while casting; -¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Side Effects (Drain STUN 2d6; -¼). Total cost: 13 points.

White Noise Generator: Darkness to Hearing Sense Group 3" radius, Hole In The Middle (1 hex in center; +¼) (19 Active Points); OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0). Total cost: 9 points.

**POWER EXAMPLES: INDIRECT**

Calling Down The Lightning: RKA 3d6, Indirect (always comes from the sky; +¼) (56 Active Points); Only Works During Storms (-1). Total cost: 28 points.

Fist Of Earth Spell: Energy Blast 8d6, Indirect (+½) (60 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Only Works Against Targets On Open Ground (-½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires An Earth Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 17 points.

Flying Blaster Platform: Energy Blast 10d6, Indirect (+¾) (87 Active Points); OAF (-1), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 39 points.



**INDIRECT**

Value: +¼ if the attack always originates at the same location and is always aimed/fired away from the attacker; +½ if the attack always originates from the attacker but can be aimed/fired in any direction; +½ if the attack can originate from any location but is always aimed/fired away from attacker; +¾ if the attack can come from any location and can be aimed/fired in any direction

A power with this Advantage ignores or bypasses intervening barriers between the attacker and the target. These intervening barriers include walls, fences, and even Force Walls, but not personal defenses like Force Field or Armor. Barriers purchased with the Power Advantage *Hardened* affect an Indirect attack normally (characters may buy Indirect multiple times to overcome Hardened). An Indirect attack may receive a bonus for Surprise the first time a character uses it against a particular target.

You can use Indirect to simulate a wide variety of special effects: a character who can affect anything he can see; the power to instantly summon a demon who rises from a pentagram next to the target and attacks him; a character's unmatched skill at bouncing attacks off of objects to strike his targets from behind; a magical bolt whose travel pattern a character can mentally control; and so on.

Indirect can allow a character with a Force Wall to fire through it without lowering its defenses. Mental Powers, which operate directly from one mind to another, need not buy this Advantage; Telekinesis and Stretching also have inherent "Indirect" aspects.

## THE POWER'S ORIGIN POINT

When establishing the point of origin of an Indirect power, a character has wide leeway (though the GM must approve his choice). It's usually a point near the character, but as *Calling Down The Lightning* (see sidebar) shows, it can be very far away from the character in some instances. As a good rule of thumb, most origin points should be within the power's maximum range.

Indirect does not make a power invisible. Other characters can perceive the point of origin of the power and the fact the character generates that power, providing they are perceiving in the proper direction.

### The Range Modifier

Determine the Range Modifier for an Indirect power from the attacking character along the full vector of the attack. For example, if a character has an Indirect Energy Blast that always originates 4" in front of him, and fires it at a target 6" to the right of the origin point, the Range Modifier is based on a range of 10" (4" + 6").

The method described above may cause some difficulties with attacks that have unusual special effects — such as a spell that calls down a strike of lightning from the sky. Not only is imposing a severe Range Modifier on the character because of his special effect unfair, it's difficult to determine exactly how far from the character the power's point of origin is (it could even vary from time to time, based on circumstances). In these situations, the player and GM should work together to establish a fair and reasonable "origin point" for the Indirect power for game purposes, even if the special effect actually puts the origin point somewhere further away. In extreme situations, the GM and player might even agree that the benefits and drawbacks of the Indirect effect cancel each other out, reduce the value of the Advantage (even to +0), and just calculate the Range Modifier normally along a straight line from the attacker to his target.

## TYPES OF INDIRECT

Indirect comes in four different varieties, based on where the attack can originate and what direction(s) it can fire in.

### Defined Origin Point, Only Fires Away

If the Indirect power always originates from a certain spot, and can only be aimed or fired away from the character, Indirect is a +¼ Advantage. An example is an Energy Blast that always originates from a point three feet in front of a character (just outside his Force Wall). The Blast always starts at that point, and always fires in a direction away from the character. Another good example is a spell that calls down a bolt of lightning from the sky — the attack always originates at the same point (the sky) and always blasts a character in a direction away from the spellcaster. It cannot hit a target from behind and knock him toward the spellcaster, nor hit a target in the side and knock him in a direction perpendicular to the spellcaster — it can only hit targets on the side facing the spellcaster and knock them away from him.

You can also define Indirect at the +¼ value as allowing a character to alter the point of origin of a particular innate power. As discussed on page 98, a power can originate from whatever part of a character's body he desires — an Energy Blast could come from the fingertips, eyes, forehead, or other body part. However, once he chooses that point of origin, he cannot alter it. With Indirect (+¼), he can change the power's point of origin as an Action that takes no time. For example, his Energy Blast could come from his eyes one Phase, his hands another Phase, and his chest some other Phase.

### Defined Origin Point, Fires In Any Direction

If the Indirect power always originates with the character, but can be aimed/fired in any direction, Indirect is a +½ Advantage. Examples of this include some types of boomerangs and arrows that a character can cause to arc around and hit the target from various angles.

### Any Origin Point, Only Fires Away

If the Indirect power can originate anywhere, but still can only be aimed or fired away from the character, Indirect is a +½ Advantage. An example would be a gadget-building character who creates a flying blaster platform that "orbits" his body in a

magnetic link with his powered armor suit. It can fire in any direction away from him — straight ahead, straight behind, to the side, up or down — from any position (it could, for example, fly 15" away from him and then fire). However, it cannot fire back towards him (meaning, among other things, that it cannot attack from behind any foe facing him). The special effect is that the platform has a built-in safety feature to prevent it from accidentally shooting its "master."

**Any Origin Point, Fires In Any Direction**

If the Indirect power can originate from anywhere and aim in any direction, Indirect is a +¾ Advantage. A power bought with this level of Indirect could, for example, originate behind a defender and knock him toward the attacker. If the armored gadgeteer in the above example paid for this level of Indirect, his flying blaster platform could move all over the battlefield to attack targets from behind or above, hit targets so that they're Knocked Back toward the character, and so forth. Another example is a ball of mageflame that can travel anywhere on a battlefield and attack any character from any angle, as its creator wills.



**INVISIBLE POWER EFFECTS**

Value: +½ for a power invisible to one Targeting Sense Group or the Mental Sense Group, +¼ for a power Invisible to one Nontargeting Sense Group; +¼ for each additional Sense Group; +1 Advantage to be Invisible to all Sense Groups; +¼ for a power which is invisible to one Sense or in very limited circumstances; half value to hide only the special effects but not the source of a power; x2 cost to hide the effects of the use of the power

Most powers and/or their sources can be perceived by three Sense Groups (see *Sensing Powers And Special Effects,* page 98). The special effects and source of a power with Invisible Power Effects ("IPE") are not perceivable when it is used or in use.

A character defines the special effects and source of a power, and thus what Sense Groups it's perceivable by, when he buys that power. For example, a Flame Blast is clearly visible as a bolt of fire emanating from the character, can be heard, and can be felt as heat. Sometimes characters just perceive the source of a power — most characters cannot perceive bullets in flight, but they can certainly see and hear the gun being fired. IPE allows a power to be used or affect its targets without perceivable special effects or source. For example, an Invisible Flame Blast could not be perceived, and the fact it originates from the character also could not be perceived; a gun could be bought with IPE so the gun itself is invisible and fires silently (though other characters might see the shooter's arm pointing toward the target).

A character can make an attack Invisible to one Targeting Sense Group for a +½ Advantage, or to one Nontargeting Sense Group for a +¼ Advantage; each additional Sense Group (Targeting or Nontargeting) is an additional +¼ Advantage. A power can therefore be completely Invisible for a +1 Advantage. Some examples of powers and abilities that could be built with IPE include: silencers for guns (Invisible To Hearing Group; +¼); some forms of Energy Blast, such as concentrated x-rays (Invisible To Sight Group; +½); and super-stealthy movement (Invisible To Hearing Group bought for Running). Since Mental Powers are already invisible to all Sense Groups except the Mental Sense Group, it only costs a +½ Advantage to make them completely invisible.

Not all forms of Invisible Power Effects need to affect an entire Sense Group. A power can be invisible to just one Sense, or in very limited circumstances, for +¼. Examples include: Invisible To Metal Detectors; Invisible Only To Normal Vision (for powers that cannot be sensed with ordinary eyesight, but which can be seen by, for example, Infrared Perception); and Invisible To Tracing (which makes it difficult or impossible for other characters to trace bugs, radios, and other transmissions to their source).

**POWER EXAMPLES: INVISIBLE POWER EFFECTS**

VIPER VB1-S "Whisper" Blaster: Energy Blast 10d6, Invisible To Hearing Group (+¼) (62 Active Points); OAF (-1), 10 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 27 points.

The Invisible Blade Of Kallose The Mysterious: HKA 1½d6 (up to 3d6+1 with STR), Invisible To Sight Group (+¼*), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (44 Active Points); OAF (-1), No KB (-¼). Total cost: 19 points. *Note: The Advantage is reduced to +¼, since the act of swinging the sword can still be perceived.

Plastic Pistol: RKA 1d6+1, Invisible To Metal Detectors (+¼) (25 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 8 points.

**Invisible Power, Visible Source**

At the GM's option, if both the special effects of a power and its source are normally perceivable, a character can buy the power with IPE so that the special effects of the power, but not its source, are Invisible. In this case, the value of the Advantage is halved (minimum +¼). The character then must rely on stealth or trickery to hide the source of the power. Similarly, characters can make the source Invisible, but not the special effects of the power, for half value (*Indirect* may also be necessary fully to hide the source of the power).

Example: *Lazer wants to build an X-Ray Laser which is Invisible To Sight Group (normally a +½ Advantage) into his Laser Rifle. However, the rifle itself is quite visible. Therefore the value of the Advantage is +¼. When Lazer uses his X-Ray Laser, the laser beam itself is Invisible to the Sight Group. However, the rifle is still visible, so unless Lazer is able to hide it somehow, the invisibility of the laser beam itself may not do him much good.*

**Invisible Effects On The Target**

While the source and special effects of a power may not be visible, its effects on the target are. For example, an IPE Energy Blast still causes visible damage (burns, bleeding wounds, shattered objects, and the like). Furthermore, characters can always use their common sense, Skills, and the like to determine the probable source or nature of an Invisible power — for instance, if the trajectory of an attack points right back to a particular character, most observers will suspect that character of being the source of the power even if it's bought with IPE. At the GM's discretion, the effects (as well as the source and special effects) of a power can be made Invisible if the value of the Advantage is doubled. The victim still feels the effects of the power, but other characters won't perceive them.

Example: *Mechanon wants to buy a Microwave Cannon to cook puny organics from the inside. He buys this as an RKA 3d6, Invisible To Sight. Since he doesn't want the damage caused by the attack to be obvious to observers, he pays double for the IPE Advantage — +1, instead of the usual +½. When he uses this attack, its special effects, source, and effects are Invisible. The victim knows he's taking damage, and feels terrible pain, but observers won't see any burns, bruises, injuries, or other signs that he's been attacked.*



**MEGASCALE** STOP

Value: See MegaScale Table

A power with this Advantage works over a much greater scale than an ordinary power. Each level of MegaScale is a +¼ Advantage; characters can buy MegaScale multiple times.

Characters can buy MegaScale for the following powers:

—Powers that already affect an area (either inherently, such as Darkness, or because they have the Advantages Area Of Effect or Explosion)

—Movement Powers (except Extra-Dimensional Movement and FTL Travel)

—Powers that work at Range, such as many Attack Powers and Sensory Powers

MegaScale converts the standard hex from one game inch (1"), or two meters, to a larger unit of measurement. The first level of MegaScale converts each hex of range or area from two meters to up to one kilometer (1 km). Further levels expand a Power's area or range to cover even greater distances. The character chooses the scale he wants when buying the power — for example, at the +¼ level, he might define each 1" as equaling 10 meters, or 130 meters, or 1 kilometer — but may not change the defined scale thereafter. (For intermediate scales for other values of the Advantage, the character must choose the next highest value; for example, creating a power where 1" = 5,000 km is a +1¼ Advantage.)

MegaScaled powers cost normal END (1 END per 10 Active Points including the *MegaScale* Advantage).

**MEGARANGE AND MEGAAREA**

Characters may apply MegaScale to increase a power's range or the area it covers; to do both, they must buy MegaScale twice. For range, each game inch of range a power would normally have is converted to a MegaRange — for example, a power with a normal range of 20" and one level of MegaScale has a range of 20 kilometers. Include the *MegaScale* Advantage when determining the Active Points of a power (and thus its Range or the size of the Area covered).

**MegaRange**

MegaRange Powers suffer the standard Range Modifier (unless the character purchases *No Range Modifier*). However, MegaScaling affects the Range Modifier as well, so that, for example, a MegaRanged Energy Blast (1" = 1 km) suffers Range Modifiers beginning at 5 *kilometers,* not 5 hexes as with a normal EB. Of course, if the character cannot perceive a target at MegaRange with a Targeting Sense, he's at 0 OCV. (On the other hand, the target of a MegaRange attack is likely to be Surprised by it, gaining the attacker a slight OCV bonus — at least the first time.)

Example: *The Galactic Federation's Transport Booth Network can teleport someone vast*





*distances — all the way across a planet, if necessary. To do this, it has Teleportation 10", MegaScale (1,000 km per hex; +1). This gives it a range of 10,000 km, sufficient to Teleport anywhere on a planet.*

*Dr. Destroyer builds an Ultralaser so he can attack the Earth from his lunar base. He buys this as an RKA 6d6 (normal range 450") with four levels of MegaRange (1,000 km per hex; +1). His cannon now has a range of 450,000 km, more than enough for the beam to reach the Earth.*

A character with a MegaRange Attack Power (or the like) is not limited to attacking targets at even increments of 1" (however 1" is defined). For example, suppose a character has MegaBlast (an Energy Blast where 1" = 100 meters). Using it, he could attack targets that are 100, 200, 300, and so on meters away, but he could also attack a target that was 135 meters away, or 513, or any other distance. The only restrictions are how far he can scale the power down (see below) and the maximum range of his Attack Power.

**MegaArea**

For area, each hex of area converts to a MegaArea — for example, an Energy Blast 8d6, Area Of Effect (4" Radius), MegaScale (1" = 1 km wide and deep; +¼) covers a four kilometer radius area. Generally speaking, a MegaArea power should not have the *Selective* or *Nonselective* Power Modifiers, but the GM can allow this if he wishes. The character using such a power would need to have a way to perceive all of the targets (or suffer the modifiers for not being able to perceive them).

**MEGAMOVEMENT**

MegaMovement is considered Noncombat Movement even though the MegaScale effect applies only to the character's inches of Combat Movement. Movement Powers bought with MegaScale do not have a Noncombat Movement multiple and may not purchase such multiples.

A character may not perform Move Throughs, Move Bys, Grab Bys, or Dives For Cover with MegaMovement without the GM's permission. Even with such permission, it would be almost impossible for the character to succeed with an Attack Roll — he is at OCV 0 and ½ DCV because he's considered to be using Noncombat Movement (at the GM's option, he may have Velocity-Based DCV; see page 123). In the case of Move Bys/Throughs, the damage he'd suffer from the Maneuver would almost certainly obliterate him.

A character with MegaMovement is not limited to stopping in even increments of 1" (however 1" is defined). For example, suppose a character has MegaTeleportation (1" = 1,000 km). Using it, he could Teleport in even increments of 1,000 km, but he could also Teleport 1,200 km, or 4,136.278 km, or any other distance. Similarly, if a character has MegaRunning, he can stop anywhere he wants to once he's moved as far as the minimum distance for the power. The only restrictions are how far he can scale the power down (see below) and the maximum range of his Movement Power. With MegaLeaping and MegaTeleportation, a character may also have difficulty perceiving the target location (see pages 197 and 235).

Acceleration and deceleration with MegaMovement is at the same rate as for normal movement,

**POWER EXAMPLES: MEGASCALE**

Supersonic Flight: Flight 10", MegaScale (1" = 1 km; +¼). Total cost: 25 points.

Orbital Cannon: RKA 4d6, MegaScale (1" range = 40 km; +¾) (105 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼). Total cost: 47 points.

MegaBomb: Energy Blast 10d6, MegaScale (1" = 1 km for Explosion; +¼), Explosion (-1 DC/1 km; +½) (87 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½), 1 Charge. Total cost: 19 points.

## MEGASCALE TABLE

| Value | Length/Area Of 1 Hex | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| +0 | 2m | Personal; man size |
| +¼ | 1 km | City |
| +½ | 10 km | County |
| +¾ | 100 km | State |
| +1 | 1,000 km | Nation, continent |
| +1¼ | 10,000 km | Planet |
| +1½ | 100,000 km | Lunar (Earth to the Moon = 384,000 km) |
| +1¾ | 1 million km | |
| +2 | 10 million km | Astronomical unit (1 AU = 150 million km, the distance from Earth to the Sun) |
| +2¼ | 100 million km | |
| +2½ | 1 billion km | |
| +2¾ | 10 billion km | Solar system (Earth's solar system = 500 AU in diameter) |
| +3 | 100 billion km | |
| +3¼ | 1 trillion km | |
| +3½ | 10 trillion km | 1 light-year; 1 parsec (3.26 light-years) |
| +3¾ | 100 trillion km | 10 light-years |
| +4 | 1 quadrillion km | 100 light-years |
| +4¼ | 10 quadrillion km | 1,000 light-years (the Milky Way Galaxy is about 100,000 light-years in diameter) |

| Value | Modifier |
|---|---|
| ¼ additional Advantage | Character can scale MegaScaled power down to 1" = 1 km (see text) |

but over the larger scale. For example, MegaMovement at the rate of 1 kilometer per hex allows a character to accelerate or decelerate at the rate of 5 kilometers per kilometer. A character cannot instantly decelerate to 0" by switching to a non-MegaScaled version of the same power, unless the GM so permits. He may not deactivate the MegaScaled Movement Power until he decelerates to 0" normally or through some outside means (such as being hit with an attack that would stop him from moving), or the GM specifically allows him to.

**Perceiving Where You're Going**

A character using MegaMovement may move so fast he can't perceive where he's going. Unless a character has an appropriate MegaSense, it's difficult (at best) for him to perceive where he's traveling to with MegaMovement (which may result in collisions, blind Teleportation, and the like). To prevent these problems, a character needs a MegaScaled Targeting Sense (this is an exception to the rule that characters shouldn't apply Advantages to Senses). The character usually buys the MegaScale as a naked Advantage for his Sense at the same level he buys it for his movement (use the costs for normal Senses on page 162, or the cost of a purchased Sense if appropriate). To the Active Point cost the character may apply a Limitation, *Only With MegaMovement* (-½). (Of course, a character who has a MegaSense already can just use it instead, or can decline to apply the Limitation if desired.)

If the character lacks a MegaSense, or has a MegaSense at a lesser level of MegaScaling than his movement, for every step down the MegaScale Table by which MegaMovement exceeds the MegaScaling on his Sense, he suffers a -1 penalty to make PER Rolls to see obstacles in time to avoid them. The GM may increase or decrease this penalty if appropriate. For example, it's probably not hard to perceive and avoid obstacles while running across a flat, relatively featureless desert, so the penalty would be less... but it's a lot tougher in a forest or on a city street, so the penalty might be higher. The character must make a PER Roll once per Phase when using MegaMovement; this is an Action that takes no time. If the character's PER Roll succeeds, he perceives obstacles in his path and avoids them. If it fails, the GM may require him to make a DEX Roll at the same penalty to avoid the obstacles he encounters. The GM may alter the penalty on the DEX Roll as he sees fit, or require multiple DEX Rolls if appropriate.

Example: *Kinetik has Overdrive Running, defined as five levels of MegaScale (1" = 10,000 km; +1¼) for his Running. That means he needs a similarly-MegaScaled Sense. He applies the Advantage (+1¼) to his Normal Sight (which has an "Active Point cost" of 25 points) for an Active Point cost of 31, to which he applies the -½ Only With MegaMovement Limitation. That yields a Real Cost of 21 points for the ability. Kinetik now need not fear colliding with obstacles as he jogs around the planet.*

*Suppose, however, that he only bought a MegaSense at the +½ level (1" = 10 km). Since his MegaMovement is three levels below that on the table, he'd suffer a -3 to his PER Rolls to avoid obstacles.*

**NO PERSONAL SCALE**

The tradeoff for MegaScale is this: the character can't use the power on a personal level anymore. A MegaScaled power can't be "scaled back" to cover or affect a range or area lower than the defined minimum scale. He can use less of his power (for example, use less than the full inches of a MegaMovement power), but cannot change the level of MegaScaling. For example, the shortest distance a character with MegaTeleportation (1" = 1,000 km) can Teleport is 1,000 km — 1" times the defined minimum scale. A character with an attack that has MegaRange (1" = 1 km) cannot attack targets closer to him than 1

kilometer — the defined minimum range. In other words, a character with a MegaScaled power might be able to move to or affect another planet or galaxy easily, but he can't simply cross the street, or fire at a target right across the street.

At the GM's option, a character may pay an additional +¼ Advantage to scale a MegaScaled power down to 1" = 1 km, regardless of how large the defined minimum scale is. Thus, if a character has MegaTeleportation (1" = 1,000 km, can scale down to 1" = 1 km), he pays a +1¼ Advantage for it (instead of the usual +1 for 1" = 1,000 km), and the shortest distance he can Teleport is 1 kilometer. (The GM may allow characters to define lower scaling down than 1" = 1 km, such as 1" = 10 m, but should beware of potential game balance problems this can cause, and should never let characters scale a MegaScaled power down to anything close to personal scale.)

A character can define a power as a Multipower with two slots: one personal scale, and one MegaScale (he could even have multiple slots, each with a different level of MegaScaling, if he wanted to for some reason). That way he can use the power on both scales.

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

MegaScaled powers have additional drawbacks and considerations. With MegaArea powers, characters (and their friends) are likely to be caught in their own effect unless they also buy MegaRange (or Personal Immunity). Furthermore, the collateral effects of a MegaArea power can be extreme — destruction of an entire city, for example.

Each level of MegaScale increases the possible distance or area covered by a factor of roughly 10. But as described above, characters can define MegaScale as having some different scaling for 1". Characters should choose the scaling which best suits the ability they're trying to build. For example, a power with +¾ MegaScale may only need to cover 50 kilometers per hex to achieve the distances the character wants — it doesn't have to cover the full 100 kilometers per hex.

If the GM has established a minimum cost for Powers in his campaign, MegaScale must be bought for at least the minimum cost. For example, if the minimum cost for Teleportation is 20 Character Points (10"), the character cannot apply MegaScale to 5" of Teleport — he must buy the full 10" before applying MegaScale.

The GM must approve all MegaScale powers, since they can have serious effects on a campaign. MegaScale isn't appropriate for all powers (for example, MegaSwinging would be ridiculous). It's primarily intended to allow characters to create effects (such as weather control) over large areas, or to travel great distances quickly. Special effects and practical considerations may limit the scope of a MegaScaled power. For example, even if a character buys Change Environment (Weather Control) with enough MegaScaling to affect the solar system, he still can't make it rain in outer space.

## NO NORMAL DEFENSE

Value: +1, or +½ for switching to an equally common defense or if the defense is extraordinarily common

A power with this Advantage ("NND") ignores all conventional defenses. For example, if a character applies NND to Energy Blast, the Energy Blast ignores the usual PD, ED, Force Field, Armor, and like defenses — the target takes the full amount rolled on the dice as STUN. No Normal Defense attacks are STUN only; they can only do BODY if the character also buys the *Does BODY* Advantage, which requires the GM's permission.

When a character purchases an NND attack, he must define a reasonably common power or circumstance, or a set of uncommon powers or circumstances, as the defense. If the target has this defense, he totally ignores the attack — it does no damage to him at all. The special effect of the NND often suggests appropriate defenses. The No Normal Defense Examples Table provides some possible attack types and their suggested defenses.

The GM must approve all chosen defenses, and should not allow inappropriate defenses. Examples of defenses usually considered inappropriate include a lack of anything (for example, "lack of Resistant Defenses," "lack of Mental Defense," or "not being a Dwarf"), being a particular type of creature ("being a spellcaster," "being a Martian"), a defined number of points of defense (for example, "10 or more points of Power Defense"), or having to make some sort of Skill Roll or other roll (either the character has the defense, or he doesn't).

Characters ordinarily shouldn't have more than one type of NND attack; this gives them too much flexibility in combat. However, there are situations where it is acceptable for a character to have multiple NNDs. This most often occurs when the NNDs are well-known or obvious, each of them has very common defenses, or the defenses for each of the NNDs are relatively similar. In these situations, the player's ability to exploit the combat advantage of having multiple attacks that ignore defenses is minimized. For example, a character might know both Nerve Strike and Choke Hold (both Martial Maneuvers based on NND), or might know Nerve Strike and also carry a gun that fires Knockout Darts. The dart gun is easily recognizable, so other characters know what to do to avoid its effects, whereas the Nerve Strike has a fairly common set of defenses.

Normally, NND is a +1 Advantage. However, in some situations it's only worth +½. For example, if you're converting a power from its ordinary defense to a defense that's equally as common in the cam-

### POWER EXAMPLES: NO NORMAL DEFENSE

Knockout Dart Gun: Energy Blast 6d6, NND (defense is any Resistant PD or appropriate LS: Immunity; +½ [defense is simply a limited class of the standard defense for this power]) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 18 points.

Sonic Blast: Energy Blast 5d6, NND (defense is solid ear coverings, Hearing Group Flash Defense, covering your ears, or being deaf; +1). Total cost: 50 points.

Biochemical Control: Mind Control 8d6, NND (defense is solid Resistant PD protecting entire body; +1) (80 Active Points); No Range (-½). Total cost: 53 points.



## NO NORMAL DEFENSE EXAMPLES TABLE

| Attack | Defense |
|---|---|
| Knockout Dart Attack | Any form of Resistant Defense |
| Knockout Gas Attack | Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing); target holds his breath |
| Modulated Energy Beam | Any type of Force Field |
| Sonic Attack | Solid ear coverings, Hearing Group Flash Defense; target covers his ears; target is deaf |
| Taser | Any form of Resistant ED; target is completely insulated |

### POWER EXAMPLES: PENETRATING

.45 Semiautomatic Pistol with Penetrating Frangible Ammunition: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Penetrating (+½) (61 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum (9; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage; -1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 16 points.

Piercing Fire: Energy Blast 12d6, Penetrating (+½). Total cost: 90 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: PERSONAL IMMUNITY

Life Force Blast: Energy Blast 12d6, Personal Immunity (+¼). Total cost: 75 points.

Mystic Darkness: Darkness to Sight Group 4" radius, Personal Immunity (+¼). Total cost: 50 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: RANGE ADVANTAGES

Sniper Blaster: Energy Blast 12d6, Increased Maximum Range (x5, or 2,250"; +¼), No Range Modifier (+½) (105 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 35 points.

Wizard's Missile: RKA 1d6, Increased Maximum Range (x5, or 550"; +¼), No Range Modifier (+½) (26 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff, -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 9 points.

paign, use the lesser value. In most campaigns this includes substituting one exotic defense (such as Mental Defense, Flash Defense, Lack Of Weakness, or Power Defense) for another exotic defense — like an Ego Attack that works against Power Defense instead of Mental Defense. NND is also only worth +½ if the defense against it is extraordinarily common (moreso than the defense ordinarily applied against the power) or is simply a limited form of the power's standard defense. For example, a character might buy an NND Sight Group Flash defined as poking the victim in the eyes. The defense is any form of rigid eye protection (glasses, a helmet, and so forth). Since this defense is a lot more common than Sight Group Flash Defense, the NND is only worth +½.

If an NND attack is bought with Autofire, Autofire costs an additional +1 Advantage.

#### PENETRATING

Value: +½

A power with this Advantage automatically does some damage, no matter how strong the target's defenses are.

To use Penetrating, the character rolls his damage dice normally and applies them against the target's defenses. But no matter how high those defenses, the target takes a minimum of 1 point of effect for every 1 "Normal Damage BODY" rolled on the dice *or* the damage he'd take from the attack after applying his defenses, whichever is greater. (At the GM's option, the target may take a minimum of 1 point of effect for every Damage Class in the Penetrating power.) In other words, the target takes no points of effect from each 1; he takes a minimum of 1 point of effect from each 2, 3, 4, and 5, and 2 points of effect from each 6. If the Standard Effect Rule has been applied to the power, a Penetrating attack does 1 Penetrating BODY damage per die.

Characters can apply Penetrating to the STUN of Normal Damage attacks, the BODY of Killing Attacks, the points lost due to a Drain, or any other effect that applies the total of the dice against a target's defenses. They may not use Penetrating with the BODY of Normal Damage attacks, Flash Attacks, or any other attack that applies the "Normal Damage BODY" of the attack against a target's defenses without the GM's express permission. It also may not be used with NNDs.

With Killing Attacks, the presumption is that Penetrating applies to the BODY damage, but a character can apply it to the STUN instead. A 1-point Killing Attack does 1 BODY Penetrating; a half die of Killing Attack does 1 BODY if it rolls a 4, 5, or 6 (minimum of 1 point); a Killing Attack that adds +1 to the dice rolled doesn't get any extra benefit if it's Penetrating.

Targets with Hardened defenses ignore the effect of Penetrating (though they still suffer the normal damage or effect from the power); characters with Damage Reduction cannot reduce the minimum effect (see page 143). Characters can buy Penetrating multiple times, but only to counteract multiple levels of Hardened. See *Hardened,* page 115, for rules regarding the application of Hardened defenses to a power which is both Armor Piercing and Penetrating.

#### PERSONAL IMMUNITY

Value: +¼

This Advantage prevents a character from being affected by his own power. Typically characters buy it for powers that cause damage (such as most Attack Powers, or some forms of Change Environment), but with the GM's permission they may also buy it for other powers, such as Sense-Affecting Powers. If a power has *Side Effects,* Personal Immunity offers no protection from them.

At the GM's discretion, Personal Immunity could also provide immunity to other characters' powers that are extremely similar to the power for which the character bought this Advantage. For example, if two identical mutant twins were separated at birth, and each has Personal Immunity on his Energy Blast, the GM might rule that each is also immune to the other's Energy Blast.

#### RANGE ADVANTAGES

These Advantages affect a power's range or how it works at range. They apply only to powers that already work at Range. A power that doesn't work at Range can do so if the character buys the *Ranged* Advantage (see below) for it.

**Increased Maximum Range**

Value: +¼ for every x5 multiplication of the power's maximum range

This Power Advantage increases a power's maximum range. For every +¼ Advantage, multiply the maximum range of the power by five (don't include this Advantage when calculating the Active Points upon which the power's range is based). Thus, for example, an Energy Blast 8d6 (normal maximum range 200" — 5" x Active Points) with this Advantage would have a range of 1,000" (25" x Active Points [not including the cost of the Advantage]). Characters can buy Increased Maximum Range multiple times to *really* increase a power's range.

Characters can only buy Increased Maximum Range for powers that don't already have a defined way to increase their maximum range (see the individual Power descriptions). It does not improve a character's chance to hit and has no effect on the Range Modifier; it just means he can use the power out to a greater range.

**Line Of Sight**

Value: +½

A power with this +½ Advantage works on a Line Of Sight (LOS) basis, like Mental Powers, instead of following the usual rules for Ranged attacks (including no longer being limited to a Range of 5" x Active Points). This means, among other things, that the power is not subject to the Range Modifier, but can easily be blocked by intervening objects. See *Line Of Sight,* page 116. Characters can only buy LOS for powers that already work at Range. If a character wants to buy it for a power that has No Range, he must first buy the Advantage *Ranged* for it.

**No Range Modifier**
Value: +½

A character using a power with this +½ Advantage ignores the Range Modifier when making Attack Rolls with the power. A power with No Range Modifier has as good a chance to hit at its maximum range as at point blank range.

Characters shouldn't buy this Advantage for Senses; instead, use *Telescopic* (page 165) to counteract the Range Modifier for Senses.

## RANGED

Value: +½

Powers that ordinarily have No Range can be used at Range if a character purchases this Advantage for them. (Characters cannot buy this Advantage for powers with a "range" of *Self Only.*) For example, characters can use a Drain or Transfer with Ranged to attack targets at Range. The maximum Range of a power bought with this Advantage is 5" x Active Points (don't include this Advantage when calculating the Active Points upon which the power's range is based). The power suffers the standard Range Modifier.

This Advantage does not automatically allow the character to use the power on others — if the power isn't an Attack Power, the character also has to buy the Power Advantage *Usable On Others.* Characters cannot buy this Advantage for their STR; characters who want to use STR at Range should buy Telekinesis or Stretching.

Characters can also buy two lesser versions of Ranged:

**Limited Range**
Value: +¼

A power with this Advantage works at Range, but with a maximum Range less than 5" x Active Points (often *much* less). The GM sets the exact Range of the power.

**Range Based On STR**
Value: +¼

A power with this Advantage works like a power with the Limitation of the same name (page 302) — it has a Range based on how far the character can throw it.

## REDUCED ENDURANCE

Value: Half END cost is a +¼ Advantage; 0 END is a +½ Advantage

This Advantage reduces the normal END cost of a power. Reducing the END cost of a power by half is a +¼ Power Advantage; the power then consumes 1 END per 20 Active Points of power (instead of the usual 1 END per 10 Active Points). The minimum END cost is still 1 END per Phase. Don't consider the *Reduced Endurance (½ END)* Advantage when determining the END cost of a power; it halves the END cost of the power unmodified by itself.

Example: *Defender buys an Energy Blast 10d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼). This power costs 62 Active Points, which would normally cost 6 END. However, the Half END Advantage is not considered when determining the power's END cost, so it would only cost 5 END. Since the Advantage halves the END cost, Defender pays only 2 END when he uses this power.*

Reducing the END cost of a power to 0 END is a +½ Power Advantage. Although a power with this level of Reduced END costs no END to maintain, it still turns off at the end of the Segment whenever the character is asleep, Stunned, or Knocked Out. (The character must also buy the Advantage *Persistent* [page 257] if he wants the power to stay on if he becomes unconscious.)

**Costs Endurance Only To Activate** ⚠
Value: +¼

A Constant Power with this Advantage only costs END to turn on; it costs no END to maintain. The power costs its standard amount of END in the Phase when it's activated, and no END thereafter. Although the power costs no END to maintain, it still turns off at the end of the Segment whenever the character is asleep, Stunned, or Knocked Out. (A character must make a power cost 0 END and also buy the Advantage *Persistent* [page 257] if he wants it to stay on if he becomes unconscious.) This Advantage does not allow a character to make a power Persistent; a power has to cost 0 END before Persistent can be applied.

A character may apply the *Increased Endurance Cost* Limitation to a power that only costs END to activate. However, he only receives half value for the Limitation.

This Limitation is most appropriate for Body-Affecting Powers and the like. The GM should carefully evaluate its use for other Constant Powers to make sure it won't unbalance the campaign. Characters cannot take both this Advantage and Reduced Endurance for a power without the GM's permission.

### POWER EXAMPLES: RANGED

Fatigue Ray: Drain END 4d6, Ranged (+½) (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 20 points.

Throwing Knife: HKA ½d6 (up to 1d6+1 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum (4; -¼), Real Weapon (-¼) (total cost: 6 points) **plus** Range Based On STR (+¼) for HKA ½d6 (2 Active Points); OAF (-1), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Lockout (cannot use HKA at all until Charge is recovered; -½) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 7 points.

Soul Drinking: Transfer 2d6 (BODY to STUN), Ranged (+½). Total cost: 45 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: REDUCED ENDURANCE

Blaster Gauntlet: Energy Blast 12d6, Armor Piercing (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (120 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 80 points.

Sonic Sword: HKA 2d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1), No STR Bonus (-½), No KB (-¼). Total cost: 16 points.

Gift Of Banishing: Dispel 15d6, any magical spell or effect one at a time (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½). Total cost: 79 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: STICKY

Firelord's Consuming Flames: RKA 3d6, Continuous (+1), Penetrating (+½), Sticky (+½), Uncontrolled (+½). Total cost: 157 points.

Sap Globes Of The Tree People: Entangle 3d6, 3 DEF, Sticky (+½) (45 Active Points); OAF (Sap Globe Thrower, -1), Ranged Based On STR (-¼). Total cost: 20 points.

Giant Spider Webs: Entangle 6d6, 4 DEF, Sticky (+½) (75 Active Points); No Range (-½), Vulnerable (Fire; -½). Total cost: 37 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: TIME DELAY

Dr. Demolition's Bomb: Energy Blast 10d6, Explosion (-1 DC/3"; +1), Time Delay (programmable timer; +¼) (112 Active Points); IAF (disguised bomb; -½), Requires A Demolitions Roll (to set up; -½), Side Effects (bomb blows up; -1). Total cost: 37 points.

Midnight's Curse: Major Transform 6d6 (normal person to person with Unluck 3d6), Time Delay (takes effect when next the clock strikes midnight; +¼) (112 Active Points); Limited Target (humans; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Witchcraft Roll (-½), Side Effects (suffer curse; -1). Total cost: 32 points.

## STICKY

Value: +½ (or +¼ if freeing one victim frees all victims)

This Advantage makes a power "sticky" — any character who touches a character affected by the power is also affected. (This only applies to touching the character who was originally affected by the power — touching someone who touched him has no effect.) There's no limit on the number of characters that can be affected, though the GM may establish one if he wishes.

Characters can only buy this Advantage for powers that require no conscious control from the character after the initial attack, such as Entangles and attacks bought with the Advantage *Uncontrolled*. The power must also have a physical effect; Mental Powers may not be bought with this Advantage unless they also have the Limitation *Based On CON*.

Examples: *Binder hits Defender with a 4d6 Entangle, Sticky. Before Defender can break free, Witchcraft is Knocked Back into him. Now both of them are Entangled.*

*The Lord Of Fire, a powerful wizard, has the ability to immolate his enemies. He buys this as RKA 3d6, Penetrating, Continuous, Uncontrolled, Sticky. Because it's Sticky, anyone who touches someone he's attacked with this power also catches fire!*

If a Sticky power involves paying END beyond the initial use — for example, if it's Uncontrolled — the basic END cost for the power carries it over and maintains it for any number of people who might be affected. For example, if a Sticky Uncontrolled power has a pool of 30 END to run it, and after it gets down to 15 END someone touches the victim and is affected by the power, the power affects him with 30 END to power it. The GM may change this in the interest of game balance, proper simulation of special effects, common sense, and dramatic sense.

A character who has a Constant area-affecting attack (see page 99) can apply Sticky at the +½ level so that when a character leaves the affected area, he continues to take damage as if affected by a non-area Constant attack.

If one character (even the character who was originally affected by the power) breaks free from the power's effects, other characters who have been affected remain affected until they break free from the power's effects on their own. If everyone affected is freed when any affected character is freed, reduce Sticky's value to +¼.

## TIME DELAY

Value: +¼

This Advantage allows a character to set off a power at a certain time in the future (after a given number of Segments [or other units of time] have passed, or upon the occurrence of specific time-related event, such as the next dawn or a clock striking noon). The time duration can be of any length, but the character must decide the time duration when he "sets" the power. The character pays END for the power when he sets up the power. Once the power has been set, the character doesn't have to worry about maintaining the power.

Among other things, Time Delay allows characters to make bombs with timers. It also provides a way to build a power that doesn't affect the target until sometime in the future (for example, a mystic curse that takes effect when next the clock strikes midnight).

## TRANSDIMENSIONAL STOP

Value: +½ to affect targets in a single dimension; an additional +¼ to affect targets in a related group of dimensions, one dimension at a time; an additional +¼ to affect targets in any dimension, one dimension at a time

This Advantage allows a character to use a power to affect targets in other dimensions. Although characters normally apply Transdimensional to Sensory Powers such as Mind Scan, they can use it with most powers that have inherent "indirect" properties (such as most forms of Telekinesis) or for which the Advantage *Indirect* is purchased at the +½ or +¾ level.

For a +½ Advantage, a character can use the power to affect targets in a single other dimension. For an additional +¼ Advantage (total cost: +¾), a character can use the power to affect targets in a group of related dimensions (the Nine Hells, all Outer Planes, or the like), one dimension at a time. For an additional +¼ Advantage (total cost: +1), a character can use the power to affect targets in any dimension, one dimension at a time.

Example: *Delaxor the Destroyer wants to create a mystic attack that works against targets in any of the four Elemental Planes. He purchases an Energy Blast 12d6, Indirect (+½), Transdimensional (any Elemental Plane, +¾). The Active Point cost for this attack is (60 x (1 + 1¼)) = 135 points. He can use this attack to affect targets in any Elemental Plane, but can only affect one target in a single elemental plane with any given attack.*

A character can use a Transdimensional power against a target in the same dimension he's in if he wants to. He still has to pay END for the Advantage, allocate reserve points to it if it's in a Multipower, and the like, but he's not restricted to attacking only dimensions other than the one he's currently in.

A character can apply Transdimensional to non-Ranged powers if he wants to. However, the vast majority of Transdimensional powers are Ranged.

Applying Transdimensional to a power doesn't grant a character the ability to perceive targets in the other dimension for free. If a character doesn't have a Sense that can perceive into the target dimension (such as Clairsentience or an Enhanced Sense with the *Dimensional* Sense Modifier), then he's at 0 OCV when attacking with the Transdimensional power.

Transdimensional does not eliminate the Range Modifier. The character must calculate a normal Range Modifier based on the position at which his power breaches the barrier between dimensions relative to the position of his target in the other dimension (the dimensional breach's location in the dimension where the character currently is, is in the character's hex). There's no additional "Range Modifier" just for attacking through a dimensional barrier, or for crossing multiple "dimensional layers" between the character's current dimension and the target dimension, or anything of the sort (unless the GM chooses to impose one).

Example: *Delaxor uses his Transdimensional Energy Blast to attack an earth elemental in the Elemental Plane of Earth. The barrier between Indushara (Delaxor's home) and the Elemental Plane of Earth is breached at a point 24" away from the elemental. Therefore Delaxor suffers a -6 OCV Range Modifier.*

Transdimensional can be an extremely potent Advantage. Gamemasters should regulate its use very carefully.

## TRIGGER

Value: See Trigger Table

This Advantage allows a character to set up a power that activates when a defined circumstance occurs. Some examples of Triggers include a button the character must press, a radio control device, an activation word or incantation, applying sufficient pressure, a reflex action, or reaching a certain altitude.

The value of Trigger depends on what conditions or circumstances activate the Trigger, how easy it is to re-set the Trigger, and related factors. See the accompanying Trigger Table for a summary of costs. The minimum value of Trigger is +¼, regardless of the modifiers applied.

### ACTIVATING CONDITIONS

The primary consideration for a Trigger is what activates it. If only one condition activates the Trigger — such as a coded radio signal, or pressing a button — the Advantage is worth +¼. This value also applies if a discrete and related set of conditions activates the Trigger, such as any one of three different code words. If the character can change the Trigger each time he sets up the power, Trigger is a +½ Advantage. Once a character sets a +½ Trigger, he cannot change it unless the GM permits him to (though he could activate the power by satisfying the Trigger's conditions and then set the power up with a new Trigger condition). With the GM's permission, a character can de-activate his own Trigger and re-set it.

The circumstance that activates a Triggered power must be easily verifiable, and cannot depend on any Senses the character does not possess — characters cannot use Trigger as a cheap way to detect phenomena they could not ordinarily perceive. (If the character wants to create a Trigger that has special Senses, he can buy these specifically for use with one Triggered power for a -2 Limitation, or with any Triggered power for a -1 Limitation.)

### POWER EXAMPLES: TRANSDIMENSIONAL

Æthereal Corruption: RKA 2d6, Indirect (+½), Transdimensional (Plane of Æther targets; +½). Total cost: 60 points.

Basilisk's Gaze: Major Transform 7d6 (standard effect: 21 points) (living things to stone), Indirect (+½) Transdimensional (targets on either the ethereal or astral plane; +¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (341 Active Points); Must Meet Basilisk's Gaze (-1). Total cost: 170 points.



## TRIGGER TABLE

| Value | Basic Activating Circumstances |
|---|---|
| +¼ | One defined condition, or related set of conditions, activates Trigger |
| +½ | Character can define Trigger condition with each use of the power |
| **Value** | **Activation Modifiers** |
| 0 more Advantage | Activating the Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action |
| ¼ more Advantage | Activating the Trigger is an Action that takes no time |
| ¼ less Advantage | Character does not control activation of personal Trigger |
| ¼ more Advantage | Two activation conditions apply simultaneously |
| ½ more Advantage | Three or more activation conditions apply simultaneously |
| **Value** | **Reset Parameters Modifiers** |
| ½ less Advantage | Trigger requires a Turn or more to reset |
| ¼ less Advantage | Trigger requires a Full Phase Action to reset |
| 0 more Advantage | Trigger requires a Half Phase Action to reset |
| ¼ more Advantage | Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action to reset |
| ½ more Advantage | Trigger resets automatically, immediately after it activates |
| 0 more Advantage | Character can set Trigger multiple times; power must have Focus or Charges |
| **Value** | **Miscellaneous Modifiers** |
| ¼ less Advantage | Trigger can expire (it has a time limit) |
| ¼ less Advantage | Trigger can Misfire |

The minimum value of Trigger is +¼, regardless of the modifiers applied.

## POWER EXAMPLES: TRIGGER

Automatic Riposte: HKA 1d6 (up to 2d6 with STR), Trigger (when character Blocks an attacker's sword-blow, activates as an Action that takes no time, resets immediately; +1) (30 Active Points); OIF (swords of opportunity; -½). Total cost: 20 points.

Potion Of Giant Strength: +30 STR, Trigger (quaff potion; +¼) (37 Active Points); OAF Fragile Expendable (easily spilled or diluted liquid, brewed from giant's blood and other components which are Difficult to acquire; -1½), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Minute each (-¼), Concentration (creator has 0 DCV while brewing potion; -½), Extra Time (takes minimum of 1 Hour to brew potion; -3), Gestures (must make arcane gestures while brewing potion; -¼), Incantations (must incant magical formulae while brewing potion; -¼), Requires An Alchemy Roll (-½). Total cost: 5 points.

Radio-Controlled Bomb: RKA 3d6, Explosion (-1 DC/2"; +¾), Trigger (variable radio signal, misfires if brought near radios set to certain frequencies; +¼) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1). Total cost: 45 points.

Warding Spell: Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF, Area Of Effect (7" Radius; +1), Trigger (if anyone other than spellcaster enters protected area; +¼) (135 Active Points); OAF Expendable (silver chain, Difficult to recover; -1¼), Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END; -1), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 17 points.

The GM may want the player to write down the circumstances that activate the Trigger to prevent disagreements later.

Example: *Arkelos is leaving his tower behind, and wants to set up some magical traps. He casts a guardian spell — Entangle, Area Of Effect, with a +¼ Trigger. The Power goes off whenever anyone tries to enter the room without saying "I'm home." Since Arkelos has no special Senses, only intruders perceivable by normal human Senses can activate the trap. If a visible thief tries to enter the room, he sets off the Entangle, likely trapping him until Arkelos returns. However, since Arkelos himself cannot see invisible beings, an invisible thief would not activate his Triggered spell.*

In some cases, activating a Trigger requires a character to take some specific action. As a default, this is a Zero Phase Action, but the character can make it an Action that takes no time by paying for an additional +¼ Advantage. In either case, even if activating the Trigger involves an attack or making an Attack Roll, it does not constitute an Attack Action (unless the GM rules otherwise).

Example: *Lt. Andy Barrett of the U.S. Navy SEALs is going on an infiltration mission. He realizes that if he's spotted, the enemy can shoot him easily because he'll be seriously outnumbered. Since he may need a way to generate some quick cover, he gets four smoke grenades and rigs them to a bandolier. He buys the grenades (Darkness to Sight Group on a Focus) with a Trigger, defined as a reflex action — whenever he needs some cover, he reflexively reaches for a grenade and "pops smoke" so the enemy can't see him. The GM allows him to set the Trigger for all four grenades. If it becomes necessary to use the grenades, activating the Trigger is an Action that takes no time (because he paid for the extra +¼ Advantage; ordinarily it would be a Zero Phase Action).*

If a character has a Trigger for a personal power for which he cannot control the activation, he may, at the GM's option, reduce the value of Trigger by ¼. An example would be an Aid STR, Triggered when the character becomes Enraged (or Berserk). Since the character cannot become Enraged at will, he gets less use out of his Triggered power, so the GM might reduce the Advantage's value. (The GM may also allow the power to take the *No Conscious Control* Limitation, if appropriate.)

Normally only one activation condition can apply to a Trigger at one time. If two conditions can apply simultaneously (for example, "power activates if five minutes pass *or* I say "relgarb""), Trigger costs ¼ more Advantage. If three or more activating conditions can apply simultaneously, Trigger costs ½ more Advantage. The GM may restrict the number of activating conditions a character can apply simultaneously in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, or game balance.

Some Triggers can *Misfire,* meaning conditions or events other than the predefined circumstances can activate them. For example, a bomb with the Trigger "radio detonator" might Misfire if a radio tuned to certain frequencies comes within 2" of it. A Trigger subject to Misfire costs ¼ less. The typical chance to Misfire when the condition occurs is 11-; the GM may modify this based on the situation and the nature of the power.

A Trigger remains "ready" even if the character who bought the power goes to sleep or is Knocked Out. If the character dies, the fate of the Trigger depends on the circumstances. In some cases, such as powers bought through a Focus, the power may remain active (other characters may be able to use it, if the Focus is Universal). In other cases, the power may fade away, or the Trigger may activate automatically upon its creator's death (this works well for some types of spells, for example).

A Trigger has no preset time limit or duration. It's possible for a Trigger to remain ready for use for years. If a Trigger has a defined time limit (it no longer works after a specified time period has passed), the GM may reduce the Advantage's value by ¼, but in this case whether the duration has passed should be obvious to an observer.

### RESET CONDITIONS

The next thing to consider about a Trigger is how the character resets it. As a default, a character must use a Half Phase Action to reset a Trigger power; he may only reset a given Trigger once per Phase. If it takes longer to reset the Trigger (a Full Phase, or a Turn or more), the Advantage costs less.

Some Triggers take less time to reset; these cost more. A Trigger that a character can reset as a Zero Phase Action costs +¼ more. A Trigger that resets automatically after every time it's used costs +½ more. This takes no action on the character's part and effectively makes the Trigger equal, in many ways, to a Constant Power, so the GM may want to establish a minimum value of +1 for any Trigger with this reset condition.

Example: *Severin d'Compeigne is a master fencer who has a lethal riposte technique — every time he Blocks a sword-blow, he can strike back at whoever attacked him. He defines this as an HKA 1d6 with a Trigger that has a single activating condition (whenever he Blocks a weapon attack with his sword). He specifies that the Trigger resets automatically after each use, and that it activates as an Action that takes no time. This costs him +1 total. Whenever he Blocks a weapon attack, his Trigger attack activates automatically and he strikes back at his attacker. Immediately after it activates, the Trigger resets, so that the attack applies every time he Blocks a weapon attack, even if he Blocks ten weapon attacks in the same Segment.*

Typically, a character may only set a Trigger once; after the Trigger activates, the character must reset the Trigger. (This does not apply to Triggers that automatically reset, of course.) If a Power has

the *Focus* Limitation or the *Charges* Power Modifier, the character can set the Trigger multiple times. This is appropriate for attacks like landmines, for example. The GM can allow characters to set other Triggers multiple times, if desired, or forbid multiple setting if appropriate.

**USING TRIGGER POWERS**

To Trigger a power, the character must first set up the power — for example, a landmine (RKA 2d6, Explosion, Trigger [when sufficient pressure applied; +¼]) must be buried at the proper location and activated before it can go off. The character pays END for the Trigger when he sets up the power; Limitations such as Activation Roll, Extra Time, Concentrate, and Requires A Skill Roll also apply when the power is set up, not when it is used.

For Triggered powers not activated by the character who bought the power, the target of a Triggered power is the person who sets off the Trigger — who steps on the landmine, who walks into the zone that activates a trap, or the like. Of course, that may make other people targets as well (for example, if the Triggered power is an Explosion). In situations where the character controls the activation of the Trigger, such as the bandolier of grenades mentioned above, the character may choose his target.

The character makes the Attack Roll needed to hit a target with the power when the Trigger activates, not when he sets up the power. (This does not constitute an Attack Action; the time required is as indicated above.) For a power not typically intended for use in combat (such as a Triggered trap, or a landmine), the character uses his OCV at the time he sets up the attack. Based on the special effects, the nature of the Trigger, and other such factors, the GM may, in his discretion, forbid characters to use bonuses from Combat Skill Levels, maneuvers, or the like, and allow the use of base OCV only. For a power typically intended for use in combat (such as the bandolier of grenades mentioned in the example above), the character uses his OCV at the time he makes the attack, and can apply Combat Skill Levels normally.

In either case, the GM may, in his discretion, impose modifiers on the character's OCV to reflect the situation when he Triggers the attack. For example, if he can't see the location of the Triggered power clearly (perhaps it's blocked by Darkness), he may have a harder time Triggering it precisely. On the other hand, some Triggered powers (like a landmine, whose Triggering the character doesn't really control at all) might not suffer a reduced OCV in this situation.

For a typical Triggered power, calculate the Range Modifier from the point at which the power is "located" (where the character set the Trigger and left it). With other Triggered powers, like the bandolier of grenades mentioned above, the "location" of the power and where the character is when he activates it are the same, so he calculates the Range Modifier from himself as normal.

Even though a power has been set with a Trigger and not yet used, another character may Dispel or Drain that power, or deactivate it by other appropriate methods. For example, an enemy wizard could Dispel Arkelos's guardian spell, saving himself from being captured by Arkelos's trap. A soldier could defuse a landmine with a Demolitions roll before it goes off.

If a character applies an Adjustment Power to increase a Triggered power, or he Pushes a Triggered power, the effects of the Adjustment Power or Pushing fade at their normal rate. A character cannot "boost" a Triggered power, set the Trigger, and thus "lock in" the boosted effect. Characters may not Haymaker Triggered powers.

If a character has a power with Trigger as a slot in a Power Framework, and he sets the Trigger, he may then shift the points in the Framework to another slot. The Triggered power remains in effect, waiting to be Triggered, even though the Framework has shifted to another power (though the GM may forbid this if he feels it violates dramatic sense or would cause game balance problems). Activating the Triggered power doesn't cause the Power Framework to switch to that slot or cut off a power currently in use through the Framework.

Characters can usually spot a power with a Trigger with a PER Roll, unless the power has the Advantage *Invisible Power Effects.* There's no limit to the number of Triggered Powers a character may place on the same object/person/place at once (or on different objects/persons/places), unless the GM imposes one. Nor is there any limit to the number of powers he can Trigger at once by the same method, unless the GM restricts this.

## POWER EXAMPLES: UNCONTROLLED

Acidic Secretions: RKA ½d6, Continuous (+1), Uncontrolled (removable with vinegar or water; +½) (25 Active Points); No Range (-½). Total cost: 17 points.

Perpetual Shadow: Darkness to Sight Group 6" radius, Uncontrolled (banished by holy light or powers; +½). Total cost: 90 points.

Wand Of Protection: Force Wall (12 PD/12 ED; 1" high and wide), Uncontrolled (can be removed with electricity; +½), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) (105 Active Points); OAF (-1), 50 Charges which Never Recover (-1½). Total cost: 30 points.



### UNCONTROLLED STOP

Value: + ½ Advantage; the Power must already be Constant

A Constant Power with this Advantage can maintain itself without conscious thought from its user. The base power must be Constant (either inherently, or because Continuous was purchased for it).

To set up an Uncontrolled power, the character must activate and use the power as normal (including succeeding with an Attack Roll, if necessary). Once successful, the character feeds as much END as he desires into the power to create a pool of END to fuel it. The Uncontrolled power runs for as long as there's END to power it. However, any power bought with this Advantage must have a reasonably common and obvious set of circumstances that will turn it off or negate it. (An Uncontrolled HTH attack should have "target moves out of HTH Combat range" as the condition [or one of the conditions] that causes the Uncontrolled effect to cease.)

If the Uncontrolled power is an attack, the target takes the damage when the power is first used. Thereafter, on each of the attacker's Phases, the attack uses END from the pool set up by the attacker and damages the target again (roll damage separately each time, but the attacker does not have to make another Attack Roll). The damage occurs on the attacker's DEX (*i.e.,* when his Phase occurs in the Segment).

If an Uncontrolled power is an Area Of Effect, the effect remains in all Segments, not just the attacker's Phases. Any character who enters the area takes damage or suffer the power's effects (no Attack Roll is required) that Segment and on each of the attacker's Phases thereafter until he leaves the area.

Once a character has set up an Uncontrolled power, he's not restricted in any way. As with an ordinary Constant Power, he could, for example, make more attacks with the Uncontrolled power or his other powers (or take other Actions), or move away from the target of the power, without affecting the Uncontrolled power at all — it would continue to function as intended. But unlike an ordinary Constant Power, if he's Stunned or Knocked Out, or loses Line Of Sight on the target, the power does not cease working — it continues to function as intended. Similarly, if an Uncontrolled power is bought as a Multipower or VPP slot and the character switches the Framework to a different slot, the Uncontrolled power does not turn off; it continues to function until it uses up its END pool.

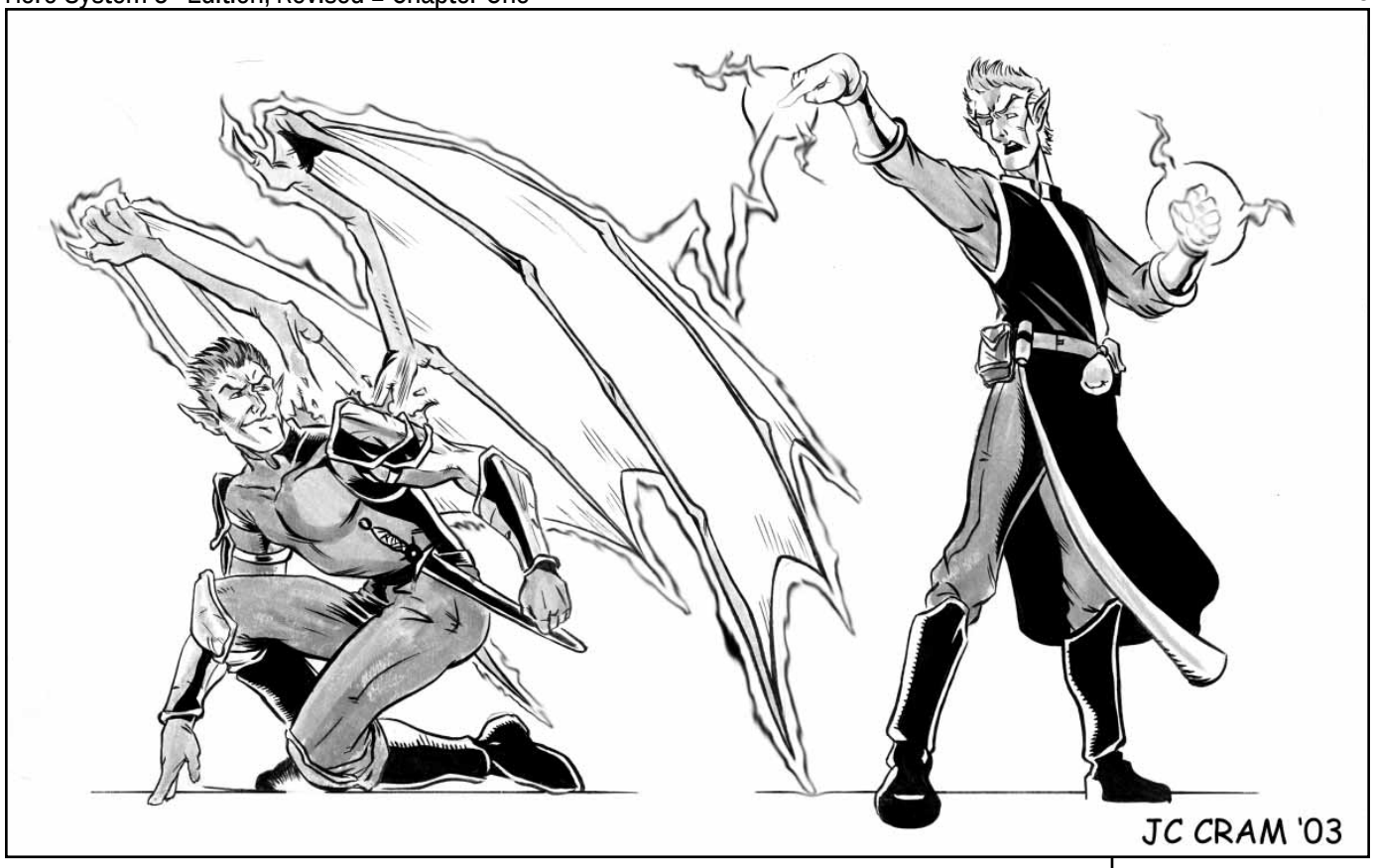
The GM should be wary of *Uncontrolled* attacks bought to 0 END, as these can be extremely powerful. At the very least he should require the power to have a set duration in addition to a reasonably common and obvious way to turn it off.

Example: *The Lord Of Fire purchases a spell he calls Immolation: RKA 2d6, Continuous, Uncontrolled (75 Active Points, 7 END). The special effect is that he causes his foe to burst into flames. To shut down this power, douse the fire with water or sand.*

*In a battle with the Vestrian Fire-Eaters, the Lord Of Fire uses Immolation on Burgida, a half-giantess warrior. He succeeds with his Attack Roll, then feeds 42 END to the power. This means it affects Burgida for the Lord's next six Phases (it costs 7 END per Phase, so the 42 END will be used up in six Phases). While Burgida burns, the Lord Of Fire can use other attacks on her or take any other action without affecting the Immolation. Even if he's Knocked Out or loses Line Of Sight to her, she continues to burn.*

Generally speaking, making a power Uncontrolled does not deprive a character from controlling aspects of that power (other than END use/duration) after he's activated it. However, as with all things, this may depend on the special effects involved, the exact nature of the "control" he wants to exert over the power, potential abusiveness, and the like, so the GM's judgment would come into play. The character should also be subject to Limitations on the power that affect his control of it (such as Extra Time).

A character may want to apply Uncontrolled to a Persistent Power that costs 0 END, such as Life Support or Mental Defense, to simulate a power that has a maximum duration (such as "power remains in effect for 1 Minute maximum" or "duration of 1 Hour, +1 Hour per point by which character makes his Skill Roll"). At the GM's option, in that situation he can reduce the value of Uncontrolled to +0.






## USABLE ON OTHERS STOP

Value: See Usable On Others Table

This suite of Advantages allows a character to give a power to another character — for example, as a blessing, or the ability to grant other characters temporary superpowers — or to impose a power on another character without his consent (*i.e.,* as an attack).

How a character gives or imposes a power upon other characters depends upon which Advantage the character buys: Usable By Other; Usable Simultaneously; or Usable As Attack. Characters can also buy additional Advantages to modify and improve whichever base form of Usable On Others they choose.

### BASIC RULES

The following basic rules apply to all Usable On Others powers:

**Range; Line Of Sight**

All Usable On Others ("UOO") powers have No Range. This means a character has to be within HTH Combat range of (or touch) a person he wants to grant a power to. However, once he does so, the recipient can use the power without having to remain in contact with the caster; the caster just has to maintain Line Of Sight to him. A character can buy a UOO power with the Advantage *Ranged,* giving that power the standard Range of 5" x Active Points, but in that case he has to have Line Of Sight to a recipient to grant a power to him. (A character can substitute the *Range Based On STR* or *Limited Range* Advantages for Ranged, if he prefers.)

## USABLE ON OTHERS TABLE

| Value | Advantage |
|---|---|
| +¼ | Usable By Other |
| +½ | Usable Simultaneously |
| +1 | Usable As Attack |
| **Value** | **Modifiers** |
| +½ | Ranged |
| +¼ | x2 Targets or x2 Mass (character may purchase multiple times) |
| +½ | Line Of Sight Not Needed After Initial Use ("Persistent," see text) |

Usable On Others powers require Line Of Sight between the character and his target at all times. If the character loses LOS to the recipient (including being Stunned or Knocked Out), the target can no longer use, ceases to be affected by, or loses the power at the end of that Segment. However, any existing effects created by the recipient while he had the power — such as the damage from an Attack Power or the boost to a Characteristic from an Aid — do not "vanish." They remain in effect according to their standard rules.

A character can eliminate the LOS and consciousness requirements by purchasing the *Reduced Endurance* (0 END) (if the power costs END) and *Persistent* (even if it's normally Persistent) Advantages for a UOO power. (The *Persistent* Advantage applied for these purposes doesn't make the power Persistent — it only removes the LOS requirement. To make the power Persistent as well, the character has to buy Persistent a second time if the power's not normally Persistent.) If the power has those Advantages, the recipient must remain within the power's maximum Range (5" x Active Points [including the points added

## POWER EXAMPLES: USABLE ON OTHERS

Phantom Form Spell: Desolidification, Usable Simultaneously (up to four people at once; +¾), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) (80 Active Points); OAF (bracelet woven from fibers from a rope used to hang someone; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 27 points.

Entombment: Tunneling (4" through up to 5 DEF material), Fill In Tunnel, Usable As Attack (does not work on characters with Tunneling, Desolidification, or Power Defense; +1), Ranged (+½). Total cost: 82 points.

Blessing Of The Battle God: +1 OCV in HTH Combat, Usable By Other (+¼) (6 Active Points); Gestures (laying on of hands; -¼), Incantations (prayer; -¼). Total cost: 4 points.

## USABLE AS A GROUP

Characters sometimes want to create Usable On Others powers that let a group of characters do something together. Examples include a superhero's ability to grant his comrades the power to fly (provided they remain close to him), or a wizard's Spell Of Multiple Invisibility (which makes anyone he grants the power to invisible as long as they stay within 3" of him).

There are two ways you can accomplish this. If the character wants the recipients to control what they can do and pay END for the power, build this ability with Usable Simultaneously. Increase the number of recipients to the maximum you want the character to be able to apply the power to at once. Then, if the GM permits, apply a Limitation reflecting the restrictions on the power, such as *Recipients Must Remain Within 10" Of Character.* If a recipient violates the condition, he loses the use of the power at the end of that Segment. The value of the Limitation varies depending on how much it restricts the power, but it shouldn't be so high that it effectively negates the Usable On Others (since the power's still extremely useful). Usually it's a -¼ or -½, at the most (and might even be a -0).

If the character wants to control the power and pay the END cost for it, he can buy this ability as Usable As Attack. He defines a condition that causes the power to stop working (such as "recipient moves more than 3" from me"). If that condition occurs, that recipient ceases to be affected by the power at the end by UOO]); if he goes beyond that distance, he loses the power entirely at the end of that Segment. (The GM may increase this to the grantor's line of sight, if he prefers, and characters can buy Increased Maximum Range for UOO powers if desired.)

A character cannot negate the need to maintain Line Of Sight, or to remain within the maximum Range of the power, by buying a UOO power through a Focus or the like. At the GM's option, he can do so by making the power Uncontrolled instead of Persistent (this has no other effect).

**Number Of Targets; Mass**

At their base level, Usable On Others powers work on one living target (of any mass) or an inanimate object of approximately human mass (100 kilograms). For each additional +¼ Advantage, the character can double the number of living targets (regardless of mass) or the mass affected. For example, if a character wanted to grant a power to eight characters at once, the Advantage would cost +1 (Usable By Other, +¼; three doublings up to eight targets, +¾).

This additional Advantage isn't required when buying Usable On Others for powers that have their own rules for increasing the mass they can affect (such as Teleportation). In that case, buy the power to affect the mass desired before applying Usable On Others. Mass is only relevant for inanimate objects; a power may be used on or granted to other characters and living beings regardless of their mass. The GM determines when a character has to increase the mass for a Usable On Others power.

If a UOO power that applies to multiple objects at once can affect increased mass, the increase applies *per object.* It's not divided among the objects as a group.

**Endurance**

The END cost for Usable On Others powers depends on the Active Points in the power (including the cost of the *Usable On Others* Advantage). For example, if a character buys Desolidification, Usable As Attack (+1), Ranged (+½), the Active Cost is 100 points, and it costs 10 END per Phase. If the base power doesn't cost END (such as Mental Defense or most Skills), then it doesn't cost END just because it's a Usable On Others power (unless the GM rules otherwise).

**Dispel And Adjustment Powers**

If a third party Dispels or negatively Adjusts (via Drain, Suppress, or Transfer) a Usable On Others power on a recipient, only that recipient suffers the effect — the grantor and anyone else who received it remain unaffected. But if the third party Dispels or negatively Adjusts the power on the grantor, then all current recipients suffer the effect at the end of the Segment. If a character wants to have a Usable On Others power for which a Dispel or negative Adjustment Power used against the character or any recipient affects all granted powers and grantees, he may, with the GM's permission, reduce the Advantage's value by ¼ (minimum of +¼ value) to reflect that.

**Power Frameworks**

If a UOO power is bought as a slot in a Power Framework, and is granted to a recipient, and the character then switches the Framework to another slot, the recipient loses the use of the power at the end of the Segment (even if the power is 0 END, Persistent).

### USABLE BY OTHER

This is the typical, or default, form of Usable On Others. It means the power is usable by any one person whom the character targets — in other words, the character "gives" a power to another character. The recipient controls the power and pays the END to use it; he's also subject to any Limitations on the power (such as having to use Gestures or suffering a Side Effect if the power isn't activated properly). The character can, if he wishes, target himself with the power. Only one person can use the power at a time with this level of Advantage, and the recipient may, if he chooses, refuse the power.

Granting a Usable By Others power is an Attack Action, though the GM may change it to a Zero Phase Action if the character grants the power to himself. Granting the power requires an Attack Roll, but the GM can assume the roll automatically succeeds if the recipient wants the power. The character granting the power does not have to make a new Attack Roll or take any Action every Phase to maintain the power; once he grants power to the recipient, he can perform other Actions freely.

The character granting a Usable By Other power to another character does not have to pay any END to grant the power. The recipient doesn't have to pay END just to receive a power, or to maintain the grant of power. However, the recipient must pay the END cost for the power when he uses it (assuming it costs END; if it doesn't, the GM may establish a time limit or other restrictions on its use). If the power uses an Endurance Reserve, the Endurance Reserve must also be Usable By Other.

The recipient of a Usable By Others power has full control over it. It remains under his control until he voluntarily "releases" it, or the grantor loses Line Of Sight to him. (The grantor cannot otherwise "turn the power off" or take it away from the recipient.) If it involves making a roll (such as Find Weakness), he makes the roll, not the grantor. Releasing the granted power is a Zero Phase Action; the release occurs automatically and requires no Attack Roll. When using the power, the recipient can choose to use none, some, or all of it, as he prefers; he's not required to use it at full strength.

Example: *Arkelos wants to create a magic spell that grants others the power of flight. He only wants to be able to grant Flight to one person at a time, so he buys his spell as Flight 10", Usable By Other (+¼), which costs 25 Active Points. The target of the power, not Arkelos, pays the END cost for the Flight, and can choose the speed at which he flies (from 1" to 10" per Phase, as desired). Arkelos cannot control where or when the target flies, that's up to the target. Similarly, if the target doesn't want to be able to fly, he can refuse Arkelos's grant of power — Arkelos can't force him to fly.*

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If a Persistent Power is bought Usable By Other, the character can use it to affect an unconscious or unaware recipient, provided the power would be beneficial to that recipient (*i.e.,* characters cannot exploit this rule to obtain a cheap "Usable As Attack" power). For example, Mental Defense Usable By Other could be used to protect an unconscious person's mind from attack by Mental Powers.

**USABLE SIMULTANEOUSLY**

This level of Usable On Others allows two characters (typically the character and one recipient) to use the power at the same time. Each character controls his own use of the power, pays END for his use of the power, and is subject to any of the power's Limitations. A character can increase the number of potential recipients with the standard +¼ for every x2 targets Advantage (thus, a Usable Simultaneously power can be used by four characters at once for an additional +¼ [total of +¾], eight characters for an additional +½ [total of +1], and so forth). The character can make himself one of the persons who receives the power (and normally should, unless the GM rules otherwise), but he counts as part of the total number of recipients (*i.e.,* he doesn't get to use the power "for free").

Example: *Arkelos decides there may be situations where he would want to fly at the same time as the person he grants the power of flight to (so they can travel together, for example). He buys his spell as Flight 10", Usable Simultaneously (+½), which costs 30 Active Points. He can now grant the power of flight to one person, and then grant it to himself as well. He pays the END for his Flight, and the other character pays for his own Flight, and neither can control whether, when, or how the other chooses to fly.*

*Later Arkelos earns some Experience Points and improves his spell to be Usable Simultaneously (up to four persons at once; +¾), for a total cost of 35 Active Points. Now he can grant the power of flight to up to four people at once. If he chooses to make himself one of the four, he can grant the power to up to three other people.*

Granting a Usable Simultaneously power is the same as granting a Usable By Others power. A character only has to use one Attack Action (and make one Attack Roll) to grant the power to up to the defined number of people at once — the character doesn't have to activate it one time for each person. However, all persons to be affected by the power must touch the character or another person who's affected, unless the power also has the *Ranged* Advantage (in which case they must all be within his Line Of Sight).

**USABLE AS ATTACK**

If a character wants the ability to force a power on another character, and/or to control how the recipient uses a power, he must buy *Usable As Attack* ("UAA"). For example, with UAA, a character could force the power of Flight on a target and then make him fly into a wall, render another character Desolidified against his will, or the like. A character who creates a power with this Advantage retains full control of the power, is subject to the Limitations on the power, and must pay END for the power while it's in use. Because Usable As Attack powers can be extremely effective, the GM must approve them.

Standard rules for Usable On Others powers generally apply to Usable As Attack powers. For example, characters can use powers with this Advantage against inanimate objects of approximately human mass (or higher if they pay an Advantage; see above). The target's mass is only relevant for inanimate objects; a character can inflict a Usable As Attack power on other characters or living beings regardless of their mass. If the character loses Line Of Sight to his target, the Usable As Attack power ceases to affect the target at the end of that Segment.

Typically, powers that are Usable As Attack should not have Limitations unless those Limitations affect only the character who creates the power (such as *Increased Endurance Cost*). For example, a character normally shouldn't be allowed to buy Density Increase, Usable As Attack (+1), Does Not Increase STR (-½). That's just a cheap way of getting a Drain STR in addition to the Usable As Attack power; it's not a valid power construction. If a character wants to make a target so heavy he cannot move, that's the special effect of an Entangle (or some other Power), and that's how he should buy it.

Applying Usable As Attack to a Self Only power converts that power to one with No Range (*i.e.,* which the character can inflict on another character within HTH Combat range, or to which a character can apply the *Ranged* Advantage).

A Usable As Attack power is *only* usable as an attack — the character cannot use it himself for its normal purpose. The GM might permit a character to "attack" himself with his own power in appropriate circumstances, but generally this shouldn't be allowed.

**Using The Attack; Defenses**

Usable As Attack requires an Attack Roll against the target; it has No Range (unless the character buys the *Ranged* Advantage for it). The character must define a reasonably common set of defenses that cancels out the attack. For example, Flight UAA might not work against any character who had Flight, Desolidification, or Power Defense. If the target of the power does not have the appropriate defense when the Usable As Attack power affects him, but later obtains or activates that defense, the Usable As Attack power ceases to affect him at that time. (The power cannot act as its own defense; if the defense to Flight UAA is for the target to have Flight himself, that refers to his *own* ability to fly — he cannot use the Flight from the attack to negate the attack itself.)

A Usable As Attack power functions similarly to a Constant Power in some respects. It lasts as long as the character keeps paying END for it (and does anything else required to maintain it), or until he loses Line Of Sight to the victim or the victim finds some way to free himself.

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of the Segment (the character would have to grant him the power again, if necessary). The character receives no Limitation for this; it's just a predefined condition under which he "stops giving" the power to the recipient.

**Controlling The Target**

A Usable As Attack power may require a character to control the victim in some way. For example, Flight, Usable As Attack, requires the character to pay attention to where he flies the victim to, which direction the victim's traveling (and how fast), and so forth. If so, the act of controlling the victim requires a Half Phase Action on each of the character's Phases. At the GM's option, a character can convert the Half Phase Action requirement to a Zero Phase Action requirement by buying the Advantage *Uncontrolled* for the power (this has no other effect).

Regardless of the Action required, the character usually doesn't have to make any additional Attack Rolls or the like. However, the GM may require the character to make an Attack Roll if he wants to do something that would harm the victim (like smash him into a wall). In this case, all standard modifiers, including the Range Modifier, apply to OCV; the target typically has DCV 3 (since he's under the character's control). If the character doesn't take a Half Phase Action to control the victim, the victim keeps doing whatever it was last made to do (for example, he keeps flying in the same direction and at the same speed).

Other Usable As Attack powers (such as Desolidification UAA) don't require any control of the target by the character — they remain in effect as long as he pays END (and does anything else required to maintain them). He doesn't need to devote any Half Phase Actions to maintaining them.

Example: *Arkelos realizes that being able to force someone to fly would be a useful form of attack, so with the GM's permission he changes his spell again, to Flight 10", Usable As Attack (+1), Ranged (+½), which costs 50 Active Points. Now, with an Attack Roll, he can force someone to fly whether they want to or not. Arkelos pays the END cost for the Flight (5 END) and controls where the target flies. He can fly the target into a wall, out to sea, or straight up in the air and then let him go.*

**Multiple Targets**

Ordinarily, a Usable As Attack power only works on a single target. With the GM's permission, a character can buy a UAA power to affect multiple targets using the standard UOO rules. To use such an attack, the character must touch all of the targets he wants to affect with a single use of the power. (If the power also has Ranged, the GM should examine it *very* carefully before approving it, since the ability to affect so many targets at once could prove unbalancing.) The power has the standard END cost (1 END per 10 Active Points); the character pays END once per Phase when using the power, not once per target per Phase.

**"Attached" Powers**

Usable As Attack allows a character to "attach" a Constant Power to a target and have that Power follow him as he moves. For example, Darkness to Hearing Group 1" radius, Usable As Attack, would "stick" to a target and move with him as he moves, thus preventing him from escaping its effects.

**DIFFERING MODIFIERS**

Sometimes a character wants to create a Usable On Others powers that has different Power Modifiers from the Modifiers on the power the recipient gains. For example, Arkelos's spell has the Limitations *Gestures, Incantations, Requires A Magic Roll,* and *Focus* (OAF - Magic Wand). But characters who get to fly by means of this power aren't subject to any of those Limitations; they only apply to the casting of the spell that grants the power to fly.

To create such an ability, a character must first determine how to create the power as the recipient will use it, with all appropriate Advantages and Limitations (this does not include the *Usable On Others* Advantage unless you want the recipient to be able to grant the power to others). For example, to re-do Arkelos's basic spell in a better fashion, he buys Flight 10" (20 Active Points), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½) (total cost: 13 points). He does not apply Usable On Others or the Limitations listed above, because the power as the recipient will use it does not involve them. Similarly, the Limitations on the power do not apply to the character when he grants the power to the recipient.

After the character builds the power as the recipient will use it, the Real Cost of the power becomes the Base Cost of the ability to grant it to other characters. The character then applies the appropriate Advantages and Limitations (including UOO); these affect the grant of power, but not the recipient's ability to use the power.

Example: *Arkelos finally builds his spell this way:*

*GIFT OF FLIGHT SPELL: Grant the following power to other characters: Flight 10" (20 Active Points); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½). Total cost: 13 points.*

*The 13 point cost becomes the Base Cost for the Usable On Others power. Arkelos applies these Power Modifiers to the 13 points: Usable On Other (+¼) (16 Active Points); OAF (Magic Wand; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 5 points. So, the spell costs Arkelos 5 points (not 13 or16).*

*When Arkelos casts the spell, he must have his Magic Wand, utter incantations, make gestures, and succeed with a Magic Skill Roll. If he does all this, the recipient of the spell becomes able to fly. The recipient isn't subject to any of those Limitations, but is subject to the x2 END cost of the base power. Arkelos, on the other hand, pays only the standard END cost for his spell (2 END), not double END cost.*

Characters should not be allowed to build Usable On Others powers in this fashion as a cheap way of getting that power themselves — for example, to buy Arkelos's spell as described above (for only 5 points) rather than the straightforward ability to fly. Usable On Others powers are, as the name indicates, primarily intended to be used for (or on) others, not on the character himself.

### THE DANGERS OF USABLE ON OTHERS

Usable On Others provides you with a great deal of flexibility in the creation of unique and intriguing abilities. As always, that flexibility comes with the threat of abuse. The temptation to combine *Usable As Attack* with powers such as Extra-Dimensional Movement, Flight, or Teleportation, to take just a few examples, will affect many players.

The GM should review all UOO powers carefully and make sure they're unlikely to unbalance the campaign or provide a character with an unusually effective or potent attack. One important rule of thumb to follow is that characters cannot use *Usable As Attack* to duplicate an Attack Power unless the cost of, and restrictions on, the UAA power are at least as bad as, or worse than, the Attack Power. For example, Flight Usable As Attack is of dubious legality, since Telekinesis is the appropriate and legal way to achieve the same effect in most circumstances.

Usable By Others powers present similar possibilities for abuse. For example, imagine how it might affect a campaign if every PC got extra defense from a Force Field, Usable By Others, in every combat. When determining each character's affect on campaign balance, be sure to include any powers they might "receive" in this manner.

There are other ways to grant characters powers — Transform, for example. Similarly, any character can use a Universal Focus even though this Advantage isn't bought for it; that's part of the *Focus* Limitation.

### VARIABLE ADVANTAGE STOP

Value: Double the value of the Advantages the character can apply to the power; ¼ less for a limited group of Advantages (but with a minimum value of +½)

A power with this Advantage can have any Power Advantages of up to a certain value. The character can change the Power Advantage(s) on the power before it is used. Changing the Advantage(s) is a Zero Phase Action, but characters can only change Advantage(s) once per Phase unless the GM permits otherwise.

The value for Variable Advantage equals double the value of the Advantages the character wishes to change between. For example, if the character wanted to be able to change +½ worth of Advantages, the value of the *Variable Advantage* Advantage would be +1. If the power can only use a limited set of Advantages (typically no more than four), Variable Advantage is worth ¼ less (but with a minimum value for the Advantage of +½). Other than this, there's no restriction on the Advantages a character can assign to a power via Variable Advantages, unless the GM chooses to establish some.

Example: *Firelord buys an Energy Blast 10d6 with +½ Variable Advantage (+1) (100 Active Points). He can apply any +½ Advantage to this power — it can be Armor Piercing one Phase, an Explosion the next, and have Invisible Power Effects the next. If he can only apply two to four predefined Advantages to the Energy Blast (for example, Armor Piercing, Penetrating, Explosion, and 0 END), the Advantage is only worth +¾.*

A character always has to assign the appropriate value worth of Advantages. He cannot assign no Advantages or less than the full amount of Advantages. He could, however, assign Advantages that have little or no effect on the Power involved. A character can use two or more Advantages to fill the value, if appropriate (for example, he could assign a +½ Variable Advantage to two +¼ Advantages).

An Advantage added via Variable Advantages can complement or expand an existing Advantage on a power (unless the GM forbids this). For example, if a power has Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) and Variable Advantages, the character can use ¼ worth of the Variable Advantage to increase the Reduced Endurance to (0 END; +½). However, the GM may forbid the character to apply Advantages that contradict, or aren't compatible with, the Limitations on a power. For example, if a power has an Endurance Limitation (such as Increased Endurance Cost or Costs Endurance), a character shouldn't be allowed to assign Variable Advantage on that power to Reduced Endurance.

If a power with Variable Advantage also has the Advantages *Autofire, Area Of Effect,* or *Explosion,* all shots fired must use the same Advantage(s) and all targets must be affected by the same Advantage(s). The character cannot vary the Advantage(s) from shot to shot or target to target.

### POWER EXAMPLES: VARIABLE ADVANTAGE

Modular Firearm: RKA 2d6, Reduced Endurance (has plenty of clips of various types of bullets; 0 END; +½) Variable Advantage (+½ Advantages, but only those with the special effect of bullets or gun parts; +¾) (67 Active Points); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), STR Minimum (12; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage; -1). Total cost: 19 points.

Battle Mage's Staff: Energy Blast 8d6, Variable Advantage (+½ Advantages; +1), Variable Special Effects (anything which can be produced with a magic spell; +¼) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), 9 Charges (-¼), Independent (-2). Total cost: 21 points.

Vari-beam: Energy Blast 12d6, Variable Advantage (+1 Advantages; +2) (180 Active Points); OIF (Powered Armor; -½), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 72 points.






## POWER EXAMPLES: VARIABLE SPECIAL EFFECTS

Invocation Of The Elements: Energy Blast 8d6, Variable Special Effects (any elemental effect; +¼) (50 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires An Elemental Magics Roll (-½). Total cost: 17 points.

Starship Weapons Pod: RKA 6d6, Variable Special Effects (any of several energy beams the ship can project; +¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (157 Active Points); OIF, Bulky (-1). Total cost: 78 points.

The END cost for a Variable Advantage power includes the cost of the *Variable Advantage* Advantage itself. For example, an Energy Blast 6d6, Variable Advantage (+½ Advantages; +1) (60 Active Points) costs 6 END when used, even though the power only has "45 points" with its assigned Advantage. Of course, assigning the Variable Advantage to the Advantage *Reduced Endurance* changes a power's END cost, but the *Variable Advantages* Advantage still affects the power's END cost. In the above example, assigning the Variable Advantage to Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) and Personal Immunity (+¼) means the power costs 3 END (half of 6, not half of 4).

Variable Advantage does not alter a power's special effects. That requires the *Variable Special Effects* Advantage (see below).

### VARIABLE SPECIAL EFFECTS

Value: +¼ for special effects from a Limited Group; +½ for any special effect

The special effects of a power with this Advantage can vary. Changing the special effect is a Zero Phase Action, but characters can only change special effects once per Phase unless the GM permits otherwise.

This Advantage has no direct effect on combat: an Energy Blast 10d6 remains an Energy Blast 10d6 regardless of what it looks like or how it manifests. However, a character can use a power with Variable Special Effects to exploit an enemy's Limitations or Disadvantages. For example, if a character knows his opponent takes 2 x STUN from Fire Attacks, he can define his Energy Blast as a fire attack and inflict more damage than he normally would.

If the special effects come from a Limited Group (for example, all heat/cold special effects or any magic special effect), this Advantage is worth +¼. If the power can have any special effect, it's a +½ advantage.

If a power with Variable Special Effects also has the Advantages *Autofire, Area Of Effect,* or *Explosion,* all shots fired must use the same special effect and all targets must be affected by the same special effect. The character cannot vary the special effect from shot to shot or target to target.

Variable Special Effects does not allow a character to alter anything about a power other than its special effects. He cannot add or remove Advantages or Adders, change the Characteristics or Powers affected by an Adjustment Power, change the defense allocation of a Force Field, or the like. However, he can switch back and forth between affecting Physical defenses and Energy defenses by choosing the appropriate special effects.

# ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS CALCULATIONS TABLES

These tables are a quick-reference for calculating the effects of Advantages and Limitations when you don't have a calculator handy. To determine the Active Cost of a power with Advantages, find the base cost of the power in Character Points across the top, then cross-reference with the total value of all Advantages applied in the left-hand column (the value listed is before the base 1 is added). To determine the Real Cost of a power with Limitations, find the Active Cost of the power in Character Points across the top, then cross-reference with the total value of all Limitations applied in the left-hand column (the value listed is before the base 1 is added).

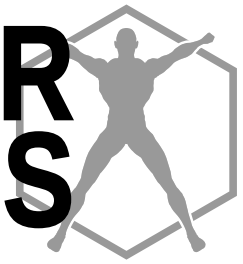
## ADVANTAGES CALCULATION TABLE

| Val | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 | 40 | 45 | 50 | 55 | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | 80 | 85 | 90 | 95 | 100 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| +¼ | 6 | 12 | 19 | 25 | 31 | 37 | 44 | 50 | 56 | 62 | 69 | 75 | 81 | 87 | 94 | 100 | 106 | 112 | 119 | 125 |
| +½ | 7 | 15 | 22 | 30 | 37 | 45 | 52 | 60 | 67 | 75 | 82 | 90 | 97 | 105 | 112 | 120 | 127 | 135 | 142 | 150 |
| +¾ | 9 | 17 | 26 | 35 | 44 | 52 | 61 | 70 | 79 | 87 | 96 | 105 | 114 | 122 | 131 | 140 | 149 | 157 | 166 | 175 |
| +1 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 | 110 | 120 | 130 | 140 | 150 | 160 | 170 | 180 | 190 | 200 |
| +1¼ | 11 | 22 | 34 | 45 | 56 | 67 | 79 | 90 | 101 | 112 | 124 | 135 | 146 | 157 | 169 | 180 | 191 | 202 | 214 | 225 |
| +1½ | 12 | 25 | 37 | 50 | 62 | 75 | 87 | 100 | 112 | 125 | 137 | 150 | 162 | 175 | 187 | 200 | 212 | 225 | 237 | 250 |
| +1¾ | 14 | 27 | 41 | 55 | 69 | 82 | 96 | 110 | 124 | 137 | 151 | 165 | 179 | 192 | 206 | 220 | 234 | 247 | 261 | 275 |
| +2 | 15 | 30 | 45 | 60 | 75 | 90 | 105 | 120 | 135 | 150 | 165 | 180 | 195 | 210 | 225 | 240 | 255 | 270 | 285 | 300 |
| +2¼ | 16 | 32 | 49 | 65 | 81 | 97 | 114 | 130 | 146 | 162 | 179 | 195 | 211 | 227 | 244 | 260 | 276 | 292 | 309 | 325 |
| +2½ | 17 | 35 | 52 | 70 | 87 | 105 | 122 | 140 | 157 | 175 | 192 | 210 | 227 | 245 | 262 | 280 | 297 | 315 | 332 | 350 |
| +2¾ | 19 | 37 | 56 | 75 | 94 | 112 | 131 | 150 | 169 | 187 | 206 | 225 | 244 | 262 | 281 | 300 | 319 | 337 | 356 | 375 |
| +3 | 20 | 40 | 60 | 80 | 100 | 120 | 140 | 160 | 180 | 200 | 220 | 240 | 260 | 280 | 300 | 320 | 340 | 360 | 380 | 400 |

## LIMITATIONS CALCULATION TABLE

| Val | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 | 40 | 45 | 50 | 55 | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | 80 | 85 | 90 | 95 | 100 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| -¼ | 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 20 | 24 | 28 | 32 | 36 | 40 | 44 | 48 | 52 | 56 | 60 | 64 | 68 | 72 | 76 | 80 |
| -½ | 3 | 7 | 10 | 13 | 17 | 20 | 23 | 27 | 30 | 33 | 37 | 40 | 43 | 47 | 50 | 53 | 57 | 60 | 63 | 67 |
| -¾ | 3 | 6 | 9 | 11 | 14 | 17 | 20 | 23 | 26 | 29 | 31 | 34 | 37 | 40 | 43 | 46 | 48 | 51 | 54 | 57 |
| -1 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 10 | 12 | 15 | 17 | 20 | 22 | 25 | 27 | 30 | 32 | 35 | 37 | 40 | 42 | 45 | 47 | 50 |
| -1¼ | 2 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 | 27 | 29 | 31 | 33 | 36 | 38 | 40 | 42 | 44 |
| -1½ | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 | 26 | 28 | 30 | 32 | 34 | 36 | 38 | 40 |
| -1¾ | 2 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 | 25 | 27 | 29 | 31 | 33 | 34 | 36 |
| -2 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 13 | 15 | 17 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 23 | 25 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 32 | 33 |
| -2¼ | 1 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 15 | 17 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 23 | 25 | 26 | 28 | 29 | 31 |
| -2½ | 1 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 14 | 16 | 17 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 23 | 24 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| -2¾ | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 27 |
| -3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 25 |

# POWER LIMITATIONS



Power Limitations, like Power Advantages, help to emphasize the special effects of a power. Unlike Advantages, Limitations do this by designating situations or conditions in which the power does not function, functions less effectively, or suffers some other restriction. Because they make a power less useful, Limitations lower its cost. Power Limitations also help to develop a character's conception and background; many backgrounds automatically suggest particular Power Limitations, and vice versa.

Before you load your character's powers down with Limitations, remember that Limitations are disadvantageous — and the GM will use these weaknesses against your character. Some Limitations (especially *Focus*) are very effective for the character unless the GM brings the Limitation into play once in a while, so it's the GM's responsibility to make sure the Limitation affects the game, at least occasionally. Don't complain that this makes your character ineffective — the GM will just remind you that you took the Limitation for the power, and having a Limitation means the power isn't as effective. If you don't want your character to be Limited this way, buy the Limitation off with Experience Points (which requires the GM's permission, of course) or don't take it in the first place.

All Limitations are governed by a very simple rule:

**A Limitation that doesn't limit the character isn't worth any bonus!**

This rule is universal. For example, a character can't get a Limitation for a power that *Does Not Work Against Magic* if there's no magic in the campaign — a Limitation must restrict or hinder the use of the power if the character is to receive a cost reduction for it. The GM should also examine powers that can compensate for Limitations put on other powers.

Example: *If a character's Force Field only works when the temperature exceeds 100 degrees, he would normally take a Limitation reflecting the fact that the power's not always available to him. However, if he also had the Power Change Environment defined to keep the temperature above 100 degrees, he could change the temperature himself, and would always be able to use the Force Field. The Force Field would no longer be restricted, so the Limitation on it wouldn't be worth any point savings (at most, it would be a -0 Limitation, which doesn't change the power's cost).*

Put another way, if a character has control over the situation or condition that Limits his power, he's not really Limited unless other factors decrease or restrict his control. For example, a character with Shrinking could buy powers that *Do Not Work When Shrunk.* Ordinarily this wouldn't be a Limitation (or, at most, would be a -¼ Limitation) because the character has more or less complete control over when he uses or doesn't use his Shrinking. However, because there are situations where he'll want to remain Shrunk regardless of whether he needs to use his other powers (for example, in combat or when trying to fit through tiny spaces), the GM should probably allow such a Limitation as a -¼ or -½, depending upon how often he thinks it will affect the character.

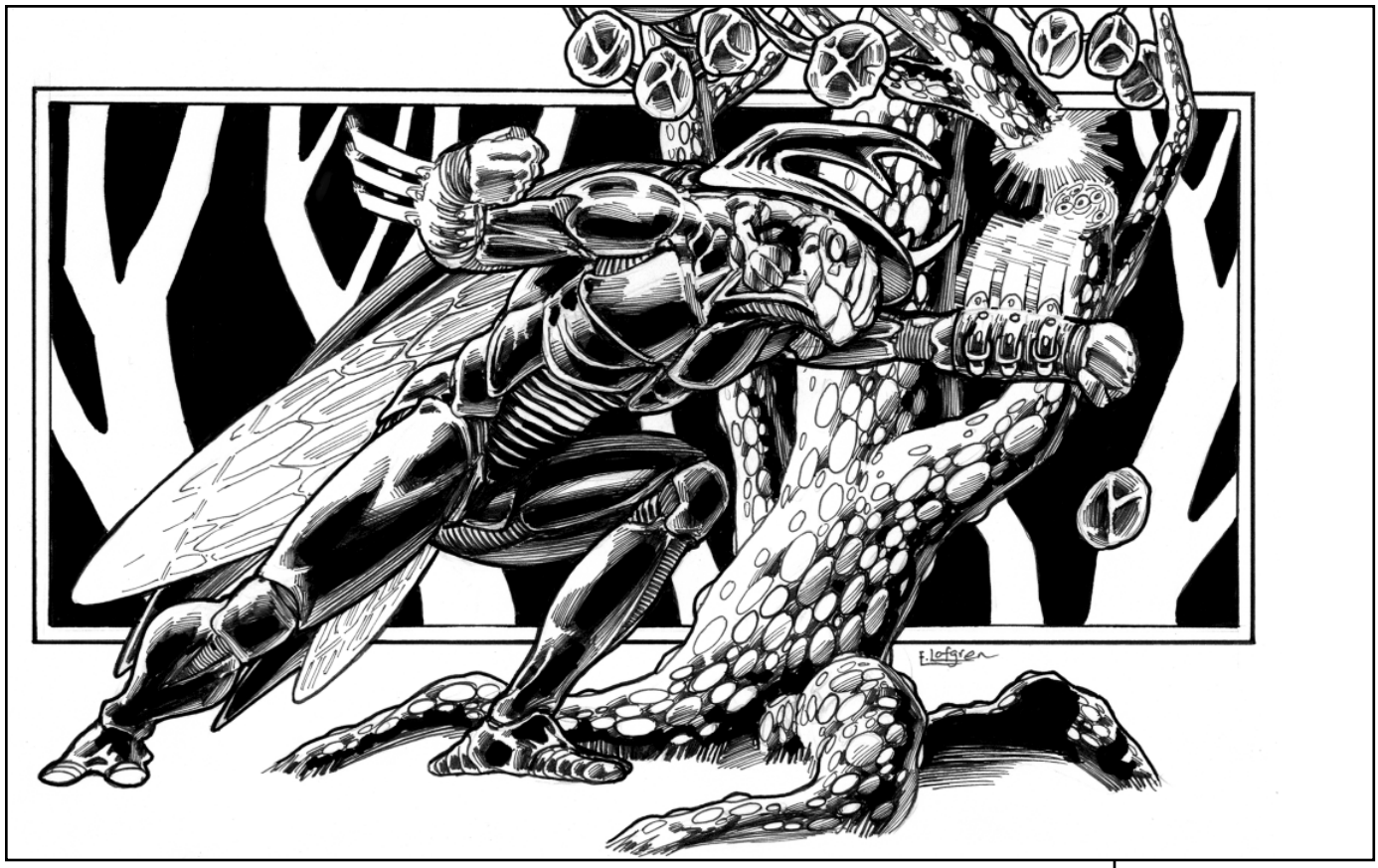
The GM should examine all Limitations used in his campaign. It's up to him to decide if certain Limitations are worth more or less in his campaign, and change their value accordingly. The GM has the final say over whether a Limitation is allowed in his campaign, and how much it's worth.

Some Limitations provide small bonuses or benefits to powers every now and then. For example, *Charges* makes a power cost no END, and some Foci can be used by other characters in addition to the characters who bought them. This doesn't affect the Limitation's value.

You should be certain each Limitation you take for one of your character's powers represents him correctly. Don't take Limitations just to get more Character Points to work with, take them to reflect appropriate restrictions on the use of a power. The GM will take advantage of the Limitations, and sometimes an enormous savings in Character Points isn't worth losing the use of a power when a character needs it the most. Consider each Limitation carefully before you take it, and make sure it fits the conception of your character and his powers.

## The Effect Of Limitations

If a Limitation affects a character, that means the power involved doesn't work at all. For example, if a character has a spell with Gestures, he can't cast it at all if he can't make mystic gestures; a superhero who has +30 STR that Only Works During The Full Moon can only use the extra STR when the full moon is out. However, sometimes the GM allows a character to use a power at reduced efficiency, or subject to other restrictions, instead of not letting the character use it at all.





If a character has a Limitation on an ability that suddenly comes into play while the power is in use, the power stops working at the end of the Segment. For example, if a character has Flight with the Limitation *Does Not Work In Intense Magnetic Fields* and he flies into an intense magnetic field, his Flight stops working at the end of the Segment. Typically the character realizes what's happening and has the chance to get to safety, if appropriate.

## How Limitations Affect A Power's Cost

To determine the cost of a power with a Limitation, first total up the bonuses the power's Limitations are worth. Total the Limitations as positive values, even though they're listed as "negative" numbers. Use the formula below to find the Real Cost of the power.

**Real Cost = Active Cost / (1 + total value of all Limitations)**

The Real Cost is the number of Character Points the character must spend to buy the power. As described on page 244, the Active Cost is the number of Character Points the power has after all Adders and Advantages are applied (the total from which you figure its END cost). The "total value" is the total of the listed values for each of the Limitations the power has.

Example: *Lorraine d'Arbois, a space pilot, buys HKA 1d6 (15 Active Points) with the Limitation that she has an Obvious Inaccessible Focus (Powered Armor). This Limitation is worth -½. Putting these numbers into the formula, the Real Cost is (15 / (1 + ½)) = 10. She pays 10 Character Points for 15 Active Points of HKA.*

Example: *Lazer wants to build an energy pistol that does Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing damage; that's (40 x (1 + ½)) = 60 Active Points of power. The pistol only has 12 Charges, which is worth -¼ Limitation, and it's an Obvious Accessible Focus (-1). Putting these numbers into the formula, the Real Cost is (60 / (1+¼ +1)) = 26.6 which rounds to 27 Character Points.*

There's no restriction on how many, or how much value of, Limitations a character can put on a power, unless the GM chooses to impose one.

If a character buys a Power that he gets some of for free — like Running (gets 6" for free) or Mental Defense (gets EGO/5 for free upon purchase) — and he wants to take a Limitation for that Power, he applies the Limitation only to the points spent on the Power. For example, if he wants his Running to be Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END), the -1 Limitation applies to the 6 points spent, not to the "18 points" that an overall Running 9" would "cost" him.

**Calculating A Limitation's Value**

Throughout this section you'll find Limitations that have many options. For example, you can configure the Limitation *Side Effects* many different ways. Some of them are more restrictive than the normal form of Side Effects, and they increase the Limitation's value. This is indicated in the Side Effects Table in that writeup, in the section labeled "Modifiers," by the phrase "more Limitation." This type of modifier increases the base value of the Limitation by adding to it.

There are also forms of Side Effects (and other Limitations) that are less restrictive than normal. These are indicated under "Modifiers" with the phrase "less Limitation." In essence these are "Advantages" that *decrease* the value of the base Limitation.

In short, when calculating the value of a Limitation with a modifier, *add* the modifiers that are additional Limitations to the base Limitation's value, and *subtract* the ones that reduce the Limitation's restrictiveness.

If a Limitation has an option that multiplies or halves its value (as Side Effects does), the multiplication or division takes place as the very last step, after all additions and subtractions take place. (In the event a power has both a multiplier and a halving, apply the multiplier as the penultimate step, and the halving as the very last step.)

The minimum value for most Limitations is -0, regardless of how much they're reduced with less restrictive options. The text notes exceptions, such as *Charges.*

## Partially-Limited Powers

A character may have a power that's only partly restricted — only part of the power operates under the Limitation. The character decides what Limitation to apply to the power, then decides what parts of the power he'll Limit. The character buys the restricted part of the power with the Limitation and the rest of the power normally.

Example: *Pulsar has an Energy Blast 20d6 with many Limitations. The first 8d6 are bought normally at a cost of 40 points. The next 4d6 are bought at Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½) for a cost of 13 points. The next 4d6 are bought at Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END; -1) for a cost of 10 points. The last 4d6 are bought at Increased Endurance Cost (5x END; -2) for a cost of 7 points. The entire 20d6 cost 40+13+10+7=70 points. To use the entire 20d6 costs 4+4+6+10 = 24 END!*

You can also apply this effect to Advantages, Adders, Power Frameworks, and parts of a power. However, no matter how much an Advantage is Limited, it increases the power's END cost (and penalty to any related Skill Rolls) at all times.

Example: *Lazer has an RKA 3d6 which he has tuned to work well against Force Fields. The attack has the Power Advantage* Armor Piercing *with the Limitation* Only Against Force Fields *(a -1 Limitation). The RKA 3d6 costs 45 points, so the Armor Piercing by itself costs (45 x (1+½) = 67, minus 45 =) 22 points. Because the Armor Piercing has a -1 Limitation, it costs (22/ (1+1) =) 11 points; the entire power costs 45 + 11 = 56 points. The Active Cost of the power is 67, and the Armor Piercing increases the END cost of the power even when the target doesn't have a Force Field.*

## Which Limitation Do I Want?

The accompanying table provides some *guidelines* regarding which Limitations create which effects. These aren't absolute restrictions; with a game as versatile as the *HERO System,* it's impossible to predict the many interesting — and perfectly legal — ways in which players may Limit their powers.

## LIMITATION SUMMARY TABLE

| Limitation Name | Description |
|---|---|
| Activation Roll | Power only works some of the time, based on a roll |
| Always On | Power cannot be turned off |
| Charges | Power can only be used a few times per day |
| Concentration | Character has reduced DCV and PER Rolls when activating or using power |
| Duration Limitations | Power has a worse than normal duration |
| Endurance Limitations | Power costs END, or more END than normal |
| Extra Time | Power takes longer than normal to activate or use |
| Focus | Power works through an object or device |
| Gestures | Character must make special, distinctive gestures to use power |
| Gradual Effect | Power takes effect more slowly than normal |
| Incantations | Character must speak special, distinctive words to use power |
| Independent | Power is separate from character; losing it costs him Character Points permanently |
| Limited Power | Power is restricted in some way defined by character |
| Linked | Power can only be used when another power is used |
| Lockout | Using power prevents use of other powers |
| No Conscious Control ⚠ | Character cannot control use of power |
| Only In Heroic Identity | Power only works for one of the character's identities |
| Physical Manifestation | Power has a physical manifestation other characters can attack |
| Range Limitations | Power has no range, or less range than normal, or functions less effectively at range |
| Reduced Penetration | Power penetrates defenses less well than ordinary attacks |
| Requires A Skill Roll | Character must make a Skill Roll to use power |
| Requires Multiple Users | Two or more characters must use power for it to work |
| Restrainable | Grabs or Entangles prevent use of power |
| Side Effects | If power fails to work, character suffers harm |
| Variable Limitations ⚠ | Character can change Limitations on power as a Full Phase Action |
| Visible | A normally invisible power is perceivable |

For notes about the application and interaction of specific Limitations with specific powers, please refer to the individual Power and Power category descriptions earlier in this chapter. Those descriptions also provide some Limitations applicable specifically to individual Powers or Power categories that aren't listed here.

# POWER LIMITATION DESCRIPTIONS

## ACTIVATION ROLL

Value: See Activation Roll Table

A power with this Limitation only works some of the time — it's unreliable. Examples include Armor that covers only part of the body, or complicated gadgets that sometimes malfunction. The Activation Roll Value Table shows the Limitation value for each level of Activation Roll. A character cannot take multiple Activation Rolls on the same power unless the GM specifically permits him to.

To use a power with an Activation Roll, the character must roll the Activation Roll number or less on 3d6 *each Phase he wants to use or maintain it* (even if the power is Constant). (If the character uses the power out of combat, the GM decides how often the character needs to make the roll.) If the Activation Roll succeeds, the character can use his power freely that Phase and get any benefits from its use. If the Activation Roll fails, the character cannot use the power that Phase (though in some cases, such as a suit of armor that only partly covers the character, the GM may let the character make further Activation Rolls in the same Phase). Making an Activation Roll is an Action that takes no time.

A character always makes Activation Rolls after all other preparations; for example, he must spend the END for the power regardless of whether the Activation Roll succeeds. Similarly, if the power is an Attack Power, attempting to use it is an Attack Action even if the power fails to activate.

Example: *Lazer is trying out the latest superblaster developed by VIPER labs. Since the blaster is new, it doesn't have all the bugs worked out yet — it has an 11- Activation Roll. Whenever he wants to use the blaster, Lazer must roll an 11-; if he rolls 12 or higher the blaster doesn't work that Phase.*

### ACTIVATION ROLL OPTIONS

There are two additional options for Activation: Burnout and Jammed. Characters may not take either option for a power that has only 1 Charge (see *Charges*).

**Burnout**

A power with this option has a chance to burn out every time a character uses it. Unlike a regular Activation Roll, a character rolls Burnout *after* he uses the power. If the roll succeeds, he may use the power again normally. If the roll fails, the power burns out and he cannot use it again for the rest of the adventure (or until the power recovers from Burnout or is repaired, at the GM's discretion). With Burnout, a character can be certain a power will work at least once — but each use might be the last!

The bonus for Burnout equals the Activation Roll moved down one level on the table. Thus, an 8- Burnout is a -1½ Limitation; a 14- Burnout is a -¼ Limitation; and a 15- Burnout is worth no Limitation at all. If a character takes Burnout for a power with Charges, the maximum value for the *Charges* and *Burnout* Limitations, combined, cannot exceed -2.

**Jammed**

A power with this Limitation can jam during use. Each time a character tries to use the power, he must first make his Activation Roll. If he makes it, the power functions normally. If he fails the roll, the power does not activate, and it won't work for the rest of the adventure (or until it has been "unjammed," at the GM's discretion). Thus, Jammed is like Activation Roll, only worse.

The value for Jammed equals the equivalent Activation Roll, with an additional -½ Limitation. For example, a Jammed Roll of 14- would be a -1 Limitation; a Jammed Roll of 8- would be a -2½ Limitation.

## ACTIVATION ROLL TABLE

| Roll | Bonus | Burnout | Jammed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8- | -2 | -1½ | -2½ |
| 9- | -1½ | -1¼ | -2 |
| 10- | -1¼ | -1 | -1¾ |
| 11- | -1 | -¾ | -1½ |
| 12-, 13- | -¾ | -½ | -1¼ |
| 14- | -½ | -¼ | -1 |
| 15- | -¼ | -0 | -¾ |

### POWER EXAMPLES: ACTIVATION ROLL

Anti-Laser Armor: Armor (6 PD/12 ED) (27 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

Experimental Blaster: Energy Blast 10d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (75 Active Points); OAF (-1), Activation Roll 13-, Burnout (-½), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 25 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: ALWAYS ON

Spirit Form: Desolidification, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (80 Active Points); Always On (-½). Total cost: 53 points.

The Invisible Man Syndrome: Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (60 Active Points); Always On (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

The Midas Touch: Major Transform 4d6 (anything into gold) (standard effect: 12 BODY), Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (210 Active Points); Always On (-½). Total cost: 140 points.



## ALWAYS ON

Value: -½

A power that a character can never turn off is worth a -½ Limitation. Before a power can take Always On, it must first have the Advantages *Reduced Endurance (0 END)* and *Persistent* (unless it naturally costs 0 END and/or is Persistent).

A character cannot Push an Always On power (see page 427). Having an Always On power also tends to make it difficult for a character to disguise himself. The GM should define any other problems a character with an Always On power typically has. Powers like Invisibility or Force Field have clear difficulties when Always On. (Ever tried eating through a Force Field?)

Example: *A demon buys 10 Character Points of Darkness. He buys the Power Advantages* Reduced Endurance *(0 END) and* Persistent; *he also takes the* Always On *Limitation. The hindrance is that he's always surrounded by a 1" field of impenetrable Darkness, which may prevent him from going certain places or hiding from his enemies.*

At the GM's discretion, a character who has an Always On power can nevertheless turn the power off temporarily, but at great personal cost. The character must pay five times the power's normal END cost (even if it doesn't normally cost END) for every Phase in which he keeps it turned off. If he's Stunned or loses consciousness in any way, he immediately reverts to his Always On state. The GM may wish to reduce the value of the Limitation to -¼ if a character can do this, or impose other restrictions on the character (such as needing a Focus, or having to Concentrate, to turn the power off ).

The GM should remember that Always On is a *Limitation.* If an inability to turn a power off does not restrict or hinder the character in any way, he receives no bonus. Characters cannot have conditional Always On powers (such as "Always On at night"); they should construct such a power with the *Limited Power* Limitation. Nor can characters buy Always On powers on a Focus, or with any other Power Modifier the GM believes is inconsistent with the concept of the power always being active.

## CHARGES

Value: See Charges Table

A character can only use a power with this Limitation a limited number of times per day. Examples include a gun that only has ten bullets or a magic spell a wizard can only cast once per night. The character decides how many times per day (or per adventure) he can use the power, and finds the resulting Limitation on the Charges Table.

A power that has Charges does not cost END to use. If the character wants a power with Charges to use END, he can apply the *Costs Endurance* (-½) Limitation. A character does not get any additional or separate Limitation value if he takes Charges for a power that ordinarily costs no END (such as Life Support).

Charges define how many times per day the character can use the power. The exact time needed to regain Charges varies depending on the special effects of the power. If a character has Charges which are bullets for a gun, the GM may allow him to go home to get new bullets. If the Charges represent a magic power that only works three times a day, all three Charges may be magically restored at dawn. The GM and the player should decide on a mutually agreeable method for the Charges to return. At the GM's discretion, the value of the Limitation decreases if it's especially easy for the character to regain his Charges, or increases if it's particularly difficult. If it takes longer than a day for the Charges to recover, the Limitation's value increases (see below).

Each Charge normally only lasts for one Phase. Therefore Charges of, say, Force Field or other Constant Powers aren't very useful (but see *Charges Options*, below, regarding Continuing Charges).

Since powers with Charges don't cost END to use, a power with a large number of Charges is better than one bought normally — so at a certain point Charges becomes a Power Advantage. The Charges Table shows the value of different amounts of Charges.

### CHARGES TABLE

| Number Of Uses | Charges Value | Boostable Charges Value | Recoverable Charges Value |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | -2 | N/A | -1¼ |
| 2 | -1½ | -1¼ | -1 |
| 3 | -1¼ | -1 | -¾ |
| 4 | -1 | -¾ | -½ |
| 5-6 | -¾ | -½ | -¼ |
| 7-8 | -½ | -¼ | -0 |
| 9-12 | -¼ | -0 | +¼ |
| 13-16 | -0 | +¼ | +½ |
| 17-32 | +¼ | +½ | +¾ |
| 33-64 | +½ | +¾ | +1 |
| 65-125 | +¾ | +1 | +1¼ |
| 126-250 | +1 | +1¼ | +1½ |
| 251-500 | +1* | +1½ | +1¾ |

...and so forth.

*: The value of the standard *Charges* Advantage is capped at +1 (equivalent to 0 END cost on an Autofire attack). See the text for how Charges Options such as Continuing Charges or Recoverable Charges affect this.

## CHARGES OPTIONS

Characters can use Boostable Charges, Clips, Continuing Charges, Fuel Charges, and Requires Multiple Charges to better customize Charges for the power they have in mind.

**Boostable Charges**

This option represents a power that becomes more powerful if the character spends extra Charges. Every extra Charge spent increases the power by +1 Damage Class (or +5 Active Points for non-Attack Powers). A character can spend no more than four Charges (+4 DC/+20 Active Points) per power per Phase this way. The value of Boostable Charges is 1 level down on the Charges Table. (The cost keeps increasing as it goes down the table; it's not capped at +1.)

The first time a character uses Boostable Charges in a given adventure, the power automatically acquires a 15- Burnout roll (see *Activation Roll,* above). Each time thereafter that a character spends extra Charges to Boost his power, the roll decreases by one (after the second use, it's a 14-; after the third use, a 13-; and so on). If the power already has Burnout, then using Boostable Charges in this manner decreases that roll each time, as described above. If the power has a normal Activation Roll, the first use of Boostable Charges converts it to a Burnout roll, and later uses reduce the roll as described above.

Example: *Lazer buys his Laser Rifle as an RKA 2d6, 32 Boostable Charges (+½) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 22 points). During a tough fight against some armored cops, he decides he needs a little extra firepower, so he increases the gain on his Rifle (which drains its battery faster). By spending an extra four Charges (in addition to the one Charge spent just to use the power), he can do 3d6+1 Killing Damage. However, this causes some strain on his Rifle. For the rest of the adventure, it has a 15- Burnout roll. If he Boosts its power again, the roll becomes a 14-. If the Laser Rifle already had a 14- Activation Roll, the first use of Boostable Charges would convert it to a 14- Burnout roll, and the second would reduce it to a 13- Burnout roll.*

When a character uses Boostable Charges to increase the Damage Classes of a power with an Advantage, he must account for that Advantage when applying the increased Damage Classes (see page 404). He must also account for the value of Boostable Charges, if it is an Advantage instead of a Limitation. For example, consider an Energy Blast, Armor Piercing. For an Energy Blast AP, it takes 7.5 points to add 1d6, so each 1d6 of damage equals 1.5 DCs — thus, each 3 DCs adds +2d6. So by spending +3 Charges, the character can do +2d6 damage. (To speed up game play, the GM can waive this rule and let the DCs from Boostable Charges add directly, without accounting for Advantages.)

## INCREASED RELOADING TIME

| Value | Increased Reloading Time |
|---|---|
| ¼ more Limitation | 2 Full Phases |
| ½ more Limitation | 1 Turn |
| ¾ more Limitation | 1 Minute |
| 1 more Limitation | 5 Minutes |

...and so on.

A character with Fast Draw can reduce the increased reloading time by half with a successful roll.

**Clips**

This represents a power whose Charges are broken down into several smaller "clips" of fewer Charges. Charges are normally purchased in a single "clip" — that is, all the Charges are available at all times. By taking a Limitation Bonus one level down on the Charges Table (*i.e.,* by reducing the value of the Limitation by ¼, for most steps), the character can have 2x the number of clips of those Charges. For standard Charges, this increase in cost is affected by the +1 cap — don't increase the value of the Advantage beyond +1. On the other hand, Boostable Charges, Continuing Charges, and Recoverable Charges *can* increase beyond +1; continue to increase the value of the Advantage by +¼ for each step down the Charges Table (as already shown for Boostable and Recoverable Charges). When a character calculates the value of Charges, the effect of buying Clips should be added in last, after all other modifiers (such as Continuing Charges and Increased Recovery Time) are added in.

If moving one level down the table means Charges goes from being a Limitation to an Advantage — for example, when you move from 13-16 Charges (-0) to 17-31 Charges (+¼) using standard Charges — the character receives 4x the number of clips. Below that, the standard rule (double the number of clips for each ¼ reduction in the Charges value) applies.

It takes a Full Phase for a character to change Clips (unless he succeeds with a Fast Draw roll, see page 59). If a character wants reloading to take longer than that, he can increase the value of the *Charges* Limitation as indicated in the Increased Reloading Time table.

**Continuing Charges**

Charges normally last for, at most, a character's Phase. If a character wants a power with Charges (a smoke grenade, for example) to last longer than this, he should use the Continuing Charges option. Characters can only use this option with Constant or Persistent Powers. The *Uncontrolled* Advantage is not required. The duration of a Continuing Charge depends on the Time Chart.

Continuing Charges are bought by taking a lesser Limitation (or a larger Advantage) on the Charges Table (see the accompanying Continuing Charges Table and Continuing Charges Quick-Reference Table). The value of Continuing Charges is not capped at +1 the way standard Charges are; it keeps increasing by ¼ per step (inherently Persistent Powers, such as Life Support or Knockback Resistance, are an exception; for them, the value caps at -0). The additional Limitation value from

## POWER EXAMPLES: CHARGES

Ion Blaster: Energy Blast 12d6 (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), 12 Boostable Charges (-0). Total cost: 30 points.

Emergency Shelter: LS: Self-Contained Breathing, Diminished Eating (No Need To Eat), all Safe Environments and Immunities, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (1 Month; -0). Total cost: 42 points.

Bow & Arrows: RKA 1d6 (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), 8 Recoverable Charges (-0). Total cost: 7 points.

Smoke Grenades, Mk. II: Darkness to Sight Group 3" radius, 12 Charges lasting 5 Minutes each (cleared away by high winds, rain, or the like; +¾) (52 Active Points); OAF (-1), Ranged Based On STR (-¼). Total cost: 23 points.

Word Of Power: RKA 8d6 (120 Active Points); 1 Charge which Recovers in 1 Month (-3), Incantations (-¼), Costs END (-½), x3 END (-1), Side Effect (character always loses 2 points of CON permanently when he uses the spell; -2). Total cost: 15 points.

## CONTINUING CHARGES TABLE

| Duration | Change In Charge Limitation |
|---|---|
| Full Phase | No change |
| Extra Phase | -1 level on Charges table |
| 1 Turn | -2 levels on Charges table |
| 1 Minute | -3 levels on Charges table |
| 5 Minutes | -4 levels on Charges table |
| 20 Minutes | -5 levels on Charges table |

...and so on.

other modifiers (such as Increased Recovery Time or Never Recovers) is part of the overall Charges calculation, not a separate Limitation; the Continuing Charges cost could partly or fully "cancel out" the benefit of those modifiers.

A character who's affected by an attack with Continuing Charges takes damage when the power is first used, and on each of the attacker's Phases thereafter on the attacker's DEX. If the power covers an Area Of Effect, the effect remains in all Segments (it does not exist only on the attacker's Phases). Any character who enters the area takes damage or suffers the power's effects on the Segment when he enters (no Attack Roll is required) and on each of the attacker's Phases thereafter until he leaves the area.

All powers bought with Continuing Charges must include a reasonably common way to turn the power off. If a power with Continuing Charges is turned off for any reason, the Charge is used up; the character must use another Charge to reactivate the power. To simulate a power with Continuing Charges that a character can turn on and off at will, buy a Fuel Charge (see below).

A Continuing Charge remains in effect and continues to function even if the character using the power is Stunned or Knocked Out. A character could specify "I become Stunned or Knocked Out" as a condition to end the Charge, if appropriate.

If a power with Continuing Charges is bought through a Multipower or VPP, and the character switches the Framework to another slot after using a Continuing Charge, the Continuing Charge does not immediately turn off. It continues to affect the target or area until its duration expires. The GM should examine Continuing Charges in Multipowers carefully to ensure that they don't unbalance the game. For example, a character shouldn't be allowed to buy a Framework with several slots that have lengthy Continuing Charges just so he can activate all the powers at the beginning of the game and have them remain in effect for a long time.

**Fuel Charges**

Characters can also use Charges to represent the fuel that powers a vehicle, the supply of air provided by a gas mask, or the like. Generally, characters should only buy Fuel Charges for Movement Powers and other non-offensive abilities; they're not intended for Attack Powers and the like.

Creating a Fuel Charge is a two-step process. First, buy the power with 1 Continuing Charge, with the Charge lasting for however long the power can continuously operate. For example, a vehicle might buy the Continuing Charge to last 1 Day, since it can operate for an entire day on one tank of fuel.

Second, reduce the value of the Limitation by ¼ (or, if Continuing Charges is an Advantage, increase it by ¼). This represents the fact that this type of power's Continuing Charge can be turned off and on without losing any "operating time." A Continuing Charge, once turned off, cannot be turned on again; it's been used up. However, a Continuing Fuel Charge doesn't work that way — the character can turn it on and off again. Each Phase of use counts as 1 second subtracted from the operating time. For example, suppose a gas mask (LS: Self-Contained Breathing) has 1 Continuing Fuel Charge for 5 Minutes. The base Limitation's value is -2, reduced four steps to -¾ for Continuing Charges, and reduced another ¼ for Fuel Charges, for a final value of -½. The gas mask works for a total of 5 Minutes, but the character can wear it for one minute, then turn it off and save the rest of its "fuel" for later.

Example: *Lazer has a jetpack. He buys Flight 20", 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (enriched jet fuel, easy to obtain, 1 Hour; +0) (40 Active Points); OIF (-½). Total cost: 27 points. Lazer is SPD 5. He flies for one full Turn (5 Phases), then lands. He can turn his Continuing Fuel Charge back on again and fly some more later; when he does, he'll have 59 minutes, 55 seconds' worth of fuel left.*

For powers that cost no END — either inherently, as with Life Support or vehicular Movement Powers, or because they're bought with the Advantage *Reduced Endurance* (0 END) — a Fuel Charge cannot become an Advantage. Its maximum value is a -0 Limitation, unless the GM rules otherwise. (If the power has a modifier to Fuel Charges for difficult-to-obtain fuel, calculate the value in the normal manner. If it's an Advantage, it's still a -0 Limitation, but if it becomes a normal Limitation the power gets that Limitation value.) For other powers (such as a character's jetpack Flight that would cost END if not bought with Charges), Fuel Charges can become an Advantage in the standard manner, and is not capped at +1.

## CONTINUING CHARGES QUICK-REFERENCE TABLE

| Number Of Uses | Full Phase | Extra Phase | 1 Turn | 1 Minute | 5 Minutes | 20 Minutes | 1 Hour |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1* | -2 | -1½ | -1¼ | -1 | -¾ | -½ | -¼ |
| 2 | -1½ | -1¼ | -1 | -¾ | -½ | -¼ | -0 |
| 3 | -1¼ | -1 | -¾ | -½ | -¼ | -0 | +¼ |
| 4 | -1 | -¾ | -½ | -¼ | -0 | +¼ | +½ |
| 5-6 | -¾ | -½ | -¼ | -0 | +¼ | +½ | +¾ |
| 7-8 | -½ | -¼ | -0 | +¼ | +½ | +¾ | +1 |
| 9-12 | -¼ | -0 | +¼ | +½ | +¾ | +1 | +1¼ |
| 13-16 | -0 | +¼ | +½ | +¾ | +1 | +1¼ | +1½ |
| 17-32 | +¼ | +½ | +¾ | +1 | +1¼ | +1½ | +1¾ |
| 33-64 | +½ | +¾ | +1 | +1¼ | +1½ | +1¾ | +2 |
| 65-125 | +¾ | +1 | +1¼ | +1½ | +1¾ | +2 | +2¼ |
| 126-250 | +1 | +1¼ | +1½ | +1¾ | +2 | +2¼ | +2½ |
| 251-500 | +1¼ | +1½ | +1¾ | +2 | +2¼ | +2½ | +2¾ |

...and so on.

*: For a Fuel Charge of a given duration, reduce the listed Limitation value for 1 Continuing Charge by ¼ (or, if Continuing Charges is an Advantage, increase it by ¼). See the text for additional information.

In some cases, you can divide a Fuel Charge among several characters. For example, if a starship's escape pod has enough food (Life Support) for one person for a week, that "fuel" could be divided up to feed seven people for one day each.

Characters can refuel a power with Fuel Charges as circumstances allow. If the fuel needed is Difficult to obtain, increase the Limitation's value by ¼; if it's Very Difficult to obtain, by ½; if it's Extremely Difficult to obtain, by 1 (see *Focus — Expendability,* below, for guidelines for these terms).

Typically, Dispelling a power with Fuel Charges uses up all the fuel, but the GM can alter this to take into account the special effects involved.

Characters who want to have multiple powers drawing from the same reserve of fuel should buy an Endurance Reserve rather than Fuel Charges.

**Requires Multiple Charges**

If a character has a Multipower with an overall number of Charges for the entire Framework (or a similar grouping of powers that all draw from the same "pool" of Charges), he may want some slots to use up more than one Charge per use. If so, that qualifies for a Limitation on the slot; the accompanying table lists the value of the Limitation.

**RECOVERING CHARGES**

The following options affect how a character recovers Charges.

The additional Limitation value from these options is part of the overall Charges calculation, not a separate Limitation. Other modifiers could partly or fully "cancel out" the "Limitation value" they provide.

**Increased Recovery Time**

Characters don't recover some forms of Charges after a day (or an adventure) — it takes a week, or longer, before the character can use the power again. For every step down the Time Chart below 1 Day which it takes before the character can use the power again, increase the value of Charges by -½. (The maximum value that Charges with Increased Recovery Time can have is -1¾, since Charges which Never Recover (see below) are worth -2.) The character may not "apportion" the recovery of Charges over the defined time period; he has to wait for the entire time period to pass before recovering any Charges. The GM can allow apportionment if he wishes, but if he does so he should reduce the value of the Limitation/increase the value of the Advantage by ¼ (or more) to reflect the beneficial change.

**Restricted Recovery**

Some forms of Charges only replenish themselves if the character does something expensive, dangerous, or otherwise difficult. Examples include performing a human sacrifice, waiting for a particular event to occur (such as the full moon), or having to pay large sums of money. If so, increase the value of Charges by -¼ (or more, in the GM's option). Characters generally should not take Restricted Recovery for powers with Expendable Foci.

**Never Recover**

Charges which Never Recover are worth an additional -2 Limitation. This is a good way to simulate magic scrolls whose writing disappears after the spell on it is cast one time, a gun for which there is a limited supply of irreproducible ammunition, and so forth. Characters cannot take this additional Limitation together with Increased Recovery Time.

There's no restriction on how many Charges a power with Charges which Never Recover can have, but the GM should approve the number to ensure it doesn't unbalance the game. Charges which Never Recover are primarily intended for intriguing power constructs with a small number of Charges, like a one-time-use magic scroll.

**Recoverable Charges**

This option represents Charges that aren't expended when the character uses the power — instead, he can recover them and use them again. Some examples include a knife the character throws, arrows he shoots, or a dust he can later sweep up and recover. The value for Recoverable Charges is 2 levels down on the table; Recoverable Charges is not capped at +1.

Ordinarily, characters can only recover their Recoverable Charges once combat has ended, although this depends on the special effect of the power. In the GM's discretion, a Charge might be broken or lost, in which case it must be recreated like normal Charges. Generally a character should not be allowed to use Recoverable Charges to simulate Charges that return to him on a quicker than once-per-day basis, but the GM can allow this if he thinks it's appropriate.

Generally speaking, a power cannot have both Recoverable Charges and Increased Recovery Time or Never Recovers for its Charges. Recoverable and Never Recovers are by definition exclusive. In most cases, the special effects of Increased Recovery Time and Recoverable are also so incompatible as to be exclusive. The GM can let a character combine the two if he feels it won't cause game balance problems.

## REQUIRES MULTIPLE CHARGES

| Limitation Value | Number Of Charges Used |
|---|---|
| -¼ | 2 per use |
| -½ | 3-7 per use |
| -¾ | 8-12 per use |
| -1 | 13-17 per use |

... and so on

This chart assumes the character has a fairly high number of Charges — 65 or more, in one or more clips — for his Multipower. For each step up the Charges Table, add an additional -¼ Limitation value (though a slot can never require more Charges than the entire Multipower has at full strength). Thus, for a Multipower that has 16 Charges for the entire Multipower, a slot that costs 4 Charges per use gets a -1¼ Limitation.

## POWER EXAMPLES: CONCENTRATION

**Focused Mental Control:** Mind Control 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); Concentration (0 DCV, totally unaware of nearby events, must Concentration throughout maintenance of Mind Control effect; -1½). Total cost: 24 points.

**Minor Undead Creation Spell:** Summon up to 4 200-point undead, Loyal (+½), Delayed Effect (+¼) (87 Active Points); OAF (Necromancer's Staff; -1), Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Extra Time (one Hour or more; -3), Gestures (throughout; -½), Incantations (throughout; -½), Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1½), Requires One Body Per Undead Created (-1), Requires A Necromancy Roll (-½). Total Cost: 9 points.

**Wall Of Force:** Force Wall (10 PD/10 ED), +5" length/height, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) (75 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Concentration (0 DCV, must Concentrate throughout; -1). Total cost: 25 points.

### CONCENTRATION

Value: -¼ for half DCV; -½ for 0 DCV; an additional -¼ if character is totally unaware of nearby events; values are doubled if power is Constant and character must Concentrate throughout

This Limitation requires the character to concentrate partially or totally while activating or using a power. As a result, he's less able to defend himself or take notice of events occurring around him.

A character using Concentration is at reduced DCV (½ or 0, depending upon the Limitation's value). Furthermore, he is, at best, only dimly aware of nearby events (although if he uses the power to attack someone, he's fully aware of his target and what that target is doing). He may make a PER Roll with a Targeting Sense at -3 to notice any such events. He may not move more than 1" per Phase, nor may he Dodge or take any other Actions. If he's completely oblivious to the rest of the world (no PER Rolls allowed whatsoever), Concentration is worth an additional -¼ value. At this level of Concentration, a character cannot move, Dodge, or do anything similar. With either level of Concentration, a character cannot activate or use another power with Concentration at the same time, or as long as he has to Concentrate.

A character who has activated or is using a power with Concentration may stop Concentrating, but the power immediately turns off, and he must re-do any preparations if he wants to use the power again. If anything else breaks his Concentration, the same result occurs. Concentration is interrupted if he takes any STUN or BODY damage from any Attack Power (or, at the GM's discretion, suffers other harmful effects from any power, such as Knockback). At the GM's discretion, a character may make an EGO Roll (at -1 per 2 points of STUN damage taken or other effect suffered) to maintain his Concentration when injured.

When using a power with Concentration, a character must Concentrate not only during the Phase in which he activates the power, but until his next Phase. This applies to Instant Powers (even though the Power is used in the Phase when the character activates it) and to Constant Powers that only require Concentration to activate. If he has to Concentrate throughout the duration of a Constant Power, double the Limitation value (at the GM's discretion, this also applies to powers a character buys with the Limitation *Extra Time* of at least 1 Turn). Constant Concentration means the character must continuously Concentrate; he cannot activate any other powers that require Concentration while he's keeping the current power going.

When a character must Concentrate throughout the duration of a Constant Power, he must either set a predetermined time for the power to last (if he's unable to perceive other events while Concentrating or is unsure of making a PER Roll) or count on making a PER Roll to know when he needs to turn it off. However, he can always turn the power off based on information gained by using the power (for example, if a character takes Concentration for his Telepathy, he can turn the power off based on any information gained by using Telepathy).

## CONCENTRATION TABLE

| Value | Concentration Effect |
|---|---|
| -¼ | ½ DCV |
| -½ | 0 DCV |
| **Value** | **Modifiers** |
| -¼ | Character is totally unaware of nearby events |
| x2 | Must Concentrate throughout use of Constant Power |



## DURATION LIMITATIONS

Value: -½ for Instant; -¼ for Nonpersistent

These Limitations alter how long a power remains in effect.

**Instant**
Value: -½

This -½ Limitation converts a Constant Power into an Instant Power. It only remains in effect for, at most, the Phase in which it's turned on — just long enough for the character to make an Attack Roll.

**Nonpersistent**
Value: -¼

A character can convert a Persistent Power into a Constant Power with this -¼ Limitation. It automatically turns off if the character is Knocked Out or Stunned. A power with this Limitation does not automatically cost END. However, if a character takes the *Costs Endurance* Limitation (see below) for a Persistent Power, that Power automatically becomes Constant instead, and he may not take this Limitation for it.

A Defense Power with this Limitation does not protect the character at all times; instead, it must be "turned on" (a Zero Phase Action). Thus, the character will usually have no defense against certain surprise attacks.

## ENDURANCE LIMITATIONS

Value: See text and table

These Limitations make it necessary for the character to spend more END to use a power, or to spend END for a power that normally doesn't cost END.

**Costs Endurance**
Value: -¼ if power only costs END to activate; -½ if power costs END every Phase the character uses it

This Limitation, which characters can only buy for Powers that inherently cost no END (such as Armor or FTL Travel), makes such a Power cost END. If the power only costs END to activate, the Limitation is worth -¼; if it costs END every Phase the character uses it, the value is -½. If a power that normally costs END only to activate (but not to maintain) also costs END to maintain, it may take a -¼ Limitation. A power may not have both this Limitation and the *Reduced Endurance* Advantage.

A power with Costs Endurance turns off when a character is Stunned or Knocked Out, and is perceivable by three Sense Groups throughout the duration of its use. If a character takes Costs Endurance for a Persistent Power, that Power becomes Constant instead.

**Increased Endurance Cost**
Value: See Increased Endurance Table

A power with this Limitation is so strenuous to use that it costs a character more than the normal 1 END per 10 Active Points. The Increased Endurance Table shows the multiple of the normal END cost and the corresponding value of the Limitation.

Characters cannot take this Limitation for Powers that inherently cost no END (like Life Support). A power can't have both Increased Endurance Cost and the *Reduced Endurance* Advantage. A character may apply the *Increased Endurance Cost* Limitation to a power that Costs Endurance Only To Activate (whether due to an Advantage or a Limitation), but he only receives half value for the Limitation. (The GM may also allow this for other powers, if desired, but may wish to reduce the value of the Limitation further.)

A character can use Increased Endurance Cost to simulate powers he can easily "Push" above their normal values (see *Pushing,* page 427). To create a power with "added Push," buy the base amount of power normally, then spend additional Character Points on the power, with the *x10 END Cost* Limitation and another Limitation, *Only Works When Character Pushes* (-½).

Example: *Lifter is normally quite strong, but when he pushes himself, his strength is astronomical. Lifter buys 40 STR for 30 Character Points. He then buys +50 STR, with the Power Limitations Increased Endurance Cost (x10 END) and Only Works When Character Pushes His STR (-½). This costs (50 / (1 + 4¼)) = 9 Character Points. His full STR when Pushing is 90 +10 = 100, but such a herculean effort costs him 4+ 50 + 10 = 64 END.*

Sometimes a character wants to have an Increased Endurance Cost for only some uses of a power. For example, a necromancer in a Fantasy game might have a Dispel Magic spell, but it's intended mainly for use on necromancy spells — it's more strenuous to use (*i.e.,* costs more END) on any other type of magic. In this situation, reduce the value of the Limitation. If the Increased Endurance Cost only applies in an Uncommon circumstance or situation, reduce the value of the Limitation by 1; if in a Common circumstance or situation, by ½; and if in a Very Common situation, by ¼ (the minimum value in this case is -0).

## INCREASED ENDURANCE TABLE

| Value | Endurance Multiple |
|---|---|
| -½ | x2 |
| -1 | x3 |
| -1½ | x4 |
| -2 | x5 |
| -2½ | x6 |
| -3 | x7 |
| -3½ | x8, x9 |
| -4 | x10 |

## POWER EXAMPLES: DURATION LIMITATIONS

Iron Will II: Mental Defense (10 points) (10 Active Points); Nonpersistent (-¼). Total cost: 8 points.

Detect Treasure Spell: Detect Treasure (INT Roll) (no Sense Group), Range, Discriminatory (20 Active Points); OAF (wizard's staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Nonpersistent (-¼), Instant (-½), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 5 points

## POWER EXAMPLES: ENDURANCE LIMITATIONS

Pseudopods: Extra Limbs (as many as the character feels like extruding) (5 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½), Limited Manipulation (-¼). Total cost: 3 points.

Basic Bracing: Knockback Resistance -10" (20 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½), Requires A STR Roll (-½). Total cost: 10 points.

Enhanced Push: +20 STR (20 Active Points); Increased Endurance Cost (x10 END; -4), Only Works When Character Pushes His STR (-½). Total cost: 4 points.

Thaumaturgical Dispel: Dispel 12d6, any magic power one at a time (+¼) (45 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END to Dispel magical powers from schools other than Thaumaturgy; -½), Requires A Thaumaturgy Roll (-½). Total cost: 13 points.

### OTHER FORMS OF EXTRA TIME

At the GM's option, characters can also buy these forms of Extra Time:

If a power that normally requires a Zero Phase Action to activate requires a Half Phase Action to activate, it can take a -¼ *Extra Time* Limitation (provided the GM thinks this is sufficiently Limiting; it might only be worth -0).

A Constant Power that requires a Half Phase Action to maintain each Phase may take a -½ *Extra Time* Limitation.

A power that requires a Full Phase plus one extra Segment to activate may take a -½ *Extra Time* Limitation.

## EXTRA TIME

Value: See Extra Time Table

A power with this Limitation takes longer than usual to activate and/or use. Normally activating a power requires a Zero Phase Action — and for attacks, a minimum of a Half Phase Action to use the power (see pages 103, 357). A character must take longer than that to activate and/or use a power with this Limitation.

While a character activates a power with Extra Time, he may take other actions (if not, the Limitation is worth an additional -¼). However, the power only activates once the proper amount of time passes. Attacks are an exception: if the character takes this Limitation for a power that requires an Attack Roll, he cannot make another attack until the power has been used (unless the GM gives permission otherwise). There are some special rules for powers requiring a Full Phase to use; see below.

At the GM's discretion, characters can also purchase Extra Time for powers that take a longer than normal time to affect the target. For example, many poisons have an "onset time" — a delay between when they're administered and when they begin to affect the victim. Extra Time can represent this delay, rather than a delay in activating or using the power. When a character purchases Extra Time for a power that requires an Attack Roll with that sort of special effect, the GM may allow the character to make other attacks while waiting for the power to take effect.

A character can stop activating his power at any time simply by stopping his preparations, but if he wants to use the power later, he has to start from the beginning. For example, if a character began an attack that would take a month to turn on, he could stop the power at any point and use a more immediate attack. However, by doing so he'd lose any preparations; if he wanted to turn on the month-delayed power later, he'd have to start from scratch.

All powers with Extra Time are subject to being interrupted. At the GM's discretion, if the character is interrupted while activating the power — for example, by taking STUN or BODY damage from, or otherwise being affected by, an attack — then it may stop activating. A character must pay the full END cost for a power with this Limitation when he begins activating it, so he loses the END even if he stops activating it or is interrupted.

If a power is bought in increments (like Energy Blast or Growth), Extra Time applies to the use of the whole power (or of whatever fraction of it the character chooses to use at any given time). It does not apply per increment.

If a power has a Limitation that has a varying cost based on whether it's used just to activate the power or throughout the power to maintain it (like *Gestures* or *Incantations*), at the GM's option a character can take the "throughout" value for the Limitation if (a) it takes Extra Time to activate the power, and (b) he has to obey the Limitation throughout the activation time period, but not thereafter. This is most appropriate if the power requires at least 1 Turn of Extra Time to activate.

## EXTRA TIME TABLE

| Value | Time Period/Duration |
|---|---|
| -¼ | Delayed Phase |
| -½ | Extra Segment |
| -½ | Full Phase |
| -¾ | Extra Phase |
| -1¼ | 1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) |
| -1½ | 1 Minute |
| -2 | 5 Minutes |
| -2½ | 20 Minutes |
| -3 | 1 Hour |
| -3½ | 6 Hours |
| -4 | 1 Day |
| -4½ | 1 Week |
| -5 | 1 Month |
| -5½ | 1 Season (3 months) |
| -6 | 1 Year |
| -6½ | 5 Years |
| -7 | 25 Years |
| -7½ | 1 Century |

...and so on

| Value | Modifiers |
|---|---|
| ¼ more Limitation | Character cannot activate other powers while activating non-attack power with Extra Time |
| x½ | Constant or Persistent Power only requires Extra Time to activate, not to use thereafter (minimum of -¼; see text) |

If a power requires an intermediate time period to turn on, use the next lowest period to determine the value of the Limitation. Thus, if a character has a power which requires 30 Minutes to take effect, use the -2½ Limitation for 20 Minutes.

### EXTRA TIME PERIODS

The time periods listed in the Extra Time Table represent how long it takes to activate and/or use a power. They replace, not add to, the time it normally takes to turn on a power (typically a Zero Phase Action) and/or use it (for attacks, at least a Half Phase Action). Unless noted otherwise below, the character may perform a Half Phase Action before starting to activate the power.

Example: *Andarra has a gadget that requires 1 Turn to activate. On her Phase in Segment 3, she makes a Half Move (to get behind some Concealment) and then begins activating the gadget. One Turn later, in Segment 3 of the next Turn, the gadget activates on her DEX. In the meantime she can take other Actions (unless her gadget requires an Attack Roll, in which case she must wait patiently for an entire Turn before she can do anything else).*

The Limitation values in the Extra Time Table apply to powers that require the Extra Time each time the character activates them. If the power has a lengthy activation time, but the character can use it every Phase from then on without taking Extra Time, halve the Limitation value (minimum value of -¼). This applies to Constant or Persistent Powers (and some Instant Powers) that only require Extra Time to activate, but not to use or maintain in any Phase after that. This often works well for magical items that take a long time to create or

"energize," but once created, can be used normally in any Phase (without taking Extra Time). Another example would be a cannon that takes a long time to set up so it can fire its first shot, but that can fire normally thereafter.

A character can Abort to a power that takes a Full Phase, Delayed Phase, or Extra Segment as normal. He can Abort to a power that takes an Extra Phase, but if so he loses his next two Phases. He cannot Abort to powers that take more Extra Time. The GM can change this in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, game balance, or the like.

**Delayed Phase**

Delayed Phase (-¼) means the power does not activate on the character's normal DEX in a Phase. Instead, his DEX for purposes of determining when the power activates is halved. He may still perform a Half Phase Action (such as making a Half Move) on his normal DEX.

Example: *A warrior-mage with DEX 20, SPD 4 has a Spell Of Shrieking Lightning with Extra Time (Delayed Phase). She wants to use it to blast an evil priest. On her Phase in Segment 3, she can make a Half Move on DEX 20. However, she cannot activate her spell until DEX 10 — she'll have to wait until everyone who can act on DEXs 11-19 acts.*

**Extra Segment**

Extra Segment (-½) means the power requires an extra Segment to activate. The character starts activating the power on one of his Phases (he may take a Half Phase Action first, if he so desires). The power activates at the very end of the next Segment (after all other characters have acted; if more than one character has such a power, they go in order of their DEXs at the end of the Segment). If the target moves before the character can activate his attack, the attack misses — the character cannot "track" a moving target after he starts activating the power. For example, if a character with DEX 20 and SPD 4 had a Spell Of Shrieking Lightning with this Limitation, he could make a Half Move in Segment 3 (one of his Phases), then cast the spell, and the spell would activate at the very end of Segment 4 — but if his target moves in Segment 3 after he starts the spell or in Segment 4, the attack automatically misses. The character may Abort to a defensive Action in the next Segment before he uses the power; if so, the power does not work and he loses the END spent on it.

**Full Phase**

Full Phase (-½) means the power requires a character's Full Phase to activate and use. The character can perform Zero Phase Actions before he begins activating the power, but may not perform Half Phase Actions. However, the power still activates on his DEX in the Phase; he isn't required to wait until the end of the Phase to turn it on. If the power already takes a Full Phase to use (for example, Extra-Dimensional Movement), this Limitation works just like Extra Phase (see below), and Extra Phase may not be taken as a Limitation for it.

Example: *Defender (DEX 23) has an Energy Blast with the Limitation* Extra Time *(Full Phase). If he wants to use the Energy Blast to attack, he must use his Full Phase to do so. He can take no other Actions. The power activates, and thus is used, on DEX 23 in the Phase.*

**Extra Phase**

Extra Phase (-¾) means the power requires a Full Phase plus an extra Full Phase to activate and use. The power activates on the character's DEX in the second Phase (or on his delayed DEX, if Delayed Phase is also taken as a Limitation). During these two Phases, and the Segments between them, the character can perform no other Actions; if he does, the power stops activating. The character pays the END cost for the power in the first Phase, when he begins activating it. The rule regarding Aborting and Extra Segment, above, applies to Extra Phase as well. Characters cannot take Extra Phase with any Extra Time period other than Delayed Phase.




## POWER EXAMPLES: EXTRA TIME

Emplaced Laser Cannon: RKA 6d6 (90 Active Points); OAF Immobile (-2), Extra Time (Extra Phase; -¾), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 22 points.

Curse Of Ugliness: Drain Comeliness 3d6, Delayed Return Rate (gain back 5 Character Points' worth of Comeliness per year; +2½) (105 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Gestures (throughout; -½), Incantations (throughout; -½), Requires A Witchcraft Roll (-½), Side Effect (caster suffers Drain Comeliness 2½d6; -¼). Total cost: 15 points. (Note: This example uses the optional rule applying the double value of Gestures and Incantations to powers requiring Extra Time to activate and/or use.)

Slow-Acting Poison: RKA 4d6, NND (defense is appropriate LS: Immunity; +1), Does BODY (+1) (180 Active Points); OAF Fragile (easily spilled or diluted poison; -1¼), No Range (-½), Extra Time (onset time of 20 Minutes; -2½), Gradual Effect (1 Hour, take 1d6 damage every 15 minutes; -1¼), No KB (-¼), 1 Charge (-2). Total cost: 21 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: FOCUS

Circle Of Protection: Force Wall (16 PD/16 ED), Backlash (+½), Hardened (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (180 Active Points); OAF Immobile Fragile (circle can easily be broken or disturbed by anyone outside it; -2¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Independent (-2), Restricted Shape (circle only; -¼). Total cost: 30 points.

Man-Portable Pulson Cannon: Energy Blast 20d6 (100 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 33 points.

Crystal Ball, Farseeing: Clairsentience (Sight Group), MegaScale (1" = 1,000 km, sufficient to see any point in the Valdorian Empire; +1) (40 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Concentration (0 DCV, completely unaware of surroundings; -¾), Extra Time (1 Minute to activate; -¾), Independent (-2), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 6 points.



## FOCUS

Value: See Focus Table

A power with this Limitation works through some sort of object or device. This is a very common Limitation; for example, guns, swords, magic rings, helmets, shields, and powered armor can all be Foci (plural of Focus).

A character must decide six things about his Focus: its Obviousness; its Accessibility; its Mobility; its Expendability; its Durability; and its Applicability. The first five choices affect the Limitation value for the Focus, as listed on the Focus Table. The last choice doesn't affect the cost, but makes a big difference in how the Focus works in the campaign.

### OBVIOUSNESS

First, the player decides if his character's Focus is Obvious or Inobvious.

If a Focus is *Obvious,* it's clear to anyone looking at the character that the power comes from the Focus — no PER Roll is necessary. This is important, because opponents know where the power comes from and can attempt to disable the Focus or take it away. Some examples include most weapons (whose lethal capabilities are easily perceived), a magic ring that glows whenever it's used, or a shield.

If a Focus is *Inobvious,* it's not immediately clear where the power comes from. Examples include disguised or concealed weapons (such as a cane-gun or a blaster hidden inside an ordinary-looking glove) or a magic ring that gives no indications of its powers (it looks completely normal, doesn't glow when its powers are used, and so forth). A character who buys an Inobvious Focus must specify a certain power, Skill, or set of circumstances that allow an opponent to identify the Inobvious Focus (for example, a device built into clothing would be detectable by a search or Infrared Perception; anyone with magic abilities could identify a magic necklace).

If a Focus is difficult or impossible to detect (for example, an Invisible Desolidified magic ring), it's not a Focus, and the character gets no Focus bonus for it (though the character may be able to simulate it with the Limitation *Only In Heroic Identity*). The GM determines whether something is or is not a Focus.

### ACCESSIBILITY

Second, the player decides whether the Focus is Accessible or Inaccessible.

**Accessible Foci**

An *Accessible* Focus is one that's easily taken away from the character, or of whose benefit the character can easily be deprived. An Accessible Focus can be hit by a Grab or other nonranged attack (see *Combat Maneuvers,* pages 383-98), or by any Ranged attack (such as an Energy Blast or thrown rock). There is a -2 OCV modifier on attacks against Foci, and the attacker must state before he rolls his Attack Roll that he's trying to hit the Focus. If he makes his Attack Roll, he has Grabbed the Focus (if he made a Grab) or hit it (with a nonranged or Ranged attack). The Focus is knocked free if the attacker rolls more BODY for his attack than the defender rolls BODY for his Strength (see *Disarm,* page 386). Alternately, it may be damaged or broken (see below). Some common examples of Accessible Foci include most weapons, shields, magic wands, and the like. If a character holding an Accessible Focus is Stunned, he retains his grip on the Focus. If he's Knocked Out, he usually lets go of the Focus.

An ordinarily Inaccessible Focus can be defined as Accessible if it's easily damaged or destroyed, even if it cannot easily be taken away from the character. A magical robe might be hard to take off of a character, but if it can easily be torn, burned, or otherwise ruined (so that it no longer provides any powers) it is, in effect, Accessible.

**Inaccessible Foci**

An *Inaccessible* Focus can't be hit with a Grab or otherwise attacked for purposes of taking it away from a character while that character is in combat (an Inaccessible Focus could still be targeted at -2 OCV to hit it for the purposes of damaging it; see below). However, someone who spends 1 Turn out of combat can take an Inaccessible Focus away from a character. An Inaccessible Focus cannot be removed from a character who is struggling or resisting. Some common examples of Inaccessible Foci include powered armor, magic rings, a belt, and similar items.

Even a seemingly Accessible Focus can be defined as being Inaccessible if the character prefers. For example, guns are usually Accessible, but a character could make his gun Inaccessible by attaching it to his clothing with a lanyard. Similarly, a character could define his shield as being Inaccessible on the grounds he's so skilled at using it that it's virtually impossible to take it away from him unless he's unconscious.

If a character can use any Accessible item of a particular type — "objects of opportunity" — as his Focus, then the Focus is *Inaccessible,* since it's so difficult to take the Focus away from him. For example, a character who can use any small, sharp object as a lethal throwing weapon would buy an RKA with the Limitation *Obvious Inaccessible Focus (any appropriate object of opportunity; -½),* since opponents have to take the time to strip an area bare before they can prevent him from finding objects to use this power with.

**Things That Are Not Foci**

If removing a "Focus" requires surgery (or some other lengthy and difficult procedure or Skill Rolls) or causes damage to the character, then the item in question isn't really a Focus, so the character receives no Limitation. For example, a metal skeleton is not a Focus, though it may be a special effect that allows the character to buy extra BODY and an HKA (claws). Normally, claws (natural or artificial) aren't a Focus unless they can be removed. Characters may be able to take the *Restrainable* Limitation for some such abilities (see page 306).

Similarly, an Accessible Focus should be Accessible to everyone, or virtually everyone. A Focus that only a few people can take away from a character isn't really a Focus (or is, at best, an Inaccessible one).

In short, not all capes are Accessible, nor all guns Obvious — it depends on how the player wants to define the Focus. Of course, the GM has to believe the explanation for why the gun's not Obvious, or else the character will have to make his Focus Obvious.

**MOBILITY**

Third, the player decides how mobile the Focus is. Characters can move most Foci easily — they don't hinder the character in any way. However, a Focus can be Bulky or Immobile.

A *Bulky* Focus is large and unwieldy. A character can carry it, but not conveniently (even with two hands). A character is at ½ DCV when carrying a Bulky Focus. Some examples of Bulky Foci include large, oddly-shaped objects (like a statue of an important deity) and objects that are simply large and heavy (such as crew-serviced machine guns or many televisions). Bulky Foci receive an additional -½ Limitation. (Most Foci attached to Vehicles are automatically considered Bulky.)

If a Focus is actually *Immobile* — it's part of a base or castle, is a huge obelisk, or the like — then it receives an additional -1 Limitation. Thus, an Immobile Obvious Accessible Focus is worth a -2 Limitation. A Focus cannot be both Bulky and Immobile. Most Foci attached to Bases are automatically considered Immobile.

Another aspect to mobility is whether a Focus requires *Arrangement.* If the parts of a Focus must be precisely arranged (for example, the candles and other components used in a magical ritual), then it's a difficult and time-consuming chore to set them up or move them. This is considered an additional -¼ Limitation.

A Focus's mobility may affect its Accessibility. It's much harder to take a Bulky or Immobile Focus away from a character, so most such Foci are Inaccessible. However, if such a Focus is easily damaged or destroyed, it probably should be considered Accessible (see above).

**EXPENDABILITY**

Fourth, the player must decide whether the Focus is expendable. Most Foci aren't expendable — the character can use them over and over. Even if the Focus has the *Charges* Limitation, the character can regain his Charges by some simple means.

However, some Foci are expendable — they must be replaced after each use. This is a common Limitation for spells in Fantasy games, where it simulates components (bat wings, pixie dust, lizard tongues, and so on) that are used up each time the character casts a spell.

The value for being expendable depends on how difficult it is to "recover" the Focus. This includes the availability of the Focus (rarer items are worth more), the cost of the Focus (more expensive items are worth more), and the danger or difficulty involved in obtaining the Focus (the more dangerous or difficult, the more it is worth). If the Focus is Difficult to acquire (it's not too hard to obtain; requires a little money, gold, or other resources to recover; or minor danger or hardship is involved), this is an additional -¼ Limitation. If the Focus is Very Difficult to recover (it's difficult or dangerous to obtain; it requires a lot of money or items of similar value; it's rare or hard to find), this is an additional -½ Limitation. If the Focus is Extremely Difficult to recover (it's unique or extraordinarily rare; it costs a fortune for each one; it's extremely dangerous to try to obtain), the Limitation is worth an additional -1.

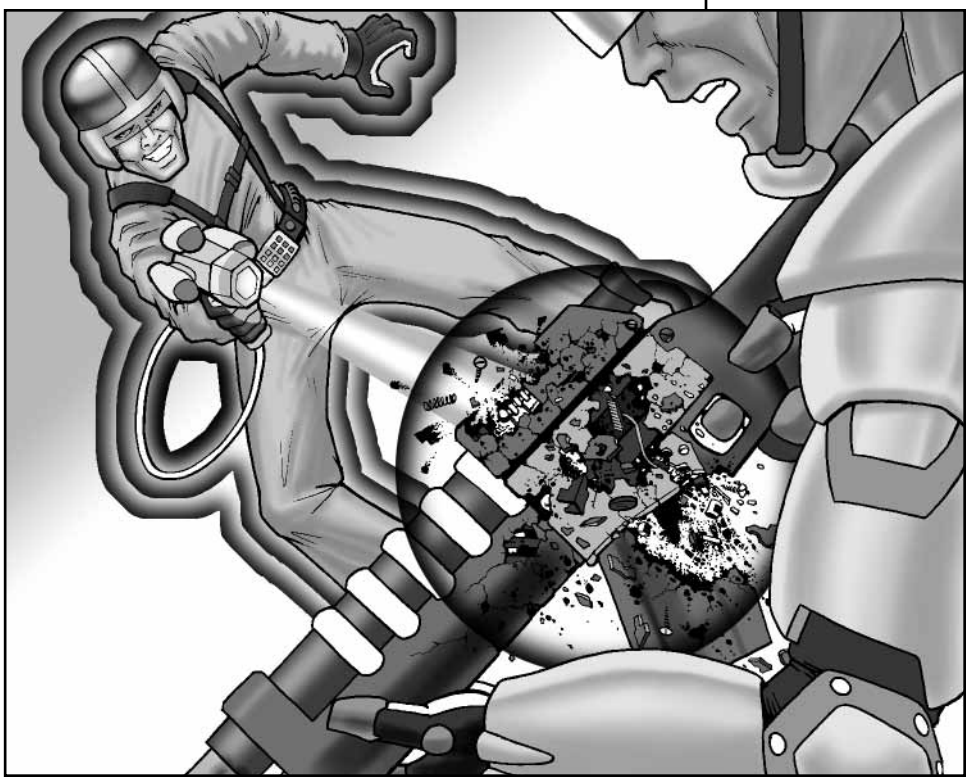
For example, plutonium is relatively rare, extremely expensive, and often dangerous to obtain, so it would probably be Very Difficult to replace. It would be even harder to find in a medieval setting, so its value as a Limitation in a Fantasy game would be greater (Extremely Difficult).

**DURABILITY**

Fifth, the player decides whether the Focus is Breakable or Unbreakable. Either choice has advantages and disadvantages, so there's no cost difference except in extreme circumstances (see below).

**Breakable Foci**

A *Breakable Focus* has a DEF equal to the (Active Points/5) of the largest power bought through the Focus; the minimum DEF is 3 (unless the GM rules otherwise). For instance, a gun with an Energy Blast 10d6 has a DEF of 10; if the gun also had 50 points in Flight and 20 points in Life Support, its DEF would still be 10.



A Breakable Focus that provides PD or ED to the character in any way (such as Armor, Force Field, or other Defense powers) can use whichever defense is higher (its own or the one it provides to the character) to protect itself from damage; the defenses never add. A Breakable Focus does not normally possess exotic defenses such as Power Defense or Lack Of Weakness, though it does if it provides such a defense or the defense is bought specifically for it (usually with a -2 Limitation; characters can also buy ordinary defenses, like PD or Armor, for Foci using this Limitation).

Example: *Lorraine d'Arbois has powered armor, which she's defined as an Obvious Inaccessible Focus. Since the powered armor is technological, it seems reasonable that it's Breakable. The largest power Lorraine has is an Energy Blast 12d6 (60 Active Points); therefore, the powered armor has DEF 12. Lorraine also bought 20 PD and 20 ED Armor through the Focus, so these values are used against attacks, since 20 is greater than 12. An attack would have to do 21 or more BODY to harm the Focus.*

Any Focus that provides defenses to a character is automatically hit by any attack that hits the character based on a successful Attack Roll (or that hits the hex in which the character is standing, in the case of powers with the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages). (Defenses on an Activation Roll or Required Skill Roll that don't "activate" wouldn't be hit by an attack they don't provide protection against.) Of course, the Focus gets its DEF or the defense it provides to the character (whichever is higher) against the attack. (To speed game play, and avoid breaking Foci on a regular basis, GMs may choose to ignore this rule. In such a case, Foci are only hit and damaged by attacks that specifically target them.)

If a character has multiple Foci, all Foci are "outside" of any defenses they don't provide. For example, if Lorraine has OAF goggles that give her Telescopic Sight, the defenses provided by her powered armor wouldn't protect the goggles from damage. (Of course she could have made the goggles OIF, and thus a part of the suit and protected by its defenses, but that would have cost more points.)

When an attack hits a Breakable Focus, each attack that penetrates the DEF of the Focus and does BODY damage destroys one of the powers bought through the Focus. The amount of BODY done is unimportant — one power is destroyed whether the attack did 1 BODY or 15. The GM should determine which power is destroyed; usually it's the largest one in the Focus or one chosen randomly. The special effects of the attack or the Focus may help the GM decide which powers are affected. For this purpose, a Multipower counts as one power (with Active Points equal to the value of its reserve, +1 point for each slot); an Elemental Control counts as one power (with Active Points equal to the value of the Active Points in the largest power in the EC, +1 point for each additional power); and a Variable Power Pool counts as one power (with Active Points equal to the value of the points in its Pool).

A Focus is destroyed when it loses all of its powers, or when any single attack against it does two times (2x) its DEF in BODY, at the GM's option. Defenses of any kind aren't broken until the entire Focus is destroyed.

A character can repair, rebuild, or replace a Breakable Focus with some effort. This usually involves acquiring or building a replacement. Of course, this may not always be possible in the course of some adventures — if a character is in a distant land or another dimension, it may be a while before he can replace or repair a damaged Focus. The GM should decide how the Focus gets replaced based on the special effects involved and the exact circumstances. Replacing a Focus can even form the basis of another adventure. However, regardless of the method used, replacing or repairing a Focus does not cost the character any more Character Points.

Some Breakable Foci are especially vulnerable to attacks. A *Fragile* Focus has only 1 DEF, and this cannot be bought higher. Fragile represents a Focus that's exceptionally delicate — anyone can destroy it, ruin it, or permanently sap it of its powers, given time. Fragile is worth an additional -¼ Limitation. Examples of Fragile include a magical tiara made of delicate crystal, a potion or other liquid (which is easily spoiled, diluted, or spilled), or a laser gun with an easily-broken focusing lens.

On the other hand, some Breakable Foci are much less vulnerable to attacks — they're *Durable*. A Durable Breakable Focus has double its normal DEF. Durable, like Unbreakable, is free; it doesn't cost a character extra points. However, GMs should check all Foci defined as Durable to make sure they deserve that distinction; most Breakable Foci should have their normal DEF.

**Unbreakable Foci**

An *Unbreakable* Focus is just that: unbreakable by any force. Of course, this doesn't mean, for instance, that a character wearing armor defined as an Unbreakable Focus can't be hurt. The armor still only protects the character up to the value of whatever Defense Powers it provides, but the armor itself cannot be harmed by attacks. An Unbreakable Focus is considered to have Power Defense solely for the purposes of protecting it from being Drained or Transformed, and is Difficult to Dispel; see *Dispel, Drain,* and *Transform*.

A character must define one way in which other characters can destroy or unmake an Unbreakable Focus. This is usually connected with the Focus's origin in some way. For instance, many magical Foci are considered Unbreakable, but the person or being who made the Focus could probably destroy it. The GM should be careful with an Unbreakable Focus; if he destroys it, the character should have some way (a quest, perhaps?) to remake it. Of course, Unbreakable Foci can always be stolen, even if they can't be destroyed.

A character using an Unbreakable Focus as a HTH or thrown weapon can do his full STR damage with it, unless the GM rules otherwise. See page 447 for more information.

## FOCUS TABLE

| Value | Type of Focus |
|---|---|
| -¼ | Inobvious, Inaccessible (IIF) |
| -½ | Inobvious, Accessible (IAF) |
| -½ | Obvious, Inaccessible (OIF) |
| -1 | Obvious, Accessible (OAF) |

**MODIFIERS**

| Value | Mobility |
|---|---|
| -¼ | Arrangement |
| -½ | Bulky (½ DCV) |
| -1 | Immobile |
| **Value** | **Breakability** |
| -¼ | Fragile |
| +0 | Durable |
| **Value** | **Expendability** |
| -¼ | Difficult to obtain new Focus |
| -½ | Very Difficult to obtain new Focus |
| -1 | Extremely Difficult to obtain new Focus |

### APPLICABILITY

The last thing a player has to decide about his character's Focus is its Applicability — in other words, can only the character use it, or can anyone use it? Either way, the cost is identical, since there are advantages and disadvantages for both.

A *Personal* Focus is one which only the character can use — if someone else Grabs it, it's useless to that person (though the GM can make exceptions to this rule). Some examples of this include magic items "keyed" to the character or technological items that enhance the character's unique physiology (and thus wouldn't affect anyone else). The advantage of a Personal Focus is that a villain can't take it and use it against the character; the disadvantage is that it can't be loaned to a friend.

If the character makes his Focus *Universal,* then other characters can use it without special requirements. (It does not need the Limitation *Independent;* see page 297.) Most realistic Foci like guns, other weapons, and common technological devices are Universal Foci. The advantage and disadvantage to a Universal Focus is that other characters can use it.

### MULTIPLE FOCI

Sometimes a character wants to have a single power that requires two or more Foci. There are several ways to simulate this.

If any one of the multiple Foci is enough to allow the character to use the power, then having multiple Foci is just a matter of Accessibility — having more Foci just makes it harder for an enemy to deprive a character of the power, so the Focus should be Inaccessible.

If the character has to have *all* of the Foci or his power won't work, it's still just a matter of Accessibility — with so many ways for him to be deprived of the power, the Focus is probably Accessible (unless all the multiple Foci are Inaccessible). If all Foci involved are already Accessible, the GM may, in his discretion, allow the power to take an additional -¼ Limitation, but this should only be allowed if the character definitely suffers some extra restriction or drawback beyond the standard restriction of having an Accessible Focus.

It gets trickier if the power works at reduced effectiveness if some (but not all) of the Foci are taken away from the character. To represent this, the character must take the Focus at ¼ less of a Limitation. Each Multiple Focus contains a proportionate fraction of the Active Points in the power. For example, if a character has an Energy Blast 12d6 with Multiple Foci (two magic rings, both OIF, but worth only -¼ because they're Multiple Foci), then each ring has 6d6 (30 Active Points) worth of the power, and he will only have an Energy Blast 6d6 if one is taken. If he has 12 rings, each contains 1d6 (5 Active Points) worth of the power, and if five are taken away he'll only have an Energy Blast 7d6. In situations where dividing the Active Points between the Multiple Foci does not work well — for example, a character who wants to be able to use Missile Reflection when he has his enchanted sword and shield, but just Missile Deflection when he only has his shield — the GM and player can apportion the points or powers in a reasonable manner.

All Multiple Foci require the GM's permission.

### OTHER NOTES

Not all devices or objects are Foci. Sometimes an object is just a special effect for some other Limitation. For example, a character could have a magic sword that transforms him from a normal person into a superhero whenever he wants. Moreover, it doesn't matter whether he has the sword with him, because the sword teleports instantly to his hand whenever he calls for it. This is just a special effect, not a Focus, because the sword can't be easily taken away or broken. This sort of "Focus" is more likely to be the special effect of the Limitation *Only In Heroic Identity* (see page 302).

A player should think carefully before taking the *Focus* Limitation for one of his character's powers. When a character's power works through a Focus, sometimes he's not going to be able to use the power — that's why he gets a Limitation for it, after all. If a character bought any Characteristics through the Focus, the player should also write down what the character looks like without his Focus. A true hero (*i.e.,* most PCs) should be able to do something useful or heroic even without his Focus.

The GM should keep an eye on a character's choice of Focus and how it's used, and should veto anything he doesn't like. All PCs should be able to do something when they lose their Foci; otherwise the player will likely be very bored whenever his character's Focus is taken away.

## POWER EXAMPLES: GESTURES

Harp Of The Seven Slumbers: Energy Blast 10d6, NND (defense is LS: Diminished Sleep or being deaf; +1), Area Of Effect Selective (22" Radius; +1½), Personal Immunity (+¼) (187 Active Points); OAF (-1), Gestures (user must "play" the harp with both hands; -½), Independent (-2), No Range (-½), 3 Charges (-1¼). Total cost: 30 points.

Plague Of Hornets Spell: RKA ½d6, Continuous (+1), Penetrating x2 (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (35 Active Points); OAF Expendable (small piece of amber, Difficult to replace; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Side Effects (the hornets attack the caster for one Segment instead; -¼). Total cost: 10 points.

The Scintillant Shackles Of Saravane: Entangle 5d6, 5 DEF (50 Active Points); OAF (mystic amulet; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼). Total cost: 20 points.

## GESTURES

Value: -¼; an additional -¼ if both hands are required to perform Gestures; x2 value if power is Constant and requires Gestures throughout

A character can use a power with this Limitation only if he makes gestures that are obviously out of the ordinary. He must be able to move freely — if he's encumbered or in a confined space, the power should function poorly, if at all. If he's restrained or Grabbed, he cannot activate and/or use the power.

Gestures must be clearly visible at a distance and cannot be useful for any purpose other than activating that specific power (Gestures cannot include attacking with a weapon, for example). If the character takes damage from or is adversely affected by any power that requires an Attack Roll or ECV Attack Roll while he's Gesturing, the power doesn't activate or immediately turns off.

If the power only requires Gestures to activate, the Limitation has a value of -¼. This includes all Instant Powers (like attacks); it can also be used for Constant Powers that don't require Gestures once they've been turned on. The value is doubled if the power is a Constant Power that requires Gestures throughout its duration (the GM may also apply this doubling if the power has the Limitation *Extra Time* for at least 1 Turn). Constant Gestures means the character must continuously gesture; he cannot activate any other powers that require Gestures while he's keeping the current power going.

Gestures require a minimum of one hand to perform. If a character must use both hands to perform Gestures, the Limitation is worth an additional -¼ (this applies before the doubling for "Gestures required throughout").

Example: *Kasdrevan has two spells: a Puissant Blast (Energy Blast) and a Charm Of Mystic Protection (Force Field). Both of them have Gestures for their entire duration. The Energy Blast is an Instant Power, and thus gets a -¼ Limitation. The Force Field is a Constant Power, so it gets double value (-½) because Kasdrevan must keep Gesturing if he wants the Force Field to keep functioning. That means he cannot use the Energy Blast while using the Force Field (since this would require different Gestures).*

Gestures is primarily intended for use in Heroic campaigns.

## GRADUAL EFFECT

Value: See Gradual Effect Table

A power with Gradual Effect works slowly, taking some time to achieve its full effect. It's most often used to build poisons, drugs, and similar attacks.

When building a power with Gradual Effect, the character decides how long it takes for the power to cause its full damage or effect. The longer the time, the greater the Limitation (see accompanying table).

When a character uses a power with a Gradual Effect, the GM must apportion the damage proportionately over the course of the time period. For example, if the character has an RKA 5d6 that takes 5 Minutes to do full damage, he rolls 1d6 damage per minute. The first increment of damage typically applies in the Phase in which the character uses the power, but the GM may adjust the timing as he sees fit. If the power costs END, the character pays the END in the Phase when he activates and first uses the power; he does not have to pay END throughout to "maintain" the power.

The victim may apply any appropriate defense against the attack, but only gets the value of his defense once — it applies until such time as the total damage from the attack exceeds the value of the defense. Thereafter he may apply no defense against the damage.

Example: *An evil wizard uses a spell to splatter Hemdring with a blob of acid. The acid is an RKA 3d6, Gradual Effect for 3 Minutes (1d6 per minute). Hemdring is wearing leather armor (DEF 3). On the Segment in which the acid hits him, the evil wizard rolls 2 for damage; Hemdring's armor protects him against this. The next minute, the damage is 4; Hemdring's armor absorbs one more point of damage, and Hemdring takes the remaining 3 points. In the third minute, the acid does 3 BODY; Hemdring takes all of this damage without any defense, since his defense was already exceeded.*

## GRADUAL EFFECT TABLE

| Value | Time Period/Duration |
|---|---|
| -¼ | 1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) |
| -½ | 1 Minute |
| -¾ | 5 Minutes |
| -1 | 20 Minutes |
| -1¼ | 1 Hour |
| -1½ | 6 Hours |
| -1¾ | 1 Day |
| -2 | 1 Week |
| -2¼ | 1 Month |

...and so forth

| Value | Modifier |
|---|---|
| ¼ more Limitation | Character cannot use Gradual Effect power on a victim until after the first use of the power on that victim takes full effect |

If a power or situation involves an intermediate time period, use the next lowest period to determine the value of the Limitation. For example, if a character has a power that takes 30 Minutes to take effect, use the -1 Limitation for 20 Minutes.

In most cases, the victim of a Gradual Effect attack cannot Recover any of the damage sustained until the Gradual Effect has entirely run its course (see page 113 regarding Adjustment Powers). He can still Recover STUN or BODY lost to other means, and could be Healed of the early stages of the damage before the Gradual Effect ends. He can recover from being Stunned if the power Stuns him (though taking damage from the Gradual Effect power in the Segment he tries to recover would prevent this, of course). The GM may change this if it seems contrary to common sense, dramatic sense, or game balance for a particular effect.

At the GM's option, a character can also use Gradual Effect with a Constant attack to lengthen the time period over which the character takes damage. For example, a Constant attack with Gradual Effect (1 Minute; -½) would only cause damage to the victim (and only cost the attacker END) once per minute instead of once per Phase. Gradual Effect used this way has a maximum value of -¾, regardless of the length of the damage period.

### INCANTATIONS

Value: -¼; x2 value if power is Constant and requires Incantations throughout

A character can use a power with Incantations only if he speaks loud phrases that are audible at a distance and are obviously out of the ordinary (they cannot, for example, double as normal conversation, a shouted warning, or the like).

To use Incantations, a character must be able to speak freely and clearly — if he's gagged or has his mouth full, he can't activate and/or use the power. It's also impossible to use the power while in a silence field (see *Darkness*). If he takes damage or is adversely affected by any power that requires an Attack Roll or ECV Attack Roll while he's Incanting, the power doesn't turn on or immediately turns off.

If the character only requires Incantations to activate the power, the Limitation has a value of -¼. This includes all Instant Powers (like attacks); characters can also use it for Constant Powers that don't require Incantations once they've been activated. The value is doubled if the power is a Constant Power that requires Incantations throughout its duration (the GM may also apply this doubling if the power has the Limitation *Extra Time* for at least 1 Turn). Constant Incantations means the character must continuously incant; he cannot activate any other powers that require Incantations while he's keeping the current power going.

Incantations is primarily intended for use in Heroic campaigns.

### INDEPENDENT

Value: -2

An Independent power is unconnected to the character in any way. This has several effects: an Independent power works if the character is unconscious, dead, or across the world; any other character can use an Independent power; and a character can lose the Character Points he spent on an Independent power forever.

Independent is mainly used to create special items — such as enchanted items in Fantasy campaigns. For example, consider a wizard's magic wand that fires an Energy Blast. In basic terms you can build this wand two ways. First, you can define it as a Focus. The wand is just a stick to anyone else, because it's the wizard who knows how to cast the Energy Blast spell; he just needs to have the wand to use the power. If someone takes away or breaks the wand, the wizard can't use the power again until he finds it or makes a new one. As explained under *Focus,* making a new wand doesn't cost him any more Character Points.

Second, he can build the wand as a power with both the *Focus* and the *Independent* Limitations. If the wand is Independent, it means the ability to throw Energy Blasts is part of the wand, not the wizard. If the wizard loses the wand (or it's taken from him), anyone who picks up the wand can use it to throw Energy Blasts. The wizard can't use the power again unless he regains the wand or makes a new one. And making a new wand that's Independent costs him the same amount of Character Points he paid for it the first time!

It's this last fact that explains why Independent has such a large value (-2): the character can permanently lose the Character Points spent on the item. If the item is broken, stolen, lost, Dispelled, or otherwise rendered inoperative, the Character Points spent on it are lost forever.

An Independent item can be used by *anyone* — a character who obtains it doesn't have to pay any Character Points for it or do anything special to use it (outside of what its Limitations require). Requiring the maker (the wizard, in this case) to pay his own Character Points for each and every one is the only way to ensure that wizards don't form assembly lines and flood the world with magic wands.

A power with Independent is normally controlled by its wielder. For example, a character could build an Independent ring with appropriate Life Support and could breathe underwater while wearing it. The character could give the ring to someone else, and then that person could breathe water. This is different from *Usable On Others* (see pages 273-77), which signifies that the person wearing the ring could touch someone and allow them to breathe underwater without giving them the ring.

Independent powers are normally items (*i.e.,* they're built with the *Focus* Limitation; the Focus must be Universal). However, an Independent power doesn't have to be tied to an item. A character could also place an Independent power on a

### POWER EXAMPLES: GRADUAL EFFECT

Sureshtar's Acidic Sphere: RKA 3d6 (45 Active Points); OAF Expendable (tiny ball made of marsh mud and scorpion venom, Difficult to replace; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Gradual Effect (3 Minutes, 1d6/minute; -½), Incantations (-¼), No KB (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 11 points.

Sleep Poison Darts: Energy Blast 6d6, NND (defense is appropriate LS: Immunity; +1) (60 Active Points); OAF Fragile (poisoned dart, poison is easily wiped off or spoiled; -1¼), Gradual Effect (6 Minutes, 1d6/minute; -¾), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 15 points.

Intelligence-Sapping Drug: Drain INT 4d6 (40 Active Points); OAF Fragile (easily spilled or diluted drug; -1¼), Gradual Effect (4 Minutes, 1d6/minute; -½), 1 Charge (-2). Total cost: 8 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: INCANTATIONS

Song Of Destruction: RKA 3d6, One Hex Accurate (+½) (67 Active Points); Incantations (-¼). Total cost: 54 points.

Word Of Opening: Lockpicking 20- (25 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Incantations (-¼). Total cost: 11 points.

Glandrusar's Invocation Of Enfeeblement: Drain STR 4d6, Ranged (+½) (60 Active Points); OAF Expendable (piece of moldy burlap; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: INDEPENDENT

**Belgar's Mantle Of Concealment:** Invisibility to Sight, Hearing, and Smell/Taste Groups, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); OIF (-½), Independent (-2). Total cost: 17 points.

**Professor Horgenheissen's Miraculous Steam Gyropack:** Flight 10" (20 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1½), Independent (-2), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 4 points.

**Wand Of Fireballs:** Energy Blast 12d6, Explosion (+½) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), Independent (-2), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 18 points.

person or a place — this is a good way to simulate a curse, for example. Using an Independent power on a location or person would attach the power permanently to that spot or person. The power can be removed if the location itself is somehow destroyed, or with an appropriate Adjustment Power or Transform.

Characters can also use Independent to simulate the inherent natural or magical properties of a substance. For example, in a Fantasy campaign a character could find a material that has magical power (defined as a pool of Character Points) locked inside it — a magically-charged stone from the sky and the body parts of some mythical beast are two possibilities. He could only use the Character Points in this material to build an Independent item — the points could not be added to his abilities.



**LIMITED POWER**

Value: Varies; see text and tables

Players can use this catch-all Limitation to construct their own Limitations if they can't find one that does what they want elsewhere in this book. The Limited Power Examples Table provides some example Power Limitations and their appropriate values. If none of the examples are what you're looking for, you can construct your own, using the examples as guidelines. The GM must approve all such Limitations, of course.

Limited Powers are organized into two groups — Limited Powers and Conditional Powers — though in many cases the distinction is vague or irrelevant. A *Limited Power* lacks some of the normal effects or effectiveness of the standard power: an Energy Blast that can't be Bounced, a Transform that doesn't work against dwarves, or an Ego Attack that only affects women. In essence, the Limitation defines situations or conditions that cause the power to become ineffective or not work properly. *Conditional Powers* don't work at all in a given situation, or only work in a particular situation. This would include powers that, for example, don't work at night or only work during storms. In essence, the Limitation restricts the circumstances under which a character can use the power at all.

The value of this Limitation depends on how restrictive it is. For a Limited Power, the GM should decide how much effectiveness or usefulness the Limitation takes away from the power. The Limited Power Guidelines Table provides suggested Limitation values based upon how much overall effectiveness the power loses (not in terms of damage it does or the like, but how often it becomes ineffective).

For Conditional Powers, the GM should determine how often the character becomes unable to use the power. The value ranges from -0 (the GM thinks the restriction will rarely, if ever, limit the character) to a maximum bonus of -2 (the character will almost never be able to use the power). The Conditional Powers Guidelines Table offers suggested Limitation values based upon how often the character will be restricted.

## LIMITED POWER GUIDELINES TABLE

| Value | Effect On Power |
|---|---|
| -0 | Power loses less than a fourth of its overall effectiveness |
| -¼ | Power loses about a fourth of its overall effectiveness |
| -½ | Power loses about a third of its overall effectiveness |
| -1 | Power loses about half its overall effectiveness |
| -1½ | Power loses about two-thirds of its overall effectiveness |
| -2 | Power loses almost all of its overall effectiveness |

When assigning a value to this Limitation, the GM should try to relate the Limitation to similar Limitations to get an idea of how much it's worth, while keeping in mind the nature of the campaign. How frequently a Limitation affects a character often depends on the campaign. For example, suppose a character wants to build an Energy Blast that only works in an intense magnetic field. In a Science Fiction campaign, intense magnetic fields exist just about everywhere (meaning the Limitation is only worth about -¼). On the other hand, a WWII "Golden Age" superhero would almost never encounter an intense magnetic field (so the Limitation's more like a -2).

To repeat: *a Limitation that doesn't limit a power provides no bonus!* A character receives no bonus for Life Support that *Only Works When Using Desolidification* if his Desolidification has the *Always On* Limitation. Similarly, if a character took the Limitation *Only Works In Intense Magnetic Fields* on his Energy Blast, and another PC just happens to generate intense magnetic fields as a special effect, he gets no bonus (or a very small one, if they don't work together all the time).

The GM should also watch out for Power Limitations that are too sweeping. For instance, a character probably shouldn't be allowed to buy all of his powers with the Limitation *Only Works In Darkness.* Such a character would be worthless during the daytime and terrifically powerful at night; this is no fun in a roleplaying campaign, and it's unfair to the other players. Logically, the player is probably going to ask the GM "Will this adventure take place at night?" before every game — and if the answer is no, he won't play, or will play some other character.

There's no overall limit to, or ceiling on, the amount or value of *Limited Power* Limitations a character can have on a power, unless the GM chooses to impose one for some reason. A -2 ceiling might be appropriate for some campaigns or genres.

## LIMITED POWER EXAMPLES TABLE

| Value | Power Limitation |
|---|---|
| -¼ to -2 | Limited Power: power loses some of its effectiveness (bonus is based on how much is lost) |
| -1 | Power Only Works On Women |
| -¾ | Power Does No STUN (only works for attacks which normally do STUN) |
| -¼ or -½ | Power Does Not Work On Dwarves (exact value depends upon how common dwarves are in the campaign) |
| -¼ | Power Cannot Be Bounced |
| -¼ | Power Cannot Be Pushed |
| -¼ to -2 | Conditional Power: power only works in a given situation (bonus is based on how often the situation occurs) |
| -¼ | Power Only Works In Daylight |
| -¼ | Power Only Works While Character Is Touching The Ground |
| -½ | Power Only Works In Darkness |
| -1 | Power Only Works In Twilight |
| -1½ | Power Only Works In Water |
| -1½ | Power Only Works During Natural Rainstorms |
| -2 | Power Only Works In Tornadoes |
| -2 | Power Only Works In Intense Magnetic Fields |
| -2 | Power Only Works Under A Full Moon |
| -¼ to -2 | Conditional Power: power does not work in a given situation (bonus is based on how often the situation occurs) |
| -½ | Power Does Not Work In Darkness |
| -¼ | Power Does Not Work In Water |
| -¼ | Power Does Not Work In Intense Magnetic Fields |

## CONDITIONAL POWERS GUIDELINES TABLE

| Value | Conditional Situation/Circumstance Is |
|---|---|
| -0 | Very Uncommon (character is rarely, if ever, limited) |
| -¼ | Uncommon (character is limited about a fourth of the time) |
| -½ | Common (character is limited about a third of the time) |
| -1 | Very Common (character is limited about half the time) |
| -1½ | Extremely Common (character is limited over half the time) |
| -2 | Ubiquitous (character almost never gets to use power) |

### LINKED

Value: See Linked Table

A character can only use a power with this Limitation with another power. If he isn't using the other power (the "greater power"), he can't use the power with the *Linked* Limitation (the "lesser power") either.

Linked only affects the lesser power. A character can use the greater power without using the lesser power if he wants; Linked doesn't restrict the greater power in any way. However, he can only use the lesser power when he uses the greater power.

#### BUYING LINKED

When Linking two powers, a character should only take Linked for the power that costs fewer Active Points. If both the greater power and lesser power have the same Active Point cost, take Linked for the one with the lowest Real Point cost before Linked is applied. If their Real Point costs are also the same, apply Linked to only one of them, chosen by the player (hereafter considered the "lesser power").

At the GM's discretion, a character may Link a power with a higher Active Point cost to one with a lower Active Point cost for a smaller Limitation. An example of this is a knife coated with poison. The poison is much more costly, both in Active Point and Real Point terms, than the knife. However, while the character cannot use the poison without the knife, he can easily use the knife when it's not coated with the poison. Therefore the poison should take the *Linked* Limitation, even though it costs more points. In this case, the value of the Limitation is ¼ less.

If a character wants to Link three or more powers, every power but the power that costs the most Active Points may take Linked (if two or more powers have the same Active Point cost, use the guidelines above). All powers that take Linked are considered lesser powers. A character cannot Link one lesser power to two or more greater powers

## POWER EXAMPLES: LINKED

Mace Of Blinding: HKA 1½d6 (up to 3d6+1 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (37 Active Points); OAF (-1), Independent (-2), STR Minimum 10 (-½) (total cost: 8 points) **plus** Sight Group Flash 3d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Personal Immunity (+¼) (26 Active Points); OAF (-1), Independent (-2), Linked (-½) (total cost: 6 points). Total cost: 14 points.

Electric Field: FF (20 PD/ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points) **plus** HKA ½d6, Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (30 Active Points); Linked (-½), No STR Bonus (-½) (total cost: 15 points). Total cost: 75 points.

Poisoned Knife: HKA ½d6 (up to 1d6+1 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), STR Minimum 4 (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼) (total cost: 6 points) **plus** RKA 3d6, NND (defense is appropriate LS: Immunity; +1), Does BODY (+1) (135 Active Points); OAF Fragile (easily wiped off or spoiled poison; -1¼), No Range (-½), Gradual Effect (3 Minutes, 1d6/Minute; -½), Linked (-¼), No KB (-¼), 4 Charges (-1) (total cost: 28 points). Total cost: 34 points.

so that he can only use the lesser power when all greater powers are in use.

A character may Link two or more lesser powers to the same greater power and decide from Phase to Phase whether to use either, both, or none of the lesser powers. With the GM's permission, a character can Link a lesser power to only *part* of a greater power, such as one part of a partially-Limited greater power or an Adder the character doesn't always have to use.

At the GM's option, Linked may be worth ¼ less if the greater power is Constant or is otherwise likely to be in use most or all of the time. For example, Defense Powers are sometimes Linked to Absorption, but since Absorption is rarely "turned off," Linked is worth ¼ less. On the other hand, Flight, though Constant, is often not in use, so powers Linked to it receive the standard Limitation value.

A Persistent Power Linked to an Instant or Constant Power becomes an Instant or Constant Power itself.

A character cannot Link two instances or uses of a single Power to form one larger power (such as Telekinesis (30 STR) plus Telekinesis (30 STR), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END), Linked) without the GM's permission. It's perfectly legal to buy partially-Limited powers that way, or even a two-part power that adds together without being partially Limited, but that's just a definitional choice.

A character can't Link an ability to his STR. He must Link to a specific use of STR, such as Linked to Punch, Linked to Grab, or the like. To create an ability that injures or affects any target a character touches, use Damage Shield.

**Advantages And Limitations**

A character often takes the Limitations on the greater power for the lesser power as well. For example, if a greater power has 4 Charges, the lesser power probably also takes that Limitation; if the greater power requires Extra Time, the lesser power must take that Limitation, too. If the greater power is bought as a Focus, the lesser power should be as well. However, this isn't necessarily required (unless the GM says so) — for example, a greater power might cost END normally, while a lesser power has 12 Charges or Increased Endurance Cost.

If both the greater and lesser powers have the same Limitation, the character isn't subject to it twice. For example, if both the greater and lesser power require Extra Time, he only has to devote the Extra Time once to activate both powers when they're used together, not twice. Similarly, he'd only have to make one Activation Roll or Required Skill Roll if both had that Limitation, though in the latter case the Active Point penalty must account for the combined Active Points of *both* powers.

The Advantages on the greater and lesser power often match as well, but they don't have to, with one exception: Line Of Sight. If one of the powers has the *Line Of Sight* Advantage, the other must as well. The GM may create other exceptions as he sees fit.

If a character takes the same *Side Effects* Limitation for both parts of a Linked power, determine the value based on the total Active Points of the power (*i.e.,* of both powers added together), and he only suffers the Side Effect once if the roll fails. If he takes different Side Effects for each part of the power, calculate their values separately (based on the Active Points of each part), and he takes both Side Effects if the roll fails (assuming he uses both parts).

**Range**

A Linked power that works at Range has the Range of the greater power. The lesser power doesn't have to pay for an Advantage to match the greater power's Range, it gets that Range for free. However, the character must buy the *Line Of Sight* Advantage for lesser powers Linked to greater powers that have an LOS range if the lesser power doesn't already have LOS range itself.

### USING LINKED POWERS

When a character uses two (or more) Linked powers, he activates and uses them simultaneously. If the lesser and greater powers are both Attack Powers, he must use them against the same target. He only makes one Attack Roll to hit with them, and it must be the same type of Attack Roll — a power that uses a DEX-based Attack Roll cannot be Linked with one that uses an ECV Attack Roll, except with GM's permission. However, the target gets to apply his defenses separately against the powers. Additionally, if one of the attacks reduces or affects his defenses or CV (for example, a Drain PD or a Flash, or a Drain EGO Linked to a continuing-effect Mental Power), the other attack applies first.

Example: *Lazer wants to create a laser attack that both cuts and blinds an opponent. He buys an RKA 3d6 for 45 Character Points and a Sight Group Flash 4d6 for 20 Character Points. Since the Flash is the smaller power, Lazer applies the Linked Limitation to it. The Flash 4d6 now costs (20/ (1+½)) = 13 Character Points; he can only use it when he uses the RKA, and only in proportion to the RKA. Both powers are activated and fired at a target at the same time, though Lazer may fire only the RKA if he so chooses. The RKA applies to the target before the Flash, since the Flash, if successful, reduces the target's DCV.*

If a character Links an Instant Power to a Constant Power, he only activates and uses the Instant Power in the Phase in which he activates the Constant Power. To use the Instant Power thereafter, he must turn off the Constant Power and turn it back on again. For ¼ less Limitation, a character can activate the Instant Power when he activates the Constant Power, and can thereafter use the Instant Power in any Phase in which the Constant Power remains in use.

If a character Links a Constant Power to an Instant Power, it only lasts for the Phase in which the Instant Power is used (the Constant Power may take the Limitation *Instant* to reflect this).

## LINKED TABLE

| Value | Limitation |
|---|---|
| -½ | Lesser power is Linked to greater power; character can use greater power without using lesser power, but can only use lesser power if he also uses greater power; character must use lesser power in proportion to greater power. |
| -¼ | Greater power is Linked to lesser power; character can use lesser power without using greater power, but can only use greater power if he also uses lesser power; character must use greater power in proportion to lesser power. |
| **Value** | **Circumstance Modifiers** |
| ¼ more Limitation | Lesser power can only be used when character uses greater power at full value |
| ¼ less Limitation | Linked power need not be used proportionately to power with which it is Linked |
| ¼ less Limitation | Greater power is Constant or in use most or all of the time |
| ¼ less Limitation | Lesser Instant Power can be used in any Phase in which greater Constant Power is in use |

A Combat Skill Level has to work with both parts of a Linked power to apply to that power. For example, if a character has +4 with Energy Blast, he cannot use those CSLs with his Energy Blast plus Linked Flash if he wants to use the Flash effect. He could apply a 3-point CSL with EB, Flash, and RKA to the Linked power, or a 5-point Ranged CSL, or any higher-cost CSL.

For further information and options on using two powers at once, see *Multiple-Power Attacks,* page 358.

**Proportionality**

The character must use the lesser power in proportion to the greater power. If he uses the greater power at half strength, then he also uses the lesser power at half strength. For example, suppose a character has Linked a Flash 4d6 (20 Active Points) to an Energy Blast 8d6 (40 Active Points). If he wants to use only 6d6 of his Energy Blast, he must use his Flash (if he chooses to use it) at 3d6. However, for ¼ less Limitation, a character need not use his Linked powers proportionately.

Sometimes a character can use the lesser power only if he uses the greater power at full strength. If so, the value of the Limitation increases by ¼.

### LOCKOUT

Value: -½

A power with this Limitation prevents the character from using some or all of his other powers when it's in use. It's most commonly taken for a slot in a Power Framework that prevents the character from using other slots in the Framework (in situations where that normally wouldn't be the case).

Typically Lockout is worth -½. However, the GM may adjust this value depending on how many powers the Lockout prevents the character from using, how important those powers are, and so forth.

### NO CONSCIOUS CONTROL

Value: -2; or -1 for a power the character can use at will, but whose effects he cannot control

A power with this Limitation is not under the character's control. Although the character possesses the power, he cannot consciously activate or use it. The power only turns on when the GM chooses — usually when it furthers the adventure, or when an accidental "discharge" of the power inconveniences the character. The GM could occasionally allow the character to turn on the power, but at substantial penalties (-5 or more) to control rolls, Attack Rolls, and the like. No Conscious Control is a -2 Limitation, but the value could even be higher if the GM intends to let the character use the power only rarely.

No Conscious Control lets you simulate mysterious powers — those that help a character, but which he can never rely on. For example, a character could buy Precognitive Clairsentience with No Conscious Control. His Precognition occasionally grants him momentary visions of future events, but doesn't let him foresee the future whenever he wants. Similarly, Telepathy with this Limitation allows a character occasionally, and without any control on his part, to read minds.

A character can use a variant of the standard *No Conscious Control* Limitation, worth only -1, for powers he can turn on and off at will, but whose effects he cannot control while the power is on. Examples include: Mental Illusions that can only create a target's greatest fear, or that only make dreams become "real"; or a Transform the character cannot control the results of. (With the GM's permission, a character could instead define this variant as "character can't control the activation of the power, but can always control the result when it does activate.")

A No Conscious Control turns off if the character is Stunned or Knocked out, unless it's a Persistent Power. No Conscious Control does not itself make a power Persistent.

### POWER EXAMPLES: LOCKOUT

Elastic Body Entrapment: Entangle 4d6, 4 DEF, Backlash (+½) (60 Active Points); Lockout (character cannot use Stretching, or attack other characters with Entangle, while Entangle affects a target; -½), No Range (-½). Total cost: 30 points.

Spell Of The Bereft Will: Mind Control 16d6 (80 Active Points); OAF (wizard's amulet; -1), Concentration (½ DCV; -¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Lockout (cannot cast this spell or other spells while maintaining Mind Control; -½), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 21 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: NO CONSCIOUS CONTROL

Prophetic Glimpses: Clairsentience, Precognitive, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); Precognition Only (-1), No Conscious Control (character cannot control when "psychic flashes" occur, nor can he guarantee the accuracy of them; -2). Total cost: 15 points.

Irresistible Suggestions: Mind Control 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); Incantations (subjects do whatever character innocently suggests or describes; -¼), No Conscious Control (-2). Total cost: 18 points.

Mind-Sifting: Telepathy 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (60 Active Points); Receive Only (-½), Surface Thoughts Only (-½), No Conscious Control (can control activation of power, but not what fact it retrieves; -1). Total cost: 20 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: ONLY IN HEROIC IDENTITY

Imperial Powered Armor, Mark I: Armor (20 PD/20 ED) (60 Active Points); OIHID (-¼) (total cost: 48 points) **plus** +50 STR (50 Active Points); OIHID (-¼) (total cost: 40 points). Total cost: 88 points.

Amulet Of Horus (amulet transforms character into an avatar of the Egyptian god of vengeance, granting him the following powers when he speaks a magic word): +30 STR, HKA 2d6, Sight Group Flash 6d6, Armor (10 PD/10 ED), and Flight 15" (total of 150 Active Points' worth of powers); all OIHID (-¼). Total cost of powers: 120 points.

### POWER EXAMPLES: PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION

Ice Slides: Running +10", Usable As Gliding (+¼) (28 Active Points); Physical Manifestation (-¼), Side Effects (leaves big chunks of ice around the environment; -0). Total cost: 22 points.

Moving Hand Of Stone: Telekinesis (40 STR) (60 Active Points); Physical Manifestation (-¼). Total cost: 48 points.

## ONLY IN HEROIC IDENTITY

Value: -¼

A character can only use a power with Only In Heroic Identity ("OIHID") while he's in an alternate identity. Obviously, only characters who maintain two distinct identities can use this Limitation. For example, it's commonly used by superheroes who maintain a Social Limitation: Secret Identity, and by characters with some types of shape-shifting or body alteration abilities. It's most appropriate for Superheroic campaigns.

For this Limitation to be valid, the character must have some difficulty changing forms — the change must take at least a Full Phase, if not longer (during which the character can do nothing else), and/or there must be other difficulties or ways to prevent him from changing identities. For example, a character who defines his suit of powered armor with OIHID would probably require much longer than a Full Phase to put the armor on. A character whose transformation to his alternate identity requires him to speak a magic word can be gagged or otherwise silenced to prevent the change.

A power usually cannot take both OIHID and a *Focus* Limitation. However, you can use OIHID to simulate characters who seem to have a Focus, but somehow never lose it. For example, the powered armor character described above never seems to lose his suit for long or have it taken away from him while he's wearing it. Therefore, it isn't really a Focus — if he bought the armor as a *Focus,* he could lose it. Instead, his armor is better defined as a special effect of the *OIHID* Limitation.

## PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION

Value: -¼

This -¼ Limitation signifies a power that, while not built as a Focus or the like, has some physical embodiment that other characters can attack. Examples include a Flight bought to simulate riding a column of force, Telekinesis defined as a giant stone hand that grabs things, or skating along an ice-slide.

When a character applies this Limitation to the power, he must define the exact nature of the physical manifestation; this requires the GM's approval and may involve applying other Limitations to the power. Treat the manifestation like a Breakable Focus for purposes of determining its DEF and BODY. It has a DCV equal to the character's base DCV (*i.e.,* as calculated from DEX, with no other modifiers), unless the GM rules otherwise based on the size or nature of the manifestation.

## RANGE LIMITATIONS

Value: -½ for No Range; -¼ for Limited Range; -¼ for Range Based On Strength; -¼ for Reduced By Range; -¼ for Subject To Range Modifier

This suite of Limitations affects how a power works at Range. Obviously, they may only be taken for powers that work at Range (including powers bought with the *Ranged* Advantage, except that *Ranged* and *No Range* may not be taken for the same power).

**Limited Range**
Value: -¼

This -¼ Limitation represents a Ranged power with less than normal Range. The GM sets the power's exact Range based upon its special effects, but in any event the range cannot be greater than half of the power's normal Range.

With the GM's permission, Limited Range increases to -½ if applied to a Mental Power. You can call this *Normal Limited Range.* Powers with this Limitation suffer the standard Range Modifier even though they work on Line Of Sight and are still targeted with ECV like ordinary Mental Powers. If a character prefers not to suffer the Range Modifier, he can leave the value of the Limitation at -¼.

**No Range**
Value: -½

This -½ Limitation represents a Ranged power that doesn't work at Range. The character can only use the power at HTH Combat range. In some cases, the special effects of a No Range power dictate that the character actually has to touch the target of the power to affect him/it; this does not change the Limitation's value.

If a Constant Power takes this Limitation, the character only has to be at HTH Combat range to activate/use the power. After that, the distance between him and his victim doesn't matter. If the character has to maintain contact with the target to maintain a Constant effect, increase the value of No Range to -1.

**Range Based On Strength**
Value: -¼

This -¼ Limitation represents a Ranged power whose Range depends upon the Strength the character uses to throw the power. It's most often used for grenades, throwing knives, and similar thrown weapons. See the Throwing Table, page 35, to determine how far a character can throw an object.

**Reduced By Range**
Value: -¼

This -¼ Limitation represents a power that gets weaker over a distance. The power does full damage to targets within 4". It loses 2 Damage Classes (see page 403) for each doubling of Range thereafter: -2 DC from 5-8"; -4 DCs from 9-16"; -6 DCs from 17-32"; and so forth.

Example: *To represent his thrown hammer, a troll (STR 30) buys an Energy Blast 12d6, Reduced By Range, Range Based On STR. The*





*GM rules the hammer weighs four kilograms, so the troll can throw it 16" with a Standing Throw. The Energy Blast does full damage (12d6) to targets within 4", 10d6 out to 8", 8d6 out to 16", and so forth.*

**Subject To Range Modifier**

Value: -¼

Characters may only take this -¼ Limitation for powers that are not ordinarily subject to the Range Modifier (for example, most Mental Powers). The power suffers the standard Range Modifier (see page 373) when used at Range.

**REDUCED PENETRATION**

Value: -¼

An Attack Power bought with this Limitation has less ability to penetrate defenses than a normal attack. Reduced Penetration splits the attack into two equal parts for the purpose of determining BODY damage and applying that damage to the target's defenses. If the Attack Power is an HA or HKA, the damage added by STR (or other means, such as a Combat Maneuver or Combat Skill Levels) should be added *before* the attack is split in two.

When determining how much STUN damage the target takes, add the two attacks together before rolling the STUN Multiplier or applying the target's defenses. Use this "combined" STUN total to determine how much STUN damage the target takes and whether he's Stunned or Knocked Out by the attack. Determine Knockback from the highest BODY roll.

If a character takes Reduced Penetration for a power that uses the Normal Damage BODY rolled on the dice to determine the power's effect (such as Flash), divide the dice in two, make the two effect rolls, and apply the effects separately against the target's defenses.

Although a Reduced Penetration attack splits into two parts for BODY damage purposes, the character using it may only attack one target and only rolls one Attack Roll. If the roll succeeds, "both" attacks hit, if it fails, "both" miss.

## POWER EXAMPLES: RANGE LIMITATIONS

Power Darts: Energy Blast 6d6 (30 Active Points); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 6 Charges (-¾). Total cost: 10 points.

Sonic Lance: Energy Blast 8d6, NND (defense is Hearing Group Flash Defense, solid ear coverings, or being deaf; +1) (80 Active Points); Reduced By Range (-¼). Total cost: 64 points.

Voltaic Touch: RKA 3d6 (45 Active Points); OIF (power glove; -½), No Range (-½), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 15 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: REDUCED PENETRATION

Defender-Of-Forest's Claws: HKA 3d6 (up to 6d6 with STR) (45 Active Points); OAF (anointed bear's claw; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Reduced Penetration (-¼), Requires A Shamanism Roll (-½). Total cost: 14 points.

10-Gauge Shotgun: RKA 3d6, Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼) (56 Active Points); OAF (-1), Reduced By Range (-¼), Reduced Penetration (-¼), 5 Charges (-¾), Real Weapon (-¼), STR Minimum (9; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage; -1), Requires Two Hands (-½). Total cost: 11 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: REQUIRES A SKILL ROLL

Ch'i Focusing: Aid DEX 3d6 (30 Active Points); Self Only (-½), Requires A Meditation Roll (-½). Total cost: 15 points.

Inspired Terror: +2 DCV (10 Active Points); Only Works Against Attackers In HTH Combat Range (-½), Requires A Reputation Roll (opponent must make character's Reputation roll to realize who he is and thus become too terrified to fight effectively; -½). Total cost: 5 points.

Dr. Spencer's Clockwork Gatling Cannon: RKA 3d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½), 64 Charges (+½) (90 Active Points); OAF Bulky (requires a tripod or mount; -1½), Requires A PS: Gatling Operator Roll With No Active Point Modifier (-0), Real Weapon (-¼), Beam (-¼). Total cost: 30 points.

Example: *Defender-Of-Forests, a bear cult shaman, has a spell that grants her claws like a bear's. She builds the spell as an HKA 3d6, Reduced Penetration. Since Defender-Of-Forests has a 15 STR, she may add 1d6 to the attack, making it an HKA 4d6; since it has Reduced Penetration, it's considered to be two HKA 2d6 attacks.*

*Defender-Of-Forests uses her claws to fight an ogre who has a 5 PD and 4 points of Resistant Defense. Her Attack Roll succeeds, so she rolls her two 2d6 damage rolls — 5 and 9, respectively. The ogre takes 1 BODY from the first roll and 5 BODY from the second roll. Defender-Of-Forests then adds the BODY together — 14 — before rolling her STUN Multiplier. She rolls a 5, -1 makes it a 4, so she does 56 STUN ((5+9)x4) to the ogre! Even after applying its defenses of 9, the ogre is Knocked Out.*

Reduced Penetration is often bought to simulate an animal's claw and fang attacks. When combined with Reduced By Range, it's also used to simulate shotguns.



### REQUIRES A SKILL ROLL

Value: See Requires A Skill Roll Table

A power with Requires A Skill Roll ("RSR") does not work automatically or infallibly — the character must make a Skill Roll to activate it. Examples include a wizard who has to successfully "cast" a spell to activate a power, and a martial artist who must successfully focus his *ch'i* to activate a power.

#### THE SKILL USED

A character may use an existing Skill (such as Stealth or Lockpicking) for his Required Skill Roll, or he may create his own Skill (usually with the *Power* Skill). In either case, the Skill should normally cost 3 Character Points for a Characteristic-Based roll, +1 to the roll for each +2 Character Points.

Characters may instead use Attack Rolls (unmodified by Combat Skill Levels or the like), Background Skills, Characteristic Rolls, PER Rolls, or Luck rolls for RSR, but this has a different Limitation value. Using a Background Skill as an RSR is a -¼ Limitation. Use the Activation Roll Table (page 283) to determine the value for a Characteristic Roll or PER Roll as RSR. The value for using a Luck roll varies, depending on how many levels of Luck the character has to roll; in this case, the character should either apply the "no Active Point penalty" modifier, or the GM should determine how the Active Points in the power penalize the Luck roll. The Active Point penalty applies normally to other unusual RSRs.

Some RSR powers can use either of two Skills. For example, a character might buy DCV Levels that require either an Acrobatics or a Danger Sense roll, with the character choosing which roll to use based on the situation. This form of RSR is worth ¼ less than a standard RSR.

With the GM's permission, some powers may require a character to make two Required Skill Rolls, instead of just one. This simulates an ability or power that's so complex or detailed that the character needs two rolls. For example, a character might build a "laser bazooka" that's targeted by the character's line of sight. The Limitations *Requires A PER Roll* (to"lock on" to the target successfully) and *Requires A PS: Laser Bazooka Operator Roll* (to fire the weapon correctly) might both be valid Limitations. In this situation, instead of two separate -½ Limitations, take a flat -¾ Limitation (reduce this by ¼ if either of the Skills is a Background Skill).

#### USING THE POWER

To activate a power with RSR, the character must succeed with a Skill Roll ("Skill Roll" in this sense refers to any sort of roll used to activate an RSR power). Typically, there's a penalty of -1 per 10 Active Points in the power, but the character can alter this (which changes the Limitation's value). Making this roll is a Zero Phase Action that's part of the overall attempt to activate or use a power; if the roll fails, the character can't change his declared Action.

A character can base a compound power, a power plus a related naked Advantage, or several

powers on a single Skill Roll. Determine the Skill Roll penalty from the total Active Points of all the abilities being activated at one time (that is, activated by a single roll of the dice). If a character only wants to activate some of the powers (such as only a power without its naked Advantage), determine the penalty from the Active Points of just the powers being activated.

On the other hand, if a character activates two or more powers in a Phase by making a separate Required Skill Roll for each one, each roll only suffers the penalty for the power it activates. The penalty doesn't derive from the Active Points in all powers being activated that Phase.

If a character wants to activate a power at less than its full Active Point strength, base the penalty to the Skill Roll on the Active Points used, not the full Active Points.

Characters can only use RSR powers in appropriate circumstances. For example, if a character buys Desolidification, Requires A Contortionist Roll, to simulate his escape artist abilities (if he makes his Contortionist roll, no bonds or chains can hold him, regardless of how difficult it would be for an ordinary contortionist to escape from them), he can only use his Desolidification when he's tied up or otherwise bound — situations where using Contortionist is appropriate. He can't make a Contortionist roll to use Desolidification to walk through walls, avoid damage, and so forth. Furthermore, he cannot take a separate Limitation such as *Only Works On Ropes And Bonds* on the power — this is, in part, what the RSR Limitation represents.

If a character uses a Skill for a Required Skill Roll, unless the GM permits otherwise that's all the Skill does when it's used to activate a power. He doesn't also get any other benefits he would for succeeding with a roll with that Skill. If he has any Skill Levels with the Skill, he may apply them when using it to make a Required Skill Roll.

**Skill Modifiers; Skill Versus Skill Contests**

In many cases, RSR Skills aren't subject to Skill Modifiers or to the use of Complementary Skills by other characters — if they were, characters often wouldn't have any reason to buy the power in addition to the Skill it depends on. RSR powers often represent "super-Skills" — abilities the character is so good at that he easily overcomes the obstacles that make Skill use difficult (*i.e.,* Skill Modifiers). However, in appropriate situations, for the sake of drama and adventure, or to represent certain circumstances, the GM can impose Skill Modifiers on RSR rolls (particularly positive modifiers, like bonuses for taking extra time). For example, if the Required Skill is Lockpicking, but the character has lost his set of lockpicks, the GM should impose a negative Skill Modifier. In most cases, the Skill Modifier should be less than it would be for normal Skill use. The GM should also consider allowing a "partial success" with the power if the character fails the Skill Roll by only a point or two (if the power is one that could partly succeed).

## REQUIRES A SKILL ROLL TABLE

| Value | Limitation |
|---|---|
| -½ | Basic RSR Limitation — requires a 3/2 Skill, Active Point penalty to Skill Roll is -1 per 10 Active Points |
| -¾ | Two RSRs on same power (see text) |
| **Value** | **Luck roll as RSR** |
| -1 | One level of Luck required |
| -1½ | Two levels of Luck required |
| -2 | Three levels of Luck required |
| **Value** | **Modifiers** |
| No change | Attack Roll used for RSR (no CSLs apply) |
| ¼ less Limitation | Background Skill used for RSR |
| Varies | Characteristic Roll or PER Roll used for RSR — use Activation Roll Value Table to determine value of Limitation |
| ½ less Limitation | No Active Point penalty to Skill Roll |
| ¼ less Limitation | Active Point penalty to Skill Roll is -1 per 20 Active Points |
| ½ more Limitation | Active Point penalty to Skill Roll is -1 per 5 Active Points |
| ¼ less Limitation | Variable RSRs (player chooses which of two Skills to use with the power) |
| ¼ more Limitation | RSR Skill is subject to Skill Versus Skill contests |

Similarly, RSR Skills are not normally subject to Skill Versus Skill Contests with other characters. At the GM's discretion, RSR powers that are subject to Skill Versus Skill Contests receive an extra -¼ Limitation.

**RSR And Activation Roll**

RSR and Activation Roll are very similar in many ways, but they also have important differences. First, an Activation Roll indicates total success or failure. While this may be the case with a failed RSR, the GM might allow partial success (see above).

Second, an Activation Roll is appropriate for situations where there's only a chance for a power to work, but no Skill Roll is involved (for example, armor that only covers part of the body). RSR should always involve some use of a Skill.

Third, RSR rolls may be subject to Skill Modifiers (see above). Activation Rolls are never subject to Skill Modifiers. Similarly, Activation Rolls are never subject to Active Point penalties.

Fourth, if the power being Limited is Constant, an Activation Roll must be made every Phase the power's in use. On the other hand, RSR rolls usually only have to be made once (when the character first activates/uses the power).

Example: *Wendell, the GM for a Fantasy campaign, decides characters must buy all powers (magic) with the Limitation* Requires A Magic Roll. *Arkelos the mage buys his Magic Skill based on his INT for 3 Character Points. His INT is 23, so he has a (9 + (23/5)) = 14- roll.*

*Later, when examining a magical chest, Arkelos wants to use his Dispel Magic spell (Dispel Magic 10d6, any Magic power one at a time (+¼); 37 Active Points). Arkelos must make his roll at 37/10 = -4. Not liking these odds, with the GM's permission he decides to take an entire Turn to prepare, gaining a +1 (see page 45). He now needs a 14 - 4 + 1 = 11 or less to succeed. He rolls an 11 — just enough — and the power activates.*

### POWER EXAMPLES: REQUIRES MULTIPLE USERS

Ritual Summoning: Summon demon built on 800 Character Points, Friendly (+¼) (200 Active Points); OAF Expendable Fragile Arrangement (rare herbs, powders, and mystic paraphernalia, Very Difficult to obtain; -2), Concentration (0 DCV throughout; -1), Extra Time (6 Hours; -3½), Gestures (throughout; -½), Incantations (throughout; -½), Requires A Conjuration Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0), Requires Multiple Users (12 casters; -1). Total cost: 21 points.

Crew-Served Blaster Rifle: Energy Blast 24d6 (120 Active Points); OAF (-1), Requires Multiple Users (crew of 4; -½), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 40 points.

## POWER EXAMPLES: RESTRAINABLE

Wings: Flight 12" (24 Active Points); Restrainable (-½). Total cost: 16 points.

Stinger: HKA 2d6 (30 Active Points); No STR Bonus (-½), Restrainable (-½). Total cost: 15 points.

Cybereyes: Infrared Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); Restrainable (via damage or exposure to some electromagnetic radiation or dampening fields; -¼) (total cost: 4 points) plus Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); Restrainable (as above; -¼) (total cost: 4 points) plus +8 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group (12 Active Points); Restrainable (as above; -¼) (total cost: 10 points). Total cost: 4 + 4 + 10 = 18 points.



### REQUIRES MULTIPLE USERS

Value: See Requires Multiple Users Table

Some powers require more than one character to use them, or they won't function as well (or at all). The *Requires Multiple Users* Limitation simulates this. It's most often used in modern-day games for artillery and other weapons that require a crew to fire (it's often renamed *Crew-Served* in these games), and in Fantasy games for ritual magic requiring multiple spellcasters (where it's renamed *Ritual*).

The value of the Limitation depends on the size of the group needed to use the power without penalty, as indicated by the accompanying table.

If more than a single character, but fewer than the required number of characters, attempts to use a power, reduce the penalty by the number of characters beyond one (though the minimum penalty remains -1 regardless of how many characters participate). For example, if four characters try to fire a weapon needing a crew of 8, the normal -9 penalty becomes -6 (-9, reduced by 3 for each person beyond the first).

To determine the OCV of a Requires Multiple Users power, use the chief operator's OCV, or at the GM's option take the average OCV of the group. If a Requires Multiple Users power costs END, all members of the group must pay that END cost.

If a Requires Multiple Users power is one that characters have to pay for, all members of the group using the power must have the power (*i.e.,* must have paid Character Points for it, or otherwise learned it in the manner specified for the campaign). Furthermore, all members must successfully undertake all procedures (they must all Concentrate, take Extra Time, use Gestures, pay the associated END cost, bring the right Focus, and so forth). However, if the power requires a Skill Roll, Activation Roll, or the like, only the character in charge of the power makes that roll; he does not receive a Complementary Skill bonus for having helpers.

If a Requires Multiple Users weapon requires a Weapon Familiarity, at least half of the group must have that WF, or the group suffers the standard Unfamiliar Weapon penalty (-3 OCV). Weapons with this Limitation should also take the *Focus* Limitation with the additional *Bulky* or *Immobile* Limitations. They usually take the *Extra Time* Limitation as well. Generally they do not take the *STR Minimum* or *Required Hands* Limitations, since they're mounted on bipods, tripods, or vehicles.

## REQUIRES MULTIPLE USERS TABLE

| Value | Required Users | Penalty for Single Character To Operate |
|---|---|---|
| -¼ | 2 | -3 |
| -½ | 3-4 | -6 |
| -¾ | 5-8 | -9 |
| -1 | 9-16 | Not possible |

...and so on

### RESTRAINABLE

Value: -½; -¼ for powers Restrainable by means other than Grabs and Entangles

A power with this -½ Limitation is generated by or based upon an area of the body that can be restrained. Examples include Flight defined as having wings or some HKAs defined as having claws. If that area or part of the body is Grabbed, Entangled, or otherwise restrained, the character cannot use the power. When he breaks free of the restraint, or it's removed, the power functions normally again.

Characters may also take Restrainable at a lesser value — -¼ — to represent body parts that can be restrained or disabled by means other than Grabs. For example, in a Cyberpunk campaign, characters often have "cyberware" (special electronic devices) implanted in their bodies. Removing cyberware typically requires surgery, but it can often be disabled or incapacitated if damaged (visible cyberware can usually be targeted at -2 OCV) or exposed to various types of electromagnetic radiation, and these weaknesses are well-known. Since surgery is required to remove cyberware, it's not really a Focus, but it can be considered Restrainable. In this case Restrainable is only a -¼ Limitation, since disabling the body part is harder than usual or requires special equipment.

A power ordinarily should not be Restrainable and bought as a Focus; either one or the other will apply. However, with GM's permission, in some cases taking both may be acceptable (such as a "Flight Harness," a set of wings that straps onto a wearer's back). In this case, the Focus must not be Accessible, since Accessible Foci can already be restrained by Grabs, Entangles, and the like.





## SIDE EFFECTS

Value: See Side Effects Table

This Limitation means disadvantageous or harmful things happen to the character when he fails to use his power properly (or, in some cases, any time he uses the power). The value of the Limitation depends on the strength of the Side Effect, how often it occurs, and other factors.

### STRENGTH OF THE SIDE EFFECTS

The strength of a side effect typically relates to the Active Points in the power. Consult the Side Effects Table for guidelines. At the GM's discretion, you can adjust the power levels of the Side Effects. For example, in a high-power superhero campaign, the standard 15/30/60 Active Point levels for Side Effects might be inappropriate; 20/40/80 or 30/60/120 might work better.

### WHEN SIDE EFFECTS OCCUR

Characters usually take Side Effects for a power that has some chance of failure — one with the Power Limitations *Requires A Skill Roll* or *Activation Roll.* Each time the character's attempt to activate or use the power fails, he suffers the Side Effect. If the power is Constant and requires an Activation Roll, the Side Effect has a greater value than normal, since such a power tends to require more rolls (and thus has more chance of failing).

Alternately, a character may define his Side Effect as occurring *every* time he uses the power, regardless of whether he successfully activates it. In this case, double the value of the Limitation. This also applies to Side Effects on powers that always work.

A third option is to define the Side Effect as always occurring whenever a character does something or has something happen to him. For example, the Side Effect might automatically occur if the character makes a Half Move (or suffers Knockback) before he uses the power. Typically this reduces the value of the Limitation by ¼, since the character has a certain amount of control over whether the Side Effect occurs, but the GM determines the exact value.

Side Effects usually occur (or are rolled for) when the character activates/uses the power. With the GM's permission, a character could define Side Effects as occurring after he stops using the power, but only if the Side Effect always occurs. In the GM's discretion, this may reduce the Limitation by ¼, since it's not quite as restrictive as a Side Effect that occurs when the character activates or uses the power.

### THE NATURE OF THE SIDE EFFECT

The exact nature of a Side Effect is up to the character (with the GM's approval), but it must always be disadvantageous or harmful. Usually it should directly connect to the power — for example, a fireball spell might cause the character to burst into flame if he fails his Magic Skill roll, but normally shouldn't inflict a necromancy spell on him. The character and GM can choose any type of power for the Side Effect. Energy Blast and Drain are perhaps the most commonly used powers for Side Effects, but you can choose just about any type of power that adversely affects the character. For example, a botched "Spell Of Conjuration" (built using Summon) might have a Summon Side Effect — it conjures the wrong type of creature, one hostile to the spellcaster.

### POWER EXAMPLES: SIDE EFFECTS

Berserk Strength: Aid STR 4d6 (40 Active Points); Only Works In Combat (-½), Self Only (-½), Side Effects (character always acquires Disadvantage *Berserk while in combat (go 14-; recover 8-)* while his STR is boosted by Aid, and the Berserk automatically takes effect when he first uses the Aid; -1). Total cost: 13 points.

Heat Aura: FF (4 PD/12 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (24 Active Points); Side Effect (all nonliving flammable objects within 3" of character take 1d6 Killing Damage from the heat, and may burst into flame; -¼). Total cost: 19 points.

Empathic Healing Spell: Healing 4d6 (Simplified Healing option) (40 Active Points); OAF (Wizard's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Side Effects (spellcaster always suffers damage equal to what he Heals; -1). Total cost: 10 points.

In some cases a character may apply the Standard Effect Rule or in some other way define a set amount of damage or effect he takes from a Side Effect. For example, if a vampire has to force a victim to drink a large amount of his (the vampire's) blood before he can Transform the victim into a vampire, the Side Effect might be, "Takes 3 BODY and 9 STUN Damage." Typically this is worth ¼ less Limitation value, but the GM may adjust this depending upon how much damage the character takes.

With the GM's permission, a character can define a Side Effect as a short-term Disadvantage (this often counts as a "standard effect," thus reducing the Limitation's value by ¼). The Disadvantage lasts as long as the GM feels is appropriate, but in many cases should last at least as long as it would take the character to naturally heal the base points in the Side Effect if they were BODY damage. For example, a character with a 15-point Side Effect on his Mind Control might suffer from a 15-point Psychological Limitation until enough time had passed for him to naturally heal 15 BODY.

Sometimes the GM may allow a character to base a Side Effect on something other than the Active Points (or some fraction thereof) in the power. For example, a Side Effect could simply be "the character takes 1d6 inches of Knockback and falls down" or "blood vessels in character's forehead burst (-1 Sight PER Rolls for one Turn and lose 1 BODY)" or "character suffers a -3 penalty on PER Rolls for 1d6 hours." Such relatively minor effects usually have, at most, a base value of -¼.

A character can define a Side Effect as including an Advantage, with the GM's permission. For example, a Side Effect that causes Drain END 2d6 might have the *Delayed Return Rate* Advantage so the character doesn't get the END back quickly.

The GM should be wary of letting characters who have access to rapid healing methods take Side Effects whose effects they can easily erase. It's not much of a Limitation for a character to take BODY damage from a failed use of a power if he has Regeneration Healing. In this case, the GM may halve the value of the Limitation or forbid it entirely.

## SIDE EFFECTS TABLE

| Value | Side Effect |
|---|---|
| -¼ | Minor Side Effect: 15 Active Points, or one-fourth of the Active Points in the power (whichever is greater), or some other minor or trivial effect |
| -½ | Major Side Effect: 30 Active Points, or half of the Active Points in the power (whichever is greater) |
| -1 | Extreme Side Effect: 60 Active Points, or the Active Points in the power (whichever is greater), or more |
| **Value** | **Modifiers** |
| x2 value | Side Effect occurs automatically whenever power is used (or is bought for a power which always works) |
| ¼ more Limitation | Side Effect applies to a Constant Power which requires an Activation Roll |
| ¼ more Limitation | Side Effect affects both character and environment/recipient of power's benefits |
| ¼ less Limitation | Side Effect always occurs whenever the character does some specific act |
| ¼ less Limitation | Side Effect does a predefined amount of damage |
| ¼ less Limitation | Side Effect only affects the environment near the character |
| ¼ less Limitation | Side Effect only affects the recipient of the benefits of the power |
| ¼ less Limitation | Side Effect occurs when character stops using power |

### WHO'S AFFECTED BY THE SIDE EFFECT

Normally the character using the power suffers the Side Effects. However, at the GM's discretion, this doesn't always have to be the case.

A Side Effect might affect the environment around the character instead of the character himself. For example, a character with fire powers might generate such heat that small flammable objects (papers, leaves, and the like) near him burst into flame. This form of Side Effects is worth ¼ less Limitation value, and the character should rarely, if ever, be allowed to cause damage to others with it or derive any sort of combat advantage or other benefit from it.

In the case of powers intended to benefit the target (such as Healing or Aid), characters can define a Side Effect as affecting the target. For example, a "Spell of Curing" built with the power *Healing* might cause the recipient's hair to fall out or turn grey. This form of Side Effect is worth ¼ less Limitation value.

If both the character *and* the environment or recipient of the power's benefits suffer the same or similar Side Effects, do not reduce the Limitation value — increase it by ¼.

**No Defense Applies**

Any Side Effect automatically affects the character (or environment or recipient) — no Attack Roll is necessary. The character, environment, or recipient gets no defenses against the Side Effect, and it doesn't matter if he's Desolidified or otherwise protected from that form of damage under ordinary circumstances.

Example: *Arkelos has several spells with the Limitations Requires A Magic Roll and Side Effects. The first spell, Thunderbolt Of Arkelos (Energy Blast 8d6), has a Major Side Effect (-½). Since the power has 40 Active Points, Arkelos must take 30 Active Points of Side Effect. He decides that if he doesn't cast the spell properly, the electricity arcs back into him, doing 30 Active Points of damage (Energy Blast 6d6).*

*The second spell is Arkelos's Magnificent Demon-Summoning Spell, an 80 Active Point Summon that conjures a powerful demon. Arkelos again takes a Major Side Effect (-½), requiring him to come up with 40 Active Points of Side Effect. Arkelos decides that if he fails to properly cast the spell, the demon partially takes over his body. The Side Effects is two Disadvantages, a 20-point Psychological Limitation ("Obeys the Demon") and a 20-point Hunted ("Hunted by Demon's Enemies"). These Disadvantages remain until Arkelos would naturally heal 40 BODY.*

## VARIABLE LIMITATIONS

Value: See text

A power with this Limitation can have a variety of different Limitations on it. The power always has a set total of Limitation values, but the character can alter the exact type of Limitations to fit the circumstance.

The character selects the value of the Variable Limitation on a power. Each time he uses the power, he must define Limitations with *twice* that value. Thus, if a power has a -¼ Variable Limitation, the character must choose one or more Limitations with a total of -½ each time he uses that power. (If the character wants to have -¼ Limitations, Variable Limitations is worth -0; if he wants Limitations worth -¾, it's worth -¼.) The GM may define which Limitations characters can use to satisfy the Variable Limitation; a suggested list includes Concentration, Extra Time, Gestures, Incantations, Increased Endurance Cost, Side Effects, and Visible.

Switching the Limitations on a power with Variable Limitations requires a Full Phase Action, during which the character is at half DCV. The character can make the switch even if he's suffering the hindrance of the current Limitation. For example, if a character assigns the Limitation to Focus, and someone takes his Focus away from him, he can switch to other Limitations even though he doesn't have the Focus. A character who can't Gesture because he's restrained can switch to some other Limitation without having to make gestures.

Example: *Arkelos has been captured by brigands, and would like to use his Spell Of The Invisible Path (Teleportation) to escape. It has Variable Limitations at -½. Arkelos normally uses Extra Time, Gestures, and Incantations to make up his required total of -1 worth of Limitations. However, in this circumstance, time is of the essence, and in any event he's tied up and can't gesture. Praying silently to his gods, he transfers all of the Limitations into -1 worth of the Limitation Side Effects. Fortunately, he makes his Skill Roll.*

## VISIBLE

Value: -¼

Characters can buy this -¼ Limitation only for powers that are normally invisible (such as Armor, Density Increase, Mental Powers, and most Special Powers). A Visible power can be perceived by three Sense Groups (see page 98). Mental Powers with this Limitation must be perceivable by three Sense Groups in addition to the Mental Sense Group.

If the GM permits, Visible powers need not be Visible to everyone, just to a substantial or significant group of persons. For example, characters often use this Limitation (renamed "Noisy") for magic spells in Fantasy campaigns, to simulate the fact that any wizard or "sensitive" person in the vicinity can perceive the spell being cast (even if his ordinary Senses, like Sight, are unavailable for some reason).

In some circumstances (and with the GM's permission), characters can also take Visible for powers that are ordinarily visible (like Energy Blast) to simulate the fact that those powers are much more perceptible than normal (for example, a "Lightning Bolt" Energy Blast that causes a thunderclap audible up to a mile away). As a general rule, other characters should have at least a +4 bonus to PER Rolls to perceive the use of the power, be able to perceive it over much greater distances than normal, or the like.

Characters should not take Visible together with the Limitation *Focus* if the Focus is Obvious, unless the Limitation further restricts the power somehow (as with Noisy). An Obvious Focus is recognizably the source of the power, thus making it apparent to most observers that the power is being used.

### POWER EXAMPLES: VARIABLE LIMITATIONS

Wizardly Powers: Variable power Pool, 60 Pool + 30 Control Cost; Variable Limitations (requires -2 worth of Limitations; -1), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost of VPP: 72 points.

The Spell Of The Invisible Path: Teleportation 30" (60 Active Points); Variable Limitations (requires -1 worth of Limitations; -½), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 30 points.

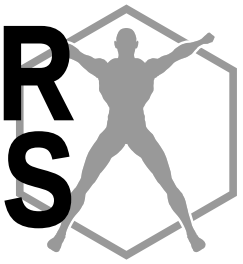
### POWER EXAMPLES: VISIBLE

Mindspear: Ego Attack 4d6 (40 Active Points); Visible (a silvery-green beam of energy lances out from the character's forehead and hits the target's head; -¼). Total cost: 32 points.

Argent Control: Mind Control 12d6 (60 Active Points); Visible (while Mind Control is in use, both the character's and the victim's eyes turn a solid silver color; -¼). Total cost: 48 points.

The Spell Of Necromantic Ennui: Drain BODY 3d6, Ranged (+½) (45 Active Points); OAF (Necromancer's Staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Noisy (-¼). Total cost: 14 points.

# POWER FRAMEWORKS



Characters use Power Frameworks to buy a number of powers that are grouped together and draw from a common "pool" of points. This results in a substantially lower cost, but in exchange, there are restrictions on how and when they can use the powers. The individual powers in a Power Framework are usually referred to as *slots*.

Power Frameworks are most appropriate for Superheroic games. In Heroic games, they're most often used to represent weapons or other pieces of equipment with multiple functions (such as a three-setting laser pistol defined as a Multipower). The GM should carefully check each character's Power Frameworks to make sure they fit in his campaign.

There are three Power Frameworks: the Elemental Control ("EC"); the Multipower ("MP"); and the Variable Power Pool ("VPP").

## GENERAL RULES

The following general rules apply to all types of Power Frameworks.

### NO COMBINING OF FRAMEWORKS

A Power Framework can never be bought through another Power Framework. For example, a character cannot create a Multipower with his Variable Power Pool, or have an Elemental Control as a slot in a Multipower.

Characters can have as many Power Frameworks as they want and can afford to buy. However, a slot in a Power Framework cannot add to or modify a slot in the same or another Power Framework, or the same or another Power Framework as a whole. For Example:

—a character cannot buy a slot in his Power Framework defined as "Energy Blast +8d6" to add to the Energy Blast 12d6 slot in the same Power Framework or another Power Framework

—a character cannot use an Adjustment Power in one of his Power Frameworks to Adjust that Framework, a slot within that Framework, another Power Framework, or a slot in another Framework (he may, however, Adjust another character's Power Framework, or a slot within one; see below).

—a character cannot use STR bought as a slot in one Power Framework (or the STR obtained from Density Increase or Growth bought as a slot) to add damage to an HA or HKA bought as a slot in the same or another Power Framework

A character could buy a Power such as Multiform or Summon through a Power Framework and define the alternate form(s) or Summonee(s) as having Power Frameworks of their own without violating the above rules, unless the GM rules otherwise.

A character may have two Power Frameworks, or two slots in the same Framework, that both add to or affect the same ability bought *outside* any Power Framework. For example, a character could have a Multipower slot of +10 PD, and a Variable Power Pool slot of +15 PD, that both added to his PD, since his PD is not in any Power Framework and the two powers are not adding to each other.

As always, the GM may grant exceptions to these rules if he feels it's appropriate to do so. For example, he might allow a wizard with a Power Framework of spells to use an Aid Magic slot to augment the power of one of his own spells (also bought through a Framework).

### Extra Powers For A Slot

A character may have other powers outside of a Power Framework that add onto one of his Power Framework slots. However, that sort of extra Power can only work with the slot, not by itself or with another slot (in some cases you can simulate this with the *Linked* Limitation).

Example: *Starburst wants a special "starburst" attack, combining a Flash with an Energy Blast. He buys a slot for his Multipower — Energy Blast 10d6. To add the Flash, Starburst buys a Sight Group Flash 4d6 for 20 points; this Flash is separate from the Multipower, not another slot. He applies the Limitation Linked (-½) to the Flash because it only works with the Multipower slot. The 20 Active Points in Flash cost 13 Real Points. This Flash only works when Starburst uses the Energy Blast; that's why he can buy the Flash outside of the Multipower and add it to the effect of a Multipower slot.*

If the extra power is simply extra dice of, or an extension of, the same power in the Framework, it's usually written with a plus sign, like this: Energy Blast +6d6 (adds to Energy Blast 8d6 slot), plus any appropriate Power Modifiers. The plus sign indicates that the power is merely an extension of an existing power. It cannot function on its own, and being all part of the one power, cannot take the *Linked* Limitation. If the extra power is a completely different power bought to work in conjunction with a Multipower slot — as with the example

above, depicting an Energy Blast-Flash combination — the character should take the *Linked* Limitation for the power outside the Framework. In that case the outside power's not just an extension of the power in the Framework slot — it's a second power that only works with the first power.

On the other hand, a character can define a Power Framework slot as only adding to a power outside the Framework. For example, a character might have a suit of powered armor that provided +40 STR as a Multipower slot, or a VPP of spells that includes one defined as Energy Blast +6d6 (adding to an Energy Blast power he's bought outside the slot). This sort of slot only functions with the outside power — it can't do anything on its own — but the character can use the outside power by itself (unless the GM rules otherwise).

With the GM's permission, a character can buy a naked Advantage for a Power Framework slot. The character should have a reasonable special effect and explanation for why he should be allowed to do this, instead of buying it as part of the slot as usual.

**Linked**

A character cannot (a) Link two slots in the same Framework to each other, (b) Link a slot in one Power Framework to a slot in another Power Framework, (c) Link an entire Power Framework (or more than one slot in a Framework) to a power outside a Framework, a slot in another Framework, or another Framework, or (d) Link a power or Power Framework to the reserve or base cost of a Power Framework.

A character may Link a power bought outside any Power Framework to a slot in a Power Framework. (See the Starburst example above for an instance of this.) But as noted above, he cannot Link a power to an entire Power Framework (or to more than one slot in a Framework) or to a Framework's reserve or base cost.

A character can put two or more Linked powers in a single Power Framework slot, unless the GM forbids this for some reason. The combined Active Points of the powers must not exceed the reserve. For example, if a character had a slot with an Energy Blast 8d6 + Sight Group Flash 4d6, the total Active Point cost of the slot is 60; the power wouldn't fit in a Multipower with a 50-point reserve. Normal rules for use of Linked powers apply.

**Multiple-Power Attacks**

Characters can use slots from two or more different Power Frameworks to perform a multiple-power attack (page 358), assuming they obey all the rules for such attacks. For example, a character could combine his Flame Blast (Energy Blast 8d6, bought as a slot in a Multipower) with his Firebolt (RKA 2d6, bought as a slot in an Elemental Control) into a multiple-power attack. However, a character may not combine two or more slots from a single Power Framework as part of a multiple-power attack, even if he has sufficient reserve or base points to use both slots at once.

## MULTIPLE POWERS IN THE SAME SLOT

Characters may not buy more than one Power in a single Power Framework slot unless those Powers are Linked (see above) or the character has the GM's permission.

## RESTRICTIONS ON SLOT PURCHASES

Characters cannot purchase Special Powers and Talents in Power Frameworks, except with the GM's permission. For example, characters generally cannot buy Flash Defense or Enhanced Senses in a Power Framework — but most GMs would allow a character who had a "Gadget Pool" VPP to do so if he defined the Special Power as an appropriate, commonly-available object (such as sunglasses or a telescope).

Unless the GM permits them to, characters cannot buy "naked" Power Advantages in a Power Framework. Each slot must be a complete power (including any Advantages and Limitations).

A character can purchase a Constant or Persistent Power as a slot in a Multipower or Variable Power Pool. If he changes the reserve/Pool allocation to another slot while that Constant Power is in use, the power immediately ceases to operate unless it's bought Uncontrolled, with Continuing Charges, or with some similar Power Modifier (or the rules applicable to that power specifically exempt it from this rule). He must keep the Framework's reserve or Pool allocated to that slot to maintain the Constant or Persistent Power.

## POWERS

Adjustment Powers: For rules regarding the effect of Adjustment Powers on Power Frameworks, see page 108 and the notes under individual Power Frameworks, below.

At any level of the *Variable Effect* Advantage (page 111) that allows a character to affect two or more powers of the same special effect simultaneously, an Adjustment Power that boosts or increases a Power Framework can increase both the reserve/pool and one or more slots at the same time (depending on how the power's defined, the value of the Advantage, the nature of the Framework, and so forth).

## ADVANTAGES

A character can have a partially-Advantaged power in a Power Framework slot, unless the GM objects for some reason. He cannot partly Advantage a Framework's reserve or base cost, however.

Autofire: If a character applies Autofire to the reserve or base cost of a Power Framework, he cannot make an attack involving shots from two or more slots — he can only use the Autofire for only one slot at a time.

## LIMITATIONS

Sometimes a character wants his Power Framework to be restricted in some way, and reflects this by taking a Limitation on the Framework's basic cost (*i.e.,* the base cost of an Elemental Control, the reserve of a Multipower, or the Control Cost of a Variable Power Pool). If that Limitation also affects the slots themselves, then each of the slots should also take the Limitation. If that Limitation only affects the changing of the Framework or the like, then the slots should *not* take that Limitation as well.

Example: *Gadget Pools (Variable Power Pools for gadgets, devices, and other such equipment) are often created by applying the* Focus *Limitation to the VPP's Control Cost at some level. That means every power in the VPP has to have Focus at that level or greater. For instance, if the Control Cost has Focus (-½), every power has to have a -1 or -½ Focus. However, a Limitation such as* VPP Can Only Be Changed Between Adventures *has no affect on Pool powers. Therefore it shouldn't be taken for the Pool powers, just the Pool.*

Example: *Lazer wants to build a laser rifle that can fire many different types of lasers. However, reconfiguring the rifle to change the type of laser fired takes a little while — 1 Turn. He defines his laser rifle as a Multipower; each slot represents one type of laser the rifle can fire. He takes the Limitation* Extra Time *(1 Turn; -1¼) for the Multipower reserve, since it affects how he can change slots. However, since the Limitation doesn't affect any of the slots themselves — he can use a slot normally once it's been chosen — he does not take the* Extra Time *Limitation for any slot.*

If a character wants to (or must) apply a Limitation to both the basic cost of a Power Framework and all of its slots, the Limitation must be exactly the same on each slot. For example, a character cannot take Increased Endurance Cost at x2 END, x4 END, and x5 END for three slots, and then take Increased Endurance Cost as a common Limitation on the basic cost of the Framework, since the Limitations aren't exactly the same. However, the GM may waive this rule if he sees fit, in which case the lowest value of the Limitation applies to the Framework's basic cost (in the example above, the -½ for x2 END). For instance, the example above concerning Gadget Pools applies the *Focus* Limitation this way. Similarly, for the *Requires A Skill Roll* Limitation, a character may have different Skills as the roll for each slot but still apply the Limitation to the Framework's basic cost as long as the value of the Limitation is the same for each slot.

See below under *Multipower* for more discussion of Limitations. The rules described there generally apply to other Power Frameworks, unless the GM prefers otherwise (they're just more easily discussed in the context of Multipower, to which they most often apply, than in abstract terms).

**Partially-Limited Powers**

A character can have a partially-Limited power in a Power Framework slot, unless the GM objects for some reason. He cannot partly Limit a Framework's reserve or base cost, however.

**Charges**

As noted on page 281, a Continuing Charge in a Power Framework remains in effect even if the character switches the Framework to another power. The rules don't establish any specific limit on how long those Continuing Charges can be bought to last, so the GM should monitor this sort of power construct to prevent abusiveness. The intent of the rule is to allow interesting and logical powers (such as smoke grenades in a Multipower of weapons), not to provide characters with huge amounts of power cheaply.



# ELEMENTAL CONTROL ⚠

Cost: See text

A character with an Elemental Control ("EC") can buy several Powers that are related by a common special effect (for example, Fire Powers, Mental Powers, Weather Control Powers, or Telekinetic Powers) at a reduced cost. An EC may have as few as two Powers, or as many Powers as the character can reasonably group together with a good rationale. Elemental Controls provide a cost savings to a character in exchange for (a) buying related Powers that fit his conception well and (b) accepting certain restrictions on those Powers.

## Buying An Elemental Control

Creating an Elemental Control is basically a two-step process:

1. The character pays Character Points for the *base cost* — the pool of points forming the base EC.

2. The character pays Character Points for each slot, or power, in the EC. The number of points spent on each slot must equal or exceed the base cost.

The total Active Points of the power in each slot equals the base cost plus the points spent on the slot. (In other words, a character gets to "add" the base cost to each of the slots to determine how powerful the slot is, even though he only pays for the base cost once.)

Example: *An Elemental Control with a base cost of 30 points and a slot with 30 points' worth of Energy Blast gives the character an Energy Blast 12d6 (a total of 60 Active Points) — add the base cost and the slot's cost together to determine the Active Points in the power.*

Thus, the minimum total Active Points in any slot is twice the points in the Elemental Control's base pool of points.

A good guideline for determining how many points to spend on the base cost of an Elemental Control is to decide how many total points of effect the character wants the typical power in the EC to have. Spend half that total on the base cost. For example, if all of the powers in an EC should have 60 Active Points of effect, the base cost of the EC should be 30 Character Points — the other 30 points of effect come from the individual slots. If a character wants the slots in his Elemental Control to have different Active Point totals, he should determine the base cost of the EC from the lowest Active Point total among them — that ensures each slot has a total Active Points equal to or greater than twice the base cost.

Example: *Firewing decides to buy an Elemental Control of Fire Powers with three slots of 90 Active Points each — Flight 30", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Force Field (30 PD/30 ED), Hardened (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); and Force Wall (10 PD/10 ED, 5" long and 2" tall), No Range Modifier (+½).*



*That means he pays 45 points for the base cost, and 45 points for each slot (total cost of 180 points).*

*Mentalla buys an Elemental Control for her Psionic Powers. However, the powers she wants don't all have the same Active Point costs the way Firewing's do. She wants Mind Scan 16d6 (80 Active Points), Mind Control 12d6 (60 Active Points), and Telepathy 13d6 (65 Active Points). To make sure all the slots follow the rule that each slot's cost must equal or exceed the base cost, she determines which one has the least Active Points and uses that to calculate the base cost. The Mind Control has the fewest points — 60. Half of 60 is 30, so she pays 30 Character Points for the EC's base cost. That means the slots cost her 50, 30, and 35 points, respectively, for a total of 145 points for the entire EC.*

A typical slot in most Elemental Controls has a total Active Point value equal to twice the base cost — in other words, the base cost and the slot cost are the same (at least before the character applies any Limitations to the slot cost; see below). However, a character can buy a slot that has a higher total Active Points than twice the base cost if he wishes. In that case, calculate the slot's cost by subtracting the base cost from the total Active Points the character wants the slot to have.

Example: *Starburst, an energy projector, buys an Elemental Control of "Stellar Energy Powers" with three slots: an Energy Blast, a Force Field, and Flight. He decides he wants most of the powers to have 60 Active Points, so he makes the base cost 30 points. He pays 30 points for Slot #1, giving him an Energy Blast 12d6. He pays 30 points for Slot #2, giving him a Force Field (30 PD/30 ED). But he decides he wants to have 40" of Flight. That would cost 80 Active Points. Therefore he subtracts the base cost from 80, yielding a cost of (80 - 30 =) 50 Character Points for Slot #3.*

If a character wants to have an Elemental Control with powers that have an odd number of total points (like 45 or 75), determine the cost of the pool of points from the next lowest even number (44 and 74, in these examples). Then buy each slot with +1 point more than the pool. For example, if a character wanted an EC with 45-point powers, he'd pay for a 22-point base cost and 23-point slots.

### ADVANTAGES FOR ELEMENTAL CONTROLS

To buy an Advantage for a Power in an Elemental Control, calculate the Advantage based on the Active Points of the entire Power, then subtract the cost of the base pool of points to determine the cost of the slot. Suppose that an Energy Blast 12d6 (6d6 from base cost, 6d6 from the slot) is bought with *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +½), making it cost a total of 90 Active Points. Since the base pool of points is 30 points, the slot costs 90 - 30 = 60 points.

If a character wants an Advantage to apply to an Elemental Control as a whole, he must buy it for each of the slots; buying it for the base cost has no effect. The only exception to this is the *Charges* Advantage; buying, say, 32 Charges for the base cost of the EC means the entire EC has only 32 Charges.

**LIMITATIONS ON ELEMENTAL CONTROLS**

A character can take any Limitation that affects *all* slots in an Elemental Control on the EC's base cost. For example, if all slots in an EC have the Limitation *No Knockback* (-¼), then the character can apply that same -¼ Limitation to the EC's base cost. If even one slot lacks the *No Knockback* Limitation, he can't take it on the EC's base cost.

If a Limitation only applies to a single slot, it reduces the slot cost, but not the base cost. For example, if the Energy Blast described above had *No Range* (-½), the slot cost would be 20 Character Points (30/(1 + ½)), but the base cost would remain 30 Character Points. (Note that the slot ends up costing less than the base cost because of the Limitation, but this doesn't violate the rule that the number of points spent on each slot must equal or exceed the base cost).

**Linked Powers In A Slot**

A character cannot Link Powers in different slots of an Elemental Control to activate together. He must buy any Linked Powers in a single slot. A character cannot buy two or more Powers in the same EC slot unless they're Linked or the GM permits him to.

**Linked Powers With Differing Limitations**

A character may want to buy a slot in an Elemental Control that contains two or more Linked powers, where the individual powers have different Limitations. To calculate the cost of such a slot, do the following:

First, find the total Active Points of both powers. That way you can ensure it fits in the EC properly.

Second, divide that into the Active Points in each of the powers.

Third, subtract half the base cost from each of the powers. (If the two Linked powers aren't equal, divide the base cost proportionately between them.)

Fourth, apply the separate Limitation totals to each power to determine their Real Point costs, then add those costs together to derive the cost of the slot.

Example: *Rockface has an Elemental Control containing 20-point powers (thus, the cost of the base is 10 points, and each slot must cost at least 10 points before Limitations). Rockface wants a slot with a 16-point power Linked to an 8-point power (total of 24 Active Points in the slot, so it qualifies for the EC because it's at least a 20-point total power). The 16-point power has -3 worth of Limitations, but the 8-point power has only -2 worth of Limitations (including Linked). So, to determine the cost, Rockface has to split the base cost and subtract it from each power proportionately. The two powers are two-thirds and one-third of the cost, so he subtracts 7 points from the 16-point power and 3 points from the 8-point power. That gives him totals of 9 and 5 points, respectively. Then he applies each power's separate Limitations, yielding Real Point costs of 2 and 2, respectively. So, the slot costs him (2 + 2 =) 4 points.*

You can apply the same method for partially-Limited powers — just divide the base cost between the "pieces" of the power and use the procedure described above.

**ENDURANCE**

Normally, all slots in an Elemental Control must cost END or have the *Reduced Endurance* Advantage (characters can buy the END cost down to 0 if they wish). Characters cannot buy Powers that inherently cost no END (for example, FTL Travel) as a slot in an EC (or as part of a slot with two Linked powers) unless they take the Limitation *Costs Endurance,* or the GM permits it. (If a character buys Costs Endurance for a slot, he can take either the regular or "only costs END to activate the power" version of that Limitation, if appropriate). A character may not apply both the *Costs Endurance* Limitation and *Reduced Endurance* Advantage to a power that inherently costs no END (such as Damage Reduction) so that he can put it in an EC.

If a power normally costs END, a character could place it in an Elemental Control slot even though it has the *Charges* Limitation. If it does not inherently cost END, taking Charges for it does not make it eligible to be in an EC.

With the GM's permission, a character can buy the *Persistent* Advantage for a slot in an Elemental Control that has Reduced Endurance (0 END). However, slots in an EC generally cannot be made Inherent.

**CHARACTERISTICS**

A character could buy a Characteristic as a Power (page 139) in an Elemental Control, assuming the Characteristic-as-Power fit the conception of the EC and the GM didn't forbid it. He could not buy his normal STR, DEX, INT, PD, or the like in an EC, whether it fits the EC concept or not. Any Characteristics as Powers bought in an EC must satisfy standard EC rules — for example, they have to cost END to use.

## Using Elemental Controls

A character can use any or all of the Powers in his Elemental Control at the same time (assuming he can afford to pay all the END, of course). For example, if a character has an Elemental Control with three slots (one an Energy Blast, one Flight, and one a Force Field), he can fly with his Force Field turned on and fire his Energy Blast, all in the same Phase — provided he can afford the END. If a character wants to activate more than one slot, activating each one requires a separate Zero Phase Action.

Here are some general rules and guidelines for using Elemental Controls. As always, the GM is free to modify, adapt, or abolish them as he sees fit.

**Adjustment Powers**

The Powers in an Elemental Control must have a common special effect. This has implications for the use of Adjustment Powers on or against Elemental Controls.

If an Adjustment Power is used to Drain or remove points from either the base cost or any slot in an Elemental Control, *all slots and the base cost are equally affected.* This is one of the prices the character pays for the point savings of an EC — the EC powers are so closely related that to Drain or Transfer points from one of them is to do it to all of them. This occurs even if the Adjustment Power is not bought to affect all the powers of a given special effect at once, or is bought only to affect a single Power.

Removing points from an Elemental Control this way essentially doubles the effectiveness of the Adjustment Power. If an attacker Drains 15 Character Points from a slot in a character's EC, the EC loses 15 Character Points from both the base cost *and* from every slot, so the overall loss of power for any given slot is 30 Character Points. (If the Adjustment Power is used against a slot that's built with a Defense Power, halve the Adjustment Power's effect only against that slot; it has full effect on the base cost and all other slots.)

The converse is *not* true: Adjustment Powers such as Aid which increase or improve an Elemental Control's base cost or one of its slots must affect *both* the base cost and the slot before there is any gain or benefit. Furthermore, the gain or benefit is limited to the smaller of the two amounts added. For example, if a character has Aid Energy Blast 4d6 and uses it to add 15 Character Points to an Energy Blast 6d6 slot, the Aid has no effect until the base cost is also Aided. If the Aid result for the base cost is 20 Character Points, the Energy Blast is only Aided by 15 Character Points — the smaller of the two amounts.

**Multiple-Power Attacks**

Character cannot combine two or more Powers from the same Elemental Control into a multiple-power attack (see page 358) without the GM's permission.

**Power Skill**

If a character wishes to buy the *Power* Skill for his Elemental Control, he need only buy one such Skill for the entire EC — for example, "Fire Powers 13-" for EC: Fire Powers. He can use that Skill with any slot in the EC.

## Acceptable Elemental Controls

The GM must approve all proposed Elemental Controls. He should reject any proposed EC that doesn't have a sufficiently common special effect defining it and linking its slots. If possible, the GM should prepare a list of "acceptable ECs" before the game begins and distribute it to the players.

Most Elemental Controls should be based on typical special effects such as ice/cold, fire/heat, earth/stone, air/wind, weather, metal, telekinetic powers, and the like. In some instances, EC powers can be based on the character's species or race, such as EC: Vampire Powers or EC: Werewolf Powers. However, treat "racial ECs" cautiously; they work best when other characters are likely to know what the EC powers are (most people could tell you what powers a vampire has, for example) or when the characters will quickly learn what those powers are (after just one or two encounters with the Rigellians, the PCs know that all Rigellians have certain abilities, defined as an EC: Rigellian Powers).

You should view Elemental Controls that represent the abilities common to all members of a group even more suspiciously. As often as not, such a "common special effect" is really a thinly-veiled excuse to buy "all the powers I want for a big discount." For example, all wizards belonging to the High Guild of Magery possess certain magic powers. Are these powers good candidates for an EC? It depends on how well-known the High Mages and their powers are, what they have in common in terms of special effects, and so forth.

As a good guideline, consider the special effects of and powers in an Elemental Control in light of the rules for Adjustment Powers, above. Does it make sense that all of the powers in the EC you're considering would be Drained at once by a single use of Drain? Are they that related? Can you conceive of a special effect for a Drain that would affect all of the powers in the EC at once (for example, a fire extinguisher or lack of oxygen for Fire Powers)? If the answer to any of these questions is "No," then allowing the character to buy an EC probably isn't a good idea.

Another good guideline is that most Elemental Controls should have only one Power of each general function: one Attack Power, one Defense Power, one Movement Power, and perhaps one Sensory Power. Elemental Controls that have a lot of Attack Powers, or Powers of any other one function, are less likely to be valid than those with a broad range of types of Powers. Of course, special effects influence this; an EC: Fire Powers might very well have several Attack Powers, whereas EC: Force Field Powers might concentrate on defense.

See the sidebar for some example Elemental Controls.

### ELEMENTAL CONTROL EXAMPLES

Some example Elemental Controls include:

Mental Powers:

Ego Attack

Mental Illusions

Mind Control

Mind Control, Area Effect

Telekinetic Powers:

Telekinesis

Telekinetic Shield (bought as Force Field)

Telekinetic Fist (bought as Energy Blast, physical attack)

Weather Powers:

Fog (bought as Change Environment)

Whirlwinds (bought as Telekinesis, Area Effect)

Wind Riding (bought as Flight)

Lightning Bolts (bought as Energy Blast)

Weather Control (bought as Change Environment)

Fire Powers:

Heatwave (bought as Energy Blast)

Fireball (Energy Blast, Explosion)

Fire Blast (bought as a Continuous RKA)

Fire Field (Missile Deflection — melt any physical projectile)

Fireriding (Flight)

**ELEMENTAL CONTROL EXAMPLE**

*Bruce is building Snowblind and decides to buy some of her powers in an Elemental Control. Since her powers are based on cold, EC: Ice Powers seems appropriate. Bruce decides Snowblind's powers would generally be about 50 points, so the cost for the base Elemental Control should be 25 Character Points. The powers Bruce wants are Ice Bonds (Entangle), Ice Slides (Running), Ice Armor (Force Field), Ice Darts (Energy Blast, Armor Piercing), and Ice Wall (Force Wall, only 4 uses per day). See the Ice Powers (I) boxed text for the final result.*

## ELEMENTAL CONTROL: ICE POWERS (I)

| Power | Active Cost | Base Cost | Remaining Cost | Real Cost |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Elemental Control: Ice Powers** | 25 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| *Ice Bonds:* Entangle (5d6, 5 DEF) | 50 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Ice Slides: Running 20", ½ END (+¼ ) | 50 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| *Ice Armor:* Force Field (20 PD/15 ED), 0 END (+½) | 52 | 25 | 27 | 27 |
| *Ice Darts:* Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+½) | 60 | 25 | 35 | 35 |
| *Ice Wall:* Force Wall (12 PD/8 ED); 4 Charges (-1) | 50 | 25 | 25 | 12 |
| **Total Cost** | | | | **149** |

*Several of Snowblind's powers have Advantages, such as Reduced Endurance or Armor Piercing; these Advantages work with the entire Power, not just that part of the Power bought through the slot.*

*Bruce decides 149 points is too expensive for Snowblind, so he decides to take a -¼ Limitation* Will Not Work In Hot Or Dry Conditions, *on all slots (and thus on the base cost as well). See the Ice Powers (II) boxed text for the final result.*

## ELEMENTAL CONTROL: ICE POWERS (II)

| Power | Active Cost | Base Cost | Remaining Cost | Real Cost |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Elemental Control: Ice Powers,** Will Not Work In Hot Or Dry Conditions (-¼) | 25 | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| Ice Bonds: Entangle (5d6, 5 DEF) | 50 | 25 | 25 | 20 |
| Ice Slides: Running 20", ½ END (+¼) | 50 | 25 | 25 | 20 |
| Ice Armor: Force Field (20 PD/15 ED), 0 END (+½) | 52 | 25 | 27 | 22 |
| Ice Darts: Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+½) | 60 | 25 | 35 | 28 |
| Ice Wall: Force Wall (12 PD/8 ED); 4 Charges (-1) | 50 | 25 | 25 | 11 |
| **Total Cost** | | | | **121** |

# MULTIPOWER ⚠

Cost: 1 Character Point for every 1 point in the Multipower reserve; slots in the reserve cost their Real Points divided by 5 or by 10, depending on the type of slot

A character with a Multipower has several different Powers that draw from a common pool of Character Points (known as a *Multipower reserve*). After buying the Multipower reserve, the character buys the powers that draw off of the reserve. He may change the distribution of reserve points from Phase to Phase, but because the powers in the Multipower share the reserve points, a character cannot use all the powers in his Multipower at full power at the same time.

## Buying A Multipower

Buying a Multipower is basically a two-step process. First, the character buys the Multipower reserve. Second, he buys the slots for the Multipower (*i.e.,* the powers to which he can allocate reserve points).

**BUYING THE MULTIPOWER RESERVE**

First, a character pays Character Points for the Multipower reserve. The number of points in the reserve equals the number of Character Points spent on it (before applying any Advantages or Limitations). In short, each point of a Multipower reserve costs 1 Character Point.

No power in a Multipower can have an Active Point cost greater than the *base cost* of the Multipower reserve — the amount of Character Points spent on the reserve before any Advantages or Limitations are applied. Even if a character takes an Advantage on his Multipower reserve, each slot still cannot exceed the base (unmodified) cost of the reserve.

Example: *Kerendor, High Priest of the Cult of the Raven, buys a Multipower of weather powers. He decides to make the Multipower reserve 60 points (which costs him 60 Character Points). That means no power he buys in the Multipower may have more than 60 Active Points.*

Example: *Lazer, a laser rifle-wielding supervillain, also decides to buy a Multipower with a 60-point reserve, to define the different types of laser beams his rifle can project. He applies the Advantage* 64 Charges *(+½) to the reserve (since the rifle's battery has enough energy for 64 shots). That increases the reserve's cost to 90 points (60 x (1+½)) — but regardless of this increase, no power Lazer buys in the Multipower can exceed 60 Active Points.*

**BUYING SLOTS**

After buying the reserve, the character pays Character Points for each slot in his Multipower. Here's how to determine the cost of a slot:

1. First, the character determines the base cost of the power he wants. For example, if he wanted one of the slots to be an Energy Blast 8d6, the base cost would be 40 Character Points.

2. Second, he applies any Advantages or Adders he wants (if any) to determine the Active Points in the power (if he ends up with a fractional result, he applies the standard rounding rules). For example, if he wanted his Energy Blast 8d6 to be Armor Piercing, he'd apply that +½ Advantage, for a total of 60 Active Points. If he didn't want any Advantages for his Energy Blast, the slot would have 40 Active Points.

Remember, no power in a Multipower can have an Active Point cost greater than the *base cost* of the Multipower reserve (see above).

3. Third, he applies any Limitations he wants to take for the power to derive a Real Point cost (he rounds again if he ends up with a fractional result). For example, if he wanted his Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (60 Active Points) to have Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END; -1), he'd apply that to get a final Real Point cost of 30 points.

4. Lastly, he divides the Real Point cost by 10 or by 5, depending on how he can use the slot (again applying normal rounding rules if he gets a fractional result). That determines the Character Point cost he must pay for the slot. There are two types of slots: Fixed slots and Flexible slots.

A character does not have to make a slot's Active Point cost equal the full value of the Multipower reserve. He can buy a slot that's smaller than the full reserve if he wants to. For example, if a character has a Multipower with a reserve of 75 points, he could buy a slot in it that was an Energy Blast 9d6 (which has only 45 Active Points).

**Fixed Slots**

Typically, a character defines his Multipower slots as "Fixed." The amount of reserve points a character must assign to a Fixed slot (also called an "ultra") is determined when the power is bought — it equals the Active Points in the power. The Character Point cost of a Fixed slot equals its Real Point cost divided by 10.

**Cost of a Fixed slot = (Real Points in slot/10)**

When a character uses a Fixed slot, he must always allocate reserve points equal to the Active Points of the power in the slot. For example, if a character has a Fixed slot with 50 Active Points, he must always assign 50 points' worth of his Multipower reserve to that slot when he uses it — even if he uses it at less that 50 Active Points' worth of effect. A character doesn't have to use a power in a Fixed slot at full effect, but it always occupies its full amount of Multipower reserve points even when used at less than full strength.

Example: *Kerendor decides to buy the following Multipower:*

| | |
|---|---|
| 60 | *Magical Powers:* Multipower, 60-point reserve |
| 12m | 1) *Wind Riding:* Flight 30" |
| 12m | 2) *Lightning Bolt:* Energy Blast 12d6 |
| 5u | 3) *Wall Of Wind:* Force Field (25 PD/25 ED) |

**Total cost: 89 points.**

*The third slot in Kerendor's Multipower, Wall Of Wind, is a Force Field with 50 Active Points. He's defined it as a Fixed slot (as indicated by the "u" next to its cost, for "ultra"). That means it costs him (50/10) = 5 Character Points, less than the costs of either of the other two slots. However, when he uses his Force Field, he must always assign 50 points' worth of his 60-point reserve to it — no more, no less. Even if he uses less than 50 Active Points' worth of Force Field, he still has to allocate 50 reserve points to the slot. For example, he could use only 20 Active Points' worth of his Force Field, giving him a 10 PD/10 ED Force Field — but even so, he has to put 50 of his reserve points into the Force Field slot to use it. Therefore he only has 10 reserve points left to divide between his Flight and Energy Blast slots (they're Flexible slots; see below).*

*Suppose Kerendor puts a Limitation on his Force Field — Obvious Accessible Focus (-1). In that case, the slot still has an Active Point cost of 50, but its Real Point cost becomes (50/(1+1)) = 25 Character Points. That means the slot costs him (25/10) = 2.5, which rounds down to 2 Character Points. Despite this, whenever Kerendor uses his Force Field, he must put 50 points of his reserve into Force Field, even if he uses less than the full 50 Active Points in the power.*

**Flexible Slots**

Alternately, a character can define one or more slots as "Flexible." The cost of a Flexible Multipower slot (also called a "multi") equals its Real Point cost divided by 5.

**Cost of Flexible slot = (Real Points in slot/5)**

When a character uses a Flexible slot, the maximum amount of reserve points he may assign to it equals the Active Points in the power in the slot. However, he can allocate fewer reserve points than its Active Points if he wants to. The benefit of having a Flexible slot is that a character may, if he wishes, allocate fewer reserve points to the slot than the slot's Active Points — which means he can save some reserve points to assign to other slots.

If a character chooses to assign fewer reserve points to a Flexible slot than the slot's Active Points, he may only use a number of Active Points in that power equal to the reserve points assigned. For example, suppose a character buys a Drain STR 6d6 (60 Active Points) as a Flexible slot in a Multipower with a 60-point reserve (cost of the slot: 12 Char-





acter Points). If he only assigns 40 points of the reserve to the Drain STR, he can only use 4d6 of it (40 Active Points' worth).

Example: *Take another look at Kerendor's Multipower:*

60 *Magical Powers:* Multipower, 60-point reserve
12m 1) *Wind Riding:* Flight 30"
12m 2) *Lightning Bolt:* Energy Blast 12d6
5u 3) *Wall Of Wind:* Force Field (25 PD/25 ED)

**Total cost: 89 points.**

*As you can see, the first two slots are Flexible slots (as indicated by the "m" next to their cost, for "multi"). They cost more than the third slot because their Active Point costs (both are 60 Active Points) are divided by 5. But Kerendor can choose to assign less than the full 60-point reserve to either of them. For example, he could assign 30 points to Lightning Bolt and 30 points to Wind Riding, giving him an Energy Blast 6d6 and Flight 15". (Compare this to the Fixed slot example, where Kerendor must assign 50 points of the Multipower reserve to Force Field even if he uses less than 50 Active Points' worth of the power.) Other possible combinations include 40 points in Flight (20") and 20 in Energy Blast (4d6), 60 points in Energy Blast (12d6) and 0 in Flight (0"), or any other combination between the two that adds up to 60 points. If he wants to use the Force Field, that automatically requires 50 reserve points, leaving only 10 reserve points for the other two slots — enough for Flight 5" or a measly Energy Blast 2d6.*

Example: *Suppose Kerendor buys his Multipower with all Flexible slots, as follows:*

60 *Magical Powers:* Multipower, 60-point reserve
12m 1) *Wind Riding:* Flight 30"
12m 2) *Lightning Bolt:* Energy Blast 12d6
12m 3) *Wall Of Wind:* Force Field (30 PD/30 ED)

**Total cost: 96 points.**

*This allows Kerendor to assign his 60 reserve points however he wants, though the total assigned to the three slots can't exceed 60. Suppose he distributes his 60 point reserve as follows: 10 points to Flight, 40 points to Energy Blast, and 10 points to Force Field. This would let him fly up to 5", fire up to an EB 8d6, and have a Force Field (5 PD/5 ED) — all at the same time. If Kerendor wanted to do more damage with his Energy Blast, he'd have to take reserve points out of Flight or Force Field; for instance, he could take the 10 reserve points from Flight and put them in the Energy Blast. This would give him 50 reserve points in Energy Blast (so he could do 10d6), but then he couldn't fly at the same time. Some possible variations:*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *1) 60* | *1) 10* | *1) 10* | *1) 30* |
| *2) 0* | *2) 20* | *2) 40* | *2) 0* |
| *3) 0* | *3) 30* | *3) 10* | *3) 30* |

*If Kerendor didn't want one of the slots to be able to use the entire reserve, he could buy that particular slot with less than 60 Active Points. For example, he could buy Flight 15" (30 Active Points). That would cost him only (30/5 =) 6*

*Character Points, but he couldn't use more than 30 Character Points of Flight, even if there were more than 30 points left in the reserve.*

By properly structuring a Multipower with Flexible slots, you can create a character with a lot of tactical and roleplaying flexibility. But using a Multipower with Flexible slots requires some thought, since you have to evaluate the possible options during the game and choose the one best suited to the character's current situation. It may help you to figure out some commonly-used allocations in advance so you can pick them quickly during the game.

**Reserve Allocation And Advantages**

As with Elemental Controls, a power with an Advantage is perfectly acceptable as a slot in a Multipower. (See below for some special rules about buying Advantages for Multipowers.) However, the Active Points in the slot still cannot exceed the base cost of the Multipower reserve. When the character allocates reserve points to an Advantaged slot, he has to account for the Advantage (in other words, he has to include it when calculating how much of the power he can use).

Example: *Kerendor decides his Multipower would be more useful if some of the powers in it cost less END to use, and if his Wall Of Wind was tougher. He raises the reserve to 62 points and changes the way he bought each power, with the following results.*

62 *Magical Powers:* Multipower, 62-point reserve
12m 1) *Wind Riding:* Flight 25", Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
12m 2) *Lightning Bolt:* Energy Blast 10d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)
12m 3) *Wall Of Wind:* Force Field (25 PD/ED), Hardened (+¼)

**Total cost: 98 points.**

*Kerendor has to account for the Advantages on a slot when assigning reserve points to it. For example, if he assigns 30 reserve points to Wind Riding, he doesn't get Flight 15", he gets Flight 12" — the 30 points has to pay for the +¼ Advantage, too, and that means only 24 base points of Flight (since 24 x (1+¼) = 30).*

## POWER ADVANTAGES ON MULTIPOWERS

An Advantage purchased for a slot affects only that slot; it does not affect the Multipower reserve.

Example: *Yong Chu buys a Multipower of various HTH Combat attacks representing her special martial arts prowess. One of the slots is a Deadly Blow, defined as an HKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+½). The Armor Piercing Advantage applies only to that slot; it has no effect on the other slots or on the Multipower as a whole.*

**Advantages For Multipower Reserves**

An Advantage taken for the Multipower reserve applies to all slots automatically; each slot does not have to purchase the Advantage again. Gamemasters should be wary of this; don't let a character apply an Advantage like *Armor Piercing* or *Reduced Endurance* to a Multipower reserve as a cheap way of applying it to all slots unless he has an extremely good justification and it fits his character conception and special effects well. (In particular, GMs should usually require characters to buy Reduced Endurance for each slot, not for the reserve as a whole.) The preferred method is to buy an Advantage for each slot, even if each slot has the same Advantage.

If a character is allowed to apply an Advantage just to the reserve so that it affects all the slots, that Advantage does not affect the cost of the slots. For example, suppose a character has a Multipower with a 50-point reserve and three ultra slots (each costing 5 Character Points). He applies the Advantage *Personal Immunity* (+¼) to the reserve. The cost of the slots remains 5 Character Points each; it doesn't become 6 points each.

If a character is allowed to apply an Advantage just to the reserve so that it affects all the slots, that Advantage does not affect the allocation of reserve points. For example, suppose a character has a Multipower with a 50-point reserve and three ultra slots (each costing 5 Character Points). One of the slots is an Energy Blast 10d6. He applies the Advantage *Personal Immunity* (+¼) to the reserve. When he allocates the 50 reserve points to the Energy Blast, he still gets an Energy Blast 10d6; he doesn't have to account for the +¼ Advantage (which would otherwise limit him to an Energy Blast 8d6).

If a character has a Multipower that has an Advantage, he's not restricted to buying powers that could only have that Advantage. For example, a character whose Multipower has the Advantage *Reduced Endurance* or *Armor Piercing* could buy Life Support in that Multipower , even though Life Support already costs no END and applying AP to it is meaningless. In that case, the Advantage simply has no effect and the points spent on it are (temporarily) wasted. However, if the rules make it illegal to apply that Advantage to a particular Power, the character cannot buy that Power in the Multipower at all. (The illogicality of buying Life Support in a Pool that has Armor Piercing is a good argument against applying Advantages to Multipowers; the preferred method is, as always, to apply the Advantage to the individual powers, not to the Multipower.)

A character may not partially Advantage a Multipower reserve unless the GM permits him to. However, he may have a partially-Advantaged power as a slot in a Multipower.

## POWER LIMITATIONS ON MULTIPOWERS

Characters may apply Power Limitations to Multipowers. Depending on the nature of the power being built, a Limitation may apply only to a single slot, only to the Multipower reserve, or to all slots and the reserve.

If a Limitation applies to a slot within the Multipower, then it decreases the cost of that slot only. It has no effect on the cost of the Multipower reserve.

If a Limitation affects only the Multipower as a whole, or only the character's ability to change slots, then it applies only to the Multipower reserve. The most common example of this is taking Charges for the entire Multipower (see below). Other possibilities include Extra Time (it takes the character longer than normal to distribute his reserve points), Concentration (the character suffers a reduced DCV and PER Rolls when distributing his reserve points), or the like. The GM may alter the value of a Limitation taken just for a Multipower reserve if he thinks that would be appropriate.

If a Limitation applies to the whole Multipower — if it affects all uses of the reserve and every slot — then the Limitation reduces the cost of the Multipower reserve *and* the slots. This most commonly occurs when the Multipower represents the different abilities provided by a gadget of some sort: in that case, the reserve and all slots take the same *Focus* Limitation. (See *Varying Limitations,* below.)

If every slot in a Multipower takes the same Limitation, then the character may also apply that Limitation to the Multipower reserve to reduce its cost (*Charges* is an exception [see below]; so is *Variable Limitations*). However, the Limitation does not affect the character's ability to distribute reserve points or the like. For example, if every slot in the Multipower requires Gestures (-¼), to use, the character may apply the *Gestures* (-¼) Limitation to the reserve cost — but he doesn't have to Gesture to distribute reserve points.

Example: *Armadillo has a suit of powered armor with blasters built into it. Depending on how he uses the blasters, they can function as an Energy Blast, as a Killing Attack, or as Tunneling. Since he can't use them all at once at full power, he decides to build them as a Multipower with a 62-point reserve. He wants his Multipower to be adaptable, so he has three Flexible slots, each with a maximum of 62 Character Points. He buys the whole Multipower through a suit of powered armor, which is an Obvious Inaccessible Focus (a -½ Limitation). Since this affects all the slots in the Multipower, it also limits the reserve. Armadillo also decides the Energy Blast isn't always reliable, so he buys it with a 14- Activation Roll (a -½ Limitation.) Since that Limitation doesn't affect all the powers in the Multipower, only that particular slot receives the Limitation. The costs for Armadillo's Multipower reserve and slots are:*

## ARMADILLO'S MULTIPOWER

| Slot Cost | Real Points | Active Points | Maximum Points In Slot | Power |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 41 | 41 | 62 | — | Powered Armor Blasters: Multipower Reserve; OIF (powered armor suit; -½) |
| 6m | 31 | 62 | 62 | Slot 1: up to EB 10d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½) |
| 5m | 25 | 37 | 37 | Slot 2: up to RKA 2d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (-½) |
| 8m | 40 | 60 | 60 | Slot 3: up to Tunneling 12" through 12 DEF materials; OIF (-½) |

**Total cost: 60 points**

As discussed on page 311, if a character wants to apply a Limitation to both the basic cost of a Multipower and all of its slots, the Limitation must be exactly the same on each slot. If a character has the same value of Limitations on each slot, but the Limitations themselves differ, he may not take that value of Limitation on the reserve. Nor may he apply the *Variable Limitations* Limitation to the reserve. Similarly, a character may not apply the same Limitation with different values to each slot, then apply the lowest value of that Limitation to the reserve (unless the GM permits this, in which case the lowest value of the Limitation applies to the reserve). However, with the GM's permission, if a character applies slightly different variations of the same Limitation to all the slots in a Multipower, and those Limitations all have the same value, he can apply that Limitation value to the reserve. (This most commonly occurs with the Limitations *Requires A Skill Roll* and *Side Effects.*)

*Examples: Mirage has a Multipower with three slots. Each slot has Extra Time: one takes a Full Phase to use, one takes 1 Turn to use, and the third also takes 1 Turn to use. She may not apply Extra Time to the reserve, because even though every slot has Extra Time, the values for Extra Time differ.*

*Deltarion Bloodlock has a Multipower of spells. Each spell has the* Requires A Skill Roll *Limitation at a -½ value, but the Skill used for each slot differs. He may apply Requires A Skill Roll (-½) to the Multipower reserve "generically," since even though the rolls differ, the value of the Limitation is the same for each slot.*

*The Slug has a Multipower with six slots. Each slot has a total of -2 worth of Limitations, but the Limitations differ from slot to slot. The Slug may not take a -2 Limitation on the reserve.*

*Jason Starward builds a blaster pistol defined as a Multipower. Each slot in the Multipower has the* Side Effects *Limitation with a -¼ value, but the Side Effects for each slot differ — sometimes the pistol blows up in his hand, sometimes battery acid leaks out, and so on. He may apply Side Effects (-¼) to the Multipower reserve "generically," since even though the effects differ, the value of the Limitation is the same for each slot.*

A character may not partially Limit a Multipower reserve unless the GM permits him to. However, he may have a partially-Limited power as a slot in a Multipower.

**Varying Limitations**

In some instances, characters may apply the same Limitation to the Multipower reserve and to each of the slots, but in slightly different ways. This is most common with the *Focus* Limitation. For example, a character who carries several different

types of guns (or other weapons) may want to buy them through a Multipower, since he can only use one gun at a time. Each slot is an Obvious Accessible Focus (-1). Normally he would then take OAF as a Limitation on the Multipower reserve. However, that would mean an enemy could disarm him by taking the reserve away from him. This makes no sense at all, since his Multipower is a group of guns, and generally any single attack could only take one gun away from him. So he buys the Multipower reserve as an Obvious *Inaccessible* Focus (-½). This simulates the fact that it takes a long time (at least a Turn) to take away all of the character's weapons. Alternately, he could define the reserve as being an OIF Gunbelt — the OAF guns are all carried on the same Focus, but it takes a long time to get that one Focus away because it's an OIF. The character still gets the full -1 value of the *OAF* Limitation on each slot; he does not have to reduce it to -½ because he's already applied OIF (-½) to the Multipower reserve. He does not, however, get to apply both the OIF and OAF Limitations to each slot; the OAF in effect "overrides" the OIF for the slots.

**Charges**

Special rules apply when a character takes the Power Modifier *Charges* for a Multipower reserve or slots. For example, characters often do this to simulate a weapon with multiple settings (Multipower slots) that's powered by a single "battery" (represented by a set amount of Charges). In this case, the Multipower *as a whole* has as many Charges as are bought for the reserve; each slot does not have that many Charges — all the slots, taken together, have that many Charges. The Modifier value applies only to the reserve, not to any slot. Conversely, if the character decides each slot has its own supply of "power" or "ammunition," he applies the appropriate *Charges* Modifier to each slot, but *not* to the reserve, even if each slot has the same amount of Charges.

Example: *Lazer builds a laser rifle defined as a Multipower with four slots: Energy Blast, Armor Piercing Energy Blast, Energy Blast with No Range Modifier, and a Ranged Killing Attack. The rifle is an Obvious Accessible Focus (-1), so that Limitation applies to the Multipower reserve and to each slot. There is only one power supply for the whole rifle, so Lazer buys 64 Charges (+½) for the reserve. This means he can shoot the rifle 64 times before he needs to "reload" it. Regardless of which slots he uses, there are only 64 Charges' worth of "ammunition" for the entire Multipower. Since he's applied the Charges Advantage to the reserve, he doesn't apply it to each slot.*

*After he builds each slot, Lazer discovers he has taken the Limitation No Knockback (-¼) for each slot. Since he's applied that Limitation to every slot, he can apply it to the Multipower reserve as well. Lazer's completed Multipower looks like this:*

*Since all of the slots in Lazer's Multipower are ultras, and each has 60 Active Points, they each require 60 points' worth of the reserve. That means he can only use one slot at a time.*

If a slot in a Multipower with Charges on the reserve requires more than 1 Charge to use, that slot may take the *Requires Multiple Charges* Limitation (see page 306).

If a character has Charges for a Multipower reserve, he may want to make one of the slots function as if Charges assigned to it were Continuing Charges. To do this, he calculates the value of the Continuing Charges by subtracting the value of the Charges on the reserve from the standard value of the same number of Continuing Charges. Then he applies the remainder to the slot as an Advantage (or Limitation, if it is one).

Example: *A Multipower has 32 Charges (+¼) on its reserve. One slot is Darkness, which the character wants to last for 1 Turn. Normally, 32 Charges lasting 1 Turn each is a +¾ Advantage. So, +¾ - +¼ = a +½ Advantage on the slot.*

## Using Multipowers

Using a Multipower requires you to distribute (or allocate) reserve points, and may have other effects during the game.

### DISTRIBUTING MULTIPOWER POINTS

A character can change the way his Multipower reserve points are distributed or allocated as a Zero Phase Action. However, unless the GM permits otherwise, he may not distribute or allocate reserve points more than once in a Phase. For example, he could not allocate reserve points to a Teleportation slot at the beginning of his Phase, make a Half Move with Teleportation, then reallocate points to his Energy Blast slot and attack with the Energy Blast — having allocated his reserve points once already at the beginning of his Phase, he cannot change that allocation until his next Phase (or unless he Aborts to do so in a later Segment).

## LASER'S MULTIPOWER

| Slot Cost | Real Points | Active Points | Maximum Points In Slot | Power |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 40 | 90 | — | Laser Rifle: Multipower, 60-point reserve, 64 Charges (+½) for entire reserve; all slots OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼) |
| 3u | 27 | 60 | 60 | Slot 1: Energy Blast 12d6; OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼) |
| 3u | 27 | 60 | 60 | Slot 2: Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (+½); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼) |
| 3u | 27 | 60 | 60 | Slot 3: Energy Blast 8d6, No Range Modifier (+½); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼) |
| 3u | 27 | 60 | 60 | Slot 4: RKA 4d6; OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼) |

**Total cost: 52 points**

Between Phases a character can only allocate reserve points by Aborting his next Phase (see page 361). Of course, he can only do this if it would constitute a defensive action.

If the GM has imposed a minimum point cost on a power, or the power inherently has a "minimum cost" (for example, Desolidification always costs 40 points), that power won't work in a Multipower unless the character allocates reserve points to that slot equal to the minimum point cost of the power. For example, to use a Desolidification slot, a character must allocate at least 40 reserve points to it. (Of course, if the Desolidification has Advantages, the allocation of reserve points has to cover the power's full Active Point cost.)

There's no number limit on the number of slots a character could have activated at any one time. The only restriction is the size of the Multipower reserve.

**Adders**

As noted on page 246, a character doesn't always have to use the Adders on a power. If a character has a power with an Adder in a Flexible slot, he doesn't have to allocate reserve points to the Adder if he's not using that Adder (but the Adder still affects the END cost of the power). If the slot is Fixed, the allocated amount is set, and doesn't change regardless of whether he uses the Adder.

**LOSING POWERS**

Multipowers are often used to define groups of weapons or gadgets. The "collection of guns" Multipower discussed above is a good example of this; so is a superhero's "utility belt" that contains pouches holding various small, useful gadgets.

With this sort of Multipower, in which the slots and the reserve typically all have a *Focus* Limitation of some sort, a character sometimes "loses" slots. Maybe he's disarmed and loses one of his weapons, or perhaps he accidentally breaks his flashlight. This does *not* mean he's lost all use of his Multipower — that would be illogical, to say the least. It just means he's lost the use of that slot. He can use the other slots as normal.

Losing the reserve is a different story. If the reserve — the gun harness, the utility belt itself, or what have you — is taken away, any weapons or gadgets bought through the Multipower go with it: that's the price of buying an entire Multipower through a Focus. (Of course, if the character was holding one of the Multipower gadgets when the reserve's Focus was taken, he still retains the use of that one gadget.)

A character should not use a Multipower as a cheap way of buying a lot of weapons or gadgets so he can hand them out to his friends. There can still only be as many slots active in the Multipower at once as its reserve allows. A character losing a weapon or gadget doesn't count as "using" that slot, but giving the weapon or device to another character does.

# VARIABLE POWER POOL STOP

Cost: Pool cost is 1 Character Point per 1 Character Point in Pool, Control Cost is half the Pool Cost. A Skill to modify the VPP, if desired, costs 3 points for a 9 + INT/5 roll, +1 to the roll per +2 points.

A character with a Variable Power Pool ("VPP") establishes a pool of Character Points that he can use to create any power, or any power within a defined group of powers (typically, a set of powers limited to a particular special effect). Think of a VPP as a Multipower that has all of the powers of a certain type or special effect. The character distributes the points in the Pool among whatever powers he wants to have at a given time.

Typically, the powers created with a Variable Power Pool are linked by common special effects, such as "gadgets," "magic," "fire/flame," or "mentalism." This allows a character to create a wide variety of powers and effects without having to try to think of every possible application of his powers in advance and buy them separately.

## Buying A Variable Power Pool

A VPP consists of two parts: the *Pool* (the pool of Character Points the character uses to buy powers) and the *Control Cost.* The Pool costs 1 Character Point per point in the Pool. The Control Cost is 1 Character Point for every 2 Character Points in the Pool (*i.e.,* it's half the Pool cost; normal *HERO System* rounding rules apply).

Example: *The Emerald Guardian wants to have a Variable Power Pool of 50 Character Points. That means he must spend a total of 75 points — 50 points for the Pool and 25 points for the Control Cost.*

No power in a VPP can have an Active Point cost greater than the Pool cost. For example, if a VPP has a total cost of 75 (50 for the Pool Cost, 25 for the Control Cost), no power built with the VPP can have more than 50 Active Points.

Characters may apply Advantages and Limitations to Variable Power Pools. Advantages and Limitations apply *only to the Control Cost.* Characters never apply Advantages or Limitations to the Pool cost; it always remains unmodified.

**ADVANTAGES FOR VARIABLE POWER POOLS**

With the GM's permission, a character can take an Advantage (such as Reduced Endurance or Armor Piercing) on a VPP and have that Advantage apply to all powers built with the VPP, using the same rules for doing this with a Multipower (see above). (The GM may want to forbid characters to apply certain Advantages to a VPP, such as Variable Advantage or Variable Special Effects, on the grounds they're unbalancing or conflict with the purpose or nature of the Pool.) The Advantage does

not increase the number of Pool points the character has to spend on powers, nor does it increase the number of Active Points an individual Pool power can have.

Example: *A character has a 100-point Variable Power Pool bought with the Advantage Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) so that none of the powers bought through the Pool costs END. He cannot buy a power in that Pool with more than 100 Active Points, nor a total Real Points' worth of powers in excess of 100 points. The +½ Advantage doesn't increase the number of Active Points a power can have, nor the total Real Points' worth of powers the character can have in the Pool at once — it just makes all the powers in the Pool cost 0 END.*

A character with an Advantaged VPP can create a power with it whose Active Points exceed the points in the Pool solely because of application of the Advantage on the VPP — the Active Point total that matters for these purposes is the power's Active Points without the Advantage. For example, using the 100-point VPP described above, a character could buy an Energy Blast 20d6 with it, since that's 100 Active Points — even though the +½ Advantage would make the EB cost "150 Active Points" if it were applied to the EB separately.

If a character has a VPP that has an Advantage, he's not restricted to buying powers that could only have that Advantage. For example, a character whose VPP has the Advantage *Reduced Endurance* or *Armor Piercing* could buy Life Support in that VPP, even though Life Support already costs no END and applying AP to it is meaningless. In that case, the Advantage simply has no effect and the points spent on it are (temporarily) wasted. However, if the rules make it illegal to apply that Advantage to a particular Power, the character cannot buy that Power in the VPP at all. (The illogicality of buying Life Support in a Pool that has Armor Piercing is a good argument against applying Advantages to Pools; the preferred method is, as always, to apply the Advantage to the individual powers, not to the Pool.)

As always, the GM should examine VPPs with Advantages very carefully before allowing them in play. They have the potential to unbalance the campaign, so a character should have a good reason (other than "being really powerful" or "saving points") for buying one.

### LIMITATIONS FOR VARIABLE POWER POOLS

There are three kinds of Limitations on the Control Cost. The first is Limitations that affect when the character can change powers. For example, maybe a character can only change his powers between adventures, a certain number of times per day (Charges), after consulting his grimoire, or after spending a Turn in meditation. This type of Limitation applies only to the Control Cost itself; the slots in the Variable Power Pool don't also take it.

The second is Limitations that affect the types of powers that the character can create with the



### EXAMPLE VARIABLE POWER POOLS

Gadget Pool: The standard Gadget Pool usually has the *Focus* Limitation and *Can Only Be Changed In A Laboratory* (-½). You can reduce or eliminate the latter Limitation to simulate gadgeteers who can make alterations "in the field." If the GM allows the character to buy an Automaton, Computer, or Vehicle through his Gadget Pool, the character must pay the full cost for it (not its cost divided by 5), and cannot use the 5-point doubling rule to buy more of them (see page 456). VPP Skill: Gadgeteering.

Magic Pool: This VPP represents a magician who must prepare his spells and who has a spell book. The Limitation on the Control Cost is *Need Bulky Spell Book To Change Spells* (-½). You can remove this Limitation to simulate mages who are so skilled they can make up spells in the field. VPP Skill: Magic Skill.

Continued on next page



Power Pool; this usually reflects the special effect that defines the VPP. Some examples include VPPs that may only be used for Fire powers, for attacks, for Transforms, or to simulate animal powers. This type of Limitation also applies only to the Control Cost; the slots don't take it.

The third type of Limitation affects the powers bought through the power Pool. This sort of Limitation is taken for both the Control Cost *and* for any powers built with the power Pool (though it does not necessarily have to be taken at the same value, in the GM's discretion). For example, a VPP defined as a character's gadgets would have to take a *Focus* Limitation on the Control Cost (typically OIF, defined as "a large collection of gadgets and the spare parts to build more"). Every power built with that VPP would also have to take the *Focus* Limitation at -½ value or greater (they could be IAFs or OAFs, but not IIFs).

**Limitations For VPP Slots**

Special considerations apply to the way characters take Limitations for VPP powers. A VPP that a character can easily change isn't very restricted by any given Limitation, since the character can switch to another power that doesn't suffer from that Limitation if a situation arises where it would hinder the power. Therefore, unless the character's ability to change VPP powers is restricted, characters should take few, if any, Limitations on VPP powers. All such Limitations are subject to GM approval.

The *Charges* Limitation is a special case. If the GM allows it, a character may take Charges for a VPP power. However, if he switches to another power, he must keep track of the first power's Charges. When he switches back to the first power, he does not get a new, full supply of Charges — he must pick up where he left off before. This most often occurs with Gadget VPP Pools featuring guns and similar weapons. The GM may apply this to other Limitations, such as Jam or Burnout.

Example: *Technon has a 30 point Gadget Power Pool. All of his gadgets are OAFs and must take that -1 Limitation, so that Limitation can also apply to the Control Cost if Technon wishes. Technon pays 30 points for the Pool Cost and (15/(1+1)) = 7 points for the Control Cost, for a total cost of 37 points for his VPP. The total Real Point cost of all gadgets in the VPP cannot exceed 30 points, and no gadget can have more than 30 Active Points. Technon's Power Pool currently has 3 items: HKA 2d6 (OAF Buzzsaw; costs (30/(1+1)) = 15 points); Flight 8" (OAF Detachable Jetpack; costs (16/(1+1)) = 8 points); and Armor (5 PD/5 ED) (OAF Shield; costs (15/(1+1)) = 7 points). He cannot have any more gadgets, since these three use up his total of 30 points, but he could, with sufficient time and after making an appropriate Skill Roll, change the gadgets in combat.*

## VARIABLE POWER POOL LIMITATIONS

Here are some typical Limitations taken for VPPs.

| Value | Limitation |
|---|---|
| -¼ | VPP Can Only Be Changed Between Scenes (takes hours) |
| -½ | VPP Can Only Be Changed Between Adventures (takes days) |
| -½ | VPP Powers Can Be Changed Only In Given Circumstance (for example, character must touch target; only under a full moon; only when character has access to his bulky spell book and time to study it; only in a lab or arsenal) |
| -½ | Character Has No Choice Regarding How Powers Change (he can control *when* they change — he just can't control what new powers he gets when the Pool changes) |
| -1 | Character Has No Choice Regarding When Or How Powers Change (this often reflects a given circumstance, *e.g.,* Powers Change During Full Moons) |
| -¼ | Slightly Limited Class of powers available (for example, Only Magic, Only Attacks) |
| -½ | Limited Class of powers available (for example, Only Adjustment Powers, Only Powers That The Target Has, Only Fire Powers, Only Elemental Magic) |
| -1 | Very Limited Class of powers available (for example, Only Drains And Transfers, Only Necromancy Powers) |
| -½ to -1½ | One Type Of Power (character may only buy abilities based on a particular Power, such as only Absorption or only Multiform; the value of the Limitation depends on how useful the single Power tends to be) |

## Buying Power Pool Slots

A character with a Variable Power Pool can have any combination of powers whose total Real Cost doesn't exceed the Pool of the VPP. No power bought in the Pool may have an Active Point cost greater than the Pool.

Example: *Dr. Yin Wu has a Chinese Black Magic Power Pool with a Pool cost of 60 points. Thus, no power, spell, enchanted item, or other ability he buys through the VPP can have an Active Point cost greater than 60. Furthermore, the total Real Points of all the powers he buys in the VPP at any one time also cannot exceed 60.*

## Distributing Power Pool Points

Normally, a character cannot change the slots in his VPP in combat — changing a power takes between 1 Turn and 1 minute. No Skill Roll is required to change a VPP under these circumstances.

Example: *Cosmo has a 50 point Power Pool, which cost him 50 points (Pool cost) + 25 points (Control Cost) = 75 points. Cosmo has 2 powers currently in his Variable Power Pool: Energy Blast 10d6, 3x Endurance Cost (50/(1+1) = 25 points); and Flight 12" (24 points). This uses up 49 points of the Power Pool. When out of combat, Cosmo could change his powers to any combination of powers that fit his special effects; it would take him at least a Turn to do so, however.*

To be able to change the powers in a VPP in combat, the character must buy a *Power* Skill (typically INT-Based) for manipulating his VPP. The name of the VPP Skill depends upon the spe-

cial effects of the Power Pool. Examples include *Gadgeteering* to modify Gadget Pools or *Magic Skill* to modify VPPs that simulate a character's mystic abilities.

Changing powers with the VPP Skill takes a Full Phase. The character must make the Skill Roll at -1 per 10 Active Points in the power(s) being created with the VPP. These points could be in one power or several; for example, changing a VPP to create a 30-point power and a 20-point power requires a Skill Roll at -5. (Only the Active Points in the powers being created/activated matter; the powers the character "deactivates" so he can buy the new powers don't affect the Skill Roll.) The GM may impose other modifiers depending on how closely the powers follow the Power Pool's special effect and other circumstances. If the character's roll succeeds, the powers change; if not, he's wasted his time and must try again.

Characters may eliminate the need for a VPP Skill, and the requirement that it takes a Full Phase to change the Pool in combat, by buying certain Advantages for the Control Cost (see the *Variable Power Pool Advantages* text box).

When a character buys a Constant Power through a VPP, if he allocates the Pool's points to another power while using the Constant Power, the power immediately ceases to operate unless it's bought Uncontrolled, with Continuing Charges, or with some similar Power Modifier. The character must keep the VPP points allocated to that slot to maintain the power.

The GM should approve any powers in a VPP to ensure that they're within the special effects of the Pool. Whenever possible, a player should prepare in advance a list of powers his character typically purchases through a VPP (he can, of course, expand this list during the campaign, even mid-game). This not only allows the GM to approve the powers in advance, it saves time. Players who have to calculate how their VPP points are assigned each Phase can slow the game down drastically.

### LOSING POWERS

Characters often buy VPPs to simulate collections of weapons or gadgets. Examples include a gadgeteer's VPP (defined as a vast selection of spare parts out of which the character can quickly build many different devices) or a wizard's arsenal of enchanted items.

With this sort of VPP, in which the powers typically all take a *Focus* Limitation, a character will sometimes "lose" slots. Maybe he's disarmed and loses one of his weapons, or perhaps his shield is broken in an attack.

## VARIABLE POWER POOL ADVANTAGES

| Value | Advantage |
|---|---|
| +½ | Powers Can Be Changed As A Half Phase Action: Changing powers with a Skill Roll only takes a Half Phase, instead of the usual Full Phase. |
| +1 | Powers Can Be Changed As A Zero Phase Action: Changing powers with a Skill Roll takes no appreciable time; the character can change them whenever he can perform a Zero Phase Action. However, unless the GM permits otherwise, the character may not distribute or allocate Pool points more than once in a Phase. |
| +1 | No Skill Roll Required: A VPP with this Advantage requires no Skill Roll to change; the character can change it automatically. |

The latter two Advantages, combined, are often referred to as *Cosmic* (+2).

If the character has taken a *Focus* Limitation on the Control Cost of his VPP, then losing a gadget built with that VPP means he loses as many points from the Pool as there were Real Points in the gadget. For example, if a character loses a Blaster Pistol (costs 18 Real Points) built with his Gadgeteering Pool (50 Pool + 25 Control Cost, Control Cost takes the Limitation *OAF*), then the character's Pool is reduced to 32 points until he gets the Blaster Pistol back. The character can still use those 32 points to build whatever he wants, but the other 18 are locked into the Blaster Pistol.

On the other hand, if the character does not take the *Focus* Limitation for the Control Cost, but only for the individual power bought through the Pool (in this case, a Blaster Pistol), losing that Focus does not deprive the character of any part of his Pool. To take the above example, if the character had not applied *OAF* to his VPP's Control Cost, he would still have a 50-point Pool to work with if he lost the Blaster Pistol. However, normally the character who took the Blaster Pistol from him could still use it — spending those 18 Pool points on something else would not necessarily cause the Blaster Pistol to disintegrate or lose all power or effect. But the character would not have the parts he used to build the Blaster Pistol to work with. He might not be able to build another Blaster Pistol (or similar device) until he could get those parts back.

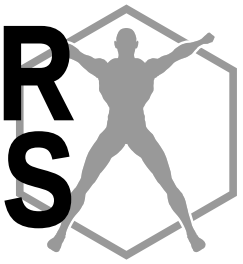
This does not mean a character can use a VPP as a cheap way to buy a lot of weapons or gadgets and then hand them out to his friends. There can still only be as many powers active in the VPP at once as its Pool allows. Losing a weapon or gadget bought through the VPP doesn't count as "using" it, but giving the weapon or device to another character does.

Continued from last page

Cosmic Power Pool: This Power Pool can be whatever the character wants, whenever the character wants. The total Advantage on the Control Cost is +2 (see above).

Mimic Pool: This Power Pool mimics the powers of a target character. The Limitations on the Control Cost are: *Requires Successful HTH Attack Roll* (-½) (character must touch the target); *VPP Mimics Targets's Powers* (-½) (the VPP "copies" the target's powers, from the one with the highest Active Point total until it runs out of points), and *Powers May Only Be As Powerful As Target's Powers* (-½) (the VPP cannot create a Flash 12d6 if the target's power is only a Flash 6d6) (total Limitation -1½).

# CHARACTER DISADVANTAGES



Characters have weaknesses as well as strengths — both are necessary to create an interesting, well-rounded individual. In the *HERO System,* the personal complications, hindrances, and drawbacks a character has to confront during his adventures are represented with *Disadvantages.* Determining a character's Disadvantages helps develop his personality and background. Disadvantages should also provide the GM with interesting ideas for adventures.

This section describes the various Disadvantages a character can take. Not all Disadvantages are appropriate for every character in every genre. For example, a knight wouldn't normally take Accidental Change, and most normal humans have no reason to take Vulnerability. However, all the Disadvantages are presented in a single place for ease of reference; the GM should make clear which, if any, aren't allowed in his campaign.

## Disadvantage Points

To encourage characters to take them, Disadvantages give a character more Character Points to spend. The GM determines the total number of points in Disadvantages a character may take, based on the type of campaign he's running. The more Disadvantages each character has, the more complications and hindrances he has to overcome, and the more points he gets to spend on Powers, Skills, and so forth. Disadvantages also require lots of work from the GM; in general, the greater the number of players, the lower the Disadvantage total should be for each character. The Character Types Guidelines Table, page 28, provides guidelines regarding the number of starting points and maximum points in Disadvantages that GMs should allow each character.

The value of a Disadvantage cannot be reduced below 0. In other words, characters aren't required to pay Character Points for a Disadvantage if the Disadvantage's negative modifiers seem to make it "cost" points.

### RESTRICTIONS ON DISADVANTAGE POINTS

If a GM wants to encourage players to take a variety of different Disadvantages for their characters, he should set a limit on the number of points characters can gain from a single type of Disadvantage. For most Heroic campaigns, the rules recommend that no more than 25 points come from a single type of Disadvantage. For typical Superheroic campaigns, the character should get no more than one-third of his Base Points (at most) from any one Disadvantage. For example, a character constructed on 150 Base Points can take no more than 50 points in any single type of Disadvantage.

The GM may modify these guidelines up or down according to the type of campaign he wants to run. For example, if he wants to run a Fantasy campaign where each character is a demi-god, he should start the PCs with more points than a typical Fantasy (Heroic) campaign — perhaps even at the Superheroic level. Similarly, a GM who doesn't want to worry about Disadvantages could raise the Base Points and decrease (or even eliminate) the points gained from Disadvantages. A GM who likes a certain type of Disadvantage (such as *Vulnerability* or *Psychological Limitation*) can raise the restriction on maximum points from a single Disadvantage type. This allows characters to take more of the selected Disadvantage.

Another thing for the GM to keep in mind is that Heroic characters usually don't have access to as many Disadvantages as Superheroic characters do. Disadvantages like Accidental Change, Enraged/Berserk, Susceptibility, and Vulnerability don't occur nearly as often in Heroic games. Heroic characters may run into trouble trying to come up with 75 or more points' worth of Disadvantages from the ones they can, "realistically," take. Gamemasters concerned about this problem can solve it by waiving or raising the limit on points obtainable from any one Disadvantage, increasing the characters' Base Points, or even multiplying the value of each Disadvantage.

The GM should encourage players to take Disadvantages for their characters above and beyond the set point limit, even though they won't get any points for them. Every Disadvantage fleshes out the character and makes him more enjoyable and rewarding to play.

### THE BASIC LAW OF DISADVANTAGES

All Disadvantages are subject to the *Basic Law of Disadvantages:*

**A Disadvantage that isn't a disadvantage isn't worth any points!**

None! For example, if a PC wants to take *Physical Limitation: No Legs,* and then buys Extra Limbs (legs), he doesn't get the Disadvantage points. Similarly, if the character takes *Hunted By Trolls* when there are no trolls in the campaign world, it's not worth any points. The GM has to

approve all Disadvantages; he should weed out any that don't seem reasonable, don't fit into his campaign, or are likely to cause more trouble than they're worth.

## Using Disadvantages In The Campaign

The GM should remember that Disadvantages are there to be used. A Disadvantage shouldn't dominate play — not every opponent needs to have an attack that exploits the character's Vulnerability — but they come into play often enough to keep the character on his toes. A GM shouldn't feel bad if he uses a lightning bolt against a character who takes *2 x STUN from Electricity;* that's what the Disadvantage is for, after all.

The GM should have a copy of each player character's sheet for his reference, especially the character's Disadvantages. He should use them to create adventures and subplots. If he's stuck for an adventure to run one evening, he can script an entire scenario around a PC's Hunted or DNPC. Such an adventure won't seem far-fetched, and besides, that character gets to be the center of attention for a whole game.

### DISADVANTAGE FREQUENCY

Many Disadvantages are weighted in terms of how often they affect the character. For example, they're worth the most if they occur Very Frequently, a little less if they occur Frequently, and the least if they only arise Occasionally. Similarly, many have Very Common, Common, or Uncommon circumstances that trigger them.

For ease of reference, and to assist GMs who are more comfortable with hard-and-fast rules, these frequencies are often assigned numbers indicating how often the Disadvantage arises (such as 14- for Very Frequently, 11- for Frequently, and 8- for Occasionally). However, the GM should feel free to ignore these guidelines if he prefers. For example, rather than rolling at the start of every game session to find out if a character's Hunted shows up, he could just keep the Disadvantage in mind as a potential plot element — or roll Disadvantages when he's planning the game to help generate adventure ideas. Instead of having the Hunted show up unexpectedly to interrupt a carefully-planned scenario, construct a scenario that features the Hunted as the main antagonist.

A Disadvantage's frequency indicates how often it affects the character *in the game.* Many Disadvantages affect the character all the time, but what matters for game purposes is how often they affect his performance in the game. For example, being unable to walk affects a character every minute of every day of his life. But it only impacts his abilities in the game frequently — there are plenty of things he can do in the game that don't require him to walk. Therefore *Unable To Walk* is a Physical Limitation that affects the character *Frequently,* not *All The Time.*

### DISADVANTAGES AS POWERS

Characters cannot use Disadvantages as Powers. For example, they can't buy Unluck, Usable As Attack as a Power to inflict "bad luck" on other characters. A character who wants to do something like that should figure out a way to simulate the Disadvantage using standard Powers. Transform



### TYPES OF DISADVANTAGES

For ease of reference, Disadvantages typically can be grouped into the following categories:

Background: Age, Unluck

Mental: Enraged/ Berserk, Psychological Limitation

Physical: Accidental Change, Dependence, Distinctive Features, Physical Limitation, Susceptibility, Vulnerability

Social: Dependent NPC, Hunted, Reputation, Rivalry, Social Limitation

is one good way to do this; a character could use a Major Transform to, for example, change "Humans" into "Humans With Unluck."

### OPTIONS FOR DISADVANTAGES

Here are some optional ways of working with Advantages that the GM might want to consider using or allowing.

**Everyman Disadvantages**

Sometimes a GM wants to make sure every PC in the campaign takes a certain Disadvantage. This simulates the way characters evolve in certain genres, provides a central "story hook" the GM can make use of, and so forth. Because these *Everyman Disadvantages* apply to all player characters in the campaign, generally PCs don't get any Character Points for them — they're simply one of the "ground rules" for the game that characters have to obey.

The most common Everyman Disadvantage is Normal Characteristic Maxima, which often applies to all characters in the various Heroic genres. See pages 25 and 32 for more information.

**Floating Disadvantages**

To minimize problems that arise when certain Disadvantages don't fit perfectly with a scenario or campaign, some GMs authorize characters to take *Floating Disadvantages.* A Floating Disadvantage is one defined "generically," rather than specifically, so the GM can change it slightly from game to game. For example, instead of having a Dependent NPC (girlfriend), a character might have a DNPC who's his "girlfriend of the week." That way he's not tied to any one character (giving the GM the freedom to do whatever he wants with the DNPC without upsetting the player too much), but he does have someone he has to protect in every scenario. Similarly, a Floating Hunted allows the GM to provide the character with an "enemy of the month," rather than having to bring the same enemy back again and again.

The Floating Disadvantage concept is most appropriate for DNPCs and Hunteds; many Disadvantages shouldn't allow for "floating" at all. The GM must approve all Floating Disadvantages.

**Mystery Disadvantages**

Sometimes it's more fun for both a player and his GM if the player doesn't know all of his character's Disadvantages. That way the GM can create the Disadvantages during the game and work them into the campaign's storylines. If the GM allows a player to do this, the player can simply note, "Mystery Disadvantage: GM's Option" and the point value of the Disadvantage on his character sheet. Or he can be more specific ("Hunted: GM's Option"). Then he just has to sit back and let the GM's fiendish imagination go to work....

## Changing Or Buying Off Disadvantages

Disadvantages aren't permanent. Characters often grow beyond their personal limitations, solve problems, or come to terms with themselves as their careers progress. In game terms, characters can buy off Disadvantages with the Experience Points they earn.

The cost for buying off a Disadvantage is the same as the points received for it in the first place. For example, if a character gets 10 points for a Psychological Limitation, it costs 10 Experience Points to buy it off. Buying off Disadvantages always requires the GM's permission, and must make sense for the character and/or be part of a scenario. For example, if a character wants to buy off a Psychological Limitation, he should spend campaign time trying to overcome his quirk, attending therapy sessions, and so forth. If a character wants to buy off certain Disadvantages like Hunteds, the GM should probably come up with a reason the Disadvantage no longer limits the character. For example, if a character was Hunted by the FBI, the GM could run a scenario in which the PC proves his innocence or the FBI finds out it's following the wrong suspect.

**Altering Disadvantages During Game Play**

With the GM's permission, characters can also alter their Disadvantages during the course of the campaign. This can reflect the way a character is being played and helps promote character development. Perhaps a character begins the campaign with the Psychological Limitation *Greedy.* As the campaign progresses, this could change to *Generous,* or even *Idealistic.* Similarly, someone could expose a character's Social Limitation *Secret Identity,* forcing him to trade in the Disadvantage points for a Hunted, or even a *Public Identity.* A character who kills or captures his Hunted may acquire another one — the former Hunted's ally, for example. So long as the points remain constant and the GM gives his permission, the character's Disadvantages can evolve to suit the character.

**Disadvantages Gained During Game Play**

Sometimes a character "earn" extra Disadvantages during play — being Hunted by an antagonist he recently defeated, for example. Characters do not get extra Character Points for this; it's just a fact of life for roleplaying game characters. However, the character might be allowed to "trade in" an existing Disadvantage that doesn't really apply to him anymore for the new Disadvantage, as described above.

# DISADVANTAGE DESCRIPTIONS

## ACCIDENTAL CHANGE

A character with this Disadvantage has at least two forms or identities and sometimes accidentally or involuntarily changes between them. Accidental Change is most often used in the horror and comic book superhero genres.

The character defines the circumstances under which he changes and the likelihood the change occurs. (If he has multiple alternate forms, he must also define which one he Accidentally Changes into.) The accompanying table shows the points received for Accidental Change. The GM must decide whether a circumstance is Uncommon, Common, or Very Common.

Every Phase a character is exposed to the circumstances that can trigger his change, he should roll against his Accidental Change. If the character rolls under the listed number, he immediately changes form (unless the GM chooses to lengthen or delay the change slightly for dramatic effect). He may not change back until the circumstances that caused the change have altered. This change is involuntary; if the character wants to be able to change voluntarily, he can do so simply by activating his Powers (or, if he wants to alter his clothing, by buying an "Instant Change" Cosmetic Transform).

## ACCIDENTAL CHANGE

| Value | Circumstances |
|---|---|
| 5 | Uncommon Circumstance |
| 10 | Common Circumstance |
| 15 | Very Common Circumstances |
| **Value** | **Chance To Change** |
| +0 | Infrequently (8-) |
| +5 | Frequently (11-) |
| +10 | Very Frequently (14-) |
| +15 | Always |

# DISADVANTAGES SUMMARY TABLE

| Disadvantage Name | Description |
|---|---|
| Accidental Change | Character sometimes involuntarily changes between two forms or identities |
| Age | Character suffers the weaknesses of youth or old age |
| Dependence | Character suffers harm if he does not regularly have some substance or item |
| Dependent NPC | Character must protect/help an NPC who often gets into trouble |
| Distinctive Features | Character has an unusual, distinctive feature |
| Enraged/Berserk | Character sometimes loses control of himself |
| Hunted | Character is pursued by an enemy |
| Physical Limitation | Character suffers from some physical handicap |
| Psychological Limitation | Character suffers from some mental or emotional handicap |
| Reputation | Character is known for some negative quality |
| Rivalry | Character competes with a profession and/or romantic rival |
| Social Limitation | Character's ability to interact with society is restricted |
| Susceptibility | Character takes damage when exposed to some normally harmless substance or effect |
| Unluck | Character is unlucky |
| Vulnerability | Character takes extra damage from some type of attack |

## AGE

This Disadvantage, which only characters subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima (see below and page 32) can buy, represents the effects on a character of being younger or older than normal. A character with Age is not at the peak of his physical capabilities due to the fact that he's very young or getting on in years. Normally a character is considered to be in ideal condition, regardless of his actual calendar age — a physically fit character can be older than 40 or younger than 10 without taking this Disadvantage.

A character with Age has different Characteristic Maxima than normal, so it's harder for him to buy up some Characteristics to high levels. A character who's over 40 receives a 5-point Disadvantage. A character over 60 receives a 10-point Disadvantage. A character who's age 10 or younger receives a 15-point Disadvantage (Social Limitations and other Disadvantages might also be appropriate for very young characters). These ages are given as guidelines; the actual age of the character is up to the player (for example, a player could take the 5-point *Age* Disadvantage for his character and say that the character is a remarkably spry 93-year-old.) Furthermore, the ages given are more or less based on modern-day demographics — GMs may wish to alter them to suit different types of campaigns (for example, the life expectancy may be much lower in some Fantasy campaigns).

Characters with *Age* simply aren't as healthy and fit as their peers (unless their peers also have Age, of course). In addition to lowered Characteristic Maxima, they might get sick more easily, have trouble with strenuous tasks, and so forth.

**Normal Characteristic Maxima**

Characters in campaigns that do not impose Normal Characteristic Maxima as a default can take *Normal Characteristic Maxima* as a Disadvantage for 20 Character Points. (The character can also take *Age* as a Disadvantage and get full points for it.) This requires them to abide by the restrictions of Normal Characteristic Maximum, includ-

### ACCIDENTAL CHANGE EXAMPLES

Anger Accidental Change: Accidental Change 11- when character gets angry (Common): 15 Character Points.

Blood Accidental Change: Accidental Change 14- when character sees or smells blood (Uncommon): 15 Character Points.

Lunar Accidental Change: Accidental Change Always when character experiences stress under a full moon (Uncommon): 20 Character Points.



ing paying double for Characteristics above the Maximum Value. For example, every point of STR above 20 would cost 2 Character Points.

**Powers**

Even if a character has *Age* or *Normal Characteristic Maxima,* Powers or Talents that raise his Characteristics affect them normally — such abilities are not counted against the Characteristic Maxima or subject to the "double cost" rule mentioned above. Examples include Aid, Growth, Lightning Reflexes, and Characteristics bought as Powers. Thus, a character with Normal Characteristic Maxima and STR 20 who buys +40 STR through a Focus only pays 40 Active Points for that STR, not 80.

## AGE TABLE

| Characteristic | Normal | Age 40+ | Age 60+ | Age 10- |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| STR | 20 | 15 | 10 | 5 |
| DEX | 20 | 20 | 20 | 12 |
| CON | 20 | 15 | 10 | 8 |
| BODY | 20 | 15 | 10 | 8 |
| INT | 20 | 25 | 30 | 15 |
| EGO | 20 | 25 | 30 | 8 |
| PRE | 20 | 25 | 30 | 8 |
| COM | 20 | 20 | 20 | 16 |
| PD | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| ED | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| SPD | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| REC | 10 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| END | 50 | 40 | 30 | 30 |
| STUN | 50 | 40 | 30 | 15 |
| Movement (Run) | 10" | 8" | 6" | 6" |
| Movement (Swim) | 5" | 4" | 3" | 3" |
| Movement (Leap) | 5" | 3" | 2" | 2" |

## DEPENDENCE

A character with this Disadvantage is dependent on a certain substance or item. If he cannot get it, he suffers negative effects, possibly even injury or death. You can use this Disadvantage to simulate drug addictions and other chemical dependencies, aquatic superheroes who cannot remain out of the water for more than an hour, a gadgeteer who depends upon a constant supply of spare parts to keep his battlesuit operating properly, and so forth.

To determine the value of this Disadvantage, a character must establish several things: how easy it is to obtain the substance; the effects of deprivation; and how long it takes before the character begins suffering those effects.

### THE DEPENDENT SUBSTANCE

The first issue is how easily the character can obtain the substance on which he's Dependent. He should consider how common the substance is (it's a lot easier to be Dependent on water than on plutonium), how expensive the substance is, whether it's dangerous to try to obtain it, and so forth. If the character can manufacture the substance himself, it's almost always "easy to obtain," unless the necessary raw materials are rare or expensive. The GM has the final say on how common a substance is in his campaign.

### THE EFFECTS OF DEPRIVATION

Second, the character should determine what happens to him if he's deprived of the substance or item he is Dependent on. Typically a character suffers damage due to withdrawal symptoms, and can even die if he fails to get the substance in time. He takes STUN damage (no defense applies) immediately when the Dependence time increment (see below) passes. Thereafter, he takes damage at each successive Dependence time increment. Once he's unconscious, the character begins to take Normal Damage BODY from the attack as well until he dies or gets the substance. The character may not Recover from the damage taken due to his Dependence until he obtains the substance he's Dependent on.

Once the character gets the substance he's Dependent on, typically all the damage he's taken "heals" immediately. However, the GM may change that based on common sense, dramatic sense, special effects, and considerations of game balance. In some cases it may work better just to let the character start taking Recoveries, or the like.

**Loss Of Power**

There are other options besides taking damage. First, a character can temporarily lose all of his powers (or some specific group or types of powers) or have them weakened. The character's powers immediately acquire an Activation Roll (starting at 14- or 11-) when the Dependence time increment passes; the roll decreases by 1 for every time increment thereafter. When he fails the roll, the powers stop working; he cannot restart them until he obtains the substance he's Dependent on. (Alternately, characters can use the damage

categories, but substitute -10 Active Points in the affected Power for every 1d6 of damage.) This is a good way to simulate, for example, some technology-based characters who require constant upkeep and replacement parts to keep their powers from malfunctioning.

**Weakness**

If a character takes the "weakness" option for his Dependence, he loses 3 points from his Characteristics (*not* 3 Character Points' worth). For example, if a character has DEX 20 and suffers weakness, he drops to DEX 17. Typically the character loses the points from all of his Characteristics, but the GM can decide to apply it to fewer if he prefers.

**Incompetency**

Another possible effect is incompetency — when the Dependence time increment passes, the character suffers -1 to all Skill Rolls, Characteristic Rolls, Attack Rolls, and related rolls. This modifier increases by an additional -1 per time increment until he obtains the substance he's Dependent on.

Normally a Dependence should only have one effect (the character should not suffer damage *and* lose his Powers, for example). However, in rare circumstances and at the GM's option, characters may suffer multiple effects by buying Dependence multiple times.

**THE TIME INCREMENT**

Third, the character should determine how long it takes for his Dependence to have an effect. The longer the character can go without the substance, the lower the value of the Disadvantage.

**Addiction**

Alternately, a character can define his Dependence as an *Addiction.* The character buys the Addiction modifier in place of the standard Time Increment for Dependence.

An Addiction must cause damage, incompetency, or weakness. The character usually suffers cravings for the substance at least once a day at first; the longer he remains Addicted, the shorter this time interval becomes, and the more he needs of the substance to satisfy his Addiction. The character may make an EGO Roll to resist giving in to the Addiction. This doesn't prevent him from suffering the effects of not obtaining the substance, though it may reduce the effects of deprivation slightly at the GM's option. However, the character has to make EGO Rolls to break the Addiction (*i.e.,* buy off the Disadvantage). The GM determines how many rolls the character has to make, or how long he must go without the substance, to break the Addiction. As a general guideline, the character should have to make at least one EGO Roll per week he's been addicted (up to the point he began making EGO Rolls).

Addiction may also entail a Psychological Limitation. It's possible to be both physically and psychologically addicted to the same substance.

Examples: *Aquakid cannot stay out of water for more than one hour or he starts to dry out and die. He takes this as a Dependence. Water is a Very Common Substance (5 points), 1 Hour is (-5 points), and Aquakid takes 3d6 damage per time increment (+10 points), for a total of 10 points. After 1 hour out of the water, Aquakid takes 3d6 damage (no defense applies), and every hour after that he takes an additional 3d6. He cannot Recover this damage until he reaches water.*

## DEPENDENCE

| Value | Dependent Substance is... |
|---|---|
| 5 | Very Common/Easy To Obtain |
| 10 | Common/Difficult To Obtain |
| 15 | Uncommon/Extremely Difficult To Obtain |
| **Value** | **Effect** |
| | Damage: The character takes damage as described in the text. |
| +5 | 1d6 |
| +10 | 2d6 |
| +15 | 3d6 |
| +5 | Character's Powers Are Affected: 14- Activation Roll |
| +10 | Character's Powers Are Affected: 11- Activation Roll |
| +5 | Incompetence: -1 to Skill Rolls and related rolls per time increment |
| +5 | Weakness: -3 to Characteristics per time increment |
| **Value** | **Time Before Suffering Effects** |
| +25 | Segment |
| +20 | Phase |
| +15 | Turn |
| +10 | 1 Minute |
| +5 | 5 Minutes |
| +0 | 20 Minutes |
| -5 | 1 Hour |
| -10 | 6 Hours |
| -15 | 1 Day |
| ...and so forth | |
| +5 | Addiction |

### DEPENDENCE EXAMPLES

Alcoholic: Dependence (must drink liquor at least once per hour or suffer Incompetence) (Very Common, Addiction): 15 Character Points.

Spare Parts: Dependence (character must replace the rare high-tech parts in his armor with new ones every day, or it begins to suffer malfunctions resulting in an 11- Activation Roll for Powers derived from the armor) (Uncommon): 10 Character Points.

Recharging: Dependence (character must recharge his powers with a "mystic battery" every day or suffer Weakness) (Very Common [character owns the battery]): 0 Character Points.

### DEPENDENT NPC EXAMPLES

Nosy Old Mrs. McCreedy: DNPC 11- (character's landlord), Incompetent, Unaware of character's Social Limitation (Secret Identity): 25 Character Points

The Third Street Irregulars: DNPC 11-, Normal, group of 8 spunky boys: 30 Character Points

Lady Riselda: DNPC 14-, Normal, Useful Noncombat Position (the Baron's lovely young daughter with a knack for getting into trouble): 15 Character Points

## DEPENDENT NON-PLAYER CHARACTER

A character with this Disadvantage has a non-player character friend, companion, or associate who often gets into trouble, requiring the character to protect or save him. You can also use Dependent Non-Player Character (DNPC) to simulate fans, villainous siblings, or sidekicks — in short, anyone the character feels he has to look out for.

The value of this Disadvantage depends upon several factors. The first is how competent the DNPC is in relation to the character — the less competent the DNPC is, the greater his value. The second is how often the DNPC gets involved in the character's adventures (some DNPCs are more accident-prone or nosy than others). Others include whether the DNPC possesses Skills or other abilities useful to the character and whether the DNPC knows about the character's adventuring career.

The player must determine who the DNPC is before the campaign begins and give the GM a full description. The GM can then help develop the DNPC's personality, Characteristics, and Skills. The GM might even give the DNPC some Disadvantages, thus making him more interesting. Sometimes the player may leave the DNPC entirely up to the GM, letting the DNPC be a surprise. DNPCs can also change from time to time, possibly even every adventure ("a date in every port," so to speak). At the GM's option, in some cases the DNPC may even be an entire group of people the character has to look out for (his parents, his siblings, all of his neighbors, or the like); if so, he gets +5 Character Points for every x2 NPCs covered by the same DNPC Disadvantage, since it's more difficult to protect multiple NPCs.

A DNPC should have weaknesses so he needs to be protected. Remember, a DNPC is a *Disadvantage.* He might help the character once in a while, but on the whole he just causes trouble. If a DNPC is too helpful, or is just an excuse for the character to have access to some Skills he hasn't paid for, the character shouldn't get any points for the Disadvantage (or should even pay points for the NPC — see *Contact* and *Follower,* pages 79, 81). A character cannot take the same NPC as a Contact and a DNPC, or as a Follower and a DNPC, unless the GM specifically permits him to.

The GM should determine at the beginning of an adventure whether the DNPC is involved. This may mean the DNPC is kidnapped by villains, falls into a deep pit, discovers something the character would prefer to keep hidden, becomes involved in some mundane situation requiring the PC's involvement, stumbles into a dangerous situation, or just plain gets into trouble.

## DEPENDENT NPC

| Value | The DNPC is... |
|---|---|
| 10 | Incompetent (-20 points or lower) |
| 5 | Normal |
| 0 | Slightly Less Powerful than the PC |
| -5 | As powerful as the PC |
| -5 | DNPC has useful noncombat position or skills |
| +5 | DNPC is unaware of character's adventuring career/Social Limitation: Secret Identity |
| **Value** | **Appearance** |
| +5 | 8- (Infrequently) |
| +10 | 11- (Occasionally) |
| +15 | 14- (Frequently) |
| **Value** | **Number Of DNPCs** |
| +5 | Group DNPC: for every x2 DNPCs |

If a DNPC dies, there are several ways for the character to provide a substitute Disadvantage. Which one works best depends on the nature of the character's personality and the situation in the campaign. The character can find a new DNPC (provided by the GM), or gain the equivalent Character Points in a Psychological Limitation related to the DNPC and/or his death — a desire for revenge, underconfidence and feelings of inadequacy, violent rage, depression, or the like. Alternately, he may begin Hunting the person who killed his DNPC.

Examples: *The Hornet has a weak old Aunt Mary who tends to get involved in adventures frequently; she doesn't know her nephew is a superhero, and so she follows him around to find out what he's up to. Aunt Mary is Frequently involved (14-), Incompetent, and unaware of the Hornet's crimefighting career, and thus worth 30 Character Points.*

*Andarra's kid sister Lunara is the CEO of OmniCorp Inc., one of the largest megacorporations in the Gemini cluster. Despite her powerful position, Lunara (who knows Andarra is a spy) constantly gets into situations from which Andarra has to rescue her. Lunara is worth 10 points (Occasionally involved [11-], Normal, useful noncombat position).*

*Finally, Hemdring's father is the evil archmage Vargon. Although Hemdring fights against Vargon, he feels he must protect him from serious injury. This is worth 5 points (Occasionally involved [11-], As powerful as the PC).*

## DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

A character with this Disadvantage has some easily recognizable feature(s) that are difficult to conceal.

### WHAT MAKES A FEATURE DISTINCTIVE

Distinctive Features could be such things as bright red hair, a facial scar, unusual height (large or small), a peculiar walk, a strange voice, an unusual odor, extra arms, green skin, belonging to an unusual race (in a mostly uniracial society; but this may be a *Social Limitation* instead), being a mutant, and the like. It could also be some distinctive personal habit the character displays, even when inappropriate (always uses off-color language, always chews tobacco, always tells puns, always displays a unique scorpion symbol and leaves it at the scene of all of his crimes [an "ego signature"]). Clothing may constitute a Distinctive Feature (a military uniform is a good example), but the character should dress that way even in inappropriate situations.

The GM has to decide how frequently other people perceive a character as distinctive, and whether this is enough to merit a Disadvantage. *Just looking odd isn't enough to earn the character any points — his unusual features have to hinder him somehow.* If the GM decides a feature qualifies as a Distinctive Feature, he should determine how others react to the character (the reaction has to be one that hampers or inconveniences the character). For example, being extremely beautiful is not ordinarily disadvantageous, but a female character could take *Gorgeous* as a Distinctive Feature if her beauty caused unabiding desire in all who saw her. Her beauty might help her occasionally, but usually it just causes trouble (men vie for her attention and bother her with lewd come-ons, women dislike her, master villains kidnap her and try to force her to marry them, and so on). In a superhero or Science Fiction campaign, or any society where there are dozens of different races or superhumans, a feature would really have to be unusual to be "distinctive" — people would consider fewer traits to be truly distinctive in a way that hinders a PC or complicates his life.

Generally, characters should only take Distinctive Features once — having several scars just makes someone more distinctive, for example. However, if a character has two Distinctive Features that aren't connected, or that are only perceivable by different Senses or groups of people, the GM might allow him to take this Disadvantage more than once. For example, a character who was a mutant and an incorrigible punster might have two Distinctive Features. The punning is easily noticed, and is therefore worth more than being a mutant (a status others can only detect with special senses or equipment).

### TAKING DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

The value of Distinctive Features depends on (a) how easily concealed the Distinctive Feature is (the harder it is to conceal, the more points it is worth); (b) how other characters react to the Distinctive Feature; and (c) what Senses and/or groups of people can perceive it. Distinctive Features that are only noticeable by an uncommonly-used Sense Group or small group of characters are worth less than ones noticeable by any character. For example, maybe all vampires have the Distinctive Feature *Vampire,* but only other vampires can sense they're bloodsucking undead fiends unless they deliberately reveal their true nature. This is worth less than, say, *Green-Skinned Alien,* which all characters can easily perceive. In the accompanying table, a "Small" group has only a few members (typically no more than a hundred) or is so widely scattered that encountering a member is unlikely. A "Large" group is anything larger than 100 members but smaller than society as a whole, or a group whose members tend to be concentrated in the same location as the character.

A Distinctive Feature that's only distinctive in some cultures or societies is worth -5 points. For example, in some Fantasy worlds elves are rare, except in their homeland. Therefore *Elf* might be a valid Distinctive Feature — but since it's not distinctive to be an Elf in part of the world (Elfland), the Disadvantage is worth -5 points. The GM should determine whether this modifier applies to a particular Distinctive Feature; if the feature is nondistinct in only a tiny part of the campaign setting, the modifier may not be necessary.

## DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

| Value | Concealability |
|---|---|
| 5 | Easily Concealed |
| 10 | Concealable (with Disguise Skill or major effort) |
| 15 | Not Concealable |
| **Value** | **Reaction** |
| +0 | Feature is Noticed and Recognizable |
| +5 | Feature is Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction or Prejudice |
| +10 | Feature Causes Extreme Reaction (abject fear, unabiding lust, utter disgust) |
| **Value** | **Sensing** |
| -0 | Feature Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses (Sight, Hearing) and/or By Virtually Everyone |
| -5 | Feature Detectable By Uncommonly-Used Senses (Smell, Touch, Taste) and/or By Large Group and/or By Simple Tests |
| -10 | Feature Detectable Only By Unusual Senses (Detects) and/or Only By A Small Group and/or Only By Technology Or Major Effort |
| -5 | Distinctive Feature Is Not Distinctive In Some Cultures Or Societies |

### DISTINCTIVE FEATURES EXAMPLES

Mystic Aura: Distinctive Features, Not Concealable (Always Noticed; Detectable Only With Unusual Senses): 10 Character Points.

Uniform: Distinctive Features, Easily Concealed (Noticed and Recognizable): 5 Character Points

Dwarf: Distinctive Features, Not Concealable (Noticed and Recognizable; Not Distinctive In Dwarfhold): 10 Character Points



## ENRAGED/BERSERK EXAMPLES

Berserker Trance: Enraged in combat (Very Common), go 11-, recover 11-: 25 Character Points

Feeding Frenzy: Berserk at the sight/smell of blood (Common), go 11-, recover 8-: 35 Character Points



### ENRAGED/BERSERK

A character with this Disadvantage tends to become extremely angry and lose control of himself when confronted by certain situations or stimuli. (Alternately, despite this Disadvantage's name, it can reflect things other than anger — panic, enthusiasm, conditioned reflexes, and the like. It all depends on how you structure the Disadvantage and roleplay the character.)

A character with Enraged must specify a set of circumstances that initiates the frenzy (encountering Rigellians, while in combat, when innocents are threatened, when he smells blood, or the like). The character also decides how easily he becomes Enraged and recovers from being Enraged.

Every Phase a character is in a situation where he can become Enraged, he should roll his chance to give in to fury. If he rolls less than or equal to his roll, he becomes Enraged; otherwise, he maintains control of himself. Once Enraged, he can attempt to recover from the frenzy in certain circumstances (see below).

When a character becomes Enraged, he mindlessly attacks the individual (or object) that Enrages him. He attacks with no regard for defending himself (he cannot use defensive maneuvers, such as Dodge or Block, or take actions the GM considers primarily defensive, like becoming Desolidified), may not apply any Combat Skill Levels to DCV, and ignores other targets or teammates in need of help. An Enraged character typically uses his most familiar or often-used offensive Power at full strength while Enraged, but the GM may allow him to use other attacks in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, or balanced game play.

An Enraged (or Berserk) character cannot use any powers that have the Limitation *Concentration,* and at the GM's option cannot use any powers that take Extra Time longer than an Extra Segment.

Once an Enraged individual finishes with his target, he must roll his chance of recovery. If he rolls less than or equal to his recovery change, he calms down and regains control of himself. If he fails, he remains Enraged and vents his anger on other targets (animate or otherwise), starting with the targets most closely related to his original target.

Other circumstances besides defeating a target that allow a character to roll to recover from being Enraged include: the character runs out of END; when someone attempts to snap him out of it (sometimes a dangerous task); or any other situation the GM believes might calm him down. The character gets a free attempt to recover from being Enraged in Post-Segment 12 if he hasn't attempted to recover in that Turn.

Enraged is most often chosen as a Disadvantage for villains, since it's not very heroic. When a PC has an Enraged, it usually occurs Infrequently at best; otherwise the character is likely to hurt someone and suffer the consequences. This Disadvantage is especially inappropriate for characters who are stealthy or who make a point of keeping their "cool."

**Berserk**

As an optional rule, the GM can allow characters to buy a form of Enraged called *Berserk*. Berserk is worth more than an Enraged, since there's a much greater chance the character will attack his friends or cause undesirable havoc. Berserk characters can't tell friend from foe; they automatically attack whoever's in front of them or nearest to them until they Knock Out or kill that target. The Berserk character then attacks the nearest visible target.

A Berserk character uses his most familiar or often used offensive Power at full strength while Berserk. He may use no defensive maneuvers or abilities (like Dodge or Block), and must apply all of his Combat Skill Levels to OCV or increasing damage (none to DCV).

### ENRAGED/BERSERK

| Value | Circumstances |
|---|---|
| 5 | Uncommon Circumstance |
| 10 | Common Circumstances |
| 15 | Very Common Circumstances |
| +10 | Berserk |
| **Value** | **Chance to Become Enraged** |
| +0 | 8- |
| +5 | 11- |
| +10 | 14- |
| **Value** | **Chance to Recover** |
| +0 | 14- |
| +5 | 11- |
| +10 | 8- |

## HUNTED

A character with this Disadvantage is pursued by some person or group. The Hunter may show up during adventures and attempt to do something to the character. This can range from monitoring his activities, to interrogating him, to arresting him, to trying to kill him. The character may or may not know he's being Hunted (player's choice).

The GM must approve all Hunteds; he should also write up most Hunters. The player (with the GM's help) should figure out why his character's being Hunted by that particular individual or group. The Hunters may be involved with the character's background or some part of his early (non-played) career. The player should use his imagination; the more creative the reason for the Hunted, the more fun the game is. A character doesn't get points for individuals or groups that begin Hunting him after the campaign begins — that's just one of the hazards of adventuring.

The value of a Hunted depends on three factors: the Hunter's competence; how often the Hunter causes problems for the character; and what the Hunter intends to do to the character.

**Hunter Competence**

The first factor is how capable, competent, and dangerous the Hunter is. This is determined relative to the character — whether the Hunter is more or less powerful than the PC — but remember that power encompasses many things. It doesn't just mean the Hunter can stand up to the PC in combat; it may reflect significant civil authority, investigative skills, wealth, access to the media or powerful persons, social or political influence, and many other factors. Depending on the Hunter's intentions towards the PC, these abilities may be more or less important than sheer combat prowess.

**Hunter Frequency**

The second factor is how often the Hunter tends to show up — in other words, how dedicated is he to finding the character and making his life miserable? Most Hunters only make an appearance occasionally, but some are downright fanatical.

The base chance for a Hunter to show up in each game session is an 8- roll on 3d6. The GM secretly makes this roll at the beginning of the adventure (or, better yet, when planning the adventure). If the GM rolls an 8 or below, the Hunter should show up sometime during the course of the adventure. Characters who are Hunted more actively than an 8- receive more points. Characters who are easy to find (because of a Public Identity or otherwise) also receive more points.

**Hunter Intentions**

The third factor is what the Hunter intends to do to the character. Does he want to kill him, punish him in some fashion, or just keep tabs on him? The latter form of Hunted is typically referred to as a *Watched,* since the Hunter's job is to keep track of the PC, not attack or harm him.



### HUNTED

| Value | Capabilities |
|---|---|
| 5 | Hunter is Less Powerful than PC |
| 10 | Hunter is As Powerful as PC |
| 15 | Hunter is More Powerful than PC |
| +5 | Hunter has extensive Non-Combat Influence (NCI) |
| -5 | Hunter is limited to a certain geographical area |
| +5 | PC has a Public Identity or is otherwise very easy to find |
| **Value** | **Appearance** |
| +0 | 8- (Occasionally) |
| +5 | 11- (Frequently) |
| +10 | 14- (Very Frequently) |
| **Value** | **Motivation** |
| -10 | Watched: Hunter is only Watching the character |
| -5 | Hunter desires to Mildly Punish the character (deportation, fining, question, theft of possessions) |
| -0 | Hunter desires to Harshly Punish the character (imprison, enslave, kill) |

### HUNTED EXAMPLES

Hunted By VIPER 8- (More Powerful, NCI, Kill/Imprison): 20 Character Points

Hunted By The Police 11- (More Powerful, NCI, Limited Geographical Area, Imprison): 20 Character Points

Hunted By Goblins 14- (As Powerful, Kill): 20 Character Points

Hunted By Private Detective 11- (Less Powerful, Watching): 0 Character Points

### PHYSICAL LIMITATION EXAMPLES

No Hands (All The Time, Fully Impairing): 25 Character Points.

Unable To Walk (Frequently, Fully Impairing): 20 Character Points.

Blindness (All The Time, Fully Impairing): 25 Character Points.

Missing One Eye — lacks depth perception (½ OCV with all Ranged Attacks), no peripheral vision on one side (Infrequently, Greatly Limiting): 10 Character Points.

Heavy Sleeper — character suffers additional -3 penalty to perceive intruders and wake up (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing): 5 Character Points

## PHYSICAL LIMITATION

A character with this Disadvantage has a physical problem that hampers him, such as blindness or a weak leg.

The value of a Physical Limitation depends on how often and to what extent the problem hinders or impairs the character in the game. The GM is the final judge of how many points a Physical Limitation is worth.

Physical Limitations can have related effects on a character that give him further Character Points. For instance, a character with *Physical Limitation: Bad Leg* would probably sell back some of the 6" of Running that every character has, maybe 2-3". This would give him an extra 4-6 Character Points in addition to the value of the Physical Limitation. The GM determines whether a character can both take a Physical Limitation and sell back some attribute, or if he has to do one or the other (and if so, which one).

If a character has a Power that directly counteracts his Physical Limitation, the GM may want to consider reducing the value of the Disadvantage (at the very least, the degree of impairment may need to be reduced). For example, if a telekinetic character took *Physical Limitation: No Hands,* it might be worth less, or perhaps nothing at all, depending upon the nature of the character, the power, and the campaign.

Physical Limitation can also represent mental or psychological problems that cannot be overcome with Mind Control or other Mental Powers. An example is *Knows Nothing Of Earth Culture,* often used for characters from other planets or dimensions. No matter how powerful a character's Mind Control is, it can't overcome this sort of ignorance. For example, mentally controlling a character with this sort of Physical Limitation and telling him to "make a phone call" accomplishes nothing — the victim has no clue what a phone is or how to use one. Most mental problems, such as claustrophobia, can be overcome with Mental Powers; this type can't, so they're better bought as Physical Limitations than Psychological Limitations. In short, if there's something the character *can't* do for some reason, you can simulate this with Physical Limitation. If the problem is that he *won't* do it, but is physically capable of doing it, then the Disadvantage is probably a Psychological Limitation (see below).

A character can never receive more Disadvantage points for lacking some physical ability than that ability costs. For example, literacy costs 1 point per language in some campaigns; therefore, illiteracy is worth, at most, 1 point per language the character can speak as a Physical Limitation. Similarly, a mentalist who lacks Mental Awareness only gets 5 points for the Physical Limitation, since that's all Mental Awareness costs.

### PHYSICAL LIMITATION

| Value | Limitation Occurs |
|---|---|
| 5 | Infrequently |
| 10 | Frequently |
| 15 | All the Time |
| **Value** | **Limitation Impairs** |
| +0 | Slightly |
| +5 | Greatly |
| +10 | Fully |

## PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATION

A character with this Disadvantage has a mental quirk or impairment regarding a given thing or situation. The character defines how often the condition affects him and the degree of impairment he suffers. The accompanying Psychological Limitation table lists what various mental problems are worth.

There are three basic types of Psychological Limitations:

1) Moral Codes or Codes of Conduct: *Codes of morality or conduct by which a character lives his life. Examples include a Code Of Honor, a Code Versus Killing, Will Not Hit An Unsuspecting Target, Chivalrous, and so on.*

2) Fears and Hatreds: *Fears of, or feelings of hatred toward, people, things, places, and events. Examples include fear of heights, cramped rooms, or open spaces; hatred of foreigners, criminals, or the government; and so forth.*

3) Personality Traits or Compulsions: *Negative or positive behavior a character feels compelled to engage in or traits that describe him. Examples include motivations such as Greedy, Overconfidence, Will Not Lie, Loves Professor Wong, and so on.*

When a situation related to a character's Psychological Limitation occurs, he usually must react as the Psychological Limitation dictates for at least one Phase. Then he may attempt to control his feelings through strength of will (*i.e.,* EGO Rolls, as outlined on the accompanying table). Psychological Limitation is a *Disadvantage,* so a character's mental condition should hinder or restrict him in some way, and the GM should stress its negative aspects. For example, Overconfidence occasionally helps a character, but most often it causes trouble.

Psychological Limitations should define the major outlines of the character's personality. The GM should not allow frivolous or silly Psychological Limitations (Fear Of Mice, Hatred Of The Color Pink). A Psychological Limitation must have some application to the campaign, otherwise it's not worth anything.

Of course, the value of a Psychological Limitation can vary due to the intensity of the Disadvantage, which changes from character to character. For example, one character may have a 20-point Code Versus Killing, simulating a Total commitment not to kill. Such a character would also seek to prevent others from killing. Another character may only have a 10-point Code Versus Killing (the character will never kill another person himself, but might allow others to, albeit with much protest).

Whereas a Physical Limitation indicates something that a character *can't* do, a Psychological Limitation indicates something a character *won't* do. No matter how hard a character tries, he cannot overcome a Physical Limitation. (If you're missing a hand, no amount of willpower will bring it back.) A Psychological Limitation, on the other hand, is "all

## PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATION

| Value | Situation Is... |
|---|---|
| 5 | Uncommon |
| 10 | Common |
| 15 | Very Common |
| **Value** | **Intensity** |
| +0 | Moderate: Decides character's choice of targets and reaction to situations; character may only change actions if he makes an EGO Roll at +5 |
| +5 | Strong: Character takes irrational actions concerning the situation, may only change actions if he makes an EGO Roll |
| +10 | Total: Character becomes totally useless or completely irrational in the situation, and will not change his mind for any reason; EGO Roll at -5 (minimum) required to change actions (if the GM allows such a roll at all) |

in the mind" — there's nothing physically preventing the character from performing a task. And if he can muster the willpower (make an EGO Roll), he can overcome his own hindrance.

### REPUTATION

A character with this Disadvantage is viewed in an unfavorable light; also, people may know something harmful or disadvantageous about him. Sometimes a Reputation can be useful, but usually it should cause problems for the character — people run screaming in fear when he rides into town, merchants refuse to sell to him, honorable people shun him, the police arrest him just on suspicion. A character should buy a predominantly helpful or useful Reputation as a Perk (see page 83); a character may have both the Perk and this Disadvantage, if warranted.

A Reputation can cause all sorts of problems for a character. It may inform people about his personality and give them knowledge they wouldn't ordinarily have about his tactics or equipment. They'll know (or think they know) how the character acts and reacts, and can plan accordingly. They may even exploit the Reputation — imagine how easily an enemy could trick a character who's known to be a *Sucker For A Sad Story* into doing nefarious deeds. Extreme Reputations in particular often dictate the actions of NPCs when they encounter the character.

Most Reputations are known to the general public. If only a small or limited group (such as the underworld, the army, or inhabitants of one world in a galactic empire) knows about the Reputation, the character receives -5 points for it. (This might also apply if the character has multiple identities or forms, and the Reputation relates to only one of them.)

## REPUTATION

| Value | Recognized |
|---|---|
| 5 | Sometimes (8-) |
| 10 | Frequently (11-) |
| 15 | Almost always (14-) |
| +5 | Extreme Reputation |
| -5 | Reputation Is Known Only To A Small Or Limited Group |

If appropriate, Reputations may improve Presence Attacks and some Interaction Skill rolls. For example, a character known to be *Bloodthirsty* might get a bonus to certain Interrogation rolls and violent Presence Attacks. As a rule of thumb, grant +1/+1d6 for an 8- Reputation, +2/+2d6 for an 11-, +3/+3d6 for a 14-, and an additional +1/+1d6 for Extreme Reputations. The same modifiers apply negatively if the Reputation would tend to counteract the Presence Attack or Interaction Skill.

A Reputation typically derives from a character's exploits before the campaign begins. Characters may earn a Reputation during the campaign, but they get no Character Points for it.




### PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATION EXAMPLES

Codes of Conduct:

- Code Of Chivalry (Common, Total): 20 points
- Code Versus Killing (Common, Total): 20 points
- Honorable (always keeps word, never takes advantage of a situation) (Common, Total): 20 points

Fears or Hatreds:

- Claustrophobia (Uncommon, Total): 15 points
- Paranoid (Very Common, Strong): 20 points
- Hatred Of Orcs (Common, Strong): 15 points

Personality Traits:

- Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate): 15 points
- Coward (Common, Total): 20 points
- Vengeful (Uncommon, Strong): 10 points
- In Love With X (Common, Strong): 15 points

### REPUTATION EXAMPLES

Reputation: Racist, 11- (Extreme): 15 Character Points

Reputation: Untrustworthy, 11-: 10 Character Points

Reputation: Has Loathsome Contagious Disease, 14- (Extreme): 20 Character Points

## RIVALRY EXAMPLES

Rivalry: Romantic (with starship captain, for affections of captain's wife; Rival is Significantly More Powerful, Rival Aware of Rivalry): 15 Character Points

Rivalry: Professional (with fellow journalist, for best stories and assignments): 5 Character Points

Rivalry: Professional and Romantic (with fellow courtier, for the attentions of the King and affections of the Princess; Rival is a Player Character; Seek to Harm/Kill Rival): 20 Character Points.

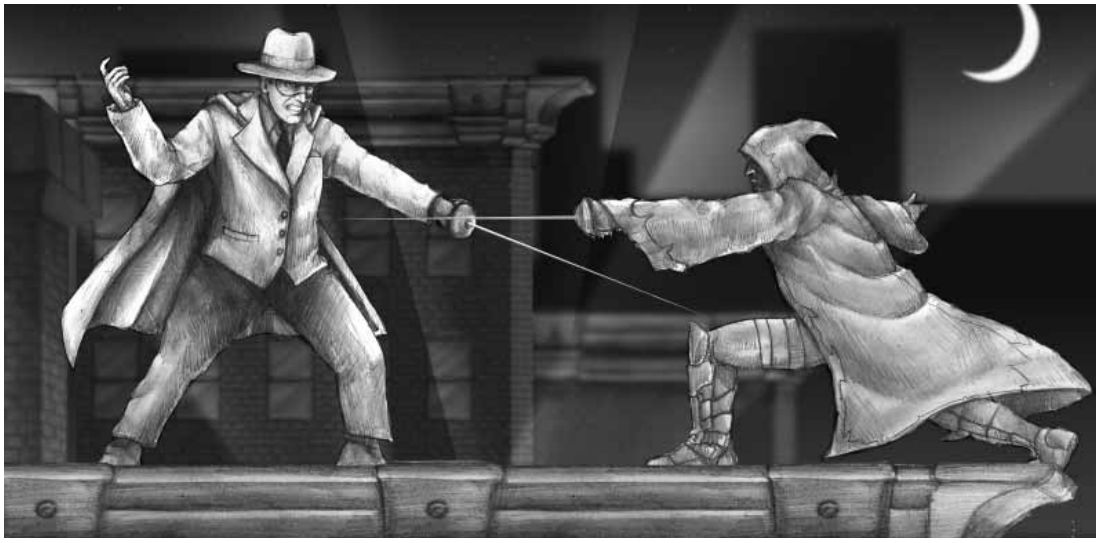
## SOCIAL LIMITATION EXAMPLES

Secret Identity: The character maintains a secret identity of some sort (for example, a superhero with a costumed crimefighter persona and a normal, everyday, identity): Frequently, Major (there is a risk that the identity will be exposed, which in turn exposes the character and his loved ones to attack or other problems): 15 points (or Severe [20 points] if the character has a large number of enemies who want to kill or maim him).

Public Identity: The character is well-known to the public for some reason, and information about him can easily be located. His enemies can attack him whenever they want, fans and admirers may mob him at awkward times, and so forth: Frequently, Major: 15 points (or Severe [20 points] if the character has a large number of enemies who want to kill or maim him).

Continued on next page





### RIVALRY

A character with this Disadvantage is engaged in a not-so-friendly rivalry, whether professional, romantic, or both, with another character. The character always attempts to outdo his Rival, though the extent to which he'll go to do this depends on the strength of the Rivalry (see below).

The GM must approve all Rivalries (as must the player of a PC who's to serve as a Rival, if applicable).

**Rivalry Versus Hunted**

Rivalry is similar to Hunted in some ways, but there are also important differences. First, the character is often on the same "side," or is somehow allied or in league with, his Rival. Second, a character does not normally pursue or hunt for his Rival, being instead content to "cross swords" with him whenever they happen to meet.

Third, Rivalries usually affect a character's personal life and rarely involve combat, unlike many Hunteds. A Hunted will, as the name implies, hunt down a character and directly try to cause him harm (attack him, blackmail him, and so forth). A Rival is more likely to take action against the character indirectly, or behind the scenes, than to attack him. For example, he might refuse to help the character, subtly lead him into a dangerous situation and then abandon him to fend for himself, or make him look like a fool in front of others.

With the GM's permission, a character could have a Rival who's also a Hunted or a DNPC (or even a Follower or Contact, perhaps). However, the GM needs to examine any of those situations carefully to make sure the character isn't getting more Disadvantage points than he's really entitled to — there should be distinct features that make the other character disadvantageous in multiple ways, and the ending of one of those "relationships" shouldn't necessarily end the other.

**Rivalry's Value**

The value of a Rivalry depends on four factors. First, is the Rivalry Professional (which includes job- and hobby-related goals and aspirations), Romantic, or both?

## RIVALRY

| Value | Rivalry Situation |
|---|---|
| 5 | Professional or Romantic Rival |
| 10 | Professional and Romantic Rival |
| **Value** | **Rival's Power Or Authority** |
| -5 | Rival is Less Powerful than character or is in an Inferior Position |
| +5 | Rival is More Powerful than character or is in a Superior Position (superior rank, numerical superiority, wealthier) |
| +10 | Rival is Significantly More Powerful than character or is in a Very Superior Position (engaged/married to romantic interest, very superior rank, much greater wealth than character, significant social or political power, greatly outnumbers character) |
| +5 | Rival is a Player Character |
| **Value** | **Fierceness Of Rivalry** |
| +0 | Character seeks to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival |
| +5 | Character seeks to Harm or Kill Rival |
| **Value** | **Knowledge Of Rivalry** |
| -5 | Rival is Unaware of Rivalry |
| +0 | Rival is Aware of Rivalry |

Second, what's the relative power of the character and his Rival? The more advantages the Rival has over the character, the greater the value of the Rivalry. These advantages could include higher rank, the ability to give the character orders, being more socially or politically prominent, having better relevant Skills (such as a better High Society roll), being wealthier, being closer to the object of the Rivalry (for example, the Rival is engaged to the object of a Romantic Rivalry), or outnumbering the character (a character who takes a Rivalry with "the U.S. Army" gets more points than one who takes a Rivalry with a single soldier). Similarly, a Rival who's a PC (and thus, by definition, possesses more importance and advantages than the average person) is worth more points.

Third, how fierce is the Rivalry? Most characters simply seek to outdo, embarrass, or humiliate their Rival, but some want to harm him or kill him.

Fourth, is the Rival aware or unaware of the Rivalry? Most Rivals are Aware. If they're Unaware

(which gives the character an advantage), the Rivalry is worth -5 points.

Example: *Hamilton Cross, a PC who is a bitter piano player, has always been jealous of Randall Irons's luck with the ladies. He buys this as a Romantic Rivalry. Irons, another PC, knows Cross will seek to show him up in front of the ladies whenever the opportunity arises. Thus, Hamilton's Rivalry is worth 10 points (Romantic Rivalry, Outdo Rival, Rival is Aware, Rival is a PC).*

*One night at the Empire Club, Cross sees Irons dancing with the lovely Duchess Lydia. Seething with jealousy, he leaves the other PCs behind and walks down to the ballroom floor to show Irons what dancing is all about!*

## SOCIAL LIMITATION

This Disadvantage means the character's ability to interact with society and/or other people is somehow limited, restricted, more difficult than usual, or dangerous to him. Examples include keeping an important secret (such as a secret identity or the fact that the character accidentally killed someone years ago), being well-known or famous (enemies or crazed fans can easily find the character and/or make his life difficult), being an ex-convict, or belonging to a disfavored minority group.

The value of Social Limitation depends upon how often the restrictive circumstances occur and their effects on the character. If the Limitation does not restrict the character in some cultures or societies with which he frequently interacts, the Limitation is worth less.

Social Limitation shares some similarities with Disadvantages such as Reputation, Distinctive Features, and Hunted. The player and GM should examine each of these to determine the best way to represent appropriate hindrances.

### SOCIAL LIMITATION

| Value | Circumstances Occur |
|---|---|
| 5 | Occasionally (8-) |
| 10 | Frequently (11-) |
| 15 | Very Frequently (14-) |
| **Value** | **Effects Of Restrictions** |
| +0 | Minor (inconvenience but little danger; that which is taken away can, eventually, be recovered or restored) (character may be fired, disowned, or suffer other minor problems) |
| +5 | Major (there is a risk of potential injury or extreme inconvenience; that which is taken away can only be restored with great difficulty) (character may suffer imprisonment, be required to undertake dangerous tasks, and so forth) |
| +10 | Severe (extreme risk of death or injury; that which is taken away cannot be restored) |
| -5 | Social Limitation Is Not Limiting In Some Cultures Or Societies |

## SUSCEPTIBILITY

A character with this Disadvantage takes damage from objects or effects that are harmless to most people.

The value of a Susceptibility depends on three factors. The first is how frequently the character is likely to encounter the damaging object or effect — common items, such as salt or silver, are worth more than rare ones, such as argonite. The GM must approve all such items or effects, and should, of course, only approve ones actually present in the campaign setting. The second factor is how much damage the character takes when he encounters the object or effect. The third factor is how quickly he takes damage.

A Susceptible character takes STUN damage (no defense applies) immediately when exposed to the object or effect to which he's Susceptible. Thereafter, he takes damage at the time increments defined by the Disadvantage. Once he's unconscious, he also begins to take Normal Damage BODY from the attack until he dies or is removed from the object or effect. He does not stop taking damage, and may not Recover from the damage, until the object or effect is removed. (He may, however, be Healed of the damage, even through Regeneration [see below].)

Example: *Centurion takes 3d6 each Phase (with no defense) when in contact with green argonite meteorites. Argonite is uncommon, so this Susceptibility is worth 25 points (3d6, Uncommon, Damage is once per Phase). He is placed in a green argonite cell and takes 3d6 STUN each of his Phases. Centurion soon goes unconscious. Now he'll take 3d6 Normal Damage (STUN and BODY) each Phase until he dies.*

If the character is Susceptible to an Instant effect, like an attack, he takes the damage whenever exposed to the Instant Power. He receives no value for time increments, since the effect doesn't last long enough to fulfill a time increment.

At the GM's option, the Susceptibility can inflict damage other than STUN. In this case, each d6 of STUN damage should be replaced with 10 Active Points of another attack.

### SUSCEPTIBILITY

| Value | Condition Is... |
|---|---|
| 5 | Uncommon |
| 10 | Common |
| 15 | Very Common |
| **Value** | **Take Damage Every** |
| +0 | Effect is instant |
| +15 | Segment |
| +10 | Phase |
| +5 | Turn |
| 0 | Minute |
| -5 | 5 minutes |
| ...and so forth | |
| **Value** | **Number Of Dice** |
| +0 | 1d6 |
| +5 | 2d6 |
| +10 | 3d6 |

Continued from last page

Famous: Like Public Identity, but the character doesn't have any significant enemies (at least at the start of the campaign), just bothersome fans: Frequently, Minor: 10 points.

Minority: The character is a member of a racial, ethnic, religious, or other minority that suffers extreme prejudice from most or all of society. He has difficulty finding a job, using public accommodations, and generally getting things done: Very Frequently, Minor: 15 points.

Subject To Orders: The character belongs to an organization (such as the military) that has near-total control over his life and actions — it can even order him to go on dangerous missions. Although the character doesn't have to obey, disobedience may entail severe consequences: Very Frequently, Major: 20 points (or Severe [25 points] if the character is typically sent on suicide missions).

Slave: The character is owned by another person, can be forced to do whatever his owner wants, and has few or no legal or civil rights: Very Frequently, Major: 20 points.

Attainder/Corruption Of The Blood: One of the character's ancestors committed a crime so vile that all of his descendants suffer restrictions on their legal or civil rights or are considered honorless scum: Occasionally, Minor: 5 points.

Harmful Secret: The character has some secret that prove harmful to him if revealed — it could cost him his job, family, or reputation, or be used to blackmail him: Occasionally, Minor: 5 points.

### SUSCEPTIBILITY EXAMPLES

**Susceptibility To Holy Ground:** suffer Drain STR 2d6 + Drain CON 1d6 every Turn character is on holy or sacred ground (Uncommon): 20 Character Points

**Susceptibility To Salt:** 1d6 damage per Phase (Common): 20 Character Points

**Susceptibility To Green Argonite:** 3d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon): 25 Character Points

**Susceptibility To Being Teleported:** 3d6 damage, Instant Effect (Uncommon): 15 Character Points

A character may choose to take BODY *and* STUN from his Susceptibility each Phase even before he's unconscious (if so, he should buy the Susceptibility twice). Be careful with this alternative — it's quite dangerous.

If a character has a Power that would serve to protect him against the substance he's Susceptible to or blunt the effects of the Susceptibility, either partly or fully (for example, Desolidification or Regeneration), he can reflect this by purchasing the Susceptibility at a low frequency (once per minute, for example). Damage from Susceptibilities is automatic — no defenses apply against it — but a low frequency can simulate a character's ability to "withstand" the damage for short periods.

Susceptibility is primarily used in Superheroic campaigns. Characters in Heroic campaigns should not take Susceptibilities except in highly unusual circumstances.

### UNLUCK

Improbable and unlucky things happen to a character who has Unluck. The GM should require an Unluck Roll when the character is winning easily in a fight, depending on a sure thing, succeeding easily, taking a simple task for granted, and so forth.

Unluck is worth 5 Character Points per 1d6. When determining whether Unluck affects him, a character rolls his Unluck dice; each "1" that appears on the dice counts as one level of Unluck. The more levels of Unluck, the more intense the effects should be. The accompanying table gives some suggested effects for Unluck.

## UNLUCK

| Levels | Possible Effects |
|---|---|
| 1 | The character slips and is put at a disadvantage in combat, the computer malfunctions, the character loses a vital clue or piece of equipment, or a complete stranger picks a fight. |
| 2 | Bystanders get between the character and his target, normally friendly people are unwilling or unable to help the character, the character's bow breaks at an inopportune moment, a vacuum suit temporarily malfunctions, or an attack misses its target and injures a friend. |
| 3 | The character is suddenly Stunned in a fight by falling debris, another enemy shows up, a downed enemy is revived by a spectacular coincidence, the character's jetpack shuts off in flight, or an airlock opens accidentally. Incredibly bad coincidence is possible. |
| 4 or more | Like three levels, only the bad luck starts to affect the character's friends or comrades. An entire team's spacesuits might fail, all ammunition might turn out to be duds, several Hunteds might show up simultaneously, and so forth. |

Unluck isn't just a roll — it should affect the character in minor ways whenever he's winning or on top of a situation. A character with Unluck may also buy Luck: he's Lucky when losing and Unlucky when winning (resulting in a very confused character). The maximum amount of Unluck allowed is 5d6 (which is worth 25 Character Points as a Disadvantage). Any more than this and the character would have great difficulty staying alive in a dangerous world.



The GM should be careful not to overemphasize this Disadvantage, since Unluck can be extremely frustrating and annoying. The GM might roll secretly for Unluck, and let the player worry about whether it's working. Usually, the GM should only roll Unluck once during an encounter, to give himself a general idea of the outcome.

## VULNERABILITY

A character with this Disadvantage takes extra damage from a particular attack form.

The value of this Disadvantage depends on two things. The first is how common or frequent the attack form is. The player should determine this with the help of the GM, since the frequency of a certain type of attack varies from campaign to campaign. If the campaign is a high-tech Science Fiction game, energy blasters might be common, while in a Fantasy setting they would be non-existent (and therefore not worth any points). The GM determines how common different types of attacks are in his campaign.

The second factor is what multiple of regular damage the character takes. Standard Vulnerabilities multiply the damage by 1½; alternatively, characters can take two times (2x) damage for a larger Disadvantage. This multiplier applies to either the STUN or BODY of the attack — the character chooses which when he buys the Disadvantage. It's possible for a character to take a STUN Vulnerability and BODY Vulnerability to an attack by buying the Disadvantage twice.

The damage a character takes is multiplied by the Vulnerability multiplier before the character applies any defenses — if he's Vulnerable to an attack, it's going to hurt. (A Vulnerability to BODY does not affect Knockback, which is still determined just from the BODY rolled.) Vulnerability does not have any effect on the Active Points of a power for purposes of Dispel or the like.

### VULNERABILITY

| Value | The Attack is |
|---|---|
| 5 | Uncommon |
| 10 | Common (a group of Uncommon attacks, or a single Common attack) |
| 15 | Very Common (a group of Common attacks) |
| **Value** | **Vulnerability Multiplier** |
| +0 | x 1½ (Target takes 1½x damage) |
| x2 | x2 (Target takes 2x damage) |

Example: *Firelord is Vulnerable to Ice/Cold Attacks (Common, 2x STUN; 20 points). He has a total of 16 ED. Snowblind hits him with a cold-based Energy Blast 10d6 and rolls 38 STUN damage. Since he's Vulnerable, this becomes 76 STUN. He subtracts his defense, takes (76-16) 60 STUN, and is Knocked Out.*

A character can have a Vulnerability to attacks that do not do literal "damage" — like continuing-effect Mental Powers, Flashes, and Presence Attacks. The value for such a Vulnerability is determined normally (*i.e.,* it's based on the level of Vulnerability Multiplier and the commonness of the attack). When attacked by the attack form, the character multiplies the dice of effect by the Vulnerability Multiplier, and then uses this new total to determine the level of effect.

Example: *Ferret takes x2 effect from Presence Attacks (he's timid). Mechanon flies down and shouts "Freeze, organic form!" Mechanon's Presence is 40, and he rolls 29 on his 8d6. Ferret doubles this to 58, and then applies it against his 8 Presence. This is a Presence + 50 effect — Ferret won't be going anywhere for a long time.*

Generally, Vulnerability is most appropriate for Superheroic campaigns. Players should consult with their GM before taking it for characters in Heroic games.

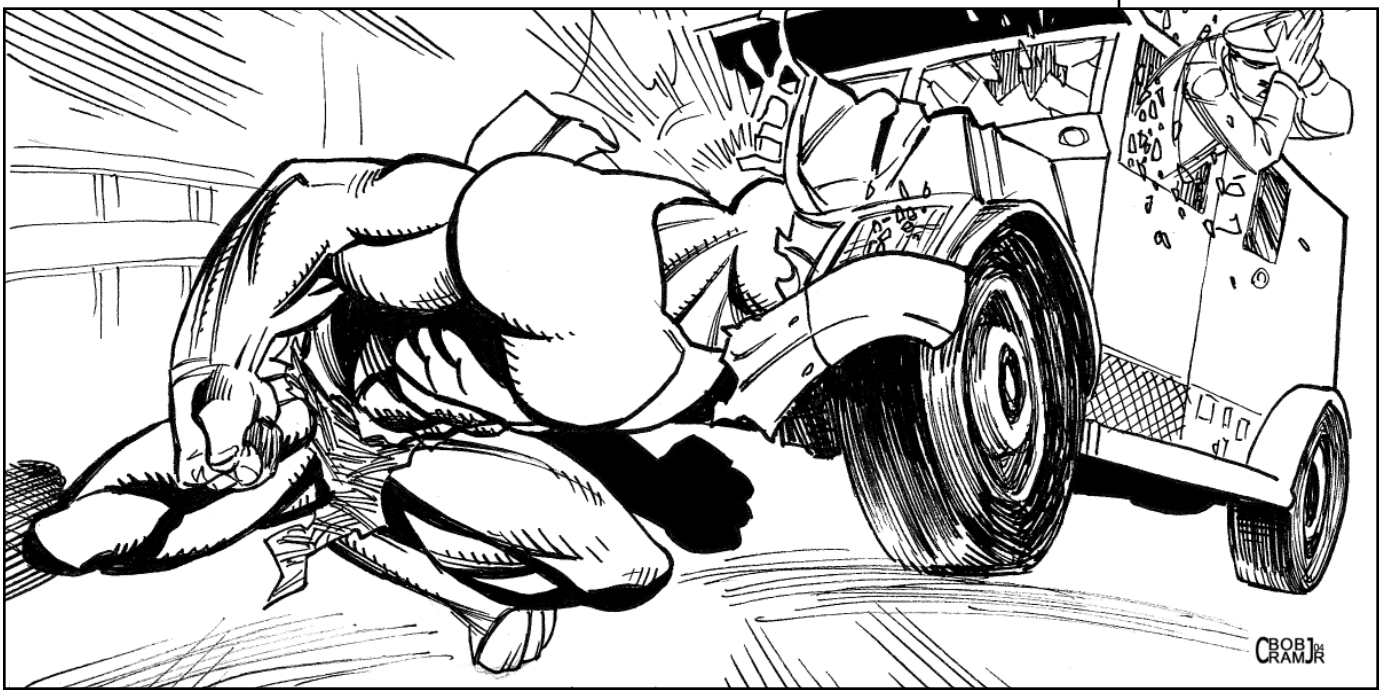
### VULNERABILITY EXAMPLES

Vulnerable To Sonic Attacks (Uncommon, 2x BODY): 10 Character Points

Vulnerable To Fire Attacks (Common, 1½x BODY): 10 Character Points

Vulnerable To Physical Killing Attacks (Very Common, 1½x STUN): 15 Character Points





# EXAMPLE CHARACTERS



Here's a step-by-step example of how to create a character. (You can find plenty of other example characters in Chapter Five.)

Tim plays in a *Pulp Hero* game that emulates the stories told in the pulp adventure magazines of the 1930s. He decides to create a classic strong-jawed, two-fisted hero. He chooses the name "Randall Irons," which has a strong, adventurous sound.

As Tim envisions him, Randall Irons is better than a normal person — stronger, smarter, tougher — but not a *lot* better. He's not the strongest or fastest adventurer out there; he's a well-rounded hero. So, Tim chooses the following Characteristics:

| Val | Char | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| 15 | STR | 5 |
| 15 | DEX | 15 |
| 18 | CON | 16 |
| 15 | BODY | 10 |
| 13 | INT | 3 |
| 13 | EGO | 6 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 |
| 14 | COM | 2 |
| | | |
| 6 | PD | 3 |
| 6 | ED | 2 |
| 4 | SPD | 15 |
| 9 | REC | 4 |
| 36 | END | 0 |
| 32 | STUN | 0 |

**Total Characteristics Cost: 91**

Next, Tim gives some thought to his character's Skills. First and foremost, he wants Irons to be physically and athletically competent, so he chooses several Skills and abilities to reflect that:

| Cost | Skill |
|---|---|
| 3 | Climbing 12- |
| 3 | Combat Driving 12- |
| 3 | Stealth 12- |
| 2 | Running +1" (7" total) |
| 2 | Leaping +2" (5" forward, 3" upward) |

Tim decides that not only is Irons a good shot, but he fought in the Great War (World War I) and learned several Skills from his military experiences:

| Cost | Skill |
|---|---|
| 6 | +2 with Firearms |
| 4 | +2 versus Range Modifier with Pistols |
| 3 | Fast Draw (Small Arms) 12- |
| 2 | Navigation (Land) 12- |
| 3 | Tactics 12- |
| 3 | WF: Small Arms, Blades |

Since the Great War ended, Irons has traveled all over the world having adventures. Tim gives him some Skills to represent his early adventuring career:

| Cost | Skill |
|---|---|
| 2 | Gambling (Card Games) 12- |
| 2 | Knowledge Skill: Africa 11- |
| 2 | Knowledge Skill: China 11- |
| 2 | Knowledge Skill: Europe 11- |
| 2 | Knowledge Skill: India 11- |
| 2 | Knowledge Skill: Legends And Lore 11- |
| 1 | Language: French (basic conversation) |
| 1 | Language: German (basic conversation) |

Irons is supposed to be a hero of the "two-fisted" variety, so Tim needs to improve his fighting Skills a little. Tim decides Irons learned how to box before joining the Army:

| Cost | Skill |
|---|---|
| 4 | Martial Block |
| 3 | Martial Grab |
| 4 | Martial Strike |
| 5 | Offensive Strike |

Lastly, Tim wants to give Randall Irons a special ability that sets him apart from other pulp heroes. He decides Irons has a gift for getting along with animals. Somehow, even the fiercest animals like him. He can make friends with the most vicious guard dog, stop a tiger from leaping at him, or calm down a rampaging bull elephant. Tim represents this with the Skill *Animal Handler;* the special effect of the Skill is "Irons has an empathic ability to make friends with animals."

| Cost | Skill |
|---|---|
| 9 | Animal Handler (Camels, Canines, Elephants, Equines, Felines, Raptors, Reptiles & Amphibians, Ursines) 13- |

Tim adds up what he's spent on Skills, and gets 73. Since he spent 91 Character Points on Characteristics, that means he's spent 164 points. Unfortunately, in this game, starting characters are only built on 150 points, so Tim needs to remove 14 points from Randall Irons. He decides to get rid of the Range Skill Levels (-4 points), the extra Running and Leaping (-4 points), and the KSs of China and India (-4 points), and to remove two categories from his Animal Handler (-2 points). That gets him down to 150 points; he can buy the Skills he had to get rid of after he earns a few Experience Points.

Now Tim has to choose some Disadvantages for Randall Irons — he needs 75 points' worth of them. The first one is obvious: he wants Randall Irons to be a true hero, the sort of man who'll pass up an oppor-

tunity to attack a villain if he has to rescue a hostage, won't hit a lady (and treats women in general with respect), and so on. The GM accepts this as a valid Disadvantage, so Tim notes it on his character sheet:

**Value Disadvantage**
15 Psychological Limitation: True-Blue Hero (Common, Strong)

15 points down, 60 to go. Tim decides Irons is the type of man who sometimes gets in over his head. He can't resist a serious challenge (even if he's outmatched) and thinks he can handle any problem — in short, he's a little too overconfident for his own good:

**Value Disadvantage**
15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)

In his military and adventuring careers, Irons has made a few enemies. The first is "Colonel" Bruce Forsythe, a former British military officer. Irons disobeyed Forsythe's badly-conceived orders several times during the War, and eventually exposed Forsythe as a traitor. Forsythe escaped justice and became an adventurer, ever eager for revenge against his hated nemesis Irons. In short, Forsythe is a Hunted; he counts as "More Powerful" than Irons because he has a lot of money and contacts he can use.

**Value Disadvantage**
20 Hunted: "Colonel" Bruce Forsythe 11- (Mo Pow, Capture/Kill)

That's 50 points worth of Disadvantages so far; Tim needs 25 more. He decides another Hunted would be in order, but he wants something a little different, with a bit of a romantic twist to it. He chooses the lovely Drisana, the daughter of a rajah and criminal mastermind in India whom Irons and his friends have clashed with on several occasions. Drisana obviously has romantic feelings for Irons, and to some extent he reciprocates them... but she's her father's daughter, with criminal inclinations and a hunger for wealth and power, so it's a match that can never be (unless Irons somehow manages to reform her).

**Value Disadvantage**
10 Hunted: Drisana 8- (As Pow, Capture [to force Irons to marry her and become her willing consort])

Speaking of romance, Tim thinks Irons, with his good looks and winning ways, is probably something of a ladies' man. Maybe that's inspired a little jealousy in one of the other PCs. In fact, the idea of having a Rivalry with another PC appeals to Tim; it would make for great roleplaying! He approaches Eric with this idea, since Eric's character, a bitter piano player named Hamilton Cross, is just the type to resent Irons's success with women. Eric likes the idea, too, so Tim notes on his character sheet:

**Value Disadvantage**
15 Rivalry: Professional and Romantic (with Hamilton Cross, another PC)

That does it! Randall Irons now has 75 points' worth of Disadvantages, so he's ready to play. Here's what the final character sheet looks like:

**RANDALL IRONS**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1] |
| 15 | DEX | 15 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 15 | BODY | 10 | 12- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll 12- |
| 13 | EGO | 6 | 12- | ECV: 4 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 14 | COM | 2 | 12- | |
| 6 | PD | 3 | | Total: 6 PD (0 rPD) |
| 6 | ED | 2 | | Total: 6 ED (0 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 15 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 9 | REC | 4 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 32 | STUN | 0 | | **Total Characteristics Cost: 91** |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"

| Cost | Powers | | | END |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Martial Arts: Boxing* | | | |
| | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Damage/Effect |
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 3 | Clinch | -1 | -1 | Grab Two Limbs, +10 to STR for holding on |
| 4 | Cross | +0 | +2 | STR +2d6 Strike |
| 5 | Hook | -2 | +1 | STR +4d6 Strike |

**Skills**
6 +2 with Firearms

7 Animal Handler (Canines, Elephants, Equines, Felines, Raptors, Ursines) 13-
3 Climbing 12-
3 Combat Driving 12-
3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 12-
2 Gambling (Card Games) 12-
2 Area Knowledge: Africa 11-
2 Area Knowledge: Europe 11-
2 Knowledge Skill: Legends And Lore 11-
1 Language: French (basic conversation; English is Native)
1 Language: German (basic conversation)
2 Navigation (Land) 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Tactics 12-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 59**
**Total Cost: 150**

**75+ Disadvantages**
20 Hunted: "Col." Bruce Forsythe 11- (Mo Pow, Capture/Kill)
10 Hunted: Drisana 8- (As Pow, Capture [to force Irons to marry her and become her willing husband])
15 Psychological Limitation: True-Blue Hero (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)
15 Rivalry: Professional and Romantic (with Hamilton Cross, another PC)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

# AVERAGE INDIVIDUALS

Here are a few more example characters — average people, not heroic PC types. The GM can use these for typical individuals the PCs meet, while players can use them to see how their characters stack up against the "average joe."

## SMALL CHILD

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | STR | -10 | 9- | Lift 25 kg; 0d6 [1] |
| 8 | DEX | -6 | 11- | OCV: 3/DCV: 3 |
| 5 | CON | -10 | 10- | |
| 5 | BODY | -10 | 10- | |
| 7 | INT | -3 | 10- | PER Roll 10- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 5 | PRE | -5 | 10- | PRE Attack: 1d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 1 | PD | 1 | | Total: 1 PD (0 rPD) |
| 1 | ED | 0 | | Total: 1 ED (0 rED) |
| 1 | SPD | 0 | | Phases: 7 |
| 2 | REC | 2 | | |
| 10 | END | 0 | | |
| 8 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristic Cost: -51** | |

**Movement:** Running: 4"/8"
Swimming: 1"/2"

| Cost | Power | END |
|---|---|---|
| -4 | *Toddling:* Running -2" (4" total) | |
| -1 | *Slow Swimmer:* Swimming -1" (1" total) | |

**Skills**

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 | *Short:* +2 DCV |
| 4 | *Short:* +2 to Stealth |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 9**
**Total Cost: -42**

**+0 Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 15 | Age: 10 or younger |
| 15 | Physical Limitation (short — 1m tall, 12.5 kg mass, +2 DCV, +3" Knockback) (All The Time, Slightly Impairing) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 30**

## SENIOR CITIZEN

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | STR | -5 | 10- | Lift 50 kg; 1d6 [1] |
| 8 | DEX | -6 | 11- | OCV: 3/DCV: 3 |
| 5 | CON | -10 | 10- | |
| 8 | BODY | -4 | 11- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll 12- |
| 13 | EGO | 6 | 12- | ECV: 4 |
| 10 | PRE | 0 | 11- | PRE Attack: 2d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 1 | PD | 0 | | Total: 1 PD (0 rPD) |
| 1 | ED | 0 | | Total: 1 ED (0 rED) |
| 1 | SPD | 0 | | Phases: 7 |
| 2 | REC | 0 | | |
| 10 | END | 0 | | |
| 14 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristic Cost: -16** | |

**Movement:** Running: 4"/8"
Swimming: 1"/2"

| Cost | Power | END |
|---|---|---|
| -4 | *Slowing Down:* Running -2" (4" total) | |
| -1 | *Slowing Down:* Swimming -1" (1" total) | |

**Skill**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | KS: Own Profession 11- |
| 2 | KS: Hobby 11- |
| 2 | PS: Own Profession 11- |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 1**
**Total Cost: -15**

**0+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | Age: 40+ |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 5**

## AVERAGE PERSON

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | STR | -2 | 11- | Lift 75 kg; 1½d6 [1] |
| 8 | DEX | -6 | 11- | OCV: 3/DCV: 3 |
| 8 | CON | -4 | 11- | |
| 8 | BODY | -4 | 11- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 8 | EGO | -4 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 8 | PRE | -2 | 11- | PRE Attack: 1½d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 2 | PD | 0 | | Total: 2 PD (0 rPD) |
| 2 | ED | 0 | | Total: 2 ED (0 rED) |
| 2 | SPD | 2 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 4 | REC | 0 | | |
| 16 | END | 0 | | |
| 16 | STUN | 0 | | **Total Characteristics Cost: -23** |

**Movement:** Running: 5"/10"
Swimming: 1"/2"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| -2 | *A Little Slow:* Running -1" (5" total) | |
| -1 | *A Little Slow:* Swimming -1" (1" total) | |

**Skills**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | KS: Own Profession 11- |
| 2 | KS: Hobby 11- |
| 2 | PS: Own Profession 11- |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 3**
**Total Cost: -20**

**+0 Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 | GM's choice of appropriate Disadvantages such as Age, Physical Limitation, or Psychological Limitation |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 10**

## NOTEWORTHY NORMAL

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | STR | 0 | 11- | Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1] |
| 10 | DEX | 0 | 11- | OCV: 3/DCV: 3 |
| 10 | CON | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 10 | EGO | 0 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 10 | PRE | 0 | 11- | PRE Attack: 2d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 2 | PD | 0 | | Total: 2 PD (0 rPD) |
| 2 | ED | 0 | | Total: 2 ED (0 rED) |
| 2 | SPD | 0 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 4 | REC | 0 | | |
| 20 | END | 0 | | |
| 20 | STUN | 0 | | **Total Characteristic Cost: 0** |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"
Swimming: 2"/4"

| Cost | Skills |
|---|---|
| 2 | KS: Own Profession 11- |
| 2 | KS: Hobby 11- |
| 2 | PS: Own Profession 11- |
| 1 | Familiarity with 1 Skill |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 7**
**Total Cost: 7**

**0+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 | 1 or more Disadvantages such as Age, Physical Limitation, or Psychological Limitation |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 10**

## SKILLED NORMAL

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | STR | 3 | 12- | Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [1] |
| 11 | DEX | 3 | 11- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 13 | CON | 6 | 12- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 10 | EGO | 0 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 10 | PRE | 0 | 11- | PRE Attack: 2d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 4 | PD | 1 | | Total: 4 PD (0 rPD) |
| 3 | ED | 0 | | Total: 3 ED (0 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 9 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 26 | END | 0 | | |
| 24 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristic Cost: 22** | |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"
Swimming: 2"/4"

| Cost | Skill |
|---|---|
| 2 | KS: Own Profession 11- |
| 2 | KS: Hobby 11- |
| 2 | PS: Own Profession 11- |
| 2 | Familiarity with 2 Skills |
| 6 | Pick six points' worth of the following: Skills, Weapon Familiarity, Skill Levels |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 14**
**Total Cost: 36**

| 25+ | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| 5 | 1 Disadvantage such as Age, Physical Limitation, or Psychological Limitation |
| 10 | 1 Psychological Limitation, Physical Limitation, Dependence, Reputation, or Hunted |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 40**

## COMPETENT NORMAL

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | STR | 3 | 12- | Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [1] |
| 14 | DEX | 12 | 13- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 13 | CON | 6 | 12- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll 12- |
| 11 | EGO | 2 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 13 | PRE | 3 | 12- | PRE Attack: 2½d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 5 | PD | 2 | | Total: 5 PD (0 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 1 | | Total: 4 ED (0 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 6 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 26 | END | 0 | | |
| 25 | STUN | 1 | **Total Characteristic Cost: 39** | |

**Movement:** Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 2"/4"

| Cost | Skills | END |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | *Fast:* Running +1" | 1 |

**Skills**

| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | 1 5-point Skill Level (player's choice) |
| 2 | KS: Own Profession 11- |
| 2 | KS: Hobby 11- |
| 3 | PS: Own Profession 12- |
| 10 | Two Characteristic-Based Skills (player's choice) at +1 each |
| 2 | Familiarity with 2 Skills 8- |
| 1 | WF: one 1-point Weapon Familiarity of character's choice |
| 9 | Nine points' worth of Skills or Talents (player's choice) |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 36**
**Total Cost: 75**

| 50+ | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| 10 | 1 Disadvantage such as Age, Physical Limitation, or Psychological Limitation |
| 15 | 1 Psychological Limitation, Physical Limitation, Dependence, Reputation, Hunted, or any combination thereof |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 75**

chapter two:



# COMBAT AND ADVENTURING

# BEFORE COMBAT



**CHAPTER TWO OUTLINE**

1. Before Combat
2. Entering Combat
3. Fighting
4. Determining Damage
5. Optional Damage Rules
6. Other Combat Effects
7. Recovery
8. Endurance
9. Presence Attacks

This chapter provides rules for running combats and similar encounters. Combat ranges from throwing a punch, to drawing and shooting a pistol, to casting a lightning bolt spell. The *HERO System* breaks combat down into several steps. The rules explain each step thoroughly, with examples to illustrate how you might conduct actual game combats.

The *HERO System* covers all types of combat with a set of simple rules. As you gain experience with these rules, there are optional rules you can use to make your combats more "realistic" and exciting. Add in optional rules when you feel more comfortable with the game and can deal with the added complexity. For the most part, the optional rules are better for Heroic games than Superheroic games.

## COMBAT AND NONCOMBAT TIME

In the *HERO System* there are two types of time: combat and noncombat.

*Combat time* is very precise, measured second by second, with exact actions and results. Because so much can happen in only a few seconds of combat time, there are extensive rules for playing it out. It may take a couple of hours (real time) to play out a combat that's just a few seconds or a couple of minutes (game time) long. As you become more familiar with the rules and rhythm of the game, the combats you run will typically take less time.

*Noncombat time,* on the other hand, isn't as exact. This is when the GM sets the scene for the players, tells them what's happening to their characters, and begins the plot of the session's adventure. Hours, days, or weeks of game time can pass in a few minutes of real time as the GM describes what's happening. This tremendous variation in time is similar to what happens in movies and novels. In a novel, weeks may pass in one paragraph or sentence, or a whole chapter may describe a fight that lasts for a minute.

Think of a game session as the telling of a story with the help of the players. First, the GM describes where the characters are, either dealing with each one individually or starting with the group as a whole. As he describes the setting, the characters will probably want to do things. For example, the GM says, "Reynolds, you hear the high-pitched whine of a laser pistol shot. It sounds like it's right around the corner." The player, acting out the part of Reynolds, describes what he does in response: "I'll run around the corner to see what's happening." The GM shouldn't worry about exactly how far it is to the corner, or how long it takes Reynolds to get there, because this is still noncombat time. What's important to the adventure is that Reynolds gets to the corner, looks around, and sees an assassin shooting the ambassador.

Unless it looks like there's going to be a fight (or some other sequence you need to detail precisely, like a car chase), you don't have to be exact about things like time or distance. It's not really important to know exactly how long it takes Reynolds to eat his breakfast, drive to work, or talk to his boss. The GM starts the adventure by telling the characters their current locations and activities. After that, the adventure may include some investigation, conversation between the players and NPCs, or perhaps some mood-setting emotional scenes. All this happens in noncombat time.

Usually, the event that marks the change from noncombat to combat time is when the GM has the PCs make Perception Rolls to spot their enemies (or vice-versa).

## SENSES IN THE HERO SYSTEM

Characters are constantly perceiving — seeing, hearing, and smelling the world around them. In some games, they may even have exotic Senses such as "x-ray vision" or the ability to detect magic. Here's how they use those Senses.

### Perception Rolls

Characters aren't always aware of everything going on around them, especially during combat. Whenever something's obvious, the GM tells the character about it ("You see a '67 Chevy in front of you"). But he may require characters to make *Perception Rolls* (PER Rolls) to notice something inobvious, or to notice something during a combat or crisis situation. Every character's base PER Roll equals 9 plus his Intelligence divided by 5:

**Perception Roll = (9 + (INT/5)) or less**

For example, a character with INT 14 has a PER Roll of (9 + (14/5) =) 12 or less.

To make a PER Roll, the character should roll this number or less on 3d6. The GM should apply modifiers to this roll depending on the circumstances (see below).

### THE RANGE OF SENSES

Many Senses can perceive things at a distance — in other words, they work at Range. For example, characters can see and hear things far away.

The *HERO System* rules don't establish any specific outer limit or boundary for a Ranged Sense. However, the Range Modifier (page 373) applies to all PER Rolls. In effect, this restricts the Range of a Sense significantly. However, the GM should also establish any other limits that seem appropriate based on common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance. For example, even if a character on Earth rolls a 3 on his Sight Group PER Roll, he can't see what's happening on Mars. As a guideline, when the Range Modifier reaches the point where it reduces a character's PER Roll to 0 or below, beyond the outer limit of that Range Modifier category things are too blurry, indistinct, or obscured for the character to perceive, even if he rolls a 3.

### TARGETING AND NONTARGETING SENSES

Of course, not all Senses are equal — a normal human can learn a lot more about someone by looking at him than by smelling him. To reflect this difference, the *HERO System* divides all Senses into two categories: Targeting and Nontargeting.

A *Targeting Sense* is a Sense a character can use to determine the exact location of a target. For normal humans, Sight is the only Targeting Sense.

A *Nontargeting Sense* is one with which the character can, at best, sense the general location of a target. For normal humans, Hearing and Smell are Nontargeting Senses. Taste and Touch both have no range, so characters can't use them to locate targets at all (to use these Senses, the character would already have to have found his opponent).

**Lack Of Senses In Combat**

In combat, a character must normally use a Targeting Sense to detect his target. If he can do so, there is no change in his OCV or DCV, and combat proceeds normally.

However, characters can't always perceive their opponents with Targeting Senses. For example, a character may have been blinded by a Flash, or his opponent could be Invisible. When a character cannot perceive his opponent with any Targeting Sense, he suffers modifiers to his OCV and DCV:

—In HTH Combat, the character is at ½ OCV and ½ DCV. This applies both to when he makes attacks in HTH Combat, and is attacked in HTH Combat.

—In Ranged Combat, the character is at 0 OCV and ½ DCV. This applies both to when he makes attacks in Ranged Combat, and is attacked in Ranged Combat.

If a character can make a PER Roll with a Nontargeting Sense (a Half Phase Action) to perceive a particular target, then against that target only he is at -1 DCV, ½ OCV when attacked or attacking in HTH Combat, and full DCV, ½ OCV when attacked from or attacking at Range. Against all other targets he is affected by the standard "lack of Targeting Sense" modifiers described above.

Example: *Orion, under attack by the supervillain team Eurostar, has been Flashed, and therefore can't see. He'd normally be ½ DCV, ½ OCV in HTH Combat and ½ DCV, 0 OCV at Range — a sitting duck. However, he makes his Hearing PER Roll against Durak. He is now only -1 DCV, ½ OCV in HTH Combat and full DCV, ½ OCV at Range against Durak only. He's still at ½ OCV and DCV in HTH and ½ DCV, 0 OCV at Range against all other opponents.*

## Sense Groups

The *HERO System* divides Senses into seven Sense Groups: Hearing, Mental, Radio, Sight, Smell/Taste, Touch, and Unusual. The Senses with which a character is born, or that he later naturally develops, are considered Inherent. Other Senses, such as Infrared Perception bought as OAF Nightvision Goggles, are only Persistent (at best).

Although normal Senses, those which all humans possess, are not exactly "Powers" *per se,* you can derive a point value for one by determining the Physical Limitation value of not having it. For example, the Physical Limitation *Blindness* (lack of Sight Group Senses) affects a character All The Time and is Fully Impairing, so it's a 25-point Disadvantage. Therefore, Normal Sight as a "Power" is worth 25 points.

**The Simulated Sense Group Rule**

Characters in *HERO System* games often have unusual Senses bought using the *Enhanced Senses* Power (page 160). Many of these Senses (primarily those belonging to the Unusual Sense Group) are subject to the *Simulated Sense Rule.*

The Simulated Sense Rule is this: if one of a character's Senses is based on or "mimics" one of the standard Senses, that Sense is affected by Sense-Affecting Powers that affect the mimicked Sense's Sense Group *and* by any Sense-Affecting Powers that specifically target that Sense. It receives the Sense Modifiers (like Sense and Targeting) associated with that Sense Group for free. The rules usually refer to this as "assigning" a Sense to a particular Sense Group.

Example: *Infrared Perception bought to represent a character's ability to see heat patterns is assigned to the Sight Sense Group — it "simulates" Sight. If the character's Sight Group Senses are Flashed, that Flash affects his Infrared Perception. On the other hand, his Infrared Perception automatically gains several Sense Modifiers (Discriminatory, Range, Sense, and Targeting) for free, because all Sight Group Senses have those Modifiers.*

This rule typically applies to the members of the Unusual Sense Group, Sense-like Talents, and so forth. For example, N-Ray Perception, Spatial Awareness, and many forms of Detect have the special effect of being "super-sensitive" or "super-powerful" versions of one of the standard Senses. N-Ray

Perception could be a form of Sight powerful enough to see right through most objects. It would be affected by a Flash versus the Sight Group, or by a Flash versus N-Ray Perception specifically.

If a Sense is not defined as "belonging to" one of the standard Sense Groups, it can only be affected by Sense-Affecting Powers individually. For example, Combat Sense and Danger Sense both "stand alone" — they don't simulate any Sense Group, so only Sense-Affecting Powers specifically designed to affect them (such as with Darkness versus Combat Sense, Invisibility to Danger Sense, and so forth) work against them.

Because of the Simulated Sense Rule, characters cannot use Sense-Affecting Powers on the Unusual Sense Group as a whole. They must affect its Senses individually, or whatever Sense Group an Unusual Sense belongs to as a whole.

**THE HEARING SENSE GROUP**

The Hearing Sense Group includes Normal Hearing (which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation) and any other Enhanced Senses based primarily upon hearing. Active Sonar and Ultrasonic Perception are almost always bought as part of the Hearing Sense Group.

The Hearing Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Range, Sense. The Discriminatory effect provided by the Hearing Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell a bird's song from a trumpet solo, but might not be able to tell two different types of bird songs apart. Characters can make Normal Hearing (or the entire Hearing Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost. Although Normal Hearing has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), the Hearing Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group.

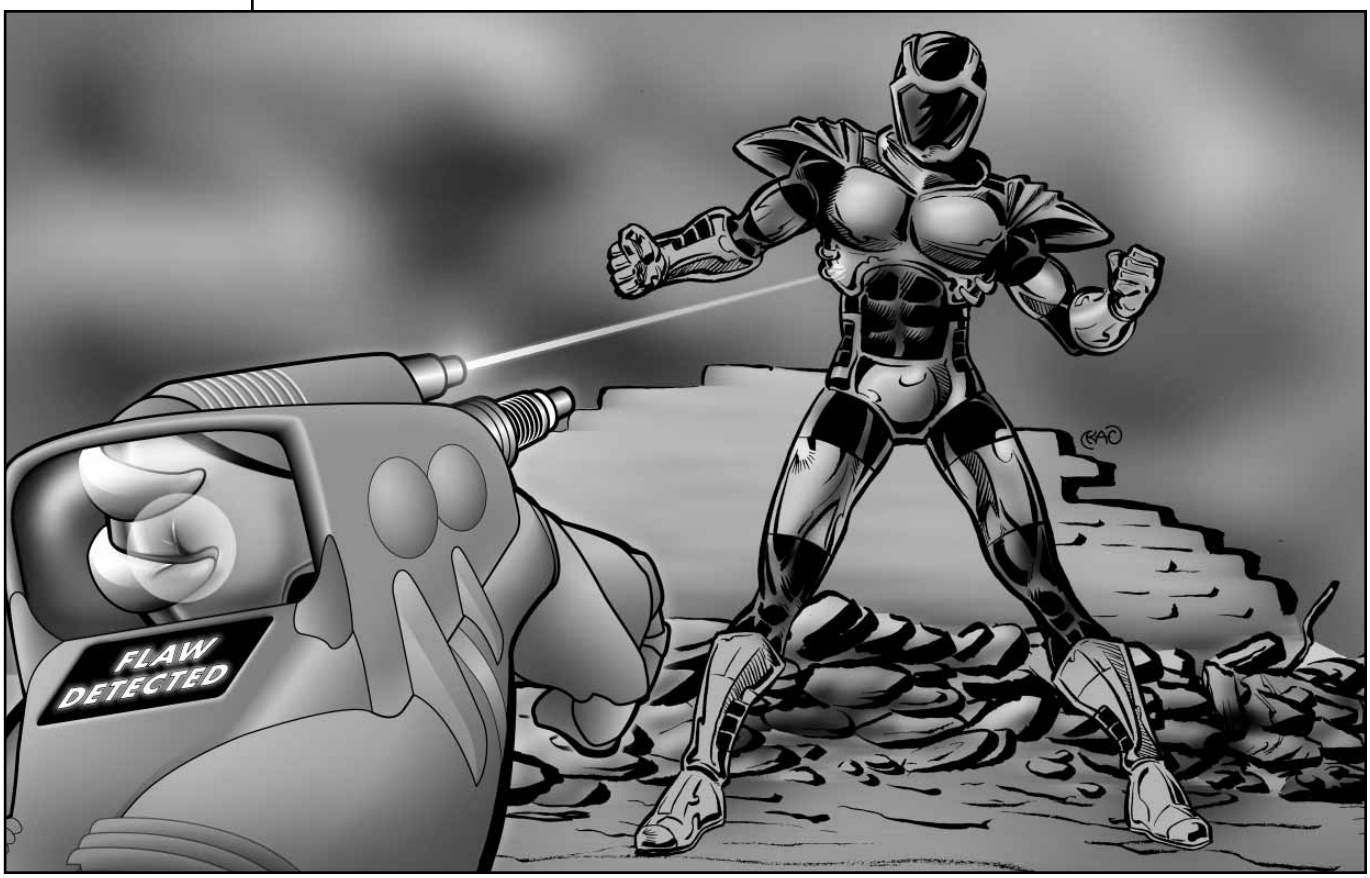
Normal Hearing is worth 20 Character Points as a Power. Lack of Hearing (deafness) is a 20-point Physical Limitation (All The Time, Greatly Impairing). Deafness means a character cannot make Hearing PER Rolls; lack of hearing in one ear (a 15-point Physical Limitation [Frequently, Greatly Impairing]) means Hearing PER Rolls are at -3.

**THE MENTAL SENSE GROUP**

The Mental Sense Group includes Mental Awareness, Mind Scan, and any other Enhanced Senses based primarily upon mental powers. To a limited extent, Telepathy (which acts as both "mental hearing" and a "mental voice") and Mind Link (a more limited form of Telepathy) are also a part of this Sense Group for purposes of applying Sense-Affecting Powers. No character has any Mental Group Senses normally, though characters who buy any Mental Power get Mental Awareness for free (see page 163).

The Mental Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Range. Mental Awareness functions as a Sense, but the Mental Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group.

Mental Awareness allows a character to perceive the user and target of Mental Powers, which are normally not perceivable (except to those two characters). Any character who has a Mental Power has Mental Awareness for free. If a character with



Mental Powers does not have Mental Awareness for some reason, he may take this as a -¼ Limitation on the Powers, or as a 5-point Physical Limitation (since it only costs 5 points, that's all it's worth as a Disadvantage), as the GM prefers. Mental Awareness is not a 360-Degree Sense, Discriminatory, or a Targeting Sense. Discriminatory Mental Awareness would allow the character to determine (with a successful PER Roll) the specific Mental Power being used, the level of power (*i.e.,* Active Points, plus or minus 10%), and whether the power is being used grossly or subtly. Analyze with Mental Awareness allows the character to know the exact Active Points in the Power, and any Advantages bought for it.

**THE RADIO SENSE GROUP**

The Radio Sense Group includes Radio Perception and any other Enhanced Senses based primarily on radio. No character has any Radio Group Senses normally. High Range Radio Perception, Radar, and Radio Perception/Transmission are almost always bought as part of the Radio Sense Group.

The Radio Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Range, Sense. Radio Perception has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), but the Radio Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group. However, many of them buy it separately — HRRP, Radio Perception, and Radio Perception/Transmission all have it. Radar does not have it, but is a Targeting Sense.

**THE SIGHT SENSE GROUP**

The Sight Sense Group is the most important Sense Group and the one most often affected by Sense-Affecting Powers. It includes Normal Sight (which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation), Nightvision, and any Enhanced Senses based primarily on sight. Infrared Perception, N-Ray Perception, and Ultraviolet Perception are almost always bought as part of the Sight Sense Group.

The Sight Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Range, Sense, Targeting. The Discriminatory effect provided by the Sight Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell two people apart based on their visual appearance, but cannot always determine a person's ethnicity or religion through Sight. Characters can make Normal Sight (or the entire Sight Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost.

Normal Sight is worth 25 Character Points as a Power. Lack of Sight (blindness) is a 25-point Physical Limitation (All The Time, Fully Impairing) that has severe effects on a character. Not only can he not make Sight PER Rolls, but his CV may be reduced (see page 349). A character who's blind in one eye (and thus lacks depth perception) suffers no penalties in HTH Combat but is at ½ OCV in Ranged Combat (making this condition a 10-point Physical Limitation [Infrequently, Greatly Impairing] for many characters in most campaigns).

**THE SMELL/TASTE SENSE GROUP**

The Smell/Taste Sense Group includes Normal Smell and Normal Taste (which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation) and any Enhanced Senses based primarily on smell or taste.

The Smell/Taste Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Range (Smell only), Sense. The Discriminatory effect provided by the Smell/Taste Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell a steak from a potato by smell or taste, but can't necessarily identify every ingredient in either dish. Characters can make Normal Smell or Normal Taste (or the entire Smell/Taste Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost.

Although Normal Smell has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), the Smell/Taste Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group. Normal Smell works at Range, and provides this effect to other Smell-based Senses; Normal Taste and Taste-based Senses do not have Range.

Normal Smell/Taste is worth 5 Character Points as a Power. Lack of smell/taste (no chemoreception) is a 5-point Physical Limitation (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing).

**THE TOUCH SENSE GROUP**

The Touch Sense Group includes Normal Touch (which every character possesses unless he has an appropriate Physical Limitation) and any Enhanced Senses based primarily on touch.

The Touch Sense Group provides the following Sense Modifiers: Discriminatory, Sense. The Discriminatory effect provided by the Touch Group is not the full Discriminatory obtained by buying that Sense Modifier, but rather an effect of somewhat cruder degree. For example, a character can tell a dollar bill from a piece of ordinary paper of the same size, but cannot tell a $1 bill from a $5 bill. Characters can make Normal Touch (or the entire Touch Sense Group) fully Discriminatory by paying the usual cost.

Normal Touch has Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), but the Touch Sense Group does not provide this Sense Modifier to other Senses assigned to the group. Normal Touch is not a Targeting Sense, but touching a target would allow the character to make a PER Roll with Normal Touch (a Nontargeting Sense) to reduce the standard penalty for not perceiving the target with a Targeting Sense.

Characters generally cannot make themselves Invisible to Touch; this is more or less the same thing as Desolidification and should be bought using that Power. Characters can, however, Flash the Touch Sense Group (with effects indicated below) or create Images that affect it (see page 189).

Normal Touch is worth 15 Character Points as a Power. Lack of Normal Touch is a 15-point Physical Limitation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing). In game terms, a lack of Normal Touch (whether permanent or as the result of a Sense-Affecting Power) generally imposes penalties of -3 (or more) on DEX-Based

Skills, OCV in HTH Combat (and even some Ranged combat, if the character has to, for example, shoot weapons), and any other activities requiring dexterous action. Lack of Touch does *not* render a character immune to pain or reduce the degree of damage he takes from attacks. He still takes full damage — he just doesn't feel it. Thus, the character may think he's perfectly uninjured and healthy, when in fact he's about to collapse due to system shock (STUN damage) or has suffered a life-threatening wound (BODY damage). However, at the GM's discretion, characters who lack Touch may receive bonuses to rolls to resist pain.

**THE UNUSUAL SENSE GROUP**

This Sense Group includes a hodgepodge of Senses that don't belong in any other group: Active Sonar, Clairsentience, Detect, Find Weakness, High Range Radio Perception, Infrared Perception, N-Ray Perception, Radar, Radio Perception/Transmission, Spatial Awareness, Sensory Talents, Ultraviolet Perception, Ultrasonic Perception, and any form of Detect that's not primarily based upon some other Sense Group.

The Unusual Sense "Group" really isn't a Sense Group in the normal meaning of the term — instead, it's a way of categorizing several odd Senses that don't fit in another Sense Group. Characters cannot buy Sense-Affecting Powers that affect the entire Unusual Sense Group (unless the GM permits this). Instead, the Simulated Sense Rule applies to the Senses in this group: they're affected by Sense-Affecting Powers that affect the Sense Group the character assigns them to.

**Clairsentience**

Clairsentience has several unique properties. Its focal point can be at any location within the Power's range, instead of just at the character himself (other Senses' focal points are the character's sensory organs). From that perception point the character uses the Sense in the standard fashion, and the Range Modifier applies.

Clairsentience is thus "Indirect" in some ways (since a character can project it "through" walls, around corners, and so forth). It can approximate Improved Arc Of Perception — the character can establish the perception point wherever he prefers within his range, including behind him, and sense in any direction from that perception point — but is not inherently a 360-Degree Sense. For a discussion of how Sense-Affecting Powers affect Clairsentience, refer to *Sense-Affecting Powers,* below.

For purposes of Sense-Affecting Powers, Precognitive Clairsentience and Retrocognitive Clairsentience should be considered separate from each other and from normal Clairsentience. Thus, a Flash versus Clairsentience affects a character's ordinary Clairvoyance or Clairaudience, but not his Precognition or Retrocognition; a Flash versus his Precognition won't affect his normal Clairsentience or Retrocognition. If a character has more than one form of Clairsentience (say, Clairvoyance and Clairaudience), it's the GM's decision, based on special effects and logic, as to whether they're affected separately or together by Sense-Affecting Powers.

Characters can buy Clairsentience as a Targeting Sense. However, this can be extremely unbalancing in combat, since it allows characters to hide behind complete cover and still perceive their opponents. Therefore GMs should be very cautious about allowing any character to buy Clairsentience as a Targeting Sense. However, even if Clairsentience is Targeting, a character cannot establish LOS with it (unless the GM permits otherwise).

**Detect**

Detects allow the character to perceive virtually anything he can think of — enemies, minds, life force, gold, secret doors, starships, you name it. Typically a Detect is subject to the Simulated Sense Rule — for example, if a character has the ability to "smell" gold, his Detect Gold is part of his Smell/Taste Sense Group.

**N-Ray Perception**

N-Ray Perception allows characters to perceive through barriers and other solid objects, as appropriate. It could be a form of perception that can see through things, a sense of smell so powerful it can smell things through barriers, hearing so precise it can detect minute shifts in air currents that indicate what things are and where they're located, and the like — its definition is as broad as the player's imagination. But no matter how you define it, you must also define a reasonably common substance that blocks it (see page 163).

**Spatial Awareness**

Spatial Awareness allows a character to perceive his surroundings without contacting them. This usually means he can perceive through barriers and other solid objects, as appropriate. Like N-Ray Perception, it's often defined as some sort of super-refined version of one of the ordinary senses, and thus is subject to the Simulated Sense Rule. Spatial Awareness does not operate in 360 Degrees and is not Discriminatory, but is a Targeting Sense. If Spatial Awareness is bought Discriminatory, it can sense fine details.

**Even More Unusual Senses**

This "category" includes several "Senses" that don't belong in any other group, not even the Unusual Sense Group. These Senses are covered by the Simulated Sense Rule.

Voice As A "Sense": A character cannot use his voice to "perceive" anything. However, since characters' voices are silenced by Darkness that affects the Hearing Group, the voice has some Sense-like aspects. Voice is worth 20 points as a Power.

Sense Talents: Several Talents are unusual types of Senses. See page 86 for further discussion.

**Other Senses And Sense Groups**

If he wishes, the GM can establish other "Sense Groups" based on common special effects. For example, all of a character's Senses that derive from his mystic powers might belong to a "Mystic Sense Group," which would then be subject to Sense-Affecting Powers directed against it.

The GM can also establish other Senses if he wishes to. For example, he could create "Mystic Awareness," which functions just like Mental Awareness regarding mystic or magical energies.

# Perception Roll Modifiers

Like Skill Rolls, PER Rolls are subject to modifiers. Some of these modifiers are the same as those for Skills; others are different, or are specific to PER Rolls based on a given Sense.

### SKILL MODIFIERS

As a general rule, GMs can apply the following types of Skill Modifiers to PER Rolls (see page 45 for details): modifiers for Routine, Easy, Difficult, and so on; taking extra time; and excellent or poor conditions. Other such modifiers apply as the GM sees fit.

### RANGE MODIFIER

Attempts to perceive things at a distance are subject to the Range Modifier. See page 373.

### MODIFIERS FOR SPECIFIC SENSES

The accompanying Perception Modifier tables show modifiers for specific objects or conditions which affect those Senses. The GM should add up all of the modifiers; if the total is positive, then the character can probably perceive the object, substance, or phenomena without making a PER Roll. If the total is zero or negative, the character has to make a PER Roll with that modifier to perceive the subject.

If a character tries to perceive someone using Stealth, they compete in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. In essence, you subtract the amount the character makes his Stealth roll by from the other character's PER Roll. A failed Stealth roll does not automatically mean the character is perceived; if the other character fails his PER Roll, the Stealth still works, albeit barely.

## SIGHT PERCEPTION MODIFIERS

| Situation | Modifier |
|---|---|
| **Contrast** | |
| Extremely high contrast (*e.g.,* a lighted object in darkness) | +5 |
| High contrast (*e.g.,* black object on white) | +1 |
| Low contrast | -1 |
| **Darkness and shadow** | |
| Night | -2 |
| Dark night | -4 |
| Moving object | +1 |
| **Object size (large)** | |
| Object fills entire hex | +2 |
| 2 hex object | +4 |
| 4 hex object | +6 |
| 8 hex object | +8 |
| 16 hex object | +10 |
| 32 hex object | +12 |
| ...and so forth | |
| **Object size (small)** | |
| ¼ hex object | -2 |
| 1/8 object | -4 |
| 1/16 hex object | -6 |
| 1/32 hex object | -8 |
| ...and so forth | |
| **Sight aids** | |
| Binoculars | +2 |
| Telescope | +3 |
| **Time spent looking** | |
| Looking (Half Phase) | +1 |
| Long look (Full Phase, ½ DCV) | +2 |

## HEARING PERCEPTION MODIFIERS

| Situation | Modifier |
|---|---|
| **Doors** | |
| Open a door | +0 |
| Slowly open a door (1 Phase) | -2 |
| Slamming a door | +2 |
| **Echoes** | |
| Generally | +3 |
| Locating source of echoes | -3 |
| **The Environment** | |
| Downwind from noise | +1 |
| Foggy weather | -1 |
| High contrast sound | +1 |
| Noisy area | -3 |
| Quiet area | +3 |
| Upwind from noise | -1 |
| **Movement** | |
| Run (6"+) | +1 |
| Fast walk (3") | +0 |
| Normal walk (2") | -1 |
| Careful walk (1") | -2 |
| **Time Spent Listening** | |
| Listen (Half Phase) | +1 |
| Listen close (1 Phase, ½ DCV) | +2 |
| **Vehicles** | |
| Hovercar | +1 |
| Spaceship taking off | +5 |
| Truck | +3 |
| **Voices And Like Noises** | |
| Loud conversation | +1 |
| Shout | +2 |
| Whisper | -3 |
| Whistle | +3 |
| **Weapons** | |
| Grenade | +6 |
| Pistol | +3 |
| Rifle | +5 |
| Submachine gun | +4 |
| **Miscellaneous** | |
| Body hitting ground | +0 |
| Breaking glass | +1 |
| Car alarm | +3 |
| Parabolic microphone | +4 |
| Punch | +0 |
| Siren | +4 |
| Sneeze | +1 |

## SMELL PERCEPTION MODIFIERS

Although the sense of Smell is technically Ranged (a character can smell something across the room), for humans it isn't as precise as either Sight or Hearing. Moreover, as the distance to the object increases, the chance to smell it decreases dramatically.

Characters can use their sense of Smell in combat, but only with great difficulty. Attempting to Smell an opponent is automatically a -5 to the PER Roll, along with normal penalties for range. (This does not apply if the character has bought Smell as a Targeting Sense.) Here are some additional modifiers:

| Situation | Modifier |
|---|---|
| People | |
| Person | +0 |
| Smelly person (unbathed or perfumed) | +2 |
| Extremely smelly person | +4 |
| Wind | |
| Downwind, light breeze | +1 |
| Downwind, strong breeze | -1 |
| Upwind, light breeze | -2 |
| Upwind, strong breeze | -4 |
| Miscellaneous | |
| Dung | +3 |
| Gasoline | +3 |
| Skunk | +5 |

# Affecting And Using Senses

Here are some additional rules regarding how to use and affect Senses in the game.

### ADJUSTMENT POWERS

In some situations, with the GM's permission characters can use Adjustment Powers (and Dispel) to affect Senses, provided those Senses are not Inherent (as most characters' natural Senses are). The effects vary depending upon the Power and the Sense, as described below.

**Aid and Healing**

Characters can Aid or Heal Senses. However, they cannot increase a Sense beyond its normal level of effect — to do that, characters have to buy Enhanced Senses.

Aiding a sense "heals" that Sense from being Flashed or Drained. This is referred to as, for example, "Aid versus Flash." Such a Power normally affects any sort of Flash, but at the GM's option characters may have to buy it versus Flash by Sense Group (such as Aid versus Sight Group Flash). Since Senses are not "Characteristics" or "special effects," an Adjustment Power that affects all Characteristics or Powers with a related special effect normally should not counteract Flashes.

To use Aid versus Flash, roll the Aid dice and count the Normal Damage BODY. Each "BODY" rolled "heals" 1 Segment of Flash effect for the duration of the Aid. If the "healing" effect equals or exceeds the number of Segments of Flash effect, the Sense is restored. But as always, Aid is not permanent, it only temporarily "boosts" a Sense. If the Aid wears off before the Flash effect does, the remaining Segments of Flash once again affect the character.

Healing versus Flash works the same as Aid versus Flash, with one exception: it's permanent. The Segments of Flash effect it removes are gone forever, thus allowing the victim of the Flash to recover from it more quickly (or instantly).

Example: *In Phase 3 Dr. Destroyer Flashes Nighthawk's Sight Group Senses with a 12 BODY Flash, so Nighthawk will be Flashed for 12 Segments. In Segment 7, The Medic arrives and uses his Healing versus Flash to restore Nighthawk's eyesight. Since 4 Segments passed since the Flash, the Flash only has 8 BODY currently in effect, and The Medic's Healing only has to roll 8 BODY or more to "heal" Nighthawk. If The Medic rolled only 2 BODY, Nighthawk will still be Flashed for 6 Segments. If The Medic had arrived in Segment 3, when the Flash had 12 BODY, he would have had to roll 12 BODY on his Healing dice to restore Nighthawk's eyesight fully.*

Aid and Healing versus Flash also work against Adjustment Powers used to affect a character's Senses. In this case the total rolled on the dice adds to the Sense's point total to counteract the effect of the Adjustment Power. For example, if a villain used Drain Sight Group to remove 15 points from a hero's Sight Group Senses, The Medic could use his Healing versus Flash to counteract the effect. If The Medic rolls 12 on his Healing dice, the hero gets 12 of the Drained points back, so he has only lost 3 points' worth of eyesight — not even enough to suffer a PER Roll penalty (see below).

**Dispel**

A character cannot Dispel a character's Inherent Senses — he must use Transform to permanently deprive a character of one of his innate Senses. However, a character could use Dispel to destroy gadgets that provide Senses, such as IR Goggles, or to Dispel non-innate Senses.

**Drain And Suppress**

With the GM's permission, characters can Drain or Suppress individual Senses (not Sense Groups) using the point costs for them listed above, provided they aren't Inherent. If the Drain/Suppress does not Drain all points in the sense, the Sense becomes less acute — the character suffers -2 to his PER Rolls with that Sense for every full 5 points Drained/Suppressed. If the Drain/Suppress equals or exceeds the points in the Sense, the character loses that Sense until the points are restored. Since this is similar to using Flash or Transform, some GMs may prefer to disallow it.

**Transfer**

A Sense can be Transferred from one character to another. This is another way to overcome the effects of a Flash. The Transfer is based on the points in the Sense, as detailed above.



## CHANGE ENVIRONMENT

Some Change Environment abilities can affect one or more Senses. For example, a character may be able to Change Environment to create a thick fog that obstructs Normal Sight. See page 135 for more information.

## DARKNESS AND FLASH

Darkness (page 145) and Flash (page 176) are the two primary Sense-Affecting Powers. The notes that follow detail some aspects of these Powers.

### Darkness Or Flash Versus Clairsentience

Darkness and Flash may work against Clairsentience in unusual ways, depending upon the special effects of the Clairsentience. For instance, a typical example of Clairsentience in a Fantasy setting is a coven of witches gathered around a cauldron whose waters display a scene several miles away (say, a group of knights on the march). The situation affects how Darkness and Flash work.

First, since the Clairsentience is defined as using the witches' eyesight to view a picture in a pool, if their eyesight is Flashed (or blinded by Darkness) the Clairsentience won't work. The Flash could take place at the cauldron itself (maybe an enemy of the coven snuck up on it and cast a "blinding spell" or something similar), or it could take place at the scene being viewed (if one of the knights sets off a Sight Group Flash for some reason, the witches viewing it may be Flashed, since their perception point is exposed to the Flash).

Second, the *Clairsentience* Power itself could be Flashed or blotted out by Darkness. A Flash versus Clairsentience would have to be launched at the witches themselves, since they're the source of the power — a Flash versus Clairsentience at the scene being viewed won't affect them. However, a Darkness versus Clairsentience used either at the scene of the cauldron or the scene being viewed will prevent the spell from functioning properly, since it "blacks out" the area to Clairsentience.

### Darkness And Flash Versus The Mental Sense Group

The Mental Sense Group is affected by Flash and Darkness somewhat differently than most other Sense Groups. This is because Mental Powers can be targeted two ways: through eyesight (or other Targeting Senses) or through Mind Scan.

A Darkness versus the Mental Sense Group prevents any use of Mental Awareness or Mind Scan by affected characters. It also prevents the use of Telepathy and Mind Link, since, like a Darkness versus Hearing, it affects both the "mental hearing" and the "mental voice" aspects of those Powers. However, if the victim has LOS to his target, he can still use Telepathy and Mind Link on that target, since they work either through a Mind Scan "circuit" or through LOS. Mind Scan itself does not work on an LOS basis, so it doesn't matter whether a character in a Mental Sense Group Darkness field can see his target — the Mind Scan is effectively "blacked out."

A Flash versus the Mental Sense Group is another story. It also blocks Mental Awareness and Mind Scan, but it only Flashes the "mental hearing" aspect of Telepathy and Mind Link. The "mental voice" aspect of those Powers still functions (similarly, a character suffering from a Hearing Group Flash can still talk). Since Mind Scan is Flashed, Telepathy and Mind Link can only be targeted through LOS. The character cannot read the thoughts of anyone he can establish LOS on — his "mental hearing" has been "deafened" — but he can send his thoughts to other persons. If he already has a Mind Link established when the Flash goes off, the "mental voice" aspects continue to function, but the "mental hearing" aspects are cut off.

Additionally, characters can affect Mental Powers with Sense-Affecting Powers that affect the Sight Group (or any other Sense Group that contains Targeting Senses used to establish LOS). If a character does not have Mind Scan and his Sight is blocked by Darkness or Flash, he is effectively unable to use his Mental Powers. If any mental effects are in existence when the Darkness or Flash is used against him, such as Mental Illusions or Mind Control, his control over those powers is cut off, but they remain in effect at whatever level they were when cut off and deteriorate as per the rules from then on.

## SENSES AND ADVANTAGES

Normally characters should not apply Advantages to Senses or Sense Groups. For example, a character should not buy *Indirect* for his Normal Sight so he can see through walls; he should buy a Limited form of N-Ray Perception or Clairsentience. However, characters can apply some Advantages, such as MegaScale, to a character's Senses or Sense Groups with the GM's permission.

# ENTERING COMBAT



Once the GM decides to begin combat, such matters as scale and time become very important. Reasonably precise measurement of these things makes game play easier. This section explains how combat scale and time works in the *HERO System*.

## GAME SCALE

Combats are often run without a map or board, using only the GM's and players' imagination to keep track of who is where and how far away they are from prominent objects. This is easy for short combats, or when several characters fight a single opponent.

For larger or more intricate combat situations, the GM may want to use a floor or tabletop and some miniatures or other markers for the characters — "mapping" a *HERO System* combat is not necessary, but you may find it helpful and fun. The GM can lay out exactly where each character is in relation to the surroundings and the other characters.

Whenever the *HERO System* rules refer to an "inch," this represents 2 meters (approximately 6.5 feet) in the game setting (thus, 1" = 2m). Maps published with *HERO System* games use a hex-shaped grid to mark off the inches. If you're using such a map, each hex is 1" wide. This scale allows the GM and player to use 25 mm (1/72 scale) miniatures to represent characters.

**One game inch = 2 meters = 6.5 feet**

## COMBAT TIME

A battle can end quickly if the opponents are unequal, but a fair fight usually lasts much longer. The *HERO System* rules divide combat time into small units so you can easily keep track of what's going on. There are three separate time increments: Turn, Segment, and Phase.

### TURN

The basic time frame of combat is called a *Turn.* Each Turn equals 12 seconds of time. Each Turn a character gets a number of Phases equal to his Speed (see below). A Turn is divided into 12 Segments.

### SEGMENT

A Turn consists of 12 *Segments,* each 1 second long. Characters who can perform an Action in a Segment (*i.e.,* who have a Phase in that Segment) do so in order of their DEX values. The character with the highest DEX score goes first, the second highest goes next, and so on. Two or more characters with the same DEX who act in the same Segment should each roll 1d6; the one with the highest roll acts first. Ties should roll again.

After every Segment 12, before the next Turn begins, there is a "Post-Segment 12" period that takes no time. At this time most characters automatically get to take a Recovery (see page 424).

### PHASE

A Segment on which a character can act is known as one of his *Phases.* Each character has a number of Phases in each Turn equal to his SPD. For instance, a Speed 5 character has five Phases; the character can perform one or more Actions in each Phase. The Speed Chart tells you which Segments a character's Phases are in.

Each time one of a character's Phases comes up, he may perform one or more Actions. Find the character's Speed on the left side of the Speed Chart, and look at the row next to it. Every Segment marked with an "X" in that column is a Segment in which the character has a Phase. For instance, a character with a SPD of 4 has Phases in Segments 3, 6, 9, and 12.

A character's Phase begins on his DEX in each of the indicated Segments. For example, if a character has SPD 5, DEX 20, his first Phase in a Turn begins in Segment 3 on DEX 20. Typically the GM begins each Segment by counting down DEXs, from highest to lowest, until there's no one left who has a Phase. *HERO System* gamers typically refer to this as having a character's DEX "come up" or "occur," or as a character "going on" his DEX ("My character goes on DEX 21").

The type of Actions a character performs have no effect on when he acts. A character gets to perform his entire Phase's worth of Actions when his Phase occurs, even if a character with a lower DEX only wants to perform a Zero or Half Phase Action.

Example: *Steve is running a Dark Champions campaign with player characters including Blade (DEX 20) and Knockout (DEX 14). Since the highest DEX in the campaign is 25, Steve always starts his DEX count at 25. "DEX 25, 24, 23, 22, 21, 20... okay, Blade, it's your Phase, what do you do?". Blade gets his entire Action now (unless he chooses to Hold).*

*After Blade's Phase is resolved, Steve continues the count: "DEX 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14... okay, Knockout, it's your Phase." Knockout gets her entire action now (unless she chooses to Hold) — even if she only wants to perform a Zero*

*Phase Action, she doesn't get to act before Blade, because his DEX is higher.*

In non-combat situations, everyone is assumed to act at SPD 2 at all times, unless the circumstances require them to use their full SPDs.

In a combat featuring many characters, GMs may wish to ignore the SPD Chart to make combat go more quickly and smoothly. Simply allow each character to act once per "combat round."

## THE SPEED CHART

| Character's Speed | Segments 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | – | – | – | – | – | – | X | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2 | – | – | – | – | – | X | – | – | – | – | – | X |
| 3 | – | – | – | X | – | – | – | X | – | – | – | X |
| 4 | – | – | X | – | – | X | – | – | X | – | – | X |
| 5 | – | – | X | – | X | – | – | X | – | X | – | X |
| 6 | – | X | – | X | – | X | – | X | – | X | – | X |
| 7 | – | X | – | X | – | X | X | – | X | – | X | X |
| 8 | – | X | X | – | X | X | – | X | X | – | X | X |
| 9 | – | X | X | X | – | X | X | X | – | X | X | X |
| 10 | – | X | X | X | X | X | – | X | X | X | X | X |
| 11 | – | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 12 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

### CHANGING SPEED

A character who wants to use a lower SPD can decide to lower his SPD in the Post-Segment 12 period. Normally, lowering SPD in a Segment requires use of an Adjustment Power such as Drain. Similarly, a character cannot return to his normal SPD after voluntarily reducing it until Post-Segment 12. Characters cannot lower their SPDs to lower than SPD 2 without GM permission.

Example: *Nighthawk is thrown into a river in Segment 8 and starts to drown. He decides to reduce his SPD to 2 so he can survive long enough for help to arrive. To do this, he must wait until the end of the Turn (Post-Segment 12). In the next Turn, he will be SPD 2 until he decides to return to his normal SPD (this must happen on a Post-Segment 12 also).*

These rules also apply to raising SPD through means other than Adjustment Powers; Adjustment Powers use the optional rule described below.

**Optional Speed Change**

If you want to allow a character to lower or raise his SPD during a Turn, without waiting for Post-Segment 12, use the following optional system. It's more complex, but lets characters with Powers like Multiform use their abilities to the fullest. Furthermore, you should always use this system when SPD is altered with Adjustment Powers.

Under this system, a character can change his SPD in any of his Phases. Changing SPD is a Zero Phase Action. After he has changed his SPD, a character cannot act (though he may Abort; see below) until the next Segment that's a Phase for *both* of the SPDs. Once he has taken an Action at the new SPD, he is at that SPD for the rest of the Turn.

## SPEED QUICK-REFERENCE TABLE

| If Your SPD Is | You Have Phases In Segments |
|---|---|
| 1 | 7 |
| 2 | 6, 12 |
| 3 | 4, 8, 12 |
| 4 | 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 5 | 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 |
| 6 | 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 |
| 7 | 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12 |
| 8 | 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 |
| 9 | 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 |
| 10 | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 |
| 11 | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 |
| 12 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 |

Example: *Storvak is in his humanoid form (SPD 3). On Segment 4, he has a Phase, and decides to change into his cheetah form (SPD 5). He can now only act when he reaches a Segment that's a Phase for both of his SPDs. SPD 5 gives Storvak a Phase on Segment 5, but because SPD 3 does not also give him a Phase in Segment 5, he cannot take an Action — he must wait until Segment 8, when both SPD 3 and SPD 5 provide Phases, to act. Thereafter he acts on SPD 5's Phases.*

## Time Chart

Many Powers, Power Modifiers, Skills, and Actions involve greater amounts of time than are used for combat. The Time Chart (see sidebar) indicates the different time increments used both in and out of combat.

## BEGINNING COMBAT

Unless the GM rules otherwise, combat always begins on Segment 12. This gives everyone a chance to act and then take a Post-Segment 12 Recovery (see page 424). If combat begins with a Surprise attack, the targets don't get to act on Segment 12 — the attackers get a free Phase.

As in any other Segment, the character with the highest DEX goes first in Segment 12, and the GM then counts down the DEXs until there's no one left who has a Phase.

## Actions

As discussed above, a Phase is a Segment in which a character can act, *i.e.,* perform an *Action.* During a Phase, a character may perform one or more Actions, depending upon the nature of those Actions and the order in which he performs them.

There are four basic types of Actions:

### FULL PHASE ACTIONS

The first are *Full Phase Actions.* Full Phase Actions take a character's entire Phase; he can do nothing else and take no other Actions that Phase. Examples of Full Phase Actions include a character

### TIME CHART

| Time Period/Duration |
|---|
| 1 Segment |
| 1 Phase |
| 1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) |
| 1 Minute |
| 5 Minutes |
| 20 Minutes |
| 1 Hour |
| 6 Hours |
| 1 Day |
| 1 Week |
| 1 Month |
| 1 Season (3 months) |
| 1 Year |
| 5 Years |
| 25 Years |
| 1 Century |

### OPTIONAL TIME INTERVALS

The intervals on the standard Time Chart were chosen for ease of memorization. Each increment is three to seven times the length of the preceding increment, and most are represented by either one or five time periods.

If the GM wishes to use a more mathematically regular (but harder to remember) series, each increment is five times the length of the preceding increment, leading to the following time increments: 1 Segment, 1 Phase, 1 Turn, 1 Minute, 5 Minutes, 25 Minutes, 2 Hours, 10 Hours, 2 Days, 10 Days, and so on.

using more than half of his inches of movement (a "Full Move"), taking a Recovery, using the *Rapid Fire* or *Sweep* Combat Maneuvers, recovering from being Stunned, or changing a Clip.

**HALF PHASE ACTIONS**

Second are *Half Phase Actions.* These are Actions that only require half a Phase to perform (in other words, a character can perform two Half Phase Actions per Phase). Half Phase Actions include a character using up to half of his inches of movement (a "Half Move"), opening a door, using the Power *Find Weakness,* or making most PER Rolls or Skill Rolls (though the time on the latter can vary, depending upon the Skill used and the circumstances).

**ZERO PHASE ACTIONS**

Third are *Zero Phase Actions.* A character may perform as many Zero Phase Actions as he wishes at the beginning of a Phase or after performing a Half Phase Action, but not after performing an Attack Action or a Full Phase Action. Shifting Combat Skill Levels, Penalty Skill Levels, or Skill Levels is a Zero Phase Action; the Levels' setting lasts until the character changes them (which he can only do during a Phase, or when Aborting). Other Zero Phase Actions include activating a Power, turning off a Power, shifting the points in a Power Framework, or using Casual STR.

**ACTIONS WHICH TAKE NO TIME**

Fourth are *Actions which take no time.* As the term implies, these Actions take no time to perform; a character may perform them whenever he wishes (even on a Segment in which he doesn't have a Phase) and as often as he wishes. Examples including making a Presence Attack, making a soliloquy, or making a roll at the GM's request.

**ATTACK ACTIONS**

*Attack Actions* — Actions that require or involve any kind of Attack Roll, such as using Mind Control, using a Combat Maneuver, projecting an Energy Blast, Dodging, Blocking, or throwing a punch — are a special case. Attack Actions only take a Half Phase, but must be the last action the character performs in the Phase. For example, a character can Half Move and then attack, but can't attack and then Half Move. Performing an Attack Action brings a character's Phase to an end — he can perform no other Actions after performing an Attack Action.

A character can turn on (activate) or off (deactivate) a Power or ability at the beginning of his Phase or after he's performed his first Half Phase Action, but not at any other time unless noted otherwise (such as Aborting to activate a defensive Power).

If a character performs a Combat Maneuver or other maneuver that modifies his OCV, DCV, damage done, or other factors, any modifiers from the Maneuver remain in effect from when the character performs the Maneuver until the beginning of his next Phase. Thus, a SPD 3 character who Dodges on his Phase in Segment 4 retains the Maneuver's +3 DCV bonus until the beginning of his next Phase in Segment 8.

## Multiple-Power Attacks

A character may use as many Attack Powers (or other attacks) in a Phase as he wishes, provided he meets several restrictions.

First, he must be able to pay the END for all of the powers.

Second, he can only make one Attack Roll. It must be the same type of Attack Roll; a character can't use a power requiring a DEX-based Attack Roll together with one requiring an ECV Attack Roll, except with the GM's permission. A character could use an area-affecting attack (which works against DCV 3) and a non-area-affecting one (which works against the target's DCV) as part of a multiple-power attack, but he must make the Attack Roll against the target's DCV for the non-area-affecting attack (in other words, not against the DCV 3 for the area-affecting attack). The attacks can affect different defenses (such as an Energy Blast and an RKA, or a Drain and a Flash).

Third, he must use all of the Attack Powers or attacks on the same target. Use of multiple powers in this fashion is considered a single Attack Action.

Example: *Defender has an Energy Blast slot in his Multipower and a Sight Group Flash (bought separately, outside his Multipower). Defender may attack with both Powers in the same Phase (assuming he has enough END to pay for both). He may only make one Attack Roll, however; if he misses, both Powers miss. He may not use the Energy Blast on one target and the Flash on another; he must use both against the same target.*

Characters should not combine Ranged and non-Ranged attacks into a multiple-power attack (unless the GM permits this); the attacks should both be Ranged or non-Ranged. Off Hand penalties do not apply to multiple-power attacks even if the special effect of the attack is that the character fires an attack from each hand, fights with two weapons, or the like. The overall attack is considered to be made with the character's good hand.

Characters can use slots from two or more different Power Frameworks to perform a multiple-power attack, assuming they obey all the rules for such attacks. For example, a character could combine his Flame Blast (Energy Blast 8d6, bought as a slot in a Multipower) with his Firebolt (RKA 2d6, bought as a slot in an Elemental Control) into a multiple-power attack. However, a character may not combine two or more slots from a single Power Framework as part of a multiple-power attack, even if he has sufficient reserve or base points to use both slots at once.

Characters cannot use defensive maneuvers or actions (such as Block or Missile Deflection) as part of a multiple-power attack. Nor can they make a multiple-power "attack" that consists of nothing but defensive actions.



## USING MULTIPLE-POWER ATTACKS

When a multiple-power attack succeeds, the target applies his defenses (if any) separately to each part of the attack. The damage from the attack does not add together for purposes of determining if the target is Stunned. Moreover, if one of the attacks reduces or affects the target's defenses or CV (for example, a Drain PD or a Flash), the other attack applies first.

To determine the Knockback caused by a multiple-power attack, determine the Knockback for each attack used, and then apply only the best result. For example, if a character uses an Energy Blast and an RKA in a multiple-power attack, and one did 6" Knockback and the other 3" Knockback, the target takes 6" Knockback.

### Different Powers

A character cannot use the same power, ability, or weapon to attack more than once per Phase with a multiple-power attack — that requires two (or more) distinct attacks. To attack multiple times with the same power, ability, or weapon, a character should buy *Autofire* for that ability or use the Combat Maneuvers *Sweep* or *Rapid Fire*.

When characters engage in weapons combat, use Martial Maneuvers, and the like, attacks based on or using STR count as "distinct attacks" for purposes of making multiple-power attacks *provided* their effects are reasonably distinguishable. A Maneuver that causes damage (such as Legsweep) is reasonably distinguishable from one that provides extra STR for a specific purpose (such as Martial Disarm) in most instances. Two Maneuvers that simply cause damage (Strike and Martial Strike, for example) generally are not, but the GM determines this based on the character, the situation, and other factors. If a character wants to hit a single target multiple times with the same, or two similar, damage-causing Maneuvers or attacks (like Martial Strike and Defensive Strike), usually he should choose one of the maneuvers and use a Sweep (or Rapid Fire, for Ranged attacks). Multiple-power attacks work best when characters combine two different forms of attack to generate an interesting effect, not when they simply lump two attack abilities together to cause more damage.

At the GM's option, if a character wants to fight with a melee weapon in each hand, he may do so as a multiple-power attack, even though that involves using two similar (perhaps identical) attacks that both do damage with STR. (The same applies to using two Ranged weapons, such as two pistols or two thrown daggers.)

### Combat Skill Levels

A character may not apply any Combat Skill Levels to improve his OCV or DCV with a multiple-power attack unless he could apply the CSLs to any of the attacks individually. To use the above example, if Defender has some 2-point CSLs with his Energy Blast, he cannot use them when making a multiple-power attack with his Energy Blast and Flash. However, if he had some 3-point CSLs usable with his EB, Flash, and Entangle, or 5-point CSLs with Ranged Combat, he could apply those. Similarly, a character may not use a Combat Maneuver with a multiple-power attack unless he could use that Maneuver with any of the attacks individually.

If a character has Combat Skill Levels he can apply to a multiple-power attack, and he uses them to increase the attack's damage, the increase affects all attacks that are a part of the multiple-power attack.

### RESTRICTING MULTIPLE-POWER ATTACKS

To prevent characters from over-using multiple-power attacks, the GM can impose restrictions similar to those on Rapid Fire and Sweep: for each power or maneuver added to the combination (including the first one) the character suffers a -2 OCV penalty; multiple-power attacks take a Full Phase; using one halves the character's DCV.

Since Linked (page 299) depends in part on the multiple-power attack rules, if the GM restricts them, he may want to consider increasing the value of Linked to reflect that.

**Combat Value Modifiers; Adding STR**

A character may make a multiple-power attack with Powers, Combat or Martial Maneuvers, weapons, or other forms of attack that provide OCV or DCV modifiers. In this case, the character uses the *worst* of the modifiers (*i.e.,* the ones that hinder him the most, or help him the least). For example, suppose a character wants to perform a Martial Disarm (-1 OCV, +1 DCV) and a Legsweep (+2 OCV, -1 DCV) against a target as a multiple-power attack. The character's Attack Roll is at -1 OCV, and he is at -1 DCV — the worst OCV modifier and DCV modifier from the two maneuvers.

If both attacks used in a multiple-power attack involve adding STR to the damage (such as HA and HKA), the character may add his full STR to both attacks. Similarly, if a character uses velocity to add damage to his multiple-power attack, the velocity adds its full effect to both attacks.

**Other Rules And Restrictions**

Multiple-power attacks are Missile Deflected, Dodged, or Blocked as one attack. They are affected by Absorption as two separate attacks, however.

A character cannot Rapid Fire or Sweep with a multiple-power attack unless the GM permits him to.

At the GM's option, characters may make multiple-power attacks with some non-Attack Powers. For example, a character might be allowed to use his Weather Alteration ability (Change Environment) together with his Lightning Bolt (RKA) to create a "storm" effect, or he could combine Darkness with an Area Of Effect Ego Attack to create a "mind-numbing shadow field."

The GM may, in his discretion, rule that characters cannot use certain attacks in multiple-power attacks, based on the attacks' respective Advantages, Limitations, special effects, or other factors. For example, he might forbid a character to use a fire power and ice power at the same time, combine a Power with the *Autofire* Advantage with a Power lacking that Advantage, or use a Power that does No Knockback together with one that does normal Knockback. If attacks have Power Modifiers that are mutually exclusive — such as Concentration, Gestures, or Incantations, each of which prevents the simultaneous use of other Powers with the same Limitation — those attacks may not be combined into a multiple-power attack.

## Who Goes First?

If there's some question as to the exact timing of Actions (for example, a character is trying to Desolidify when someone's trying to hit him), the GM should resolve the situation by having both characters make DEX Rolls. The character who makes his DEX Roll by the most gets to act first; if both characters make the roll by the same amount, the Actions go off simultaneously. Sometimes this means a character gets hit just before he manages to use a Defense Power or take a defensive Action, but *c'est la guerre.* A character can Abort to a defensive Action (see below) to guarantee that it takes effect before he gets hit (similarly, a Held defensive Action always takes place before an attack; see below).

If two characters use DEX Rolls to determine who acts first, the loser of the roll cannot then choose to Abort to a defensive Action — committing to the roll means the chance to Abort is lost. The character has staked his chances on getting to act first, and having failed to do so, has to live with the consequences. In some cases, the GM may even want the characters to specify what Actions they're attempting, and what powers or attacks they're using, before letting them make their DEX Rolls. The losing character has already stated, in effect, (a) that he's attacking, (b) what attack he's using, and (c) where he's aiming. He can't change just because the winner got lucky, saw it coming, and moved away. However, the losing character can, if hit, declare that he's Rolling With The Punch (if appropriate).

## Holding An Action

A character may choose not to act when his DEX indicates that his Phase begins. He may wait until a lower DEX or until some event occurs ("I wait until he strikes"; "I wait until he comes around the corner"). This is known as *Holding an Action* (or delaying or reserving a Phase).

A character may Hold his Action until a later DEX in one of his Phases or until a later Segment. However, he can never use a Held Action to take two Actions in one Segment — he loses any Held Action when the next Segment in which he has a Phase begins, because he can only have one Phase at a time. (The GM may, if he wishes, let a character Hold his Action until his next Phase begins, but if he chooses to use the Held Action before his Phase occurs, it takes the place of his Phase — he cannot have two Phases in the same Segment.) A character who waits a whole Turn without taking an Action still has only one Phase saved.

A character may perform a Half Phase Action and then Hold a Half Phase. The character is considered "ready" and may perform the Held Half Phase Action later.

Typically, a character must either Hold his Action until a specified lower DEX, or to wait for a specified event (such as "I'll wait until he looks at me" or "I'll Dodge if anyone attacks me"). In the latter case, once the specified event occurs, the character may choose not to use his Held Action, and keep Holding it. With the GM's permission, a character can Hold his Action "generically," without declaring any sort of precondition for acting, and then may perform whatever Action he wants to whenever he wants to.

A character can usually use a Held Action (or Half Phase Action) at any time (unless the specified precondition for acting would prevent this). If two characters want to perform an Action at the same time, each character should make a DEX Roll (or EGO Roll, if using a Mental Power); the character who makes his DEX Roll by more gets to act first. If both characters make the roll by the same amount, their Held Actions occur simultaneously. Regardless of the roll, defensive Actions (any the character could Abort to; see below) occur first; the need to

make a DEX Roll only applies to attacks, movement Actions, and the like.

A character who Holds his Action on Segment 12 still gets his Post-Segment 12 Recovery (see page 424), and may use his Held Action in the next Turn on any Segment until a Segment in which he has another Phase.

Example: *Defender (SPD 5) and Ogre (SPD 5) are in HTH Combat. It's Segment 12. On DEX 23, Defender Holds his Action. On DEX 18, Ogre charges Defender. Defender decides to fire his Energy Blast. Since both characters want to act at the same time, each must make a DEX Roll. Defender rolls a 7, making his roll by 7. Ogre rolls a 14, missing his roll by 1. Defender made his roll by more, so he acts first. If Ogre is still standing afterward, he can then take his Action. If the rolls had been made by equal amounts, the two characters would have taken their Actions simultaneously.*

*If Witchcraft had used an attack in Segment 12 to Knock Ogre Out before he could attack Defender, Defender could continue Holding his Action and use it in Segment 1 or 2 of the next Turn. This would not prevent him from taking a Post-Segment 12 Recovery. He could not Hold his Action into Segment 3, however, because that's his next Phase. When Segment 3 begins, if he hasn't used his Held Action, he loses it. He can't even use it in Segment 3 before DEX 23 comes up — he loses it as soon as Segment 3 begins.*

Generally, Holding an Action does not affect a character's Combat Value. If a character Blocks, or uses some other Combat Maneuver that affects his CV, in a Phase, and in his next Phase declares a Held Action, at that point he loses the CV modifiers from the Maneuver. Just because he chooses to delay his Action doesn't mean his Phase hasn't occurred, and that ends the effect of a Combat Maneuver. However, his Combat Skill Levels, if any, remain allocated as they were until he changes them.

## Aborting An Action

Sometimes a character can act first to protect himself, regardless of relative DEX or the fact that he doesn't have a Phase. This is done by *Aborting* an Action (sometimes called "Cancelling a Move"). A character can only Abort his next Action to perform a defensive Action (see the accompanying sidebar for a list of "defensive Actions").

Typically a character must declare an Abort when an attacker announces he's attacking that character, but before any rolls are made. A character can't wait to see whether an Attack Roll misses, and if it hits, *then* declare an Abort (unless, of course, the GM permits this for the sake of drama).

Aborting an Action requires the character's next full Phase to perform — in essence, the character uses his next Phase "early" to protect himself. If he's Holding a Phase or Half Phase, he may Abort to use his Held Action to perform a defensive Action; in that case he does not lose any more Phases.



### DEFENSIVE ACTIONS

Some valid defensive Actions for Aborting include:

**Block** (including any Martial Maneuvers with the *Block* Element).

**Dodge** (including any Martial Maneuvers with the *Dodge* Element).

**Dive For Cover** (see text).

Any Combat or Martial Maneuver with the **Abort** Element.

**Activating a Defense Power** (this includes shifting the allocation of points in a Power Framework to use a Defense Power; shifting the allocation of Combat Skill Levels that can improve DCV; and switching forms, shapes, or identities to obtain more defense or protection).

**Activating any Power** that provides a character with more points of defense (for example, Density Increase, Growth Linked to Armor) or some other significant form of protection (such as Desolidification).

**Decelerating** or turning while moving, operating a vehicle, or riding a mount.

**Resisting Knockback** with STR or Flight.

**Use of any other Maneuver**, activation/use of any other Power, or performing any other Action deemed by the GM to be primarily for purposes of defending or protecting the character.

Example: *Lazer (SPD 5) is attacked in Segment 6 and decides to Abort to Dodge. Doing so uses up his Phase in Segment 8 — when Segment 8 rolls around, Lazer can do nothing (but at least he'll still have the benefit of the extra DCV from the Dodge); he won't get to act again until his Phase in Segment 10. If Lazer was attacked in Segment 5 before his DEX came up, he would instead have lost his Action in Segment 5 when he Aborted to Dodge — since he had not yet had the chance to take an Action, he still had his full Phase left in Segment 5 and could use it to Abort to Dodge. If Lazer was attacked in Segment 5 after he made a Half Move and was Holding his remaining Half Phase Action, he could Abort to Dodge and sacrifice his Held Half Phase; he would not have to use up a full Phase in that instance.*

Once a character has performed an Attack Action or otherwise used his full Phase in a particular Segment, he cannot Abort to any Action until the next Segment. For example, if Lazer's DEX came up in Segment 5 and he used his Phase to attack Defender, and Defender then attacked him back, Lazer could not Abort — he's already acted in Segment 5. He must wait until Segment 6 before he can Abort his next Phase.

Once a character Aborts, he cannot Abort again or take any other Actions until after the Phase he Aborted has passed. For example, suppose a SPD 4 character (Phases in 3, 6, 9, and 12) Aborts his Phase in Segment 6 in Segment 4 to Dodge an attack. He cannot Abort again, or take any other Actions, in Segments 4, 5, or 6. After Segment 6 passes (*i.e.,* in Segment 7 or later), he can Abort again (for example, in Segment 7 or 8 he could Abort his Phase in Segment 9).

A character cannot normally Abort to a movement Action, such as to run, fly, or Teleport out of danger's way. Dive For Cover and decelerating or turning are exceptions to this — although they do involve some movement, characters can Abort to them. At the GM's option, characters may be allowed to Abort to other forms of movement in appropriate circumstances.

A character can never Abort to make an attack (including to use a Damage Shield, which is not a defensive power). However, if a character has an attack of some kind Linked to a Defense Power (for example, a Damage Shield Linked to a Force Field), he may activate the attack when he Aborts to activate the Defense Power.

Ordinarily a character can only Abort to protect himself. However, with the GM's permission, a character can Abort to protect others (for example, to step in front of an attack intended to hit another character, or to use Missile Deflection at range to save someone from a bullet).

A character may perform more than one defensive Action while Aborting — such as Aborting to Dodge and simultaneously activating a Defense Power — provided they're not mutually exclusive. For example, a character cannot Abort to Dodge and Block; both are Combat Maneuvers and cannot be performed together.

Characters who are Surprised normally cannot Abort their next Phase; they have, after all, been taken unawares (see *Surprised,* page 380). However, the GM may, in his discretion, allow them to Abort.

An Action a character Aborts to always "goes first," even if an opponent is already attacking or has a higher DEX. For example, if a character Aborts to activate his Force Field, he automatically gets the Force Field turned on before any opponent can attack him or complete an Action.

A character can Abort to a power that takes a Full Phase, Delayed Phase, or Extra Segment. He can Abort to a power that takes an Extra Phase, but if so he loses his next two Phases. He cannot Abort to powers that take more Extra Time than an Extra Phase unless the GM permits him to.

Whether a character can Abort, and to what Actions, is always subject to the GM's discretion. The GM may limit a character's capacity to Abort based on the circumstances, the special effects of powers, Limitations taken on particular powers, and so forth.

Example: *Willy Watson can turn into Muscleman when he utters a secret word. In his Muscleman form he has significantly greater defenses (and a higher DCV to boot). Therefore the GM normally should allow him to Abort to activate his Muscleman powers and switch identities (he might not allow this if Watson couldn't speak for some reason). On the other hand, James Harmon, the superhero Defender, has bought all of his powers (including Defense Powers) through a powered armor suit, which he simulates with the Limitation Only In Heroic Identity. When he's not wearing the armor, he carries it around in his briefcase. The GM rules that, since it takes him at least a full Phase or longer to get the suit out of the case and put it on, Defender cannot Abort to any of the Defense Powers he bought through the suit.*

## The Actions Table

The Actions Table lists some examples of the Actions a character can perform in a Phase. The

GM must decide how long an Action not listed on the Action Table takes, using the listed examples as guidelines.

Example: *Wendell wants his character to run to a pedestal and grab a mind-control helmet. The GM might call that a Half Move and a Grab maneuver.*

## ACTIONS TABLE

| Action | Time Required | Move Required |
|---|---|---|
| Brace | 0 Phase | — |
| Find Weakness | ½ Phase | — |
| Grab | ½ Phase $* | — |
| Haymaker | ½ Phase #* | — |
| Missile Deflection | ½ Phase * | — |
| Move By | ½ Phase* † | 1" |
| Move Through | ½ Phase *† | 1" |
| Set | 1 Phase | — |
| Set and Brace | 1 Phase | — |
| **Other Combat Maneuvers** | | |
| Any action that requires an Attack Roll | ½ Phase * | — |
| Accelerating/decelerating | 0 Phase | — |
| Change clothes | 1 Phase | — |
| Draw a weapon | ½ Phase | — |
| Get to one's feet | ½ Phase | — |
| Make a PER Roll with a Nontargeting Sense to perceive an enemy | ½ Phase | — |
| Make a Presence Attack | No Time | — |
| Make a roll at the GM's request | No Time | — |
| Make a Skill Roll | Variable | — |
| Open a door | ½ Phase | — |
| Recover from being Stunned | 1 Phase | — |
| Shift a Multipower | 0 Phase & | — |
| Shift Skill Levels | 0 Phase & | — |
| Speaking (conversation) | Variable | — |
| Speaking (soliloquy) | No Time | — |
| Start a vehicle | ½ Phase | — |
| Take a Recovery | 1 Phase | — |
| Turn on a Power | 0 Phase & | — |
| Turn off a Power | 0 Phase | — |
| Use Casual Strength | 0 Phase | — |
| Use more than half of your inches of movement | 1 Phase | Full Move |
| Use up to half of your inches of movement | ½ Phase | Half Move |

\# Action takes place at the very end of the next Segment

$ A character who has made a successful Grab can squeeze the target for his normal STR damage or Throw him.

* Attack Action — the character may not perform another Action after these Actions, but may perform a Half Phase Action before these Actions.

† Move By and Move Through are usually performed at the end of a Full Move, and thus take a Full Phase. However, a character could perform one after taking a Half Phase Action (such as opening a door), so they're listed as Half Phase Actions.

& Even though they are Zero Phase Actions, a character can only perform these Actions once per Segment. In the case of turning on a Power, this applies *per Power,* not to the character's Powers as a whole.

# MOVEMENT

All characters have some sort of movement ability, be it ordinary movement (such as walking or swimming) or more exotic abilities like Flight or Teleportation.

Each Phase a character may move any portion of his inches of movement with a particular mode of movement. A Full Move is defined as moving more than half of a character's movement distance with a particular mode of movement. It takes a Full Phase Action to make a Full Move; a character who has made a Full Move can't perform any other Action in that Phase. A Half Move is defined as moving up to half of a character's movement distance with a particular mode of movement. A character who's made a Half Move can perform another Half Phase Action in that Phase.

Example: *Kinetik has Running 20". That means he can perform Half Moves of 1-10". If he moves 11" or more in a Phase, that's a Full Move.*

### COMBAT AND NONCOMBAT MOVEMENT

The *HERO System* rules divide movement into two categories: Combat Movement and Noncombat Movement.

A character using *Combat Movement,* which equals the number of inches of a given mode of movement he's purchased or can use naturally, moves as quickly as possible while still looking out for incoming attacks. A character using Combat Movement has his full DCV and OCV and can move up to his full movement rate.

A character using *Noncombat Movement* moves as quickly as he can — he isn't looking out for incoming attacks. A character's usual rate of Noncombat Movement is double his Combat Movement rate; he can increase this rate without increasing his Combat Movement (see *Movement Powers,* pages 122-25). While moving at Noncombat Movement velocity, a character is at ½ DCV and 0 OCV (and ½ DECV and 0 OECV, if appropriate). If the GM wants additional "realism," he can use the Velocity-Based DCV to determine the character's DCV, but the OCV of a character using Noncombat Movement is always 0. Thus, a character using Noncombat Movement can still fight, but at the lowered values. Of course, to attack, the character must limit himself to only making a Half Move with his Noncombat Movement.

Example: *Kinetik has Running 20" with x16 Noncombat Movement. His Combat Movement is 20". When Running at speeds of 20" per Phase or less, he retains his full OCV and DCV. His Noncombat Movement velocity can be as high as (20 x 16 =) 320" per Phase. If he moves from 21-320" per Phase, he's using Noncombat Movement, which means he's at half DCV, 0 OCV.*

### REAL-WORLD SPEEDS

Characters who want to know how fast they're moving in real-world terms (such as miles per hour) can find out using this formula:

1. First, figure out how many total inches the character moves in a Turn. (In other words, multiply his maximum Noncombat Movement velocity by his SPD.)

2. Multiply that by 5 to determine the character's inches of movement per minute.

3. Multiply that result by 60 to find out the character's inches of movement per hour.

4. There are 804.5" in a mile and 500" in a kilometer. Divide a character's inches of movement per hour by those figures to determine his speed in miles or kilometers per hour.

For example, Kinetik has Running 20", x16 Noncombat, and SPD 7. That means he moves (20 x 16 =) 320" per Phase at his maximum velocity, or (320 x 7 =) 2,240" per Turn. That's a velocity of (2,240 x 5 = 11,200" per Minute, or 672,000" per Hour; 672,000"/804.5 =) 835 miles per hour!

*If Kinetik hadn't purchased Increased Noncombat Movement, he'd have the normal Noncombat Movement rate of double his Combat Movement, or 40". In that case, if he ran at velocities of 21-40" per Phase, he'd be using Noncombat Movement and suffer the standard CV penalty.*

#### VELOCITY-BASED DCV

To use this optional rule, the player should determine the total number of inches his character would travel in an entire Turn while using a particular mode of movement at a particular rate (this allows a character's SPD to factor into the calculation). The simple formula for this is:

**Velocity per Phase x SPD = Inches per Turn**

Once the character knows his velocity per Turn, the Velocity-Based DCV Table tells him his DCV.

Velocity-Based DCV is *relative;* two characters or vehicles moving at the same high speed in the same direction have their normal DCVs — relative to each other, they're not moving fast at all. As a good rule of thumb, if characters are moving in the same direction, subtract the attacker's velocity from the target's velocity (see page 391). If the result is 0 or less, the target gets its normal DCV; if the result is greater than 0, use that figure to determine its Velocity-Based DCV. On the other hand, if the characters are heading directly towards each other, add their velocities together to determine each one's Velocity-Based DCV relative to the other.

#### ACCELERATION, DECELERATION, AND GRAVITY

When using his movement, a character can accelerate at a rate of 5" per hex, up to his maximum normal Combat Movement in inches per Phase. Thus a character with 25" of Flight would be moving at a velocity of 5" after traveling one hex, 10" after traveling two hexes, 15" after traveling three hexes, and so on, up to his Combat Movement velocity. Adding or removing velocity is a Zero Phase Action, but characters can do it only once per Phase, unless the GM rules otherwise.

A character can decelerate at the same rate, up to his normal Combat Movement velocity. Since the total acceleration or deceleration in a Phase is limited to the character's Combat Movement velocity, a character with a high Noncombat Movement may need several Phases to reach maximum velocity or to slow down at the end of his journey. Characters can buy Advantages for their Movement Powers that allow them to accelerate and decelerate more quickly. See *Movement Powers,* pages 122-25.

A character cannot instantly decelerate to 0" by turning off a Movement Power, or by switching to another slot in a Power Framework (if that's how he bought the Power). He may not deactivate the Movement Power until he decelerates to 0" normally or through some outside means (such as being hit with an attack that would stop him from moving), or the GM specifically allows him to.

Flight, Gliding, Running, Swimming, and Swinging are also affected by gravity (other Movement Powers are not so affected). When moving in a direction consistent with gravity (for example, diving with Flight, or Running down a steep hill), the character may add +1" of movement for every 1" of movement he uses. For instance, a character using 15" of Flight in a dive would add +15" for a total of 30" of Flight per Phase. Since this doesn't improve the character's ability to decelerate, going too fast can lead to spectacular crashes. When working against gravity (Flying straight up or at a steep angle, Running up steep stairs), the character must use 2" of movement to move 1" (effectively halving his movement rate).

Gravity's effect on a character's velocity affects the damage a character does with Move By, Move Through, and similar Combat Maneuvers. For example, a Move Through performed by using Flight 20" to dive straight down toward the target does (40/3 =) +13d6 damage from velocity.

## VELOCITY-BASED DCV TABLE

| Velocity in Inches per Turn | Base DCV |
|---|---|
| 1-32 | 1 |
| 33-64 | 3 |
| 65-125 | 5 |
| 126-250 | 7 |
| 251-500 | 9 |
| 501-1,000 | 11 |
| 1,001-2,000 | 13 |
| 2,001-4,000 | 15 |
| 4,001-8,000 | 17 |
| 8,001-16,000 | 19 |
| and so forth | |

#### ENDURANCE

Unless noted otherwise in a Movement Power's description, all movement costs END at the rate of 1 END per 10 Active Points in the Movement Power. (This includes movement the character receives for "free," such as the standard Running 6" and Leaping from STR.) If a character moves at Noncombat velocities, the END cost equals the END he uses to move at Combat velocities — a character with Flight 15" (30 Active Points) and a x8 Noncombat Movement multiple (total of Flight 120") only spends 3 END per Phase.

#### MOVEMENT AND STRENGTH

As an optional rule, the GM can allow characters to use their Flight or Leaping to enhance their ability to lift or push. (He can allow them to use other forms of movement in appropriate circumstances; for example, a character who's underwater might be able to augment his STR with Swimming.) Every 2" of Combat Movement becomes +1 point of STR. Any movement "velocity" used in this way cannot be used for movement, nor can characters apply it to increase the damage done by Combat Maneuvers and similar attacks that use the character's STR to do damage.

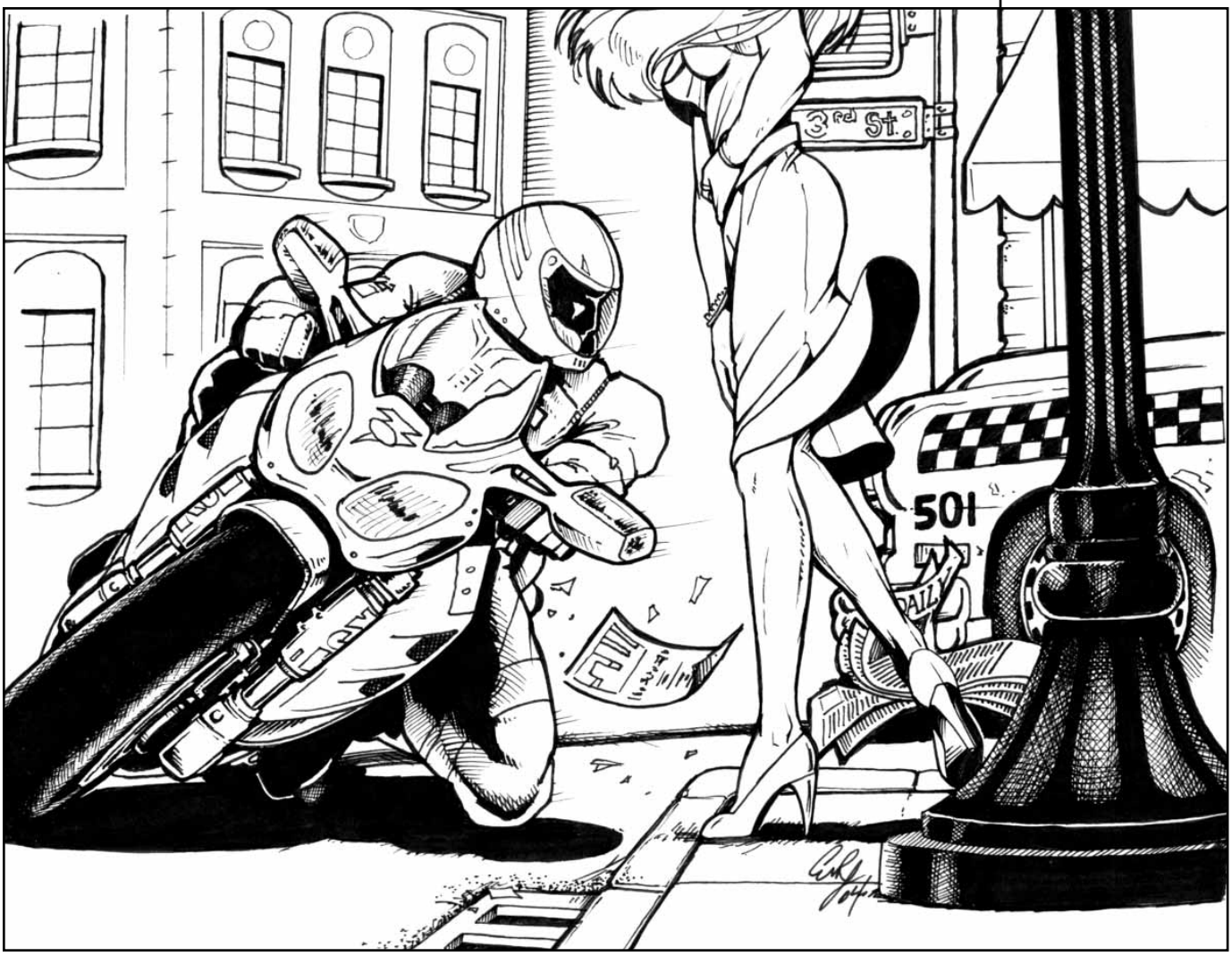
Example: *Defender sees a building about to fall on a crowd of innocent civilians. He flies under the building, but his 55 STR is not enough to*

*hold it up. Thinking quickly, he points his bootjets straight down. He decides to use all of his 10" of Flight to increase his STR; his STR (only for purposes of holding the building up) is now 55 + (10/2) = 60.*

Characters can also use STR to oppose another character's or object's movement — to stop a speeding car or runaway horse, for example. To do this, the character must make an Attack Roll to Grab the character or object and obtain a firm hold; the object may make a STR Roll (with additions to STR from movement) every Phase to break free from the character's grip (this is a Zero Phase Action, but may only be done once per Phase). For every 5 points of STR a character has (including STR added from movement), he may subtract 1" of movement per Phase. Thus, a character with 50 STR subtracts 10" of movement the first Phase he tries to stop a moving object, another 10" the next Phase (reducing the character's or object's movement by a total of 20"), and so on until the object gets away from him or is brought to 0" of movement.

If the character fails to stop the moving character or object completely with his STR the first Phase he tries to do so, but it does not break free from his grip, he will be dragged along by the moving character or object unless he lets go. If he is dragged, his weight may cause the moving character or object to slow down even further. Consult the rules for Encumbrance (page 379) to determine what effect, if any, the extra weight has, based on the character's or vehicle's STR (if the object is not a vehicle, the GM should assign it a STR for this purpose).

Example: *Defender (STR 55, Flight 10", weighs 200 kg) tries to stop a runaway bus (STR 40, Ground Movement 15", moving at 45" per Phase with Noncombat Movement). He makes an Attack Roll and Grabs the vehicle. The vehicle immediately gets to try to break free from his Grab. It rolls 9½d6 (for 40 STR + 8 STR from Combat Movement) and gets 8 BODY; Defender rolls 12d6 (for 55 STR + 5 STR from Combat Movement) and gets 12 BODY, so he maintains his Grab. Defender's STR slows the bus down by 12"; it's now moving at 33" per Phase. Because Defender did not stop it and it did not break his grip, he's being dragged (or pushed) along by the vehicle; his weight isn't enough to slow it down any further. He keeps subtracting 12" per Phase from its movement until it comes to a stop or breaks free.*



### OBSTACLES

If a character comes to an obstacle while moving, he has several options. First, he can stop his movement, assuming he has sufficient room to slow down. Second, he can perform a Move Through on the object, thereby smashing through it (if successful) or running into it and hurting himself (if not). Third, he can try to shrug it aside by using his Casual Strength (see *Strength,* page 34, for more details on Casual STR).

Example: *Baran the warrior (STR 25) is fleeing from a fire demon when he comes to a thin wooden door. Not wanting to slow down, Baran uses his Casual STR — 13 STR — to try to push the door open. The GM looks at the Strength Table to find that 13 STR would lift 150 kg, so he rules that's more than enough to push aside the door. Baran flings the door wide and continues his escape without wasting a step.*

### SEGMENTED MOVEMENT

Some types of movement don't work realistically by uneven Phases. In this case, you can split the movement into Segment by Segment movement. This helps to simulate falls and similar situations where the character's SPD doesn't directly affect his velocity. If a character uses Segmented Movement, he should move on every *Segment,* instead of every Phase. The GM can multiply his velocity per Phase x SPD to determine his velocity per Turn, and then divide that by 12 to determine how fast he moves per Segment.



## Normal Movement

"Normal" movement means those modes of movement all characters possess — Running, Leaping, and Swimming.

### RUNNING

Running is the standard form of movement for most characters. All characters start with 6" of Running; they can increase this by +1" for every 2 Character Points. In Heroic campaigns, the Normal Characteristic Maximum breakpoint for Running is 10" per Phase; after this maximum, the cost doubles. There is no maximum for Superheroic campaigns. Running has no Turn Mode (see *Flight,* below); a character can turn as often as he wants when Running. The GM may require characters to use a Turn Mode if the footing is especially treacherous.

### LEAPING

All characters have a base forward leap of 1" and a base upward leap of ½" (half the forward leap) for every 5 points of STR; a character can increase his forward leap by +1" for every 1 Character Point. The Normal Characteristic Maximum breakpoint for Leaping in Heroic campaigns is 5"; after this maximum the cost doubles. There is no maximum for Superheroic campaigns.

It's impossible to change direction once a leap has started — there's no way to leap around a corner, for example. A leap is considered to include a short run to get some velocity; a standing leap is only half as far. It's possible to perform a leap of up to half the character's inches as a Half Move. For some leaps, characters may have to make Attack Rolls to land in the target hex (see *Leaping,* page 196). When a character lands from a leap, he does not hurt himself, and generally causes no damage to whatever he lands on unless he's performing a Move Through or the GM rules otherwise.

### SWIMMING

All characters can swim a base distance of 2" per Phase. A character can increase his Swimming rate by +1" for every 1 Character Point. The Normal Characteristic Maximum breakpoint for Swimming in Heroic campaigns is 5"; after this maximum the cost doubles. There is no maximum for Superheroic campaigns. Swimming has no Turn Mode; a character can make as many turns as he wants when Swimming.

Based on their conception, some characters won't know how to swim. For example, Dwajmi the desert nomad has never seen water except in a well or a shallow oasis, so he's never learned to swim. Characters such as Dwajmi may sell back their natural 2" of Swimming, gaining 2 Character Points to spend on something else. If they later decide

to learn how to swim, they must buy Swimming at the standard cost. Unless a character has at least 1" of Swimming, he cannot even stay afloat. The GM may rule that some characters (for example, Heavy-worlders in a Science Fiction campaign) can never learn how to swim.

## Powered Movement

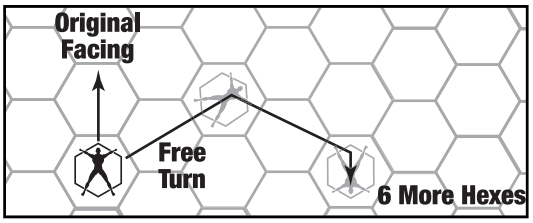
"Powered" movement means those modes of movement characters have to pay Character Points for: Flight; Gliding; Swinging; Teleportation; and Tunneling. (It also includes Extra-Dimensional Movement and FTL Travel, but those aren't covered here.)

### FLIGHT

A character's Flight speed depends on how many Character Points he spent on Flight. A character who flies isn't as maneuverable as someone on the ground — he has a *Turn Mode* that defines how often he may make a 60-degree turn (or a one hex side shift on a hex grid). The Turn Mode is defined by the formula:

**Current Turn Mode = Total Distance Traveled This Phase/5**

A character can make his first 60-degree turn any time after the start of his move; this turn is "free." Once he's turned, he cannot turn again until he moves his Turn Mode in inches forward. As a simple rule, a character using Combat Movement cannot make more than five evenly spaced turns during a move. If the character moves at Non-combat velocities, he can make no more than two evenly spaced turns.




Example: *Lazer flies at 10" per Phase. Using the formula, he has a Turn Mode of 10/5 = 2". Lazer wants to turn around, so he turns 60 degrees, moves 2", turns 60 degrees, moves 2", turns a final 60 degrees and completes his move by flying 6" (see illustration).*

As discussed on page 364, gravity affects Flight. A flying character must use 2" of Flight distance to gain 1" of altitude (*i.e.,* to fly upward, against gravity). If he dives, he gains +1" of velocity for every 1" of Flight distance he has (*i.e.,* flying downward, with gravity, increases his speed). To pull out of such a dive, the character should dive his Turn Mode in inches. If he's diving straight down (his Flight distance in inches free, plus his Flight distance down) then he must dive twice his Turn Mode. When a character has pulled out of a dive, he's considered to be flying level (at his regular velocity) and can continue flying whatever direction he wants.

### GLIDING

The GM should regulate how rapidly a gliding character can climb. Climbing is relatively easy when there are thermals or good winds; a glider can generally gain 1d6" of altitude per Phase (halved for working against gravity, as normal). At other times a character's ability to gain altitude may be limited or nonexistent. The Turn Mode and dive rate of a gliding character are the same as for Flight. Characters can only gain velocity while Gliding by losing altitude (see page 182).

### SWINGING

A character's Swinging speed depends on how many Character Points he spent on Swinging. The GM determines the direction of a swing based on the situation, the point to which the character attaches his swingline, and other factors. Typically a swing takes place in a straight line, and the character cannot change direction once he begins the swing (he cannot, for example, swing around corners, though the GM might allow minor shifts in direction based on body motion and the like). However, the GM may allow characters to swing in arcs in some circumstances. For example, if a character attaches his swingline to the corner of a building, he might be able to swing in an arc around the corner of the building. In this case, Swinging has the standard Turn Mode (see above), unless the GM rules otherwise. The character should describe the arc of his swing to the GM before making it so the GM can approve it, and cannot change it once he begins the swing unless the GM permits him to.

### TELEPORTATION

Many aspects of and rules for Teleporting are covered under *Teleportation,* page 233.

**Teleporting Blind**

When a character cannot see his target location and doesn't have it memorized, any attempt to Teleport is considered "blind." The character makes an Attack Roll to hit the target hex (DCV 3), with a normal Range Modifier. If the roll misses, he ends up in a different hex (use the standard rules for attacks that miss a hex to determine where he goes). If the hex is occupied, the character takes damage.

**Teleporting Into A Solid Object**

If a character is unlucky enough to Teleport into a solid object (for whatever reason), his natural safety system kicks in, getting him to the closest space from the target hex where he fits. The system

### TELEPORTATION DAMAGE TABLE

| 2d6 Roll | Effect |
|---|---|
| 2-7 | 3d6 of d6 STUN Only Damage |
| 8-11 | 2d6 of d6 Normal Damage |
| 12 | 1d6 of d6 Killing Damage |

If the nearest safe hex is further than the character's Combat Movement with Teleportation, add 2 to the effect roll. If the nearest safe hex is more than double his Combat Movement with Teleportation, add 4 to the effect roll.

shock is terrible, and may be fatal. To determine damage, use the accompanying table. The Teleporting character gets no defenses of any kind against this damage.

It's impossible for a character to deliberately Teleport another character into a solid object, even if the Teleportation is bought *Usable As Attack.*

Example: *Cheshire Cat (Teleportation 30") is in a cell. Although he can't see out, he decides to try to escape by Teleporting straight up. He declares his target hex and makes a successful Attack Roll (even after applying the Range Modifier). Unfortunately, the cell is buried 100" underground, so the nearest safe location is the cell. His Teleportation shifts him back to the cell automatically. The GM rolls 2d6 for the effect; he rolls a 9, which means Cheshire Cat takes 2d6 of d6 of Normal Damage. The roll is an 8, so the Cat takes 8d6 Normal Damage with no defense.*

### TUNNELING

Tunneling has no Turn Mode. A character cannot automatically perceive where he's going when he's Tunneling unless he has Sensory Powers that let him perceive through the medium he's Tunneling through. See page 241 for more information.

## Vehicle Movement

Vehicles move just like characters: they have a SPD, Combat Movement velocity, and Noncombat Movement velocity. However, all vehicles have a Turn Mode with all forms of movement (see *Flight,* above), including Ground Movement (Running).

For further information on vehicle movement in combat situations, see *Vehicle Combat,* pages 471-75.

## Mounted Movement

In some games, such as Fantasy campaigns, a lot of movement takes place while the characters are riding horses or other mounts. This often provides a character with greatly enhanced movement capability, but at the cost of restricting his ability to perform certain Actions in combat.

A mount essentially functions as a vehicle. Its inches of Running (or other form of movement) substitute for the character's. However, when it moves, and what Actions it can take, depend upon its SPD and DEX and the rider's SPD and DEX.

### RELATIVE SPEED AND DEXTERITY

If the rider's SPD exceeds the mount's, the rider can only make the mount move on its own Phases. The rider either has to (a) Hold his Action so he can act on his mount's Phases (thus, they act together); (b) make the mount Hold its Actions so that it takes its Phases in Segments in which the rider also has a Phase; or (c) limit himself to performing Actions other than moving (such as attacking or defending himself) in Segments in which he has a Phase but the mount does not.

If the mount's SPD exceeds the rider's, or the mount has Phases in Segments in which the rider does not, the rider can make the mount Hold its Action so their Phases coincide, thus allowing him more control over the mount (or the rider may, if he chooses, Hold his own Actions for the same purpose). However, the rider may choose to let the mount move on its own, with only minimal control from him. To do so, he makes a Riding roll (this takes no time). If he succeeds, the mount makes a Half Move or Full Move in whatever direction the rider desires; it may, if it makes only a Half Move, perform another Half Phase Action (such as an attack, if it's trained to fight). If he fails, the mount does not move, or may move in an undesired direction. In either case, the rider is considered to be moving at Noncombat Movement velocity (and thus to be at ½ DCV), regardless of his actual velocity.

Regardless of their relative SPDs, both rider and mount can only act on their own DEXs in their Phases. Thus, if a high-DEX character rides a low-DEX mount, he has to wait until the mount's DEX comes up during the Phase before the mount (and thus he) can move. The rider can take his Action (such as attacking a nearby foe) on his own DEX — but if he does so, he'll be unable to control the mount properly if it moves on its own DEX (just as if the mount moves in a Segment in which it has a Phase but the rider does not).

### COMBAT TRAINING FOR MOUNTS

In combat, the rider's ability to function effectively as a mounted warrior depends on whether his mount is trained for battle or not. A mount is considered trained for combat if it has a Presence of 15 or greater or it knows the *Riding* Skill itself (in this case, the Skill simulates the mount's self-control and knowledge of how to move to help its rider fight). If a mount isn't trained for combat, the rider must spend a Half Phase and make a Riding roll every one of his Phases; this helps him keep the mount under control and make it act as he wishes (though he cannot make it attack). Furthermore, even if the rider makes his Riding roll, he is at ½ OCV (his DCV remains normal). If the rider fails his Riding roll, he must make a second Riding roll to keep from being thrown; he can do nothing that Phase but hang on to the mount and make a Half Move directly away from the thick of battle.

If the mount is trained for combat, the rider may make the mount move without making a Riding roll; furthermore, the rider is at normal OCV (but suffers a -2 penalty; see below). If rider and mount both have a Phase in the same Segment, both may attack. They make up to a Half Move, and then the rider makes a Riding roll (this takes no time). If the roll succeeds, the rider may make his attack, and the mount may also make an attack. Alternately, the mount can make a Full Move (thus preventing it from making an attack) and the rider has a Half Phase Action in which to attack or defend himself. If the roll fails, the rider may use his remaining Half Phase to attack, but the mount may not attack or move any further.

**COMBAT VALUES AND FIGHTING**

In combat, the mount and the rider each have their own CVs calculated from their own DEXs. However, the rider is always at -2 OCV because, even with a trained combat mount, he must spend some energy and concentration keeping his seat and controlling his mount. At the GM's option, any negative modifiers applied to the Riding roll in a Phase may also apply to the rider's (or the mount's) OCV, reflecting the difficulty of keeping the mount controlled in such conditions. If the rider attacks targets on foot, and the campaign uses Hit Locations, the Hit Location should be rolled as a High Shot (see pages 414-15).

If a mount is injured, its rider may, at the GM's option, have to make another Riding roll to control it (this takes no time). If he fails the roll, the mount moves away from combat as fast as it can in its next Phase. Mounts trained for combat usually won't do this unless badly injured (*i.e.,* they take 5 or more BODY from a single attack).

If the mount takes Knockback from an attack, it usually loses its balance and falls. The rider must make a Riding roll to leap off the mount or otherwise prevent himself from being caught in the fall and taking the same damage as the mount takes from the Knockback (this takes no time). If the rider takes Knockback from an attack, he must make a Riding roll at -1 for every 2" (or fraction thereof) of Knockback taken or fall off the mount; if the roll succeeds, the rider takes no Knockback and retains his seat (otherwise he's knocked off the mount). If the mount is Knocked Out, it will fall, requiring the rider to make a roll as described above.

If either the mount or the rider performs a defensive Combat Maneuver such as Dodge or Block, the benefits of that Maneuver apply only to the character making them. A rider does not, for example, gain bonuses to his DCV because his mount Dodges.

The GM may apply modifiers of -1 to -5 to any Riding roll to reflect combat conditions, monsters, damage the mount has suffered, and anything else that might scare a mount.

Example: *Sir Gareth (DEX 18, SPD 4, 6" Running) rides his trusty steed Destrier (DEX 15, SPD 3, 12" Running) into battle. Destrier is a trained warhorse (PRE 15).*

*In Segment 3, Sir Gareth has a Phase, but Destrier does not. Sir Gareth could attack someone if he wanted to, but he cannot move, because Destrier doesn't have a Phase. Sir Gareth opts to Hold his Action until Destrier can move. In Segment 4, on DEX 15, Destrier moves forward 12", carrying Sir Gareth with him. Because Destrier is a trained warhorse and is not making an attack, Sir Gareth need not make a Riding roll to get Destrier to go where he (Sir Gareth) wants, and he has his full OCV (-2 for riding a mount) when he attacks this Phase. Sir Gareth swings his sword at a foe, using his OCV 4 (6-2) to hit the enemy and wound him.*

*In Segment 6, Sir Gareth has a Phase, but Destrier does not. Because there is another enemy within HTH range nearby, Sir Gareth decides to use his Phase to attack. He rolls again with OCV 4 and hits and kills his target.*

*In Segment 8, Destrier has a Phase, but Sir Gareth does not. Sir Gareth has Destrier Hold his Action so they can act together in Segment 9. Had Sir Gareth chosen to have Destrier run forward, he could have made a Riding roll to get Destrier to go where he (Sir Gareth) wanted him to, but he would have been at ½ DCV until his next Phase.*

*In Segment 9, on DEX 15, Sir Gareth urges Destrier to charge towards an enemy knight. However, an enemy wizard has cast a fear spell over the battlefield, frightening Destrier, so Sir Gareth must make a Riding roll at -2 to get him to act. Sir Gareth succeeds, so Destrier makes a 6" Half Move towards the foe. Sir Gareth decides they will both attack. He makes another Riding roll, so Destrier can use his remaining Half Phase to attack. As Sir Gareth hacks at the enemy knight and misses (the GM imposed the -2 for the initial Riding roll on his OCV, to simulate the difficulty he's had controlling Destrier this Phase), Destrier tries to bite (HKA 1 point) the enemy knight's horse. Destrier rolls a 6 with his OCV 4, and hits! The enemy horse takes a minor wound; the GM has the enemy knight make a Riding roll to keep his horse under control (he succeeds easily).*

*In Segment 12, both Sir Gareth and Destrier have a Phase. Sir Gareth decides they will attempt to Coordinate their attack. He Holds his Action until DEX 15. The GM allows them to Coordinate if both make 8- rolls; they succeed! As Destrier rears up and comes crashing down on the enemy knight, Sir Gareth uses the momentum of the maneuver to increase the force of his sword-blow (the GM grants him +1 Damage Class to simulate this); both hit, and the enemy knight falls lifeless to the ground.*

## Movement Skill Levels

If the character has any Skill Levels that apply to a particular type of movement, they have several uses:

First, he can use each Level to lower his Turn Mode by 1 (minimum of 0").

Second, each Skill Level provides a +1 to any roll required to land in, or otherwise move to, a particular hex.

Third, at the GM's option, the character can use each Skill Level to increase his acceleration or deceleration with his modes of movement (not with vehicles) by 1" per hex per Skill Level applied.

Fourth, at the GM's option, a character can use Levels with movement to improve his DCV if he Dodges or uses a Combat or Martial Maneuver that provides bonuses to DCV while moving.

Skill Levels with one mode of movement cost 2 Character Points per Level. Skill Levels that apply to any of a character's modes of movement cost 3 Character Points per Level.

# FIGHTING



### HOW YOU WANT TO ROLL THE DICE IN COMBAT

Here's a quick summary of the core resolution mechanics in *HERO System* combat — in other words, how you want to roll the dice when fighting.

Skill Rolls, Characteristic Rolls, and Perception Rolls: You want to roll *low* on 3d6; the lower the roll, the more likely you are to succeed.

Attack Rolls: You want to roll *low* on 3d6 to hit; the lower you roll, the more likely you are to hit your target. This applies to physical combat, mental combat, and any other type of combat.

However, when you're rolling the dice of damage or effect for your attack, you want to roll *high.* The higher you roll, the more damage you do to the target, or the greater the effect your attack has.



This section covers all aspects of fighting and combat. It summarizes the combat process; discusses how characters hit their targets and how targets try to avoid being hit; and describes modifiers to combat, including various environmental conditions and the many Combat Maneuvers characters can use. Later sections describe how to determine damage, how to take damage, the effects of taking damage, and the Endurance cost for fighting.

The *HERO System* includes many optional combat rules. Although they add depth and flavor to combat, they can also complicate it and slow it down considerably. It's often best for new players and others who are learning the game to ignore the options and just concentrate on the basic rules. Also, the GM should consider using fewer optional rules when he has a lot of players in a game, since combat goes faster without the options.

## How Combat Works

Although combat in the *HERO System* involves a lot of rules and options, it's really quite simple. Once you read the rules and try them out, you shouldn't have any trouble running all sorts of battles. Here's the basic procedure:

1. The player decides what Action his character will perform in the character's Phase.

2. If the character attacks a target, he must make an Attack Roll to hit it.

   a. If the Attack Roll fails, the attack misses and the character's Phase ends; the GM moves on to the next character who has a Phase in that Segment.

   b. If the Attack Roll succeeds, the character must determine how much damage the attack does and/or what other effect it has. The character's Phase then ends, and the GM goes on to the next character who has a Phase in that Segment.

All combat can be divided into two types: *Hand-To-Hand Combat* (HTH) and *Ranged* Combat. HTH Combat is combat between characters who are standing in the same or adjacent hexes. Usually HTH Combat involves punching or melee weapons such as swords, not attacks like guns or energy bolts that can affect targets at a distance. Ranged Combat is any combat between characters who are not in the same or adjacent hexes; it requires weapons such as guns or bows, or Ranged attacks such as Energy Blasts or RKAs. Assuming special effects, common sense, and/or dramatic sense don't forbid it, a character can use a Ranged attack against a character in the same hex as he, or an adjacent hex.

Here's a checklist of the sequence of combat. If a character attacks someone, these steps take place. The following sections of the rulebook explain the steps.

**COMBAT SEQUENCE CHECKLIST**

1) Determine the attacker's Offensive Combat Value (OCV). Base OCV is DEX/3.

2) Determine the target's Defensive Combat Value (DCV). Base DCV is DEX/3 or is based on an object's size.

3) Attacker makes an Attack Roll (3d6). To hit the target, the attacker must roll less than or equal to (11 + attacker's OCV - target's DCV).

4) If the Attack Roll fails, the attack misses, and the attacker's Phase ends. The GM moves on to the next character who has a Phase in that Segment.

5) If the Attack Roll succeeds, the attacker hits; determine the damage and any effects of damage. The attacker's Phase ends; the GM moves on to the next character who has a Phase in that Segment.

Optional rules add more steps to the Combat Sequence. The GM may use any or all of the optional rules. If the GM uses all of them, combat goes much slower, but is much more realistic. Normally, the GM would only want to do this for very special battles — like a "trial by combat" or a one-on-one battle.

**OPTIONAL COMBAT SEQUENCE CHECKLIST**

1) Determine the attacker's OCV (see *Figuring OCV And DCV*).

2) Determine the target's DCV (see *Figuring OCV And DCV*).

3) Attacker makes an Attack Roll (3d6). To hit the target, the attacker must roll less than or equal to (11 + attacker's OCV - target's DCV).

4) Pay the END cost for the attack.

5) If the Attack Roll fails, the attack misses, and the attacker's Phase ends. The GM moves on to the next character who has a Phase in that Segment.

6) If the Attack Roll succeeds, the attacker hits; determine the damage and any effects of damage. To determine the additional effects of the damage:

   a) Roll on the Hit Location table to find where the attack hit (this affects the damage result).

   b) Check for Knockback: target may be Knocked Back or Down.

   c) Check for a Wounded result; target makes EGO Roll to keep fighting next Phase.

   d) Target may be Bleeding; keep track of blood loss.

e) Check for severity of wound; target may be Impaired or Disabled.

The attacker's Phase ends; the GM moves on to the next character who has a Phase in that Segment.

# ATTACK ROLLS AND COMBAT VALUE

The first step in combat is to determine whether an attack hits its intended target. To do that, you need to know the attacker's OCV, the target's DCV, and the results of the attacker's Attack Roll.

## The Basic Attack Roll

Whether an attack hits a target is determined by an Attack Roll made with 3d6. All Attack Rolls, regardless of the form of the attack, are determined as follows:

**Attack Roll = (11 + Attacker's OCV - Target's DCV) or less**

Example: *If the attacker's OCV is 8 and the target's DCV is 6, then the Attack Roll is 11 + 8 - 6 = 13 or less. If the attacker has an OCV of 7 and the target has a DCV of 10, then the Attack Roll is 11 + 7 - 10 = 8 or less.*

A result of 3 on an Attack Roll always succeeds, and may entitle the character to some extra benefit or advantage (perhaps some extra dice of damage, or an Armor Piercing effect). A result of 18 always fails, and may cause the character to incur some disadvantage (perhaps reducing his DCV for a Segment or two).

### ALTERNATE ATTACK ROLL CALCULATIONS

If the GM doesn't want to reveal the target's DCV to the player, there are two methods he can use to determine whether the Attack Roll succeeds; both are mathematically identical to the standard method.

The first way is this:

**(11 + Attacker's OCV - 3d6 roll) = the DCV the attack hit**

Example: *If the attacker's OCV is 8 and he rolls a 13 for his Attack Roll, he has hit a DCV of 6 or less (11 + 8 - 13 = 6) — if the target has a DCV of 6 or less, it has been hit. If the attacker rolled a 7, he would hit a DCV of 12 or less.*

The second way is to treat the Attack Roll more like a Skill Roll. The attacker's "Attack Skill Roll" equals his OCV + 11, and how much he makes the roll by tells you the DCV he hit.

Example: *If an attacker has OCV 9, then his "Attack Skill Roll" equals (9 + 11 =) 20 or less. If he rolls a 13, he made the roll by 7, so he hits the target if the target is DCV 7 or lower. If he rolls an 8, he makes the roll by 12 and hits DCV 12 or less.*



**COMBAT ABILITIES**

Building Combat-Capable Characters

Because the *HERO System* offers so many options for character creation, it's sometimes difficult for a new player to figure out exactly how to build a character who can do what he has in mind. This is important when it comes to combat, where rules and numbers are the most prominent. So, here's a quick guide to the Skills and other abilities a character needs to be competent in combat.

Using Weapons: If a character has paid Character Points for a weapon or attack, no Skill is required for him to use it; he can use it automatically. In Heroic campaigns and other games where characters get weapons and equipment for "free" (*i.e.,* without paying Character Points for them), characters must buy *Weapon Familiarity* Skills to know how to use particular types of weapons. (See page 75.)

Shields: Characters don't need any special Skill to use a shield.

Building And Repairing Weapons: A character who wants to make and fix his own weapons should buy *Weaponsmith* (page 75). For information on how to create weapons using the *HERO System* rules, see Chapter Four.

Martial Arts: A character who has received special training in unarmed or armed combat styles can buy *Martial Arts.* Martial Maneuvers modify a character's CV and damage, and sometimes provide abilities ordinary Combat Maneuvers do not. (See pages 64, 398-402.)

Continued on next page



## ATTACK ROLL QUICK-REFERENCE TABLE

| OCV \ Target's DCV | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| **2** | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| **3** | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| **4** | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| **5** | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| **6** | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| **7** | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| **8** | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| **9** | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| **10** | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| **11** | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 |
| **12** | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 | 8 |
| **13** | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 | 9 |
| **14** | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** | 10 |
| **15** | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | **11** |

**ATTACK ROLL CALCULATION CHART**

To speed play, players and GMs can use the accompanying chart to determine what number they need to roll to hit a target. Cross-reference the attacker's OCV (leftmost column) with the target's DCV (topmost row); the number indicated is the number the attacker must roll less than or equal to hit the target. Remember — a roll of 3 always hits and a roll of 18 always misses, regardless of relative CVs.

## Calculating OCV and DCV

Obviously, the key factors in figuring out whether a particular Attack Roll succeeds and an attack hits its target are the OCV and DCV involved. Base OCV and DCV are figured as follows:

**Base OCV = Attacker's DEX/3**

**Base DCV = Target's DEX/3**

It's called *base* OCV and DCV because OCV and DCV can be modified by Skill Levels, the Range Modifier, Combat Modifiers, Combat Maneuvers, and other factors. If the result of the formula is a fraction, apply the standard *HERO System* rounding rules (page 7). For example, a character with DEX 20 has an OCV of 20/3 = 6.7, which rounds to 7.

**COMBAT VALUE (CV)**

Sometimes the rules use the general term *Combat Value,* or CV. CV reflects how good the character is at combat. A character's CV = DEX/3. The term CV may be used to discuss modifiers to both OCV and DCV.

The following checklists contain the steps for determining a character's OCV and DCV. It may look complex, but figuring OCV and DCV is actually quite easy. The following sections explain these steps.

**OCV CHECKLIST**

1) Determine base OCV (character's DEX/3).

2) Add any applicable Combat Skill Levels the character wishes to use to increase his OCV.

3) Apply any modifiers for the particular weapon or armor the character uses.

4) Apply any modifiers for the particular Combat Maneuver or Martial Maneuver the character uses.

5) Apply any Combat Modifiers.

6) Apply the Range Modifier (if applicable).

7) Apply any other modifiers.

8) Apply any modifiers that halve OCV (or otherwise reduce it by a fraction or percentage). A character's OCV can only be halved once, regardless of how many "halving" modifiers he's subject to.

**DCV CHECKLIST**

1) Determine base DCV (character's DEX/3).

2) Add any applicable Combat Skill Levels the character wishes to use to increase his DCV.

3) Apply any modifiers for the particular weapon, armor, or shield the character uses.

4) Apply any modifiers for the particular Combat Maneuver or Martial Maneuver the character uses.

5) Apply any Combat Modifiers.

6) Apply any other modifiers.

7) Apply any modifiers that halve DCV (or otherwise reduce it by a fraction or percentage). A character's DCV can only be halved once, regardless of how many "halving" modifiers he's subject to.

A character's DCV cannot be reduced below 0, regardless of how many modifiers are applied. A character's OCV can be reduced below 0, however — just apply the negative value of the OCV to increase the target's DCV and make the Attack Roll as if the attacker has OCV 0. For example, a character with OCV -3 can still attack — but his target is at +3 DCV, and he uses OCV 0 to make his Attack Roll, so his odds of hitting are mighty slim.

A reduction of OCV or DCV to 0 should generally be considered as "reducing CV by a percentage," and thus be applied as the very last step in the OCV or DCV calculation. However, the GM may change this if he wishes (for example, he might consider the 0 to be the character's base CV).

Modifiers that alter a character's CV remain in effect from when they take effect until the beginning of the character's next Phase. Thus, a SPD 3 character who takes a Recovery on his Phase in Segment 4 remains at ½ DCV until the beginning of his next Phase in Segment 8.

The DCV Modifiers Table lists some common situations that halve or otherwise affect a character's DCV, including the effect on Hit Location modifiers (if any).

### COMBAT SKILL LEVELS

Combat Skill Levels (CSLs), which are bought with Character Points, can modify the character's OCV, DCV or both. They're described on pages 53-54.

Depending on the type of Combat Skill Level, a character may use CSLs to increase his OCV, DCV, damage, and/or the damage done by an attack. A character must state how he's applying his Combat Skill Levels before he makes his Attack Roll. Usually, one CSL adds +1 to a character's OCV (or sometimes DCV, but Levels which improve DCV are rarer). Characters may also use some Combat Levels to increase damage: 2 CSLs add one Damage Class to an attack's damage, with certain restrictions (see pages 405-09).

As an optional rule, GMs can decide that Combat Levels do not apply to DCV in all cases. See *Combat Skill Levels: Optional Rules: DCV Levels,* page 54, for details. Five-point Combat Levels with HTH Combat may be applied to DCV only against HTH attacks, not against Ranged attacks (and vice-versa).

### RANGE MODIFIER

When a character attacks a target at Range, the attack is subject to the Range Modifier. This reflects the fact that it's harder to hit a target who's far away than one who's nearby. Among other reasons, this is because the target appears smaller at range — there is "less" of it to hit. Thus, a target who's half man-sized is just as hard to hit as one who's man-sized but twice as far away.

## DCV MODIFIERS TABLE

| Character Is | DCV | Hit Locations |
|---|---|---|
| Affected by EGO +30 Mental Illusion | ½ | ½ |
| Affected by PRE/EGO +20 Presence Attack | ½ | Normal |
| Affected by PRE/EGO +30 Presence Attack | -0 | ½ |
| Affected by Flash/Darkness/Invisibility | | |
| Ranged, makes Nontargeting PER Roll | Normal | Normal |
| HTH, makes Nontargeting PER Roll | -1 | Normal |
| Ranged, fails Nontargeting PER Roll | ½ | Normal |
| HTH, fails Nontargeting PER Roll | ½ | Normal |
| Attacked from behind out of combat | ½ | ½ |
| Attacked from behind in combat | ½ | Normal |
| Braced | ½ | ½ |
| Bulky Focus, character is carrying | ½ | Normal |
| Climbing | ½ to -0 | Normal |
| DEX 1 or less | -0 | ½ |
| Encumbered (depending on degree) | -0 to -5 | Normal |
| Entangled | -0 | ½ |
| Fighting in a cluttered or cramped area | -2 | Normal |
| Grabbed by another character | ½ | Normal |
| Grabbing another character | ½ | Normal |
| In the water or swimming | -2 | Normal |
| Intoxicated | -2 | Normal |
| In zero gravity | ½ | Normal |
| Knocked Out | -0 | ½ |
| On a narrow surface (tightrope, ledge) | -2 | Normal |
| On ice, mud, or other slippery surfaces | -1 | Normal |
| Prone | ½ | Normal |
| Recovering from being Stunned | ½ | ½ |
| Resisting Knockback with STR | ½ | Normal |
| Sleeping | -0 | ½ |
| STR 0 (or lower) | ½ (or lower) | Normal |
| STR -30 (or negative value of STR) | -0 | ½ |
| Stunned | ½ | ½ |
| Subject to Multiple Attackers Bonus | -1 to ½ | Normal |
| Surprised (in combat) | ½ | Normal |
| Surprised (out of combat) | ½ | ½ |
| Taking a Recovery | ½ | ½ |
| Underwater | -2 | Normal |
| Using Autofire Skills | ½ | Normal |
| Using a Bulky Focus | ½ | Normal |
| Using Noncombat Movement | ½ | Normal |
| Using a Power with Concentration | ½ | Normal |
| Using Rapid Fire or Sweep | ½ | Normal |

There is no Range Modifier out to 4" — it's as easy to hit any target up to 4" away as one who's adjacent to the attacker. After 4", any attack suffers a -2 OCV modifier. There's an additional -2 OCV Modifier for each doubling of the range thereafter: -4 OCV at 9-16", -6 OCV at 17-32", and so on.

If the GM wants additional detail, he can use the Optional Range Modifier Table, which breaks the modifier down into smaller incremental steps.

## RANGE MODIFIER TABLE

| Range | Modifier |
|---|---|
| Adjacent | -0 |
| 2-4" | -0 |
| 5-8" | -2 |
| 9-16" | -4 |
| 17-32" | -6 |
| 33"-64" | -8 |
| 65"-128" | -10 |
| and so forth | |

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Two-Weapon Fighting: A character who wants to fight with a weapon in each hand has several options. If he wants to restrict himself to attacking the same target, he can use two or more attacks or weapons in a multiple-power attack (see page 358). If he wants to be able to attack the same target or different targets, he can use the Combat Maneuvers *Sweep* and *Rapid Fire;* the special effect of the attack is that he's attacking with a weapon in each hand. (See pages 396, 397.) He may wish to buy Ambi-

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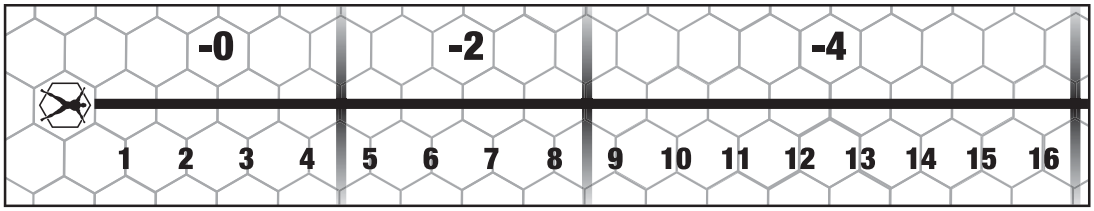
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dexterity (page 87) to counteract the standard Off Hand penalty, or, if he is particularly adept at this form of fighting, should consider buying the *Two-Weapon Fighting* Skill (page 73). In some cases he can use *Reduced Penetration* (page 303) to simulate a two-weapon attack.

Combat Skill Levels: A character who's especially good at fighting may want to buy one or more Combat Skill Levels for some or all of his attacks. CSLs can improve OCV (and/or sometimes DCV), increase the amount of damage he can do, and have other effects. (See pages 53-54.)

Accuracy At Range: A character who wants to be particularly accurate with Ranged attacks should consider buying Range Skill Levels (a type of Penalty Skill Level). RSLs counteract the Range Modifier (thus making it easier for a character to hit a target at a long distance). (See pages 66, 373.)






## OPTIONAL RANGE MODIFIERS

| Range | Modifier |
|---|---|
| Adjacent | -0 |
| 2-4" | -0 |
| 5-6" | -1 |
| 7-8" | -2 |
| 9-12" | -3 |
| 13"-16" | -4 |
| 17"-24" | -5 |
| and so forth | |

You can easily calculate the Range Modifier by counting the distance in doublings starting at eight until the number is greater than or equal to the range. Then multiply the number of doublings by -2 OCV.

Example: *The attacker is standing 31" away from the target. The GM starts counting the distance "8, 16, 32 — that's three doublings, so your total penalty is -6 OCV."*

Skill Levels with a Ranged attack (like a pistol) can add directly to OCV (see *Combat Skill Levels*) to help offset the Range Modifier. Ranged Skill Levels, a type of PSL, can only be used to offset the Range Modifier. RSLs are also used for weapons that have especially good or bad performance over range. These bonuses or penalties have no effect on adjacent targets.

Example: *A .38 derringer (page 485) has an inherent -2 Range Modifier, meaning it's not very accurate for shots at long ranges. When Randall fires his derringer at an opponent 12" away, the total Range Modifier is -4 for Range, plus -2 for the derringer, for a total modifier of -6. If Randall used a rifle (Range Modifier +2) instead, the total OCV modifier would be -4 for range, +2 for the gun, giving a total of -2. Neither gun provides any bonus or penalty when used against adjacent targets, and RSLs never add to a character's OCV — they just offset the Range Modifier.*

## Mental Combat

Most attacks use the ordinary Attack Rolls and CV already described. However, Mental Powers use *Ego Combat Value* (ECV) instead of the normal Combat Value. ECV can be divided into Offensive ECV (OECV) and Defensive ECV (DECV), just like CV. The Powers that use ECV are Ego Attack, Mental Illusions, Mind Control, Mind Link, Mind Scan, Telepathy, and powers bought with the Power Advantage *Based On ECV.* Ego Combat Value is determined using this formula:

**Ego Combat Value = EGO/3**

Substituting ECV for CV, Mental Combat works just the same as normal combat. The Attack Roll is (11 + OECV - Target's DECV) or less on 3d6. Apply any modifiers for Combat Skill Levels, just as normal. However, Mental Combat works on a Line Of Sight basis; if an attacker can see the target, he can attack him without suffering the Range Modifier. Typically, none of the Combat Modifiers apply, either.

A character using a Mental Power uses EGO instead of DEX to determine when he acts in the Phase. (However, his SPD still derives from his DEX.) If he wants to take any physical actions (such as making a Half Move) first, he must wait until his DEX comes up, move, and then use his Mental Power.

See *Mental Powers,* pages 116-21, for more details regarding Mental Powers and Line Of Sight.

## EVENING THE ODDS: FIVE WAYS TO AFFECT YOUR FOES

When their characters face opponents who seem to take little or no damage from their attacks, players often get frustrated or upset. After all, it's not much fun to feel completely useless in combat. But don't get frustrated, get creative! Here are some ways to affect enemies who seem invulnerable or undefeatable:

1. Pushing: Assuming it's appropriate (see page 427), the character can Push his attack to do more damage than normal.

2. Surprise Move: A clever Surprise Move (page 381) often leads to an OCV bonus awarded by the GM. Use that bonus to hit the enemy in a vulnerable spot the character would otherwise have difficulty hitting.

3. Try Something Different: Instead of relying on his most powerful attack, the character should try one of his more obscure, but less powerful, abilities. Maybe the dragon can shrug off your Fireball spell, but you can blind him with a properly-placed application of your Create Light spell.

4. Use Your Environment: The battlefield can provide all sorts of interesting tactical options, ranging from things the character can throw at his enemies (or hit them with) to dangerous areas he can trick them into entering. For example, maybe a character could trip, trick, or throw a heavily armed and armored warrior into water or quicksand, effectively immobilizing him.

5. Use Your Skills: Rather than relying on raw power, perhaps the character can cleverly apply his skills to create a way to affect his foe. For example, when fighting a robot so heavily armored that it cannot be affected by gunfire, maybe a character could get close enough to use Lockpicking to open up a panel on the robot, creating a vulnerable spot.

# COMBAT MODIFIERS

Where and how combat takes place can affect characters' Attack Rolls. *Combat Modifiers* describe environmental conditions, character actions other than Combat Maneuvers that affect combat, certain Power Advantages, and other such factors that help or hinder a character in battle. Examples include a character attacking someone by surprise or ducking behind cover. The accompanying Combat Modifiers Table provides summary descriptions of the standard Combat Modifiers.

During game play, situations may occur that aren't covered in the Combat Modifiers — like firing upside down from a helicopter at midnight during a thunderstorm. In such cases, the GM should apply a modifier that seems reasonable, using the modifiers listed in the Combat Modifiers Table as guidelines. But remember, *HERO System* games simulate dramatic fiction, not "real life," so characters should often be able to accomplish incredible feats. In fact, the GM should give players a bonus for especially creative and exciting maneuvers, since they make things more fun for everybody.

Any DCV modifiers from Combat Modifiers modify a character's DCV versus all attacks, both HTH and Ranged.

## Explanation Of Combat Modifiers

Here's how the Combat Modifiers work.

### AREA OF EFFECT ATTACK

The rules in this section cover not only Area Of Effect attacks, but any attack directed against a point on the ground (in other words, a hex) rather than a person or an upright object. A character can also use an Area Of Effect attack to target a hex in the air, underwater, or the like (for example, to attack a parachutist or a submarine) — he's not limited to targeting hexes on the ground.

A character may make an Area Of Effect attack against either a hex or the target's normal DCV. Generally, it's easier to hit the hex the target's standing in, because the DCV of a hex is 3, or 0 if the hex is adjacent. Attacks aimed at a hex suffer the normal Range Modifier.

To use an Area Of Effect attack, a character picks the hex he's aiming for. This becomes the central hex of his Area Of Effect (or the first hex for an Area Of Effect [Cone] or [Line]). If he fails his Attack Roll, the center of the Area Of Effect misses the target hex by 1" for every 1 point which the Attack Roll fails by; the maximum miss distance is half the distance to the target. To determine the

## COMBAT MODIFIERS TABLE

| Modifier | Notes | OCV | DCV |
|---|---|---|---|
| Area Of Effect Attack | Must hit hex's DCV (3; 0 if adjacent) | — | — |
| Autofire | More than one shot; 1 hit/2 points roll is made by | +0 | -0 |
| Bouncing An Attack | Requires 1 Combat Skill Level per bounce | +1 to +3 | — |
| Concealment | By Hit Location Table or: | | |
| | Target half hidden | -2 | — |
| | Only target's head and shoulders visible | -4 | — |
| Coordinated Attacks | Combine damage for purpose of Stunning | — | — |
| Encumbrance | Attacker is weighed down | — | -0 to -5 |
| Environmental Conditions | Various ambient conditions or situations | Varies | Varies |
| Explosion | Treat like Area Of Effect | — | — |
| Multiple Attackers | -1 DCV/attacker after the first; must Coordinate | Varies | — |
| Off Hand | Using off hand | -3 | — |
| Spreading An Attack | For one target, +1 OCV per -DC | Varies | — |
| | To hit multiple targets, -1d6 per additional hex | — | — |
| Surprised | In combat | — | x½ |
| | Out of combat, take 2x Stun | — | x½ |
| Surprise Move | GM decides | +1 to +3 | — |
| Target A Hex | Must hit hex's DCV (3; 0 if adjacent) | — | — |
| Target Prone | May have Concealment | — | x½ |
| Target Size | Fills 1 hex/2x human sized | +2 | — |
| | Fills 2 hexes/4x human sized | +4 | — |
| | Fills 4 hexes/8x human sized | +6 | — |
| | ½ human sized | -2 | — |
| | ¼ human sized | -4 | — |
| | ⅛ human sized | -6 | — |
| Throw Object | Unbalanced, unaerodynamic object | -4 | — |
| | Balanced or aerodynamic object | -2 | — |
| | Balanced and aerodynamic object | -0 | — |
| Unfamiliar Weapon | Character lacks appropriate Weapon Familiarity | -3 | — |
| Weapon Size/Shape | GM decides | Varies | Varies |

—: No change in the indicated value

### ENDURANCE COSTS IN COMBAT

Here's a quick reference to help you remember Endurance (END) costs during combat.

Strength (STR): STR costs 1 END per 10 points used (or 1 END per 5 STR in some Heroic games). For example, a superhero who uses STR 50 to punch spends 5 END to do so.

Powers: Most Powers cost 1 END per 10 Active Points in them. For example, an Energy Blast 8d6 (40 Active Points) costs 4 END each time it's used; an Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing (60 Active Points) costs 6 END per use.

Some Powers, like Armor, Clinging, and Mind Link, do not cost END at all. See the individual Power descriptions for information (or the reference table on page 129).

Powers that normally cost END may have the Advantage *Reduced Endurance* (which reduces the END cost to half or zero) or the Limitation *Increased Endurance Cost* (which makes them cost more END than normal).

Powers that don't normally cost END may have the Limitation *Costs Endurance,* which makes them cost END at the standard rate, and/or the Limitation *Increased Endurance Cost,* which makes them cost more END than normal.



direction of the miss, the character should roll 1d6 and consult the accompanying diagram.

Usually, an Area Of Effect attack affects everything in the area — the character doesn't have to make a separate Attack Roll on each target (unless he has bought a version of the *Area Of Effect* Advantage that requires this). Even if the center of the Area Of Effect misses the target hex, the attacker may still catch his target with one of the hexes in the Area Of Effect, depending on how far the Area Of Effect misses by and in what direction.

## Character Facing




**AUTOFIRE**

Automatic weapons and Powers bought with the Advantage *Autofire* can fire more than one attack with a single Attack Roll. Thus, they can hit one target several times or several targets one time each.

**Autofire Against A Single Target**

To use an attack with Autofire on a single target, the character decides how many times he wants to fire the attack, up to a maximum of the number of "shots" he has purchased via the *Autofire* Advantage. He makes a normal Attack Roll. If the Attack Roll succeeds, the character hits the target one time; in addition, for every full 2 points by which he makes the Attack Roll, he hits the target an additional time. For example, if he needs a 12- to hit his target, and rolls an 8, he hits his target 3 times (once at 12, once at 10, and once at 8). A single target cannot be hit more times than the number of "shots" fired.

Example: *Andarra fires her Autofire (5 shots) blaster at an alien agent standing next to her. Andarra has a base OCV of 7, and the agent has a DCV of 5. Because the attack is point-blank, there's no Range Modifier. Andarra's Attack Roll is 11 + 7 - 5 = 13 or less. She rolls an 8, hitting the agent three times (once each at 13, 11, and 9).*

**Autofire Against Multiple Targets**

To use an attack with Autofire on multiple targets, a character declares the targets and counts a line of continuous hexes that includes all the targets. He suffers a -1 OCV penalty for each hex in the line. He must make a separate Attack Roll for each target fired at, and each target can only get hit one time. He must fire a minimum of one shot into each hex, even if no target occupies it (thus, a character with a 5-shot Autofire weapon could affect a maximum of five hexes, and, at most, five separate targets). If the character misses one of the targets, he may continue down the line of hexes attempting to hit other targets.

Example: *Andarra fires at three rock creatures in a five-hex continuous line. She suffers a -5 penalty to her OCV for firing at each target (-1 for each hex in the line). Andarra has an OCV of 6. Each rock creature has a DCV of 4. Andarra's first Attack Roll is 11 + 6 - 4 - 5 = 8 or less. Andarra rolls a 5, hitting the first rock creature (each target can only get hit once). Andarra rolls to hit the second rock creature and gets a 9, missing it altogether. Then she rolls a 6 and hits the third rock creature.*

**Autofire Damage**

If a character uses a Combat Skill Level or other means to increase the damage done by an Autofire attack, the increased damage applies to every shot that hits the target. The GM may change this rule if he considers it unbalancing for a particular attack.

Each Autofire shot counts as a separate attack for purposes of determining Stunning — the individual Autofire shots do not add together to make a "single attack." For example, if a character with CON 20 takes 18 STUN and 14 STUN (after defenses) from two Autofire hits from the same burst of fire, he's not Stunned, since neither hit, by itself, did 21 or more STUN to him. (Of course, even though he's not Stunned, he may be Knocked Out.)

If a character with an Autofire attack Coordinates with other characters, regardless of whether they do or do not have Autofire attacks themselves, and he hits the target with two or more shots, add only the largest STUN total from any of the shots to his comrades' attack for purposes of determining the effects of Coordinating. The other shots still hit and cause damage to the target, they're just not counted for purposes of the Coordination rules.

If a character has an Autofire attack that's also Constant, it continues to affect the target with the same number of shots that hit him the first time, unless the GM rules otherwise based on the circumstances.

Characters may train themselves to overcome some of the restrictions on Autofire attacks. See *Autofire Skills,* page 50, for more information.

## BOUNCING AN ATTACK

A character with a Ranged Attack and Combat Skill Levels that apply to it can Bounce the attack off the right surface. The GM must decide what surfaces are appropriate for Bouncing a given type of attack. For each bounce the character wants the attack to perform, the character must use one CSL. (For example, if the character wants to ricochet his attack off of three walls to hit the target from behind, he has to allocate 3 CSLs to Bouncing.) Determine the Range Modifier for the attack by counting the length of the entire path of the attack. A Bounce can give the character a Surprise Move bonus (+1 to +3 OCV) if the target isn't expecting this type of attack (or possibly eliminate or reduce the effects of the *Concealment* Combat Modifier).

Example: *Marshal Graves squares off against some desperadoes who are holed up inside the Last Chance Saloon. One of them has hidden behind the bar. Graves wants to Bounce a shot from his Colt Peacemaker off one of the wooden shelves behind the bar to hit his target. The GM rules that this is possible. Graves has OCV 6 and three Combat Skill Levels with his Peacemaker; he's 4" from the shelf, and the shelf is 1" above the desperado. Graves must use one CSL to Bounce, and decides to use the other two to increase his OCV to 8. The Range Modifier depends on the entire path of the attack: 4" + 1" = 5", for a -2 Range Modifier. Thus, Graves has a final OCV of 6. However, the GM rules that he doesn't suffer the -4 OCV penalty he normally would for the desperado's Concealment behind the bar.*

Bouncing is most often used in Superheroic campaigns. However, it's appropriate for some types of Heroic campaigns as well. For example, in a *Dark Champions* campaign or a *Western Hero* campaign, characters might be skilled at bouncing bullets underneath cars or wagons, off of posts, and so forth to hit targets hiding behind cover.

## CONCEALMENT

Targets who are partly Concealed or "behind cover" are harder to hit. If a target is half Concealed (like a person behind a table or leaning around a corner), the attacker suffers a -2 OCV. If only a person's head and/or shoulders are showing (like someone peering out of a door), the attacker suffers a -4 OCV. This affects both Ranged and HTH attacks, though Concealment is most likely to come into play during Ranged Combat.

If the campaign uses the optional Hit Location Table (page 414), Concealment works differently. If a character has some cover from an opponent, the GM should decide what Hit Locations are covered. For example, a character standing behind a desk would have his feet, legs, and (perhaps) abdomen covered; similarly, a character firing a pistol around a corner would only be exposing his head and one hand, arm, and shoulder. Once the GM determines what's Concealed, combat occurs normally. If an attack hits the Concealed character, roll the Hit Location. If the Hit Location rolled is protected by Concealment, the attack strikes the cover instead. This usually means the target takes no damage, although if the Concealment was lightweight or the attack was powerful, the attack may "blow through" the Concealment and still have enough power to damage the target anyway.

Example: *Andarra has just drawn her blaster on a squad of Imperial Star Marines. Not liking the odds, she ducks behind a rock before firing. The well-trained Marines return fire. Because the rock protects roughly half of Andarra, the Marines receive a -2 OCV to their Attack Rolls.*

*Alternately, the GM could have the Marines attack normally and then roll Hit Locations. Only Andarra's head, arms, shoulders, and*

*chest are exposed, so any Hit Location roll of 12 or more hits the rock, doing no damage to her.*

## COORDINATED ATTACKS

This Combat Modifier allows two or more characters to "coordinate" so their attacks are more effective against a single opponent.

**How To Coordinate**

Before any two (or more) characters can Coordinate attacks, at the very least they must have fought together or trained together in the past. This training can be "in the field" during typical combats, or the characters can deliberately spend time practicing Coordinating their attacks. At the GM's option, characters may have to buy an Agility Skill, *Teamwork,* to reflect their ability to Coordinate properly (see page 72). A character cannot "Coordinate" with himself.

To Coordinate attacks, the characters must attack on the same DEX on the same Phase (the attacks are considered to occur simultaneously). Faster characters may have to Hold their Actions to wait for comrades who have lower DEXs. If the combat is particularly confusing or noisy, the GM might require the characters to make a PER Roll to notice the cue to attack.

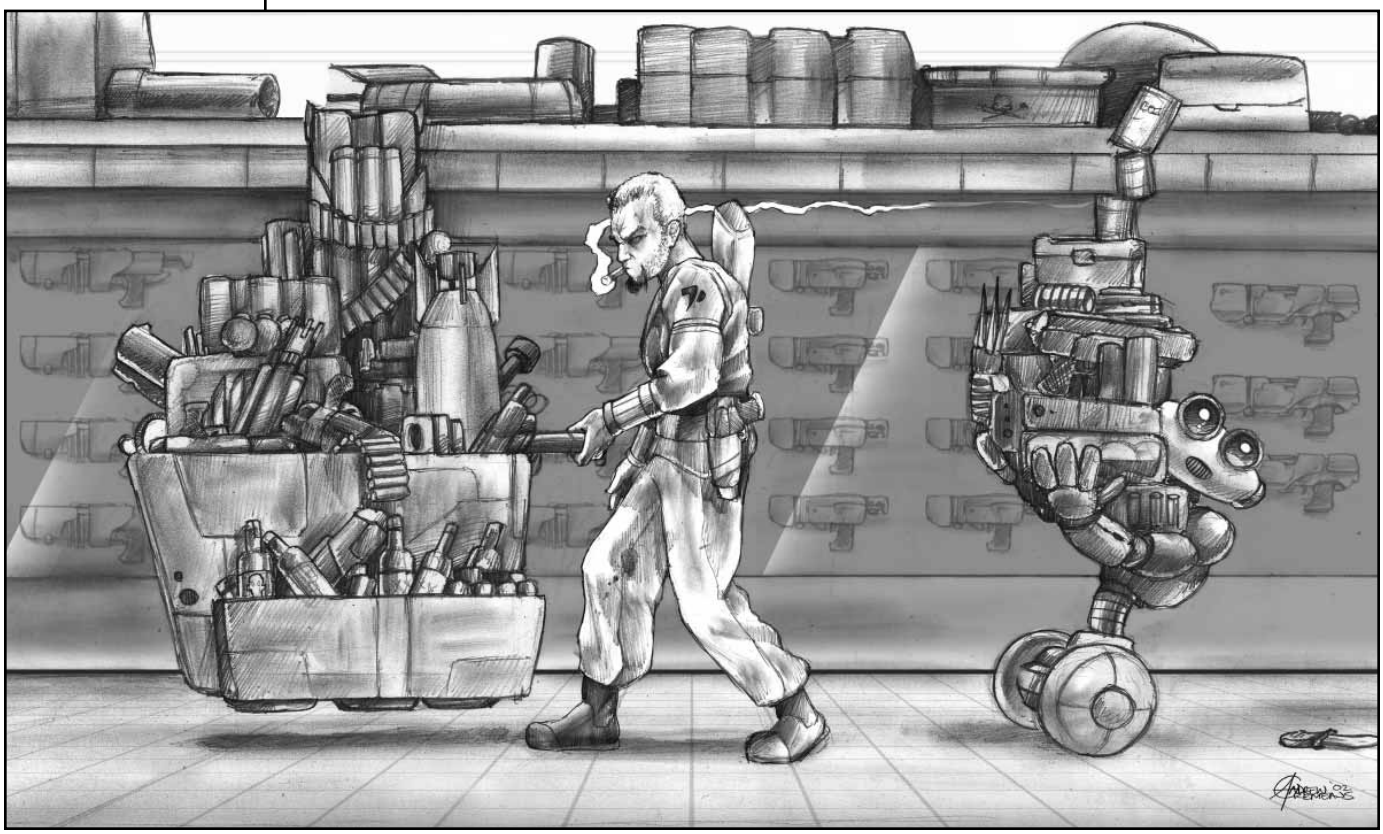
When characters try to Coordinate, they must make an appropriate Skill or Characteristic Roll to see if they succeed. If the characters have the *Teamwork* Skill, use it (with appropriate modifiers to reflect the amount and quality of their practice together). Otherwise, use a DEX Roll or Tactics roll, with negative modifiers to simulate the characters' lack of experience fighting together (a flat 8- chance to Coordinate may be appropriate in some situations).

**Effects Of Coordinating**

If two or more characters successfully Coordinate, there are several effects. First, Coordinating attacks may make the target easier to hit (see *Multiple Attackers*, below). Second, Coordinated attacks are more likely to Stun the target. When two or more attackers successfully Coordinate their attacks, each of them rolls his damage as usual for the type of attack he used. However, any STUN damage the target takes after applying his defenses adds together for the purpose of determining whether he's Stunned. If the Knockback rule is being used, Knockback is determined normally for each attack, then added together.

Typically, characters can Coordinate any types of attacks that do damage. However, Mental Powers that do damage, such as Ego Attacks, generally cannot be Coordinated with attacks that do physical damage (the GM must decide when attacks can be Coordinated based on the nature of the Powers involved, the attacks' special effects, and the circumstances). Mental Powers that do damage can be Coordinated with other Mental Powers that do damage in the usual fashion (to "coordinate" continuing-effect Mental Powers, use the rules for complementary Mental Powers, page 119). When Coordinating the effects of Powers like Dispel, which don't directly cause damage, add the effect rolls together, or use some other common-sense result.

In the event one or more characters involved in a Coordinated attack uses an attack or power that somehow lowers the target's DCV, the lowering does not apply to any attacks used in that Coordinated attack. Depending on how the lowering works, it might apply in later Segments, or to other attacks (not a part of the Coordinated attack) that take place in the same Segment but after the Coordinated attack occurs.



Example: *Arkelos the mage (SPD 3, DEX 18) and Chiron the rogue (SPD 4, DEX 20) attack a dragon who just incinerated their friend the paladin. They decide to Coordinate their attacks. On Segment 6, Chiron holds his attack. On Segment 8, Arkelos has a Phase, and on DEX 18, they both attack (Chiron uses his Held Action). Chiron's sword does 15 STUN after defenses, Arkelos's flame bolt does 18 STUN after defenses. The damage is totaled for the purposes of seeing whether the dragon is Stunned. Since 15 + 18 = 33 STUN is greater than the dragon's 28 CON, the dragon is Stunned. Whew!*

## ENCUMBRANCE

A character who carries around heavy equipment may become *encumbered,* and therefore not able to fight as well. The character will also find it difficult to perform acts requiring agility (*i.e.,* a DEX Roll). The Encumbrance rules should only be used in Heroic campaigns (except regarding movement, in which case they also apply to Superheroic campaigns).

To determine Encumbrance, calculate the total weight of all the items a character carries. This includes both worn items (such as his armor, clothing, backpack, and sheathed weapons) and any items carried in his hands. Since a character often carries around a fair number of miscellaneous items, he should probably add one or two kilograms to the total. The GM must decide the weight of any items not listed. Compare this total weight to the Encumbrance Table.

### ENCUMBRANCE TABLE

| Total Weight Carried | DCV/ DEX Roll | Movement | END Cost per Turn |
|---|---|---|---|
| Up to 10% | -0 | — | 0 |
| 10-24% | -1 | — | 0 |
| 25-49% | -2 | -1" | 1 |
| 50-74% | -3 | -2" | 2 |
| 75-89% | -4 | -4" | 3 |
| 90-100% | -5 | -8" | 4 |

**Notes**

Total Weight Carried: A percentage of the total weight a character can lift, as indicated by the Strength Table (page 34). For example, a character with a 20 STR can lift 400 kilograms; if carrying 200 kilograms, he would suffer a -3 to DCV and DEX Rolls.

Movement: Moving characters can carry up to 24% of the weight they can carry with their STR at no penalty. However, carrying more than that slows them down. The Movement column shows the impact that carrying 25% or more of their carrying capacity has on their movement. The number of inches listed in the table is subtracted from the character's movement rate. As explained on page 364, characters can use their movement to improve their STR; this may allow them to overcome some or all effects of encumbrance at less cost in velocity.

END Cost Per Turn: When Encumbered in combat, the character uses this much END per Turn in addition to any other END used for STR, Powers, and the like. Additionally, you can use this number as the amount of Long Term END he loses every hour which he carries that much weight.

A character must pay the END cost for Encumbrance in his first Phase of each Turn. As a default, he pays the entire END cost in his first Phase, but the GM may, if he wishes, divide the END cost equally over the character's Phases for the Turn. At the GM's option, characters so Encumbered that they must pay END do not get Post-Segment 12 Recoveries (and possibly not even normal Recoveries) until they get rid of enough weight to remove the penalty, or sit down and do nothing but rest.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The Environmental Conditions Table lists some typical environmental conditions and the problems they can cause in combat. In addition to the CV penalties (which apply to all forms of attack) and other penalties listed in the table, GMs may also wish to restrict the use of certain Maneuvers or other Actions in particular conditions. For example, characters fighting in hip-deep water usually can't use kicks.

Characters can eliminate the combat penalties for a particular type of environment with the Skills listed in the table or by purchasing the Talent *Environmental Movement* (page 89).

## EXPLOSION

Explosion attacks are aimed at a hex, so you handle the Attack Roll identically to an Area Of Effect attack (see *Area Of Effect Attack,* above). Explosions do full damage to the center hex; they lose DCs per hex from the center hex. Always subtract the dice that rolled the highest numbers first. See page 258 for more information.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS TABLE

| Condition | Problem; Modifiers |
|---|---|
| Climbing | During easy climbs (such as a ladder), characters suffer -1 DCV; more difficult ones can reduce DCV by up to half and subtract 2 DCs from all attacks. |
| Cluttered, Cramped | In cluttered or cramped areas, characters are typically at -2 DCV, -1 OCV (if not worse); an Acrobatics roll eliminates these penalties. |
| Intoxication | Intoxicated or drunk characters are at -2 OCV and -2 DCV. |
| Narrow Surfaces | Characters fighting on tightropes, tiny ledges, tree branches, and other narrow surfaces are at -2 DCV and -2 DC to all attacks; an Acrobatics roll eliminates these penalties. |
| Poor Footing | When footing is poor — on ice, rain-slicked rocks, mud, or the like — characters suffer -1 DCV and -1 DC to all attacks; a Breakfall roll eliminates these penalties. |
| Water | Characters fighting underwater or while swimming are at -2 DCV and -2 DCs to all attacks unless they make an appropriate Skill Roll or have TF: SCUBA. A character who stands in water while he fights is at -2 DCV (and typically also suffer Poor Footing penalties) unless he makes a Breakfall roll. |
| Zero-Gravity | Characters in Zero-G are typically at -3 OCV and/or -3 DCs for any attacks that require them to have their feet on the ground (such as kicks) or which need the momentum of gravity to function properly (such as some punches or throws). Characters are also usually at ½ DCV. Characters can eliminate some or all of these penalties with a successful PS: Zero-G Operations roll. |

### NINE WAYS TO SPEED UP COMBAT

The slow pace at which combat sometimes proceeds is a complaint common to many role-playing games. Here are a few suggestions for making your *HERO System* combats run swiftly and smoothly.

1. Restrict SPDs: The more Actions the participants can take, the longer combats last. Limiting characters to relatively low SPDs (such as a maximum of 4 or 5) can help to speed combats up some.

2. Abolish The Speed Chart: Another approach is to abandon the Speed Chart altogether and allow each character to take, for example, three Actions per Turn (or "one action per round," with each round defined as being, say, four seconds long). This may require the GM to create some "house rules" to handle Holding an Action, speedster characters, and the like.

3. Be Prepared: The GM should come to the game with a chart for his use listing the DEXs, SPDs, and other relevant combat information for the PCs and their enemies. This allows him to read off the order of combat quickly. Sometimes putting this chart up for everyone to see (by writing it on a chalkboard, for example) helps to keep the players focused on the game (albeit at the expense of letting them see the NPCs' combat information).

4. Let Players Roll In Advance: If you trust your players, let them make their Attack Rolls and other rolls before you call their DEX

Continued on next page



## MULTIPLE ATTACKERS

This optional rule reflects the fact that when there are a lot of attackers fighting a single defender, it's harder for the defender to evade their attacks. To gain a Multiple Attacker Bonus, the attackers must Coordinate their attacks (see *Coordinated Attacks,* above). If the attackers successfully Coordinate, the defender suffers a -1 DCV for every attacker after the first, down to a minimum of ½ DCV. The attackers can fight at Range, HTH, or a combination of both. The DCV penalty applies only against those opponents who Coordinate their attacks; the character's DCV against other attacks is determined normally. A character who has the Skill *Defense Maneuver* (page 57) can avoid the effects of Multiple Attackers.

A character attacked by Multiple Attackers can choose to ignore some of them to concentrate on a more dangerous opponent. In this case he gets his full DCV against the single opponent, but is ½ DCV against all the other Multiple Attackers.

Characters with Mental Powers may obtain a Multiple Attackers Bonus for ECV when using any Mental Power with which they can Coordinate (see above).

Multiple Attackers is an optional rule. It can be particularly inappropriate for a martial arts campaign or one based on the swashbuckling exploits of the Three Musketeers, since generally such characters are *supposed* to be able to take on large numbers of less skilled opponents and defeat them without getting hurt.

Example: *Five VIPER agents attack Nighthawk. Because they find Nighthawk almost impossible to hit, they decide to try for a Multiple Attacker Bonus. (This is made simpler because all VIPER agents have DEX 14 and SPD 3.) On Segment 4, they Coordinate their attacks (this is easy for them because they've all trained together and purchased the Teamwork Skill) and attack as one. Nighthawk receives a -4 to his DCV, and will probably be hit.*

## OFF HAND

An attack made with a weapon used in the character's "off" hand suffers a -3 OCV penalty. If the character is right-handed, this applies to weapons held in the left hand, vice-versa for left-handed characters. The Talent *Ambidexterity* eliminates this penalty.

This optional rule is usually used only in Heroic campaigns or other games where characters buy Weapon Familiarity and similar Skills instead of paying Character Points for their weapons and equipment.

## SPREADING AN ATTACK

This optional rule allows a character to "spread" a Ranged attack to get a better chance to hit a target. Effectively, the character "widens" the attack at the cost of doing less damage. The character does -1 Damage Class for every +1 OCV he wants. He makes his Attack Roll against the target's DCV.

Alternately, a character may Spread his attack to hit more than one target. The character loses 1 Damage Class for each hex he wants to fill with his attack. The hexes must be adjacent, and typically in a straight line as well (the attack could therefore hit a hex, and the hexes on either side, but not the hex behind). The character must make a separate Attack Roll against each target, using that target's DCV; he receives no OCV bonus for Spreading (his "bonus" is the ability to attack more targets). A Spread attack can be Missile Deflected or Reflected.

With either form of Spreading, the character must pay the full END cost for the attack, even though it's not doing full damage.

Spreading is most commonly used with Energy Blast, but characters may also Spread other types of Ranged attacks (unless the GM rules otherwise). The only Mental Power characters can Spread is Ego Attack (and, at the GM's discretion, some Ranged attacks bought *Based On ECV*).

Spreading is usually only used in Superheroic campaigns. Characters may not spread attacks that affect an area (such as Change Environment, Darkness, Images, or any power with the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages), nor any attack with the *Beam* Limitation.

Example: *Starburst has an Energy Blast 10d6. He decides to Spread his attack to get a better chance to hit his target. He spreads his attack by 2d6. This gives him a +2 OCV, but he only does 8d6 damage if he hits. He pays the full 5 END that his Energy Blast normally costs.*

*Starburst now wants to try to hit several agents with one shot. The agents, not being particularly clever, have conveniently lined up shoulder to shoulder, six agents in three adjacent hexes. Starburst spreads his attack by 3d6, thus filling up all three hexes. Starburst must now roll his Attack Roll against each agent. Each agent he hits takes 7d6 damage. Starburst pays the full 5 END for his Energy Blast.*

## SURPRISED

This Combat Modifier applies when a character is attacked from behind, above, by an invisible attacker, from ambush, or any other situation where he's surprised by the attack.

A character Surprised while out of combat is at ½ DCV and takes 2x STUN from the attack; moreover, the penalty for any Placed Shot is halved (see page 415). Double the STUN damage before applying defenses (and, in campaigns using the Hit Locations rules, before applying the STUN modifier for a location).

A character Surprised while in combat is at ½ DCV, but Placed Shot penalties are not halved, and he takes regular STUN damage from attacks.

For an attacker to receive a Surprised bonus, the target must not be expecting any attacks. For example, a character running at Noncombat velocity toward a fight expects trouble, and isn't totally unaware, so he usually can't be Surprised. In this situation he wouldn't take 2x STUN (but he would



have a DCV penalty because he's using Noncombat Movement). Conversely, an unconscious (Knocked Out) or asleep character takes 2x STUN.

The GM should interpret the phrase "expecting any attacks" in a common-sense fashion. Obviously, anyone who's in combat expects to be attacked, so in most cases other attackers entering the fray (even by surprise, as with unexpected reinforcements arriving) won't inflict the Surprised penalty. However, it's possible for a character in combat to be attacked from so unexpected a quarter, or in so unexpected a way, that he suffers a Surprised penalty. Some possible examples include:

—a clever assassin sneaks up behind the character via Stealth and stabs him in the back

—a character who seems like an ordinary soldier suddenly reveals that he has superhuman powers

—a heretofore unrevealed sniper fires at the character

On the other hand, if the character has good reason to suspect the presence of a sneaky attacker, a sniper, or the like, Surprised probably wouldn't apply. And if the character has Defense Maneuver, whether he's expecting surprise attacks really doesn't matter; he's automatically prepared for them.

**SURPRISE MOVE**

A Surprise Move is any maneuver a character makes that startles an opponent, tricks an enemy, takes advantage of a foe's unperceptiveness, or involves an unexpected action that provides him with a new angle of attack. Examples might include faking unconsciousness and attacking when an enemy comes close, swinging from a chandelier to attack an enemy from above, or suddenly shifting from one type of attack to another.

The GM should reward this sort of inventiveness on the part of the players with a bonus, because this type of creative playing adds depth, interest, and excitement to the game. (Of course, the villains also get their chance to pull Surprise Moves on the characters.) The bonus for a Surprise Move is +1, +2, or +3 OCV (sometimes even greater), depending upon the maneuver attempted and the circumstances.

**TARGET A HEX**

A character may make an area-affecting attack (such as with Darkness or a power with the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantage) against either a hex or the target's normal DCV. Generally, it's easier to hit the hex the target's standing in, because the DCV of a hex is 3, or 0 if the hex is adjacent. Attacks aimed at a hex suffer the normal Range Modifier.

**TARGET PRONE**

A prone target (*i.e.,* one who's lying on the ground) is at half DCV. However, he may have Concealment, making it harder to hit him. Many

Continued from last page

in a Phase. That way, instead of having to wait for Fred to roll to hit, then roll damage, then count the damage, you can just have him tell you, "I missed" or "I hit DCV 8 for 38 STUN, 7 BODY." You could even have each player make twenty or thirty Attack Rolls and damage rolls in advance and write them down on a piece of paper for you. For each one of their attacks, you cross the next entry off the list and describe what happens.

5. Require VPP Preparation: If any PC has a Variable Power Pool, only let him use powers he's prepared in advance — don't let him stop in mid-game to create a new gadget, spell, or ability he hasn't already written up.

6. Use Average Damage: To save time rolling and counting damage,

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assume all attacks do average damage. If that becomes too predictable, roll 1d6 for damage — on a 1-2, the attack does 25% less damage, on a 5-6 33% more damage. Or, for every point by which a character makes his Attack Roll, increase the average damage of his attack by 10%.

7. Ignore STUN Damage: For some genres, such as Fantasy, you can ignore STUN damage from ordinary attacks without negatively affecting the game. If an attacker wants to Stun (instead of kill) his target, or uses an attack that only does STUN, keep track of STUN damage, but otherwise don't bother. This also saves the characters from having to engage in the highly unheroic act of administering a *coup de grace* to every unconscious opponent when the fight ends.

8. Don't Let NPCs Take Recoveries: For all but the most powerful or important enemies and NPCs, don't apply Recoveries (even the Post-Segment 12 Recovery). Once they go down, they stay down.

9. Treat Minor NPCs Differently: When the characters are facing "thugs" or other low-powered, low-quality enemies, don't calculate every point of damage precisely. One good, solid hit (perhaps any attack, or an attack succeeding by 3 or more on the Attack Roll) takes any thug out of the combat.



attacks and other situations can cause a character to become prone. If a character wants to drop prone voluntarily (perhaps to get behind Concealment quickly, avoid being run over by a train, or the like), he must use a Zero Phase Action (this is a defensive Action he can Abort to). Getting back to one's feet takes a Half Phase Action (unless the character uses Breakfall; see page 51). Neither dropping down nor standing up costs END.

**TARGET SIZE**

Targets larger or smaller than normal human size (1" tall) are easier or harder to hit. Big objects are easier to hit: a target 2x human size is +2 to an attacker's OCV; a target 4x human size is +4; and so on. Targets smaller than human size are harder to hit: ½ human Size is -2 to an attacker's OCV; ¼ human size is -4; and so forth. (A human-sized or hex-sized inanimate object typically has a DCV of 3; the GM can treat the OCV bonus for large objects as a DCV penalty, and the OCV penalty for small objects as a DCV bonus, if he prefers.)

The Target Size modifier is generally only used for objects that don't have defined DCVs. Characters with Size Powers, or who are larger or smaller than normal all the time, have CV modifiers defined by those powers, their other abilities, and their Disadvantages. Similarly, Vehicles have their own DCV modifiers based on size.

These same modifiers apply to PER Rolls made to perceive an object that's larger or smaller than normal human size.

**THROW OBJECT**

Some objects are more difficult to throw than others because of their shape. This imposes a penalty on the Attack Roll in addition to the standard Range Modifier. The penalties described here only apply to Ranged attacks; see *Weapon Size/Shape,* below, for information concerning HTH Combat with large weapons or objects. This Combat Modifier is for non-weapon objects; it doesn't apply to weapons like throwing knives, which are meant for throwing.

Throwing an unbalanced, unaerodynamic object, such as an unwilling character, a sword, or a car imposes an additional -4 Range Modifier. Throwing a balanced or aerodynamic object, such as a willing character, a rock, or a jetpack, imposes an additional -2 Range Modifier. Characters can throw balanced and aerodynamic objects, such as a pole thrown like a spear, without any additional Range Modifier.

If a character throws something that fills one hex or more, treat it like an Area Of Effect Attack (*i.e.,* allow him to target the attack at a hex, rather than at a specific target). You should also use this method for thrown explosives, such as grenades, and similar attacks not targeted at an individual.

Alternately, the GM can determine the OCV bonus for targeting the object being thrown (see *Target Size,* above) and apply that bonus to the attacker's OCV when he throws the object. This reduces the chance that characters with high STR can repeatedly use large missiles to hit other characters effortlessly.

The Throwing Table, page 35, describes how far a character can throw different types of objects.

A character does his STR damage with a thrown object, up to the DEF+BODY of the object. For example, a costumed vigilante with STR 20 who throws a coffee mug (DEF 1, BODY 1) at someone only does 2d6 of damage — even though he can do 4d6 STR damage with a blow, the object's DEF+BODY equals two, which limits him to 2d6.

**UNFAMILIAR WEAPON**

This optional rule is usually only used in Heroic campaigns. A character must have Weapon Familiarity with a weapon to use it properly. Otherwise, he suffers a -3 OCV penalty when using the unfamiliar weapon.

**WEAPON SIZE/SHAPE**

Most weapons described in the *HERO System* rules are normal ones like swords and clubs. However, characters sometimes pick up some mighty strange objects and use them to beat on other characters — a giant might pick up a log and wield it as a club against a group of knights, the super-strong Grond might pick up the armored hero Defender and use him to smash some other superhero into a bloody pulp.

In this situation, the GM has two choices. First, for really large objects, he can treat them as Area Of Effect attacks that cover an area equal to the size of the object. Thus, a supervillain who uses a car as a club would cover a 2"x1" area (the size of a standard car) when he tries to smash the heroes with it. To take a more complicated example, the giant described above could swing his "club" from side to side; this would cover an area defined by the length of the log and the arc through which the giant swings it. Unlike normal Area Of Effect attacks, targets often can Dodge this sort of attack. For example, the knights could simply duck under (or jump over) the log as the giant swings it, or the heroes step out of the way of the car as the supervillain brings it crashing down. (Of course, targets can also Dive For Cover if they prefer.)

Second, the GM can determine the OCV bonus for targeting the impromptu weapon (see *Target Size,* above) and apply that bonus to the attacker's OCV when he attacks with the object. Thus, using a human as a club would provide no OCV bonus, but using a log that's four times human size would add +4 to the attacker's OCV.

Unlike normal weapons, which are built to hit other things without suffering significant damage themselves, impromptu weapons typically take some or all of the damage they inflict. That's why strong characters like to pick up Enemy A and use him to hit Enemy B — both enemies take the damage. The GM decides the extent to which an impromptu weapon is damaged through use. It should depend on how much like a "normal" weapon the object is (a log used as a club wouldn't suffer much damage, but a goblin used for the same purpose would likely take just as much damage as the target).

An impromptu weapon can only do as many Damage Classes of damage as it has DEF+BODY; if the character using the weapon does more damage with his STR than that, the object typically breaks. See page 447 for further information.

# COMBAT MANEUVERS

Although the number of different ways one character can strike another in combat is nearly infinite, the differences between the vast majority of these maneuvers — *in game terms* — are minimal. Therefore, the *HERO System* has a limited number of *Combat Maneuvers* that cover most of the possibilities. Any character can use these basic Combat Maneuvers, provided he has the necessary weapon (if any) or meets other special conditions listed.

There are three types of Combat Maneuvers. The first type, *Standard Combat Maneuvers,* can be used by any character in just about any type of campaign. They cover the vast majority of combat situations, and many characters never need to use any other maneuvers. The second type, *Optional Combat Maneuvers,* tend to be more advanced or complicated, or are primarily suited to particular types of campaigns. As their name indicates, they're optional; not all GMs use them in all campaigns.

The first two types of Combat Maneuvers are free — they cost no Character Points, and any character can use them. The third type, *Martial Maneuvers,* costs Character Points to learn (see page 64). Martial Arts are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Combat Maneuvers can modify the character's OCV, DCV, damage done, and/or other factors. Any modifiers from a Maneuver remain in effect from when the character performs the Maneuver until the beginning of his next Phase. For example, a SPD 3 character who Dodges on his Phase in Segment 4 retains the Maneuver's +3 DCV bonus until the beginning of his next Phase in Segment 8.

Some Combat Maneuvers provide a DCV bonus or penalty. For Dodge and Martial Dodge, the bonus applies to all attacks; for other Maneuvers, the modifier generally only applies to HTH Combat. However, for ease of game play, some GMs allow a Maneuver's DCV modifier to apply to DCV generally (*i.e.,* against all attacks, HTH or Ranged).

A character can use any of the Combat Maneuvers, provided he meets the conditions and restrictions listed on the Combat Maneuvers Table and his GM allows the maneuver. The player must state what Combat Maneuver his character uses before rolling the dice. Unless the rules note otherwise, using a Combat Maneuver counts as an Attack Action (see page 358). Using a Combat Maneuver typically costs 1 END (see page 425), and the character also has to pay the END cost for any STR or power used with the Maneuver.

Characters are not limited to using the maneuvers described here — they're free to try any action they want, even if it's not listed on the Combat Maneuvers Table. The GM should determine the modifiers applicable to and effects of a maneuver by comparing it to the listed Combat Maneuvers. If the action is sufficiently odd, the GM should give the character a Surprise Move bonus. Usually actions players suggest consist of several parts, and may take their characters more than one Phase to accomplish.

Example: *Andarra says: "I'll pull out my pistol, shoot the guard, smash the window, and leap outside!" The GM analyzes this action, and decides it consists of: a Half Phase Action (draw weapon), a Half Phase Action (shoot the guard, which is a Strike), a Zero Phase Action (smashing the window, a use of Casual STR), and a Half Phase Action (leap out of the window). It takes Andarra one full Phase and a Half Phase to do what she's described. That leaves her a Half Phase to move away from the window, shoot other guards, or do something else.*

## Explanation Of Standard Maneuvers

Here's how the Standard Combat Maneuvers work.

### BLOCK

This Combat Maneuver allows a character to block an opponent's HTH attack and set himself up to deliver the next blow.

#### USING BLOCK

A character who wants to Block must declare his intention before his attacker makes an Attack Roll. To attempt a Block, he must make an Attack Roll against his opponent's OCV (not DCV). If he succeeds, he Blocks the attack and takes no damage (and no Knockdown or Knockback). Furthermore, if these two characters both have their next Phases in the same Segment, the character who Blocked automatically gets to act first, regardless of relative DEX (the Blocking character's opponent is delayed until after the Blocking character's DEX; see below). Blocks have no effect on Ranged attacks. Using Block counts as an Attack Action.

If the Block misses, the attacker still has to hit the Blocking character's DCV. The CV bonuses obtained from Block are general ones; they apply against all characters, not just against the attacker the character attempts to Block.

Example: *Ogre tries to punch Powerhouse. Powerhouse attempts to Block. Ogre's OCV is 6, and Powerhouse's OCV is 5. Powerhouse needs a 5 + 11 - 6 = 10 or less. Powerhouse rolls a 10 and successfully Blocks. Powerhouse takes no damage. If he and Ogre both have their next Phases in the same Segment, Powerhouse automatically gets to act first, even though Ogre's DEX is higher than his.*

A character can normally Block any HTH Combat attack, including Disarms, Choke Holds, Grabs/Grab Bys, Move Bys/Throughs, sword blows (see below), most No Range attacks (unless the GM rules otherwise), and so forth (but not including HTH Combat attack bought with the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages, or the like). However, the GM must apply common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance when

#### HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT (HTH)

Combat between characters standing in the same or adjacent hexes, and usually involving punching or melee weapons such as swords, not attacks that work at Range (such as guns or Energy Blasts).

#### RANGED COMBAT

Combat that takes place at any distance beyond HTH Combat range, involving the use of Ranged attacks such as missile weapons (handheld weapons used at a distance, such as arrows or thrown daggers), small arms (pistols, rifles, lasers guns, and the like), energy bolts, and so forth. Many Ranged attacks can also be used against targets in HTH Combat range, and there's no Range Modifier (page 373) out to 4".

# COMBAT MANEUVERS TABLE

**STANDARD MANEUVERS**

| Maneuver | Phase | OCV | DCV | Effects |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Block | ½ | +0 | +0 | Block HTH attacks, Abort |
| Brace | 0 | +2 | ½ | +2 OCV only to offset the Range Modifier |
| Disarm | ½ | -2 | +0 | Disarm target, requires STR vs. STR Roll |
| Dodge | ½ | — | +3 | Dodge all attacks, Abort |
| Grab | ½ | -1 | -2 | Grab Two Limbs; can squeeze or throw |
| Grab By | ½ † | -3 | -4 | Move and Grab object, +(v/5) to STR |
| Haymaker | ½* | +0 | -5 | +4 Damage Classes to any attack |
| Move By | ½ † | -2 | -2 | ((STR/2) + (v/5))d6; attacker takes ⅓ damage |
| Move Through | ½ † | -v/5 | -3 | (STR + (v/3))d6; attacker takes ½ or full damage |
| Set | 1 | +1 | +0 | |
| Strike | ½ | +0 | +0 | STR damage or by weapon type |
| Other Attacks | ½ | +0 | +0 | |

**OPTIONAL MANEUVERS**

| Maneuver | Phase | OCV | DCV | Effects |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blazing Away | ½ | +0 | +0 | Make as many attacks as desired, only hit on a 3 |
| Club Weapon | ½ | +0 | +0 | Killing weapon does equivalent Normal Damage |
| Cover | ½ | -2 | +0 | Target held at "gunpoint" |
| Dive For Cover | ½ | +0 | +0 | Character avoids attack; Abort |
| Hipshot | ½ | -1 | +0 | +1 DEX only for purposes of initiative |
| Hurry | ½ | -2 | -2 | +1d6 DEX only for purposes of initiative |
| Pulling A Punch | ½ | -1/5d6 | +0 | Strike, normal STUN damage, ½ BODY damage |
| Rapid Fire | 1 | -2/x | x½ | Make multiple Ranged attacks |
| Roll With A Punch | ½ | -2 | -2 | "Block" after being hit, take ½ damage; Abort |
| Snap Shot | 1 | -1 | +0 | Lets character duck back behind cover |
| Suppression Fire | ½ | -2 | +0 | Continuous fire on hex(es), must be Autofire |
| Sweep | 1 | -2/x | x½ | Make multiple HTH attacks |

**MARTIAL MANEUVERS**

| Maneuver | Phase | OCV | DCV | Effects |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Choke Hold | ½ | -2 | +0 | Grab, 2d6 NND (see text) |
| Defensive Strike | ½ | +1 | +3 | STR Strike |
| Killing Strike | ½ | -2 | +0 | HKA ½d6 |
| Legsweep | ½ | +2 | -1 | STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls |
| Martial Block | ½ | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| Martial Disarm | ½ | -1 | +1 | Disarm, +10 STR to Roll |
| Martial Dodge | ½ | — | +5 | Dodge, affects all attacks, Abort |
| Martial Escape | var | +0 | +0 | +15 STR versus Grabs |
| Martial Grab | ½ | -1 | -1 | Grab Two Limbs, +10 STR for holding on |
| Martial Strike | ½ | +0 | +2 | STR +2d6 Strike |
| Martial Throw | ½ | +0 | +1 | STR + v/5 Strike; Target Falls |
| Nerve Strike | ½ | -1 | +1 | 2d6 NND (see text) |
| Offensive Strike | ½ | -2 | +1 | STR +4d6 Strike |
| Sacrifice Throw | ½ | +2 | +1 | STR; You Fall, Target Falls |
| +1 Damage Class | — | — | — | Adds to all Martial Maneuvers |
| Weapon Element | — | — | — | Allows use of Martial Arts with weapons |

* This maneuver takes one extra Segment to perform

†: Grab By, Move By, and Move Through are usually performed at the end of a Full Move, and thus take a Full Phase. However, a character could perform one after taking a Half Phase Action (such as opening a door), so they're listed as Half Phase Actions.

**EXPLANATION OF TERMS:**

Phase: How long it takes to perform the Maneuver (usually either a Half Phase [½] or a Full Phase [1]).

OCV (Offensive Combat Value): The Maneuver's modification to OCV. For example, a +1 OCV means a character has +1 to his OCV when making an Attack Roll with the Maneuver.

DCV (Defensive Combat Value): The maneuver's modification to the attacker's DCV. For example, performing a Haymaker decreases the attacker's DCV, making it more likely he'll be hit.

Effects: The damage or other effect done by the Maneuver. STR means the Maneuver does STR/5 in d6 of Normal Damage.

Abort: A character can forfeit his next Phase to perform this Maneuver in a Segment when he doesn't have a Phase. For a more detailed explanation, see *Aborting An Action,* page 361.

Dash ("—"): That column is not relevant to that maneuver.

determining what attacks a character can Block. For example, although a character could Block a Move Through performed against him by another character, he probably can't Block a Move Through performed by a Vehicle.

If a character Blocks a Constant HTH attack, the first roll deflects it entirely — it's as if the attacker missed. He doesn't have to keep Blocking it in subsequent Segments.

In Heroic campaigns, the GM can assign a penalty (-1 to -3) to Block if one character is using a melee weapon and the other is not. A character with a shield may add the shield's DCV bonus to his OCV for purposes of Blocking.

**Acting First**

As noted above, a character who Blocks an attacker automatically gets to act first (regardless of relative DEX) if he and the attacker have their next Phases in the same Segment. If this benefit applies, it does so even if the attacker decides not to attack the character in his next Phase. However, the attacker's DEX for purposes of acting first is not lowered as to any other character. Unless the character stops the attacker somehow, the attacker can attack some other target at his normal DEX.

The "may act first" benefit only applies if the two characters involved both have their normal Phases on the next Segment. If the attacker Holds his Action and chooses to act in a Segment in which the character has a Phase but the attacker normally does not, the characters' respective Actions occur in their normal order — whichever character has the higher DEX acts first, despite the Block.

**Blocking For Someone Else**

A character can Block for someone else — a useful tactic when a character wants to defend an injured or defenseless person from an attacker. To do this, a character must be in range of either the attacker or the target (*i.e.,* either in the same hex or an adjacent hex, unless the character has a weapon or some other way to extend his reach). The attempt to Block is made at -2 OCV. If it succeeds, the attack is Blocked. However, the character does not automatically get to go first before the opponent whose attack he Blocked if they both have their next Phase in the same Segment; they act on their respective DEXs in the usual manner.

## MULTIPLE BLOCKS

A character who has successfully Blocked one attack can Block additional attacks made against him (by the same or different characters). He may make these additional attempts to Block in the same Phase or later Segments before his next Phase (this does not count as Aborting to Block; it's just an extension of the initial Block). Each additional roll is made at a cumulative -2 penalty (second Block -2, third Block -4, and so on). If the character misses any of his Blocks, he cannot Block further attacks. If he attempts to Block an attack in a Segment in which he does not have a Phase, he cannot Abort in that Segment.

Example: *Ogre, frustrated, brings a group of friends to pound on Powerhouse. Powerhouse blocks Ogre's punch as before, but now must Block another attack in this Phase (in Segment 4), one in Segment 5, and two more in Segment 6. His roll to Block this second attack is determined as described above, but with an additional -2 penalty to Powerhouse's OCV. He makes this roll, but fails against the third attack (he had a -4 penalty, after all). Because he's failed to Block an attack, Powerhouse cannot try to Block any more attacks in Segment 5. Furthermore, he cannot Abort to a defensive Action in Segment 5, because he tried to Block.*

If a character successfully Blocks attacks from multiple opponents, he gets the "may act first in the next Phase, if they share it" benefit against all of them.

**Multiple Attacks**

Some attacks, such as Sweep or Multiple Move By, involve a sequence of attacks directed at the target in which if one of the attacks misses, all subsequent attacks automatically miss. For these purposes, successfully Blocking one of the attacks in the sequence does not count as a "miss"; the attacker may continue with the rest of the sequence.

Sometimes a character wants to Block an Autofire HTH Combat attack that has "hit" him multiple times. Autofire used against a single target requires a single Attack Roll from which the number of hits are determined. Therefore, the character makes a single Block roll. If he makes the roll exactly, he Blocks one of the hits. For every 2 points by which he makes the roll beyond that, he Blocks another hit. If the character Blocking the attack gets attacked by another character that same Phase and wants to Block that character's attacks, his Block roll suffers a -2 for the second attack, -4 for the third, and so forth. The penalty doesn't derive from the number of Autofire shots Blocked, because the character only made one Block roll.

For an attack like Sweep, which involves multiple Attack Rolls, a character must make one Block roll for each Attack Roll, at the normal penalty for making multiple Blocks in the same Phase. So, to Block a three-attack Sweep involves one normal Block roll, a second roll at -2, and a third at -4. If another character attacked the Blocking character, an attempt to Block his attack would be at -6.

## BRACE

This Maneuver allows a character to brace himself to steady his aim and improve his accuracy at range.

To Brace, a character must take a Zero Phase Action (not an Attack Action) to steady himself. This gives him a +2 OCV that only offsets the Range Modifier. Additionally, Bracing reduces the STR Minimum for using a Ranged weapon by 5. However, the character's DCV is halved because he stands still to Brace. If a character is Stunned while Bracing, he loses the effects of the Maneuver.

A character can combine Brace with Set in the same Phase and get both bonuses. He gains a +1 OCV, plus a +2 OCV only to offset the Range Modifier — but this takes a Full Phase, and he's at ½ DCV. For more information, see *Set.*

## DISARM

This Maneuver allows a character to knock a weapon or hand-held object out of another character's grasp.

To use Disarm, the character makes an Attack Roll. If the Attack Roll succeeds, the two characters engage in a STR Versus STR Contest: each rolls 1d6 per 5 points of STR and counts the Normal Damage BODY. If the attacker's BODY total is higher or the rolls tie, the Disarm succeeds and the target's weapon or object goes flying ½d6 hexes in the direction of the strike (attacker's choice, within reason). If the defender's BODY total is higher, he retains his grip on his weapon — the Disarm fails.

In some situations the GM may wish to modify the Disarm roll. First, there may be a negative modifier (-1 to -3) if the character attempting the Disarm is unarmed or using a short weapon to try to Disarm an armed character or one with a much longer weapon — it's hard for a bare-handed fighter to Disarm someone with a sword! Second, if the target of the Disarm is Surprised, he may only use his Casual STR to resist the Disarm. Third, it's a little more difficult to Disarm a two-handed weapon than a weapon held in one hand. A character trying this suffers a -2 OCV penalty on his Disarm. Alternately or in addition, the target gets +5 STR in the STR Versus STR Contest to keep hold of his weapon.

A character can Hold his Action to Disarm an incoming attack. This happens especially often when a character makes a Half Move and then Holds his Action, waiting for his attacker to reach him. However, a Disarm versus an incoming attack doesn't automatically mean the attacker is Disarmed before he performs his attack. The characters must make DEX Rolls to see who goes first. If the character performing the Disarm succeeds with his DEX Roll by more, he goes first. If he successfully Disarms his opponent, the opponent doesn't get his to make his attack and can do nothing else this Phase. If the Disarm misses or fails, the opponent gets his attack this Phase. If the target of the Disarm makes his DEX Roll by more, he goes first and attacks before the Disarm attempt. If the Disarming character is not Stunned or Knocked Out by the attack, he can then perform the Disarm.

## DODGE

This Maneuver allows a character to avoid an attack. A character performing a Dodge can't attack, but is much harder to hit — he adds +3 DCV against all attacks. Characters can Abort to Dodge. Using Dodge counts as an Attack Action.

Some attacks, such as Sweep or a Multiple Move By, involve a sequence of attacks directed at the target in which if one of the attacks misses, all subsequent attacks automatically miss. For these purposes, successfully Dodging one of the attacks in the sequence counts as a "miss" and ends the sequence of attacks.

## GRAB

This Maneuver allows a character to get a hold on another character or object.

### MAKING A GRAB

To Grab an opponent, a character must make an Attack Roll with appropriate modifiers. If successful, he has Grabbed his opponent. (As described below under *Escaping From Grabs,* the victim immediately gets a Casual STR roll to break free, if desired.)

The Grabber (character performing the Grab) and Grabbed character both occupy the same hex. Typically this is the Grabber's hex. However, if the Grabber has a Half Phase Action available before attacking, he can specify in advance that he wants to move into the Grabbee's hex before Grabbing him.

A character may not be able to Grab targets significantly larger than himself. A human, no matter how strong, isn't really able to Grab a giant.

#### Squeezing And Throwing

In many cases, a character Grabs his enemy just to hold onto him or prevent him from doing something, but sometimes the Grabber wants to hurt the target at the same time. A character who has Grabbed someone can do either of the following:

—Squeeze him or smash him against something. This does regular STR damage (STR/5 in d6 of Normal Damage) to the victim; the character retains his hold on the victim.

—Throw him. This does regular STR damage to the victim, and subjects him to the effects of a Throw (see *Martial Throw,* page 400), but typically requires the character to let go of the victim. See the Throwing Table, page 35, to determine how far the Grabber can Throw the Grabbed character (though he can choose just to Throw him to the ground in an adjacent hex, or the like).

If the Grabber chooses to Squeeze or Throw the Grabbed character in the same Segment in which he (the Grabber) successfully Grabbed him, the Squeeze or Throw does not require an Attack Roll (it automatically succeeds) and takes no time. If the Grabber wants to Squeeze or Throw his victim in a later Phase, doing so is an Attack Action (it doesn't automatically succeed, requires an Attack

Roll, and so forth). Assume any Grab-and-Throw is a Standing Throw, unless the Grabber begins a Phase with a Grabbed victim and the GM lets him move before making the Throw.

If a character wants to Grab-and-Throw something at a specific target (for example, to throw one enemy into another, or to pick up a live grenade and through it through an open window), he must make a separate Attack Roll against that target to do so. The standard CV modifiers for Grab apply, and the GM may impose other modifiers to reflect the circumstances. If the attack succeeds, both the Thrown object and the target take the character's STR damage.

If the Attack Roll for a Squeeze fails, the victim takes no damage but remains Grabbed. If the Attack Roll for a Throw fails, the victim is no longer Grabbed and suffers no effects of a Throw (he takes no damage, remains on his feet, and suffers no initiative penalty in relation to the character who threw him).

After performing a Grab, in that same Segment a character can only Squeeze or Throw the target, or use a Combat or Martial Maneuver that must follow a Grab, as an immediate attack. He can't use any other maneuvers or attacks (unless the GM so permits, and even in that case, using another attack should mean releasing the Grab in most circumstances). In later Phases he can use any attacks he wants (provided he has the free limbs or other means to do so).

If a Grab-based Maneuver (such as Martial Grab) provides a STR bonus, that bonus applies solely for the purposes of holding on to the target. It doesn't increase the damage done by Squeezing or Throwing the target, increase the distance a target can be thrown, or have any other effect. Similarly, characters can use Combat Skill Levels to increase their OCV or DCV when Grabbing, but not the damage done by Squeezing or Throwing.

### ESCAPING FROM GRABS

When a Grabbed character tries to escape from his captor, both characters roll 1d6 for each 5 STR they have and count the Normal Damage BODY. If the Grabbed character's total is higher, he escapes; if the Grabber's total is higher or the rolls tie, the victim remains Grabbed. Trying to break out of a Grab does no damage to either character.

The rules for Casual STR (page 34) mean very strong characters can effectively ignore Grabs performed by much weaker foes. A Grabbed character should be allowed to roll his Casual STR immediately after being Grabbed, if desired (even if he doesn't have a Zero Phase Action available; this initial attempt to break free is an Action that takes no time, though the character can only try it once).

A character attempting to escape immediately with Casual STR may apply half his STR bonus from an Escape-based Martial Maneuver (such as Martial Escape), but may not apply bonus dice from using Contortionist, a Movement Power, or the like. In later Phases, he may use half the bonuses from Contortionist and/or Movement Powers to increase a Casual STR roll to break out,




but using either or both converts the use of Casual STR to a Half Phase Action. He can add full Contortionist and/or Movement Power bonuses to a normal, full-STR damage roll to break free.

A character may not use a Ranged Attack that exerts force (such as an Energy Blast) to break free from a Grab.

See page 423 for more information on escaping Grabs, including the time required and the Actions available to the character after he breaks free.

### THE EFFECTS OF GRAB

Grab immobilizes two of the target's limbs (usually his arms). The Grabber can attempt to Sweep with his Grab to immobilize more than two limbs. While the Grabber immobilizes the Grabbed character's arms, the Grabbed character cannot use most handheld weapons and Accessible Foci.

The Grabber must use both hands/arms to gain the full effect of a Grab. If he uses only one hand, he is at -5 STR to hold on (but can use his other arm to make other attacks in later Phases). If a Grab-based Maneuver (such as Martial Grab) provides a STR bonus, a character performing a one-handed Grab can only use half of the STR bonus.

#### Grab's Effect On Combat Value

When a character tries to Grab another character, he suffers the standard -2 DCV penalty listed on the Combat Maneuvers Table. If the Grab succeeds, the Grabber suffers the ½ DCV penalty described below — this replaces the -2 DCV penalty, it's not in addition to it.

### SQUEEZING MULTIPLE TARGETS

In some situations, a character may want to Grab and Squeeze two characters. This could simulate, for example, smashing two enemies' heads to together, or simply be a clever combat tactics for a character with large arms. To do this, a character must Sweep Grab two targets, then Squeeze them both that same Phase if he succeeds. In later Phases he has to Sweep Squeeze (since Squeezing in later Phases counts as an attack), or choose which one to Squeeze.

### OTHER WAYS TO ESCAPE FROM GRABS

Here are some other tricks characters can use to break free from Grabs:

Growth: If a Grabbed character activates the *Growth* Power, he may automatically be able to break free from a Grab. Alternately, the GM can convert the Growing character's growth momentum to STR (on a 1d6 = +5 STR basis) to determine the effect of growing out of a Grab. (See page 183 regarding growth momentum.)

Shrinking: Shrinking to half a character's size or less allows him to slip out of a Grab automatically if he beats the character Grabbing him in a DEX Roll Versus DEX Roll Contest. (At the GM's option, the shrinking character may use his *Power: Shrinking Tricks* Skill instead, if he has it.)

Stretching: Depending on the special effects of a character's Stretching, the GM may allow him to escape from a Grab automatically by Stretching or contorting his malleable body, or may grant him STR bonuses solely for purposes of determining if he can escape.

Teleportation: Unless the special effects of the power indicate otherwise, a character can Teleport out of a Grab by making a Half Move or Full Move with Teleportation.

Example: *Defender (DCV 8) attempts to Grab Devastator. He's at -2 DCV, giving him DCV 6. He misses. He remains at DCV 6 until his next Phase.*

*But suppose Defender hits Devastator. He's now Grabbing someone, so he has ½ DCV, giving him DCV 4. The ½ DCV penalty replaces the standard -2 DCV penalty instead of adding to it* (i.e., *he's not DCV 3).*

A Grabbed character has ½ DCV against all attacks. The Grabber also has ½ DCV against all attacks (both those from other characters, and any the Grabbed character may be able to launch) — concentrating on holding someone leaves the character more open to attack.

The Grabbed character may be able to attack the Grabbing character at -3 OCV (or another character at ½ OCV), but this requires an appropriate free limb or other means of attack, and the GM may rule that a Grabbed character cannot perform some attacks or Maneuvers. The character performing the Grab has his full OCV against the Grabbed character and is ½ OCV against other targets. At the GM's option, some of the penalties the Grabber suffers may be reduced if his STR is 20 or more points greater than the Grabbed character's STR (see accompanying text box).

A Grabber cannot let a Grabbed character maintain his full OCV and DCV, even if the Grabbed character voluntarily submits to the Grab.

**Grabbing And Being Stunned Or Knocked Out**

A Grabber who is Stunned automatically lets go of the Grabbed person (or object) at the end of the Segment unless he succeeds with an EGO Roll. The roll suffers a penalty of -1 per 10 points of STUN damage (or fraction thereof) the character took from the attack that Stunned him (after he applies his defenses). At the GM's option, even if the character maintains his grip, a Grabbed person may receive a bonus to break free (such as +5 or +10 STR) until the Grabber recovers from being Stunned.

A Grabber who is Knocked Out automatically lets go of the Grabbed person (or object) at the end of the Segment.

### GRAB WEAPON

A character can choose to Grab a target's weapon, Accessible Focus, or other held or carried object instead of the target himself. Such attacks are at -2 OCV in addition to all other modifiers. If the attacker successfully makes the Grab, then he has his hands on the target's weapon or Focus and can attempt to wrench it away. In this case, use normal Grab rules to see if the attacker succeeds. Until one character gains control of the weapon, neither character can use it. As an optional rule, the GM may want to assign additional penalties (-1 to -3) if one character is fighting with a much shorter weapon (simulating the fact that it's harder for a character with a short weapon to get close enough to one with a longer weapon to Grab that weapon).

When Grabbing a weapon, Focus, or object, a character's DCV is only reduced during the Segment in which the object was Grabbed — his DCV returns to normal at the beginning of the next Segment (assuming he has control of the object).

## GRAB AND COMBAT VALUE

The standard CV penalties for performing a successful Grab are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Grabber: | ½ DCV against all attackers (including Grabbed character) |
| | Full OCV against the Grabbed character |
| | ½ OCV against other targets (if attacks are possible at all) |
| Grabbed: | ½ DCV against all attackers (including Grabber) |
| | -3 OCV against the Grabber (if attacks are possible at all) |
| | ½ OCV against other targets (if attacks are possible at all) |

At the GM's option, if the Grabber's STR is 20 or more points higher than the Grabbed character's STR, change the penalties to the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| Grabber: | -2 DCV against all attackers (including Grabbed character) |
| | Full OCV against the Grabbed character |
| | -1 OCV against other targets (if attacks are possible at all) |

### GRAB BY

Grab By is essentially a combination of Grab (as it pertains to weapons and Foci, and sometimes to people) and Move By. It allows a character to make a Full Move past another character and Grab an object that person's holding, or to do things like flying through the air and catching a falling person. The character suffers OCV and DCV penalties combining those of Grab and Move By.

When the character performs the Grab, in addition to the penalties for the maneuver he suffers the -2 OCV penalty if he attempts to Grab an Accessible Focus, weapon, or object. However, if the Grab succeeds, he does not suffer the typical reduction to DCV caused by Grabbing someone. He only suffers the DCV penalty for the Maneuver itself (-4) during the Segment in which the object was Grabbed — his DCV returns to normal at the beginning of the next Segment (assuming he has control of the object).

The character's velocity divided by 5 adds to his STR (not his STR dice) only for purposes of succeeding with the Grab. Otherwise, standard rules for Grabbing weapons and Foci apply, as appropriate (*e.g.,* the victim can immediately make a Casual STR roll to hold onto the object). Standard rules for Move Bys also apply, as appropriate; characters can make Multiple Grab Bys if they so desire, at the same additional penalty as for Multiple Move Bys. At the GM's option, characters may use Teleportation to perform a Grab By (at no STR bonus), even though it cannot be used to perform Move Bys. Characters cannot combine Grab By with Move By, taking objects from some targets and hitting others.

Example: *Defender wants to snatch an enchanted staff out of an evil sorcerer's grasp. He plots out his movement path, flies by him at 25", and performs a Grab By. His normal CV is 10; it is reduced to OCV 7, DCV 6 by*

*the maneuver, and he loses another 2 points of OCV for trying to Grab an object, so his final OCV is 5. Fortunately for him, the sorcerer only has a DCV of 5, so an Attack Roll of 9 succeeds. He rolls 12d6 (11d6 for his base 55 STR, +1d6 for +5 STR for his velocity (25/5)) while the sorcerer rolls 3d6 (for his 15 STR). Defender easily wins the contest and takes the staff away from the sorcerer. Defender's DCV is not halved, only reduced by 4 for the Maneuver.*

## HAYMAKER

A Haymaker is basically an all-out attack — the character takes extra time to "wind up" a punch, put extra force into his Energy Blast, aim carefully to hit a vital spot, or otherwise attack the target powerfully. It offers the chance to do extra damage, but at the risk of the target moving or the character being hit while he's standing still and preparing to attack.

Haymaker applies to any attack, not just punches. This includes Mental Powers and other attacks that don't involve physical force. For example, a character could Haymaker his Drain STR, his Ego Attack, his Major Transform, or his Telekinesis. He could even Haymaker an appropriate Presence Attack in a situation where he suffers the drawbacks from Haymakering (such as combat). When a character Haymakers an unusual attack, the GM determines how much damage or effect the Haymaker adds (see accompanying sidebar). A character cannot Haymaker with an entire multiple-power attack. He may Haymaker with one of the powers in a multiple-power attack; the standard penalties for Haymaker then apply to the multiple-power attack as a whole.

Haymaker takes an extra Segment to execute. The character begins the attack on one of his Phases (this only requires a Half Phase Action; the character could, for example, make a Half Move to the target first). However, he doesn't actually launch the attack until the very end of the next Segment, after all characters who can act in that Segment have acted. The character may Abort to a defensive Action in the Segment in which the Haymaker goes off, but doing so ruins the Haymaker.

Example: *A character with a Phase in Segment 6 declares he's going to Haymaker his Punch (a Strike). He begins the attack on his Phase in Segment 6, but the blow won't land until the very end of Segment 7, after all characters in Segment 7 have taken their Actions. He could Abort to, say, Block in Segment 7 before the Haymaker goes off, but if so he loses the attack.*

Haymaker adds four Damage Classes to the damage of the attack used. Haymaker is a Maneuver in and of itself — a character cannot, for example, do a Haymaker with an Offensive Strike. (The *Strike* Maneuver is an exception to this, since it represents the "default" attack; most Haymakers characters perform are with some type of Strike.) However, he can perform a Haymaker with a Normal Damage or Killing Damage weapon (see *Adding Damage,* page 405, for more information).

There are several risks to performing a Haymaker. First, the character's DCV is greatly reduced. Second, if the target moves 1" or more before the Haymaker is used, the character suffers any Knockback, or the character is Stunned or Knocked Out, the Haymaker fails and the character has wasted his Phase. At the GM's option, other events, such as the character taking a large amount of damage, may also prevent a Haymaker from being used. These rules apply regardless of what type of attack the character Haymakers with.

A character pays the END for the STR or power used to perform a Haymaker in the Segment in which he launches the attack (*i.e.,* the Segment after he begins the attack); if the attack fails or cannot be performed for any reason, he must still pay the END. For example, if a character begins a Haymaker during his Phase in Segment 6, he pays the END for it in Segment 7. With STR, this means he pays END for it even if he used his STR for other purposes during his Phase in the previous Segment.

## MOVE BY

This Maneuver allows a character to attack while doing a Full Move past his target. The character simply thrusts out an arm, fist, leg, tail, other appendage, or weapon and hits his opponent as he moves by him. Move By is a Maneuver in and of itself — a character cannot, for example, do a Move By with an Offensive Strike.

To use Move By, the character must plot his entire movement path and then make his Attack Roll. The target can be at any point along the hero's intended path. Hit or miss, the character finishes at the end of his movement path. The character must be able to move at least 1" to perform a Move By. Characters cannot perform Move Bys with Ranged attacks.

A successful Move By does half of the character's regular STR damage plus (velocity/5)d6 Normal Damage to the target. However, the character himself takes one-third of the STUN and BODY damage done to the target. He cannot avoid this damage by taking *Personal Immunity* on his STR or Movement Power, but his appropriate defenses apply against it. The character doesn't necessarily have to travel his Full Move to get the damage for his full velocity; see *Acceleration, Deceleration, And Gravity,* page 364. If a target Blocks a Move By, the character making the unsuccessful Move By attack does not take any damage.

Example: *Starburst (Flight 15") is 5" away from Ogre. He does a Move By on the villain and ends up 10" away from Ogre at the end of the Maneuver. The villain takes ½ of Starburst's STR damage plus 15/5 = 3d6 for Starburst's velocity. Starburst has a 15 STR, so the villain takes (½ x 3d6) + 3d6 = 4½d6 of damage. Starburst will take one third of the damage himself, but this will bounce off of his PD.*

Characters may not perform Move Bys with Extra-Dimensional Movement, FTL Travel, Teleportation, or any MegaScaled movement. However,

### UNUSUAL HAYMAKERS

Here are some guidelines for quick-and-easy adjudication of the effect of unusual Haymakers:

Drain: Haymaker adds +2d6 to any Drain.

Entangle: Haymaker adds +2d6 for purposes of determining the Entangle's BODY; it doesn't add any DEF.

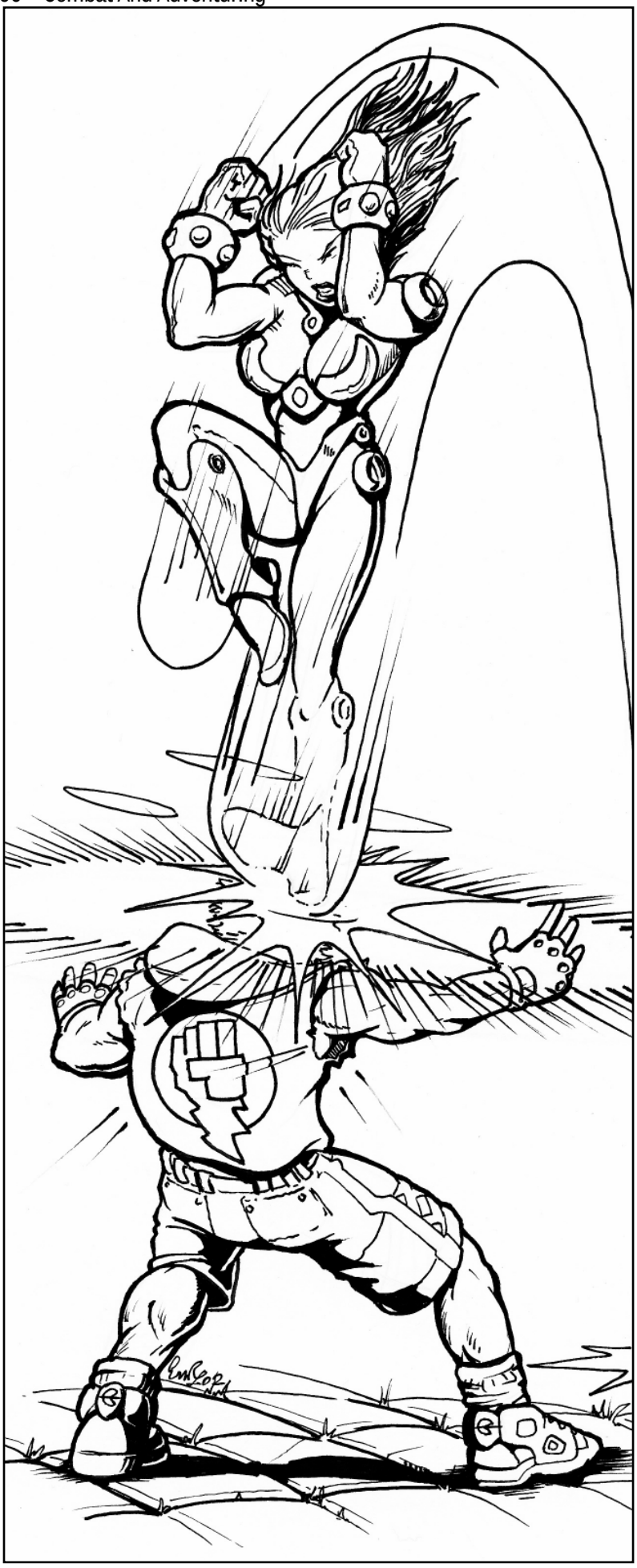
Flash: Haymaker adds +4d6 to any Flash, regardless of the number and type of Sense Groups affected.

Mental Powers: Haymaker adds +2d6 to an Ego Attack, or +4d6 to any continuing-effect Mental Power (such as Mind Control). This still reduces the character's DCV; his DECV is unaffected (unless the GM rules otherwise).

Presence Attack: Haymaker adds +4d6 to any Presence Attack.

Telekinesis: Haymaker adds +2½d6 to Telekinesis when it's used to attack, or +13 STR when used to Grab (or the like).

Transform: Haymaker adds +4d6 to a Cosmetic Transform, +2d6 to a Minor Transform, and +1d6+1 to a Major Transform.



they can perform them at Noncombat Movement speeds with other forms of movement (though this means the character has OCV 0; see page 363).

A character may perform a Move By with a weapon or a Killing Attack; see *Adding Damage,* page 405. Divide the character's STR by 2 for purposes of calculating extra damage or DC/OCV penalties based on the weapon's STR Minimum. The weapon, not the character, takes the one-third damage from the Move By. If the BODY damage done to the target exceeds three times (3x) the weapon's base Damage Classes, the weapon breaks. If a character makes a Move By with a natural Killing Attack (say, his claws), the damage he takes is the equivalent DCs of Normal Damage, not Killing Damage. Characters cannot use other innate attacks (such as a "Shock Touch" [No Range Energy Blast]) with Move By without the GM's permission; if the GM grants permission, he determines the Maneuver's effect (if any) on the attack.

**MULTIPLE MOVE BYS**

A character can perform more than one Move By in a Phase. A character can do a Multiple Move By on one target or on several different ones. A Multiple Move By takes a cumulative -2 OCV for *all* the attacks the character makes that Phase. Thus, when a character decides to do a Multiple Move By on four agents, he suffers a -8 OCV when attacking each agent. Once the attacker misses one of his Move Bys, all subsequent Move Bys automatically miss as well. The character spends END for STR once for the Phase, plus the END for movement.

If a character performs a Multiple Move By on one target (by moving in a circle and hitting him repeatedly), he can only make an attack each time he returns to the first hex he attacked from. If an attacker moved in a tight circle around a target, the attacker would have to travel through 5 hexes before he returned to his original hex. He could only attack the target each time he came back to the original hex.

Example: *Starburst decides to try a Multiple Move By on Ogre's three henchmen (each of whom is DCV 4). Starburst suffers a -6 OCV penalty on all of these attacks, so his OCV is only 3. His first Attack Roll is a 10, which hits; unfortunately, his second one is a 13, which misses. Because he missed the second attack, he does not get to attack the third henchman at all.*

## MOVE THROUGH

Move Through allows a character to attack at the end of a Full Move by running right into his opponent. This can simulate a ramming attack, a tackle, or many similar actions. Move Through is a Maneuver in and of itself; a character cannot, for example, do a Move Through with an Offensive Strike. Characters cannot perform Move Throughs with Ranged attacks.

A character can perform a Move Through as a Half Phase Action — for example, after using Find Weakness on the target. That means he can only make a Half Move toward his target, but in most cases that's enough to accelerate to full velocity using the movement rules, so it won't change the calculation of CVs or damage/effect. However, it's also possible to perform a Move Through as a Full Phase Action — at the end of a Full Move. In fact, that's how it's most often used.

To perform a Move Through, the attacker must make an Attack Roll against his target, modified for his velocity. If the attacker misses his target and has inches of movement remaining in his Full Move, he keeps traveling in a straight line through the hex the target was standing in (and may collide with some object in the vicinity, such as a wall or a tree, and hurt himself; he has no chance to hit other targets he would want to hit). He may decelerate if he wishes. If he does not have inches of movement remaining in his Full Move, he ends his Full Move in the target's hex. A character must be able to move at least 1" to perform a Move Through, but doesn't necessarily have to travel his Full Move to get the damage for his full velocity; see *Acceleration, Deceleration, And Gravity,* page 364. However, in most cases a character should make a Full Move when performing a Move Through, unless he can articulate a good reason for the GM why he wouldn't.

If the character hits his target, he does his regular STR damage + (velocity/3)d6 in Normal Damage (it's not limited to double the amount of STR dice the character has). However, the character takes half of the STUN and BODY damage done to the target. He cannot avoid this damage by taking *Personal Immunity* on his STR or Movement Power, but his appropriate defenses apply against it. If the attack did no Knockdown or Knockback, then the attacker takes the *full* damage instead (it's like running into a wall — and yes, it's possible for a character to Stun himself or Knock himself Out with his own Move Through). If a target Blocks a Move Through, the character making the unsuccessful Move Through attack does not take any damage.

If the attacker hits the target and doesn't do Knockdown or Knockback, or he hits the target at the end of his Full Move, he stops in the target's hex, directly in front of the target. If he hits and does Knockdown or Knockback and has inches of movement remaining in his Full Move, he has several choices. First, he can travel with the target, ending up either in front of the target in the same hex (if he does not choose to decelerate) or in any hex between the point of impact and the hex where the target comes to rest (if he decelerates after hitting the target). Second, he can continue to move up to the remaining inches of movement in his Full Move or the inches of Knockback done to the target, whichever is less. Third, he can remain in the hex where he hit the target.

Example: *Starburst does a Move Through on Ogre. Starburst does 3d6 for STR, and 15/3 = 5d6 for velocity, for a total of 8d6. Starburst rolls the damage, and applies half the STUN and BODY versus his own PD. If he rolls no Knockback, he takes full damage.*

Characters may not perform Move Throughs with Extra-Dimensional Movement, FTL Travel, Teleportation, or any MegaScaled movement. However, they may perform them at Noncombat Movement speeds with other forms of movement (though this means the character has a base OCV of 0; see page 363).

If a Move Through is performed with a weapon or Killing Attack, divide the character's STR by 2 for purposes of calculating extra damage or DC/OCV penalties based on the weapon's STR Minimum. The weapon, not the character, takes the half (or full) damage from the Move Through; if the BODY damage done to the target exceeds three times (3x) the weapon's base Damage Classes, the weapon breaks. If a character makes a Move Through with a natural Killing Attack (say, his claws), the damage he takes is an equivalent DC of Normal Damage, not Killing Damage. Characters cannot use other innate attacks (such as a "Shock Touch" [No Range Energy Blast]) with Move Through without the GM's permission; if the GM grants permission, he determines the Maneuver's effect (if any) on the attack.

## SET

This Combat Maneuver represents the effects of taking extra time to aim at a target with a Ranged attack, thereby improving one's accuracy. Set does not work with HTH Combat attacks.

An attacker who wants to Set must spend a Full Phase aiming at the target (this is known in some genres as "drawing a bead"). During this time he cannot move, change clips of ammunition, or perform any Actions other than Zero Phase Actions. A character who has Set on a target receives a +1 OCV to all attacks against that target until he loses his Set. A character must Set on a specific target (either individual or object); he can't just Set until a target presents itself.

A character who has Set can attack on a Phase, then continue aiming at his target for several Phases, and then attack again, all without losing his Set bonus. However, the character loses the Set bonus if he doesn't attack or aim at the target, or is forced to stop aiming at the target for any reason (for example, he becomes Stunned or Knocked Out). He also loses the Set bonus if the target moves out of sight. Of course, a character can regain his Set bonus by spending another Phase aiming at the target.

A character can Set and Brace in a single Phase,

### RELATIVE VELOCITY

Since the damage from a Move By or Move Through depends on velocity, it's the characters' *relative velocity* that matters when determining it. (Determine the OCV penalty the character performing the Move By/Through suffers depends solely on his own velocity, however.)

"Relative" velocity refers to the relationship between the velocities of the attacker and his target — sometimes they add together, sometimes they cancel each other out. For example, if two attackers rush together at 8" each, their relative velocity is 16"; the Move Through gets +5d6 damage. If one runs toward the other at 6", the relative velocity is 6" and the attack gets +2d6 damage. If the attacker runs at 10", and the victim runs away from him at 4", the relative velocity is 6" and the attack gets +2d6 damage.

thereby getting both bonuses. However, the character has to fulfill the requirements for both Modifiers — he must take a Full Phase and be ½ DCV.

### STRIKE

This is the basic attack Maneuver. It includes attacks such as punches, kicks, elbow smashes, headbutts, attacks with weapons, firing a gun or a longbow, and just about any other way a character can hit another character. The basic OCV, DCV, and damage modifiers are 0, but the OCV modifier and the damage may vary by weapon type.

A Strike performed with a fist (or foot, elbow, or knee, for that matter) does a maximum of the character's STR/5 in d6 of Normal Damage (1d6 for every 5 STR). For example, a STR 20 person could do up to 4d6 Normal Damage with a Strike. The GM may award a particularly creative Strike with a Surprise Move bonus. For instance, a sudden head butt or back kick may be worth an OCV bonus.

### OTHER ATTACKS

Characters use this Maneuver when making any other attack not listed, including using Attack Powers such as Drain, Energy Blast, Entangle, Flash, a multiple-power attack, or other Powers that require an Attack Roll. To attack, the character should just make a normal Attack Roll, modified by any particular modifiers for the Power, Skill Levels used, or applicable Combat Modifiers.

## Explanation Of Optional Combat Maneuvers

These maneuvers add more flavor to combat, but require more work by the GM. Gamemasters who are just learning the *HERO System*, running for large numbers of players, or want to speed play shouldn't use them unless everyone in the game is comfortable with them.

### BLAZING AWAY

A character may use this Combat Maneuver to "blaze away" with a Ranged attack, firing as often as he can (up to the maximum amount of END or Charges he has available). It's most appropriate for Heroic campaigns, but can be used in Superheroic games as well.

When Blazing Away, the character makes one Attack Roll for each attack fired, but he hits his target only if he rolls a 3 (he cannot improve this number with Combat Skill Levels, Combat Modifiers, or any other method). He must expend END or Charges for each attack. He may use an Autofire attack to Blaze Away, but still hits only if a 3 is rolled, and can only hit with one attack out of each "burst" fired. The GM may want to restrict an attacker using Blazing Away to 4-5 shots to reduce the amount of die rolling involved.

Blazing Away counts as an "extremely violent action" for purposes of making a Presence Attack.

Example: *Firefight notices a large group of thugs rushing up to see what happened to their boss (whom he just shot with his pistol). He runs forward (a Half Move) and Blazes Away over their heads with 5 shots. He realizes he has little chance of hitting them, but hopes to make a Presence Attack to scare them away, using his extremely violent action to get a bonus.*

When Blazing Away, a character must specify in advance how many shots he wishes to make. He's not allowed to make them one-by-one, seeing if each one hits before deciding whether to launch additional shots.

Using an Area Of Effect attack, Explosion, or the like doesn't change the effects of Blazing Away — a character can still only hurt the target if he rolls a 3 on his Attack Roll. The missed area-affecting attacks can't harm his enemy.

Usually a character cannot use an attack with the *Extra Time* Limitation to Blaze Away. However, the GM should consider the nature of the Limitation and the special effects involved. For example, if the Limitation only applies to activating the power the first time, but not thereafter, a character might be able to Blaze Away with it after it's been activated.

At the GM's option, characters can Blaze Away with HTH attacks by making a series of wild, violent punches, kicks, slashes, or the like.

### CLUB WEAPON

This maneuver allows a character to do Normal Damage with a weapon that ordinarily does Killing Damage. In essence, the character uses the "flat of the blade" or other blunt part of the weapon instead of the edge or point. The weapon does an amount of Damage Classes of Normal Damage equivalent to its Damage Classes of Killing Damage. For example, a great sword (2d6 Killing Damage) would do 6d6 Normal Damage when used with a Club Weapon maneuver.

While this rule is most applicable to melee weapons such as swords and axes, at the GM's discretion it can be used with some Ranged weapons. For example, a character could use the haft of a throwing spear or the butt of a rifle to perform a Club Weapon attack. In this case, the GM may wish to assign a specific amount of damage to the "club," rather than convert the DCs directly.

Club Weapon may not work with all weapons. For example, a club with spikes all over it may not have any blunt surfaces, so a character couldn't use it to perform this Maneuver. Whether a character can perform Club Weapon with a given weapon is up to the GM.

## COVER

This Maneuver allows the character to aim an attack successfully at an opponent, but not fire right away. It's used to simulate the common situation of holding someone at gunpoint, bowpoint, or swordpoint.

To Cover an opponent, the character must declare his intention and then make an Attack Roll. He makes this roll at a -2 OCV penalty in addition to any other modifiers (such as the Hit Location penalty, if he aims at a specific Hit Location). If the attacker makes the roll, the target is Covered. The attacker does no damage then, but at any time thereafter, he may automatically do damage to the target — no additional Attack Roll is required, and doing the damage takes no time.

Example: *Defender shouts "Freeze!" at Lazer and tries to cover him. Defender has a 7 OCV and Lazer has an 8 DCV. Lazer is standing 5" from Defender, so Defender's must roll 11 + 7 - 8 - 1 (for Range) - 2 (for the Maneuver) = 7 or less to hit. He rolls a 6, and successfully Covers Lazer. If Lazer doesn't surrender, Defender can automatically do damage to him.*

A character can escape from being Covered. To do this, the Covered character must wait for (or arrange) a distraction. For example, any Presence Attack that equals the Covering character's PRE does the trick, but the defender is at -3d6 for any Presence Attack he makes (after all, he's at a big disadvantage). If the attacker is distracted, the two characters must make a DEX Roll Versus DEX Roll Contest (target first). If the attacker wins, the target remains Covered. If the target wins, he's no longer Covered.

In some genres, such as martial arts campaigns, GMs may want characters to be able to escape from being Covered more easily. In this case, success in a Skill Versus Skill Contest (pitting the Covered character's Fast Draw, Sleight Of Hand, or DEX Roll against the attacker's PER Roll (with a Targeting Sense) or DEX Roll) allows a Covered character to escape.

Covered is usually limited to Ranged attacks, but in some circumstances characters can use HTH attacks to Cover a target. For example, a thief can Cover a victim by holding a dagger against the victim's throat.

## DIVE FOR COVER

This Maneuver allows a character to get out of the way of explosions, Area Of Effect attacks, and other attacks that cover a large area.

### USING DIVE FOR COVER

To use Dive For Cover, the character chooses a hex to move to, then makes a DEX Roll with a penalty of -1 for every 1" of distance moved. A character can only Dive For Cover up to half his maximum movement with the mode of movement used in the Maneuver.

If the DEX Roll succeeds, the character is in the designated hex when the attack goes off. He's considered to be prone (and thus at half DCV) until the next Phase in which he can act.

If the DEX Roll fails, the character is considered to be in the air in his starting hex. This means he hasn't automatically avoided the attack, and if it hits him, the GM rolls 1d6 less for calculating Knockback (if the campaign uses the Knockback rules). It doesn't change his DCV or when he next acts (though if he Aborted to Dive For Cover, that obviously factors in). The "in the air" penalties and consequences apply until the character's next Phase. At that point, he "lands" and is "prone"; he must spend a Half Phase to "get up." If he was hit while in midair, that may affect the situation by causing Knockback, Stunning him, or the like, and the GM should deal with that situation normally. If the attack has no significant effect on the character other than the loss of some STUN and/or BODY, he still "lands" in his next Phase as described above.

Dive For Cover is an Attack Action. A character Diving for Cover may not perform any other Maneuver (like Dodge or Block). A character can Abort to Dive For Cover.

Some attacks, such as Sweep or a Multiple Move By, involve a sequence of attacks directed at the target in which if one of the attacks misses, all subsequent attacks automatically miss. For these purposes, a successful use of Dive For Cover counts as a "miss" and ends the sequence of attacks.

A character cannot use Breakfall or Acrobatics to avoid the DCV penalty for Dive For Cover, or to avoid being prone after a Dive For Cover (though when he's allowed to stand up from being prone, he can use Breakfall to accomplish that as a Zero Phase Action). Nor may he use either Skill as a "Complementary Roll" for the DEX Roll to Dive For Cover.

#### Length Of Movement

A character can only Dive For Cover up to half his maximum movement with the mode of movement used in the Maneuver. Making a Half Move before Diving For Cover doesn't affect how far a character can Dive For Cover with a mode of movement — he's still restricted to only half his maximum movement. For example, if Lt. Barrett has Running 10", and he's already made a Half Move of 3", he can still use Running to Dive For Cover a maximum of 5" (half of 10"). He can choose to Dive less than 5" if he wants to, but the rules don't force him to do so. If a character makes

more than a Half Move, that's a Full Move and prevents him from Diving For Cover that Phase.

A character can Dive For Cover using his Noncombat Movement, unless the GM forbids this for reasons of game balance, dramatic sense, or the like. This allows him to Dive for up to half his Noncombat Movement distance. Doing this halves his DCV, making it more likely he'll be hit if the Dive For Cover fails.

**Type Of Movement**

Although Dive For Cover's name implies that characters use Running (ground movement) or Leaping to perform it, characters can use any type of movement (except Extra-Dimensional Movement, FTL Travel, or any form of MegaScaled movement) to Dive For Cover. The mode of movement used does not affect the need to make a DEX Roll, or modify the roll in any way.

Regardless of what form of movement a character uses to Dive For Cover, he's considered to be "prone" at the end of the Maneuver. He may still be standing, but due to disorientation and other factors suffers the usual penalties for being "prone." He must spend a Half Phase to get to his feet (or get his bearings) and is at ½ DCV until he does so.

**Protecting Other Characters**

A character can also use Dive For Cover to protect another character from an attack. He must Dive For Cover to a point between the attacker and the victim. He attempts the Dive For Cover roll normally. If he succeeds, he takes the damage from the attack — the attacker does not have to make an Attack Roll, he just rolls the damage, which applies normally to the character who Dove For Cover to "interpose" himself. If the Dive For Cover roll fails, the attacker must make his Attack Roll as normal to hit his intended target.

**Combat Skill Levels**

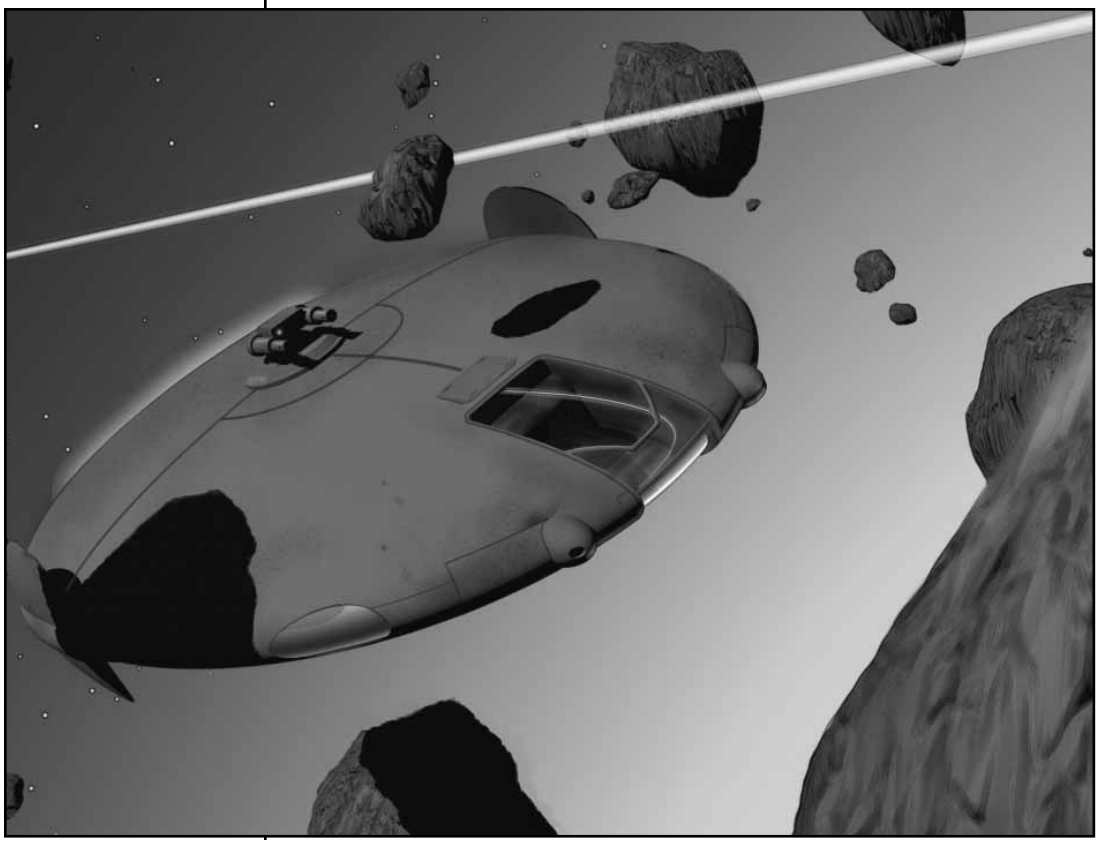
A character cannot apply Combat Skill Levels to the DEX Roll he makes when Diving For Cover, since CSLs only affect CV. Nor can a character buy 2-point Combat Skill Levels with Dive For Cover, since that type of Level only affects OCV. However, he can apply 3-point and more expensive CSLs to increase his DCV while Diving For Cover, if appropriate.

If a character has Skill Levels that can apply to DEX Rolls, he may use those to improve his DEX Roll when Diving For Cover, provided he has not already allocated them in the Segment when he uses the Maneuver.

## NON-AREA ATTACKS

Dive For Cover is most useful for avoiding attacks that cover a large area, such as Explosions and Area Of Effect attacks. However, characters can use it to avoid regular (non-area-affecting) attacks as well. For example, a character who desperately wants to avoid being chopped in two by an axe-wielding Denebian autochthon could Dive For Cover to get away from his attacker. If a character successfully Dives For Cover this way, the non-area attack automatically misses; if the Dive For Cover roll fails, the attacker makes his Attack Roll at +2 OCV.

When a character Dives For Cover to avoid a non-area attack, he's not required to literally dive behind cover or the like — all he has to do is travel far enough to get away from the effect of the attack. In many cases, moving 1" out of the way does the trick; in other cases, he may have to move further. The GM may, of course, establish a minimum distance based on the nature of the attack, or specify that the character has to Dive in a particular direction. For example, a character trying to Dive For Cover to avoid an attack by a spear-wielding opponent should have to Dive at least the length of the spear. In any event, a clever opponent may try to take advantage of the character's ½ DCV if he simply dives a mere 1" away. As always, common sense, dramatic sense, special effects, and the GM's discretion should apply.



## HIPSHOT

This Maneuver is intended for those situations where a character just *has* to get off the first shot. To use it, a character sacrifices 1 point of OCV to get +1 DEX for this Phase *only* for the purpose of going first in the Phase. A character may not sacrifice more than one point of OCV this way. The character's DCV and DEX-based Skill Rolls are not affected by making a Hipshot.

The player who wants his character to take a Hipshot must declare this at the beginning of the Segment in which he has a Phase so the GM can keep the combat in order. If two characters with the same DEX both declare a Hipshot, the GM should randomly determine who gets the first shot off.

Despite this maneuver's name, characters can use it with HTH attacks as well as Ranged attacks. Characters may use Hipshot with other Combat or Martial Maneuvers (though in most cases they simply use it with Strike).

Example: *The Sandman and Crossbow both have the same DEX, 26. The GM and the player have randomly determined who acted first each Phase. As a result, The Sandman has taken a couple of bad wounds, and he can't last much longer. He tells the GM he'll use Hipshot, so he sacrifices 1 point of OCV to get a DEX of 27 for purposes of going first. This gives him a guaranteed chance to strike first this Phase (unless Crossbow also uses a Hipshot, in which case they'll use the random determination method to see who goes first).*

## HURRY

This maneuver, which is similar to Hipshot, provides a character with a way to raise his DEX for purposes of going first in a Phase, but at the expense of rushing his attack (and thus having a worse chance to hit). Characters may use Hurry with other Combat or Martial Maneuvers (though in most cases they simply use it with Strike.

To use Hurry, a character declares at the beginning of a Segment in which he has a Phase that he will Hurry his next Action. He rolls 1d6 and adds the result to his DEX only for purposes of acting earlier in the Phase. When the DEX count gets to his effective DEX, he acts.

Normally, a character should declare he's Hurrying at the beginning of a Segment in which he has a Phase. If the character waits to declare that he'll Hurry until after the DEX count has begun, and his effective DEX while Hurrying would exceed the DEX of characters who have already acted, the Hurrying character does not retroactively get to act before they did — Actions already taken are taken, and the character simply gets to act right away.

While Hurrying, the character is at -2 CV and -2 on all Skill and Characteristic Rolls. DEX gained from Hurrying does not add to CV, Figured Characteristics, Skill Rolls, or Characteristic Rolls.

Example: *Firefight (DEX 20) declares at the beginning of the Phase that he will Hurry. He rolls 1d6 and get a 5. His effective DEX for taking an Action is now a 25. When the DEX count reaches 25, he can act, but will be at -2 on his CV and Skill and Characteristic Rolls.*

*Suppose Firefight declares after the GM has begun the DEX count that he will Hurry. He rolls 1d6 and get a 5. His effective DEX for taking an Action is now a 25. However, the GM has already counted down past DEX 24 and 23, and characters with those DEXs have acted. Firefight does not get to act before those characters, but he may now act. He is at -2 on his CV and Skill and Characteristic Rolls.*

Generally, a character should only attempt relatively simple actions while Hurrying. Many normally automatic actions become difficult if a character Hurries. The GM should feel free to require DEX Rolls, Skill Rolls, or any other appropriate roll to determine if a character can properly perform an Action while Hurrying (or, alternately, impose a penalty on the action attempted).

## PULLING A PUNCH

This Maneuver allows an attacker to Knock Out his opponent without permanently injuring him.

To Pull a Punch, an attacker takes a -1 OCV penalty for every 5d6 (or 5 DCs) in the attack. If the Attack Roll succeeds, the punch (or other HTH attack) does half the BODY it would normally do, and Knockdown and Knockback are calculated from this BODY. However, if the attacker makes his Attack Roll exactly, he does full damage to his target.

Example: *Orion wants to incapacitate a gang member without hurting him. He does a 9d6 punch, and declares he's Pulling his Punch. He's -2 OCV for the attack, giving him a final OCV of 4, the same as the gang member's DCV. Orion must roll an 11- to hit; if he rolls an 11 exactly the kid takes full damage (and probably has to go to the hospital).*

At the GM's option, characters can automatically Pull their punches without any OCV penalty. This is a good way to simulate four-color comic book combat and other campaigns where the characters are supposed to be larger-than-life good guys — penalizing such characters for trying to do the "right thing" by not severely injuring their opponents is usually unfair.

A character can Pull A Punch with a Ranged attack with the GM's permission. Characters may use Pulling A Punch with other Combat or Martial Maneuvers (though in most cases they simply use it with Strike.

### COMBAT VALUE WITH RAPID FIRE AND SWEEP

For Rapid Fire and Sweep, the attacker determines his OCV at the beginning of the sequence, based on the OCV modifiers from Rapid Fire/Sweep itself and other factors. That OCV should remain unchanged throughout the sequence of shots, unless the GM deems it appropriate to alter the attacker's OCV for some reason. If the attacks are made against a single target, the target's DCV remains the same throughout the sequence in most situations. However, if the circumstances of the attack change his DCV in some way (for example, if one attack frees him from an Entangle or Knocks him Out), then his DCV changes for all shots thereafter. The GM may choose to ignore this rule, and maintain the DCV the target had at the start of the sequence, if he prefers to run the attack in a simpler fashion.

If the attacks are made against multiple targets, with each being attacked once, each has its own DCV, determined by the conditions at the time the sequence began. If some targets are attacked more than once, the rules stated above apply.



## RAPID FIRE

This Maneuver allows a character to fire a Ranged attack more than once in a Phase, either at a single target or at multiple targets.

Rapid Fire requires a Full Phase and reduces the character to ½ DCV. He also suffers a cumulative -2 OCV penalty for each shot after the first. If he misses any of his Attack Rolls, all remaining shots in that sequence automatically miss also. He must expend END or Charges for each shot taken. He may elect to stop his attack after any successful "shot," but this does not retroactively diminish the OCV and DCV penalties for using the Maneuver.

There is no penalty for using Rapid Fire to attack multiple targets or for tracking the attack across hexes. However, all targets must be within the character's front 180-degree line of sight. With the GM's permission, a character can use Rapid Fire to fire two different Ranged weapons, one in each hand, the same way he can perform a Sweep with multiple Combat Maneuvers.

A character cannot spread his Rapid Fire over multiple Segments (*e.g.,* one shot in Segment 12, one in Segment 1, one in Segment 2, and so forth). All shots are fired in the Segment in which the character has a Phase and uses the Maneuver.

In campaigns that use Knockback, when the character uses Rapid Fire to hit a single target multiple times, determine the Knockback separately for each Rapid Fire shot that hits the target. The target takes the highest amount of Knockback rolled. For example, if a character hits a target twice with a Rapid Fired Energy Blast, and one hit does 6" Knockback and the other 3" Knockback, the target takes 6" Knockback.

If a character uses Rapid Fire with Combat Maneuvers or other forms of attack that modify OCV and/or DCV, Maneuver bonuses to OCV are not cumulative (each applies only to the attack it's used with), and if DCV bonuses are involved (including a +0 "bonus"), only the lowest bonus applies. However, all OCV and DCV penalties are *cumulative* (they apply to *all* attacks made with that Rapid Fire). DCV penalties from maneuvers should be subtracted from the character's DCV before his DCV is halved for using Rapid Fire. Maneuvers or Skills that halve the character's DCV aren't cumulative with the halving effect from Rapid Fire (the character's DCV is only reduced by half). Characters cannot combine Rapid Fire with Haymaker.

The GM may wish to restrict characters using Rapid Fire to a maximum of 2-3 shots per Phase, which gives a reasonable increase in firepower while still rendering the attacker vulnerable to counterattack.

Example: *Firefight wants to use Rapid Fire on the boss of the terrorist group he's been pursuing. He decides to fire three shots — that ought to be enough to take him down! This takes a Full Phase and reduces his DCV by half. He has a -4 OCV on all three shots.*

*Now Firefight wants to use Rapid Fire to shoot one time at each of the boss's three henchmen, who are also firing at him. These three thugs are all in front of him, but are spread out over ten hexes. He suffers the same penalties — ½ DCV, -4 OCV — and does not take a penalty for firing at multiple targets.*

A character cannot use Rapid Fire with Autofire attacks unless he knows the *Rapid Autofire* Skill (page 50). Additionally, the GM may rule that characters cannot Rapid Fire some Powers or weapons — such as slings, crossbows, and some spells. If so, those attacks may, at the GM's discretion, take a -½ *Cannot Be Rapid Fired* Limitation.

## ROLL WITH A PUNCH

Roll With A Punch allows a character to take less damage from a HTH attack. This Maneuver is unique because a character may perform it *after* he's been struck by an opponent's attack (*i.e.,* after the opponent's Attack Roll succeeds, but before he rolls damage). A character may Abort to Roll With A Punch.

To Roll With A Punch (or any other type of physical attack, at the GM's discretion) the character must make an Attack Roll against his attacker's OCV (like Block); this roll has a -2 OCV penalty. If successful, the character takes only half the STUN and BODY that the attack would have normally done. (Halve the total after defenses have been applied.) The attacker also rolls one less die for Knockback (making it more likely the character takes Knockback).

A character cannot Roll With A Punch after an unsuccessful Block or Dodge, whether he Aborted to the Block or Dodge or not.

This Maneuver is most appropriate for Superheroic campaigns, but is also applicable to Heroic campaigns.

## SNAP SHOT

This Maneuver allows a character to move after making an attack (which is normally not allowed) — the character ducks out from Concealment (see page 377), makes an attack, and then ducks back behind cover. It's normally only used with Ranged attacks, but may, with the GM's permission and in the right circumstances, be used in HTH Combat as well. Snap Shot requires a Full Phase, and characters can use it with other Combat Maneuvers (for example, a character could use Rapid Fire while Snap Shooting).

To make a Snap Shot, the character must start fully Concealed near a corner, edge, or opening in whatever he's hiding behind. The opening or edge must be in the same hex as the character. He steps out (on his Phase and DEX) and attacks, using the modifier for Snap Shot (-1 OCV) in addition to whatever other modifiers he might have (for the weapon or maneuver he uses, for example). He gets his full DCV (modified, if necessary, by any other maneuvers he is using) plus a bonus for Concealment.

The character may only fire at targets he's aware of, although he may make a PER Roll to spot previously unknown targets. After this combat

action, he's exposed to enemy attack for the rest of the Segment in which he attacked. On the Segment after the Snap Shot he may duck back behind Concealment (at the same DEX at which he made his Snap Shot).

## SUPPRESSION FIRE

Characters may only use this Maneuver with attacks capable of Autofire. Basically, a character uses this Maneuver to "hose down" an area with bullets, energy bolts, or what have you so that anyone coming into that area is automatically attacked. Suppression Fire simulates the classic "Cover me!" situation in movies, where one character sprays a hail of bullets at the enemy to give another character a chance to move without being fired at.

To use Suppression Fire, the character defines a hex line or group of hex lines that he's firing through. Find his OCV to hit that hex line or lines, taking into account the normal modifiers for using Autofire against a group of hexes (each hex line counts as one hex for this purpose). In addition, he suffers a -2 OCV penalty for performing Suppression Fire.

Suppression Fire takes a Half Phase and is an Attack Action. The character must fire the maximum number of shots he can fire with the Autofire power/weapon being used, unless the GM rules otherwise. Since Suppression Fire can last until the character's next Phase, the character fires that many shots *each Segment,* not just in Segments when he has a Phase. He must use the same number of attacks in every Segment in which he uses Suppression Fire. He must expend END or Charges for each shot made.

Anyone (or anything) who enters the area covered by Suppression Fire is automatically attacked once for each hex line he moves through. There's no way to "sneak" through a hex line, move through a hex line on a Segment in which the attacker does not have a Phase, or run through a hex line without getting attacked. Several targets may take damage, even if they enter the area on different Segments. The attacker must roll to hit; he makes one Attack Roll per hex line the target moves through. The attacker's OCV is determined by the number of hex lines being fired into, plus the -2 OCV Maneuver penalty. The target's DCV is normal, and each target can only be hit once per hex line per Segment.

## SWEEP

This Maneuver allows a character to use a HTH attack more than once in a Phase against a single target or multiple targets (provided they're all within HTH range).

Sweep requires a Full Phase and reduces the character to ½ DCV. He also suffers a cumulative -2 OCV penalty for each attack after the first. If he misses any of his Attack Rolls, all remaining attacks in that sequence automatically miss also. He must expend END or Charges for each attack. He may not use Sweep with Autofire HTH attacks unless he has the *Rapid Autofire* Skill (page 50). He may elect to stop his attack after any successful attack, but this does not retroactively diminish the OCV and DCV penalties for using the Maneuver.

In campaigns that use Knockback, when the character uses Sweep to hit a single target multiple times, determine the Knockback separately for each Sweep attack shot that hits the target. The target takes the highest amount of Knockback rolled. For example, if a character hits a target twice with a Sweeped HA, and one hit does 5" Knockback and the other 4" Knockback, the target takes 5" Knockback.

Characters may use Sweep with most Combat Maneuvers, not just a Strike. For example, a character could Sweep Disarm several enemies, Sweep Martial Throw, and so forth. However, a character may not Sweep with Haymaker, and can only Sweep maneuvers that use a Full Move (such as Move Through) if all targets are in adjacent hexes. (A character cannot do a Sweep Move By; refer to the description of Move By for information on Multiple Move Bys.) A character may only Sweep Grab as many targets as he has hands/limbs to hold them. Sweep is usually performed with some sort of (large) hand-to-hand weapon such as a greatsword, but it may be done barehanded.

With the GM's permission, a character can Sweep with more than one Combat Maneuver — for example, Martial Disarming one opponent while punching another. In this case, Maneuver bonuses to OCV are not cumulative (each applies only to the attack it is used with), and if both maneuvers provide DCV bonuses (including a +0 "bonus"), only the lowest bonus applies. However, all OCV and DCV penalties are *cumulative* (they apply to *all* Attack Rolls). DCV penalties from maneuvers should be subtracted from the character's DCV before his DCV is halved for using Sweep. Maneuvers or Skills that halve the character's DCV aren't cumulative with the halving effect from Sweep (the character's DCV is only reduced by half).

A character cannot spread his Sweep over multiple Segments (*e.g.,* one shot in Segment 12, one in Segment 1, one in Segment 2, and so forth). All attacks are made in the Segment in which the character has a Phase and uses the Maneuver.

The GM may wish to restrict characters using Sweep to a maximum of 2-3 attacks per Phase, which gives a reasonable increase in attack power while still rendering the attacker vulnerable to counterattack.

### EXTRA TIME WITH RAPID FIRE AND SWEEP

If an attack has the *Extra Time* Limitation, usually that means a character cannot use it to Rapid Fire or Sweep. However, the GM should consider the nature of the Limitation and the special effects involved. If the Limitation only applies to activating the power the first time, but not thereafter, a character might be able to Rapid Fire/Sweep with it after it's been activated.

### COMBAT SKILL LEVELS WITH RAPID FIRE AND SWEEP

A character could buy 2-point CSLs just to improve his OCV with Rapid Fire or Sweep, regardless of what type of weapon or attack he Rapid Fires with. If he buys 3-point CSLs with Rapid Fire (or more expensive CSLs that could apply to Rapid Fire/Sweep), he can use them to increase his OCV and/or DCV with Rapid Fire/Sweep (but note the DCV Checklist on page 372, which in effect halves any Levels applied to DCV).

If a character has 2-point (or more expensive) Combat Skill Levels with an attack, can he apply those Levels to his OCV when Rapid Firing/Sweeping with that attack.

If a character uses a Combat Skill Level to increase the damage done by, or his OCV with, a Rapid Fire/Sweep attack, the CSL applies to every "shot" that hits the target. He doesn't have to divide his CSLs among the shots. As always, the GM may change this rule if he finds it unbalancing.



Example: *Nighthawk faces four thugs. He knows his fighting skill greatly exceeds theirs, so he decides to punch all four of them. He performs his Punch (Martial Strike) as a Sweep.*

*He starts out with a base OCV of 11 (from DEX and CSLs). He's Sweeping four characters, so with the -2 OCV cumulative for each target after the first, he suffers a -6 OCV, making his final OCV 5 versus each foe.*

*His enemies have DCV 4. He needs a 12 or less to hit. He rolls an 11, an 8, a 12, and a 4. He has hit all four targets.*

*On his next Phase, he does it again. He rolls a 12, a 9, and a 13. Since his third Punch was a miss, he doesn't even get to roll to hit the fourth target.*

*Later on, after polishing off the four thugs, Nighthawk encounters their master. Hoping for a quick end to the encounter, he decides to use Sweep to punch the master three times (which will give him a -4 OCV (total OCV of 7) against the master's DCV of 8). He roll 10, 9, and 12. The first two attacks hit, but the third misses. Unfortunately, he's now at ½ DCV against the master's counterattack.*



## MARTIAL ARTS

Any character can use the basic Combat Maneuvers, but only those who have received special training, or have a particular aptitude for HTH combat, know Martial Arts. Many of these Maneuvers are improved versions of standard Combat Maneuvers; a few provide new abilities.

Martial Arts is a Skill — characters have to purchase Martial Maneuvers at the cost listed in the sidebar on page 64. Characters must spend a minimum of 10 Character Points on Martial Maneuvers.

Martial Arts can represent many things. It most often represents advanced HTH Combat training, whether received from an ancient Chinese master at a hidden temple deep in the Himalayas, an unarmed combat specialist in the military, a skilled practitioner of elven swordfighting, or any of hundreds of other sources. It can also simulate the standard maneuvers taught to warriors who use a particular type of weapon — instead of using the basic Strike maneuver, they use these advanced maneuvers. Martial Arts could even simulate a character who has an innate fighting ability of some sort; this is particularly good for ferocious monsters and beasts, whose skill with their claws and fangs could be represented with a few specific Martial Maneuvers.

When a character uses a Martial Maneuver with a weapon, substitute the weapon's damage for "STR" listed in the Damage/Effects column, and consider any added damage as added Damage Classes, not added d6s. For example, a Martial Strike with a weapon does Weapon +2 DC. See *Adding Damage: Haymaker And Martial Maneu-*

*vers,* page 406, for more information.

The GM should keep common sense in mind when dealing with Martial Arts damage. In the real world, some martial artists are certainly capable of incredible feats, but that doesn't mean PCs should be able to duplicate those feats effortlessly just because they've spent a few points on Martial Maneuvers. Even though a character can do, for example 9d6 with his Offensive Strike, he shouldn't necessarily be able easily to kick down a wall or the bars of a jail cell. Even if game terms say the wall only has 3 DEF, 3 BODY per hex, or the jail bars are only 6 DEF, 6 BODY, a little dose of common sense tells you that people, even trained martial artists, can't routinely kick down walls or smash jail bars with their bare hands. Regardless of whether it's possible *in game terms* to do it, the GM can, and should, tell players their characters can't do these things, because it would be just plain ridiculous. If it suits the tone of the campaign, let them do it, but in more realistic games, feel free to ignore what the rules say and tell the players *No.*

## Explanation Of Martial Maneuvers

Here's how the various Martial Maneuvers work. They do not cost END to use, though the character has to pay END for any STR used with them.

### CHOKE HOLD

This maneuver allows the character to Grab an opponent's head and neck and inflict NND damage. A Choke Hold works just like a normal Grab for purposes of determining whether the victim escapes (for example, he gets an immediate Casual STR roll to break free and take no damage). However, it only immobilizes one "limb" — the head. Besides being Grabbed, the victim of a Choke Hold takes the listed NND damage and cannot speak or shout. (The character using Choke Hold cannot also Squeeze or Throw the victim; applying the NND hold takes the place of that.) The defense against this NND is having rigid armor on the neck, a PD Force Field, or Life Support: Self-Contained Breathing. If the victim doesn't have one of these defenses, he takes all the damage rolled.

A character rendered unconscious by a Choke Hold can be killed by continued application of the Maneuver. After the Choke Hold has rendered the target unconscious, it does 1 BODY per Phase to the target if it's maintained. (See *Holding Breath and Drowning,* page 424.)

Extra Damage Classes applied to a Choke Hold only increase the NND damage done; they cannot increase the STR of the hold.

### DEFENSIVE STRIKE, MARTIAL STRIKE, OFFENSIVE STRIKE, MARTIAL DODGE, MARTIAL BLOCK

These function identically to the regular Combat Maneuvers of similar name, but

with different modifiers to OCV, DCV, and damage. At the GM's option, a character who knows Martial Block can add its CV bonuses to any attempt he makes to Missile Deflect.

### KILLING STRIKE

This Maneuver allows a character to do Killing Damage to the target without using a weapon. It includes things like breaking bones, throat punches, snapping a victim's neck, and so on. Rules regarding adding STR (as if to an HKA) and what defenses apply to Killing Damage apply to the damage done by a Killing Strike.

### LEGSWEEP

This Maneuver allows a character to knock an opponent's legs out from under him, dashing him painfully to the ground. See *Martial Throw* for details on the effects of, and restrictions on, Throws (for example, a character cannot Legsweep a target who weighs more than he could lift with his Pushed STR).

### MARTIAL DISARM

This Maneuver is identical to a normal Disarm, except that the character receives a bonus to his STR only for purposes of determining the outcome of the Disarm STR Versus STR Contest. The character has his normal STR for all other purposes. The character also receives a bonus to his DCV.

As an optional rule, GMs might allow characters with Martial Disarm to use the Maneuver's STR bonus to resist being Disarmed. This option prevents fencers and similar characters from constantly Disarming each other.

### MARTIAL ESCAPE

This Maneuver helps a character escape from Grabs. The character adds the STR from this maneuver to his own STR when rolling BODY to break out from a Grab; the additional STR has no other effect. At the GM's option, characters can also use the STR bonus from Martial Escape when attempting to escape from an Entangle. See *Other Combat Effects,* page 423, for more information about escaping from Grabs and Entangles.

### MARTIAL GRAB

This maneuver is identical to a normal Grab (the standard CV penalties for Grabbing or being Grabbed apply), except that the character receives a bonus to his STR. This bonus only helps the character hold the target; it does not add to damage done by squeezing or throwing the victim.

## MARTIAL THROW

This Maneuver allows an attacker to throw an opponent to the ground. This has several effects.

First, the Thrower does his STR damage to the Thrown character, plus 1d6 for every 5" of velocity the target had. If the surface is extremely hard or rough, the GM may, at his option, increase the damage the Throw does. The Thrown character may reduce the damage taken from a Throw by half if he makes a Breakfall roll at -1 for every 2d6 of damage done by the Throw.

Second, the target usually ends up prone in an adjacent hex. The Thrower may instead opt to Throw the victim as far as possible; consult the Throwing Table, page 35, to determine this distance. Characters can increase the distance they Throw a victim by subtracting damage from the Throw — every -1d6 of damage adds +1" to the Throw. A Thrown character may keep his feet (or land on them) if he makes an Acrobatics roll at -3; this does not, however, prevent him from taking damage from the Throw.

Third, if the Thrower and Thrown character both have their next Phases in the same Segment, the Thrower automatically gets to act first, regardless of relative DEX (the Thrower's opponent is delayed until after the Throwing character's DEX). This applies even if the character has made a Breakfall roll to reduce the damage suffered because of the Throw and/or an Acrobatics roll to keep his feet, but at the GM's option does not apply if the character makes a Breakfall roll by half.

A character may want to Hold his Action to "block," stop, or interrupt an incoming attack by Throwing the attacker. In this situation, apply the rules for stopping incoming attacks with Disarms (see above).

A character cannot Throw a target who weighs more than he could lift with his Pushed STR.

The rules for Throws described here also apply to Throws made after a character has been Grabbed (see page 386).

## NERVE STRIKE

This Maneuver allows an attacker to strike particularly vulnerable or sensitive parts of a target's body. In game terms, this is represented by NND damage. The target takes full damage from the Nerve Strike unless he has rigid armor protecting his vulnerable spots, a PD Force Field, or Lack Of Weakness (any type).

At the GM's option, characters can develop other Nerve Strike maneuvers that are affected by different defenses. For example, solid ear coverings, Resistance, or rigid Resistant PD protecting certain parts of the body might be acceptable defenses against a variant Nerve Strike.

## SACRIFICE THROW

This maneuver is basically identical to a Martial Throw. However, the victim cannot be Thrown any distance — he must land in the Thrower's hex or an adjacent hex — and the Thrower himself ends up prone in his own hex. A character cannot use Breakfall to keep his footing when he performs a Sacrifice Throw, but can use Breakfall in a subsequent Phase to get to his feet without using a Half Phase.

## +1 DAMAGE CLASS

Characters may improve their Martial Maneuvers by buying Extra Damage Classes. Each Extra DC adds one Damage Class to any Maneuver that does Normal Damage (such as Martial Strike or Martial Throw) (it takes two Extra DCs to add +1 DC to a Killing Damage attack; see page 406), or +5 STR to any Maneuver that grants extra STR for limited purposes (such as Martial Grab).

An Extra Damage Class adds to *all* of a character's Martial Maneuvers — he doesn't have to purchase Extra DCs maneuver by maneuver. Characters cannot purchase half an Extra DC, nor apply Limitations to Extra DCs. A character can choose not to use his Extra DCs if he wants to do less damage than normal.

## WEAPON ELEMENT

Some martial arts styles teach the use of weapons with Martial Maneuvers. In fact, some styles, like Fencing, require a weapon. In the latter case, the character need not pay points to use the style's Martial Maneuvers with a weapon — that's what he learned when he bought the Maneuvers (he can't use them barehanded). Other styles assume unarmed use of Maneuvers as a default. To use their Maneuvers with a weapon, the character must purchase a *Weapon Element* for each class of weapons he wishes to use with his Maneuvers. Use the subcategories in the Weapon Familiarity Table (pages 75-76) to determine what categories of weapons a Weapon Element can be bought for. For example, to use a martial arts style with three subcategories (Blades; Axes/Maces/Hammers/Picks; Staff) costs 3 Character Points (1 point per weapon category). In Heroic campaigns, a character can only buy a Weapon Element for weapons he has WF with.

A Weapon Element, if purchased, applies to all Martial Arts a character knows. However, a "free" Weapon Element gained by purchasing a weapon-based style such as Fencing, does not carry over to any other maneuvers or styles. Having a Weapon Element with a weapon does not remove or negate a weapon's inherent OCV penalty (if it has one).

# Martial Arts Styles

Martial Maneuvers are often grouped together into *styles* that represent classic martial arts such as Karate, Wrestling, or Kung Fu. Characters need not buy every Maneuver and Skill listed in a given Martial Arts package to be practitioners of a style, but must spend at least the minimum 10 Character Points on Martial Maneuvers. Characters who spend at least 15 Character Points on the style's Martial Maneuvers, have a Knowledge Skill of the style on at least an 11- roll, and have bought at least one 3-point Combat Skill Level with the style can be considered "black belts." True mastery involves buying all Maneuvers and related Skills as well as several CSLs with the style.

Players may, with the GM's permission and approval, create their own martial arts styles. Such styles should have some sort of unifying theme or doctrine and contain at least four appropriate Martial Maneuvers.

**Boxing**

Although normally confined to the sporting arena, Boxing is an effective Martial Art that concentrates exclusively on punches and blocks. A boxer is an effective fighter in a straightforward battle of upright punches, but may be at a disadvantage against more well-rounded martial artists because of his lack of throws, holds, escapes, and similar maneuvers.

## BOXING

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 3 | Clinch | -1 | -1 | Grab Two Limbs, +10 STR |
| 4 | Cross | +0 | +2 | STR + 2d6 Strike |
| 5 | Hook | -2 | +1 | STR + 4d6 Strike |

Paramedics
KS: Boxing

**Dirty Infighting**

This isn't a typical martial art; rather, it's a collection of low blows and dirty tricks used by streetfighters and barroom brawlers.

## DIRTY INFIGHTING

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Disarm | -1 | +1 | Disarm, +10 STR |
| 4 | Kidney Blow | -2 | +0 | ½d6 HKA |
| 4 | Low Blow | -1 | +1 | 2d6 NND ([def. is Resistant PD on groin]) |
| 4 | Punch | +0 | +2 | STR + 2d6 Strike |
| 5 | Roundhouse | -2 | +1 | STR + 4d6 Strike |
| 3 | Throw | +0 | +1 | STR + v/5, Target Falls |

Streetwise
WF: Blades (switchblades and the like)

**Fencing**

Fencing is the European art of swordfighting. All the maneuvers in this package require a sword; the character cannot use them barehanded (except possibly the Parry, which could be made with objects other than a sword with the GM's permission). You can use Fencing as an example of how to design other weapons-based styles, such as Escrima or Kenjutsu.

## FENCING

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | *Froissement* | -1 | +1 | Disarm, +10 STR |
| 4 | Parry | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 5 | Slash | +0 | +2 | Weapon +2 DC Strike |
| 5 | Thrust | +1 | +3 | Weapon damage |

WF: Blades
KS: Fencing

**Generic Martial Arts**

This package represents the "generic" martial arts style practices by many comic book superheroes, pulp fiction adventurers, and the like.

## GENERIC MARTIAL ARTS

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 4 | Dodge | — | +5 | Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort |
| 5 | Kick | -2 | +1 | STR +4d6 Strike |
| 4 | Punch | +0 | +2 | STR +2d6 Strike |
| 3 | Throw | +0 | +1 | STR + v/5; Target Falls |

**Jujutsu**

Jujutsu (better known as its more sport-oriented form, Judo) is a defensive art that focuses on throws and holds. Typically the *jujutsuka* slams his opponent to the ground and then applies a choke hold.

## JUJUTSU

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 4 | Choke Hold | -2 | +0 | Grab One Limb; 2d6 NND |
| 4 | Disarm | -1 | +1 | Disarm, +10 STR |
| 4 | Escape | +0 | +0 | +15 STR Escape |
| 4 | Joint Lock | -1 | -1 | Grab Two Limbs, +10 STR for holding on |
| 3 | Sacrifice Throw | +2 | +1 | STR Strike; Target Falls; You Fall |
| 3 | Slam | +0 | +1 | STR + v/5, Target Falls |
| 4 | Strike | +0 | +2 | STR +2d6 Strike |

Breakfall
KS: Jujutsu

**Karate**

Karate is a fast, straightforward Okinawan style designed to defeat an enemy as quickly as possible.

## KARATE

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 4 | Disarm | -1 | +1 | Disarm, +10 STR |
| 4 | Dodge | +0 | +5 | Dodge all attacks, Abort |
| 4 | Knifehand Strike | -2 | +0 | ½d6 HKA |
| 4 | Punch/ Snap Kick | +0 | +2 | STR + 2d6 Strike |
| 5 | Side/Spin Kick | -2 | +1 | STR + 4d6 Strike |

WF: Common Melee Weapons
KS: Karate

**Kung Fu**

Originating in China, Kung Fu is one of the oldest and most diverse martial arts styles ever created. It has hundreds of substyles, some concentrating on rapid strikes, others on defense or circular attacks.

## KUNG FU

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 4 | Disarm | -1 | +1 | Disarm, +10 STR |
| 4 | Dodge | +0 | +5 | Dodge all attacks, Abort |
| 4 | Escape | +0 | +0 | +15 STR vs. Grabs |
| 3 | Joint Lock/ Grab | -1 | -1 | Grab Two Limbs, +10 STR |
| 5 | Kick | -2 | +1 | STR +4d6 Strike |
| 4 | Knife Hand | -2 | +0 | ½d6 HKA |
| 3 | Legsweep | +2 | -1 | STR +1d6, Target Falls |
| 4 | Punch | +0 | +2 | STR +2d6 Strike |
| 3 | Throw | +0 | +1 | STR +v/5, Target Falls |
| 4 | *Tien-hsueh* Strike | -1 | +1 | 2d6 NND |

Acrobatics
Breakfall
WF: Common Melee Weapons
KS: Kung Fu

**Wrestling**

Wrestling, one of the world's oldest martial arts with variants in hundreds of countries and cultures across the globe, concentrates on bringing an opponent to the ground and holding him there.

## WRESTLING

| Cost | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Choke Hold | -2 | +0 | Grab One Limb; 2d6 NND |
| 4 | Escape | +0 | +0 | +15 STR Escape |
| 3 | Hold | -1 | -1 | Grab Two Limbs, +10 STR for holding on |
| 3 | Sacrifice Throw | +2 | +1 | STR Strike; Target Falls; You Fall |
| 3 | Slam | +0 | +1 | STR + v/5, Target Falls |

Breakfall
KS: Wrestling

# Combat Special Effects

The rules explain how combat in the *HERO System* works in game terms. But no system, however complex, can include every possible combination of punch, kick, energy bolt, sword, and gun. The Combat Maneuvers' names describe the general form of a particular type of attack. But the names of the Maneuvers shouldn't dictate how a character actually performs the attack.

Each of the Combat Maneuvers and Martial Maneuvers actually encompasses dozens of different types of attacks — in essence it labels them with a generic name and allows you to apply some game rules to them. For example, you won't find "Snap Kick" or "Elbow Smash" listed in the Combat Maneuvers Table. Those are simply forms of Strike. A character may use a Snap Kick against a fallen foe, or an Elbow Smash when infighting, but the *HERO System* simulates all of these with the OCV, DCV, and effects of a Strike. A Haymaker can be a double-handed smash, a kick, or a full uppercut. A Martial Throw can be as simple as a foot thrust in the way of a running opponent.

The martial arts styles listed above are a good example of this. Although constructed from the same group of Martial Maneuvers, each one applies its own name and effects to the various Maneuvers. Thus, a Nerve Strike is a Low Blow in Dirty Infighting and a *Tien-hsueh* Strike in Kung Fu. The rules applicable to each Maneuver are the same, but they have different names and special effects in each style.

Players should strive to come up with creative attacks and actions in combat and then find the Maneuver that best represents the actions they envision. Truly unusual moves should earn a Surprise Move bonus, but GMs must be careful not to give out bonuses unless a move really deserves it. The listed Maneuvers assume that both the attacker and defender are fighting intelligently. Only very surprising, risky, or exciting actions should get additional bonuses.

# DETERMINING DAMAGE



Attacks are intended to do damage (or achieve some other effect that puts the enemy at a disadvantage). The amount of damage an attack does, and thus the extent of its effect (if any) upon the target, is determined by rolling dice. Thus, the damage done by any attack varies — an attack might do an enormous amount of damage one Phase, and little or no damage next Phase. The variation in damage from rolling dice makes combat more interesting; it can also provide the GM with details to use in describing the battle (an attack that does a lot of damage may have hit a vital spot; one that does almost none may really have been more of a nick than a direct hit). And of course it's fun to roll dice.

Although there are many different types of attacks and ways to attack someone in the *HERO System,* in most cases the damage done is one of two types: Normal Damage or Killing Damage. This is explained in detail below, but basically, Normal Damage is caused by things like punches, clubs, and Energy Blasts; it's intended primarily to Stun the target. Killing Damage is done by things like bullets, swords, and claws, and is intended to injure or kill the target.

## How Many Dice Do I Roll?

For characters with powers that they use to attack, the amount of damage depends on the number of dice of effect purchased or Active Points in the Power used to build the ability (which in turn depends on the number of Character Points spent on the Power).

For *weapons,* the number of dice of damage depends on the weapon type. Refer to the weapons tables on pages 481-86 for the damage ratings for some typical weapons. STR may add to the damage done with melee weapons.

For *unarmed combat,* the number of dice of damage depends on the character's STR, plus any extra damage for the type of Combat Maneuver used. Divide the character's STR by 5 to get the base number of dice of Normal Damage done by the character. A character with a STR of 20 could roll up to 20/5 = 4d6 of Normal Damage.

Of course, characters can buy STR in totals that aren't multiples of 5. If a character's STR is over half way to the next multiple of 5 (*i.e.,* the STR rating ends in 3, 4, 8, or 9), he can add ½d6 of effect. For instance, someone with a STR of 23 would do 4½d6 of damage with a punch (23/5 = 4.6). A character doesn't have to use his full STR when attacking; he can also Pull his Punch (see page 395) to reduce the damage his STR does.

## Damage Class

Different dice of damage are not the same — 1d6 of Killing Damage is much more likely to injure a target than a 1d6 Normal Damage attack. However, it's necessary for game purposes to establish a rough comparison between different types of damage.

The *Damage Class* ("DC") of an attack provides a way to do this. An attack's DC is based on the number of Active Points in it divided by 5. Thus, an Energy Blast 3d6 and Ranged Killing Attack 1d6 (each with 15 Active Points) are both Damage Class 3 — or, in more game-oriented terms, each has 3 DCs. On the average, any attack of a given Damage Class is equally as harmful for the target as any other attack of that Damage Class — but of course, since different attacks have different effects, sometimes one will be more desirable or "better" than another in a particular situation or for a particular purpose.

The basic rule for Damage Classes is: *1 DC equals 5 Active Points in the Power.* Thus, a power with 45 Active Points has 9 DCs (which would be 9d6 Normal Damage or 3d6 Killing Damage). Put another way, each d6 of Killing Damage is 3 DCs, each d6 of Normal Damage is 1 DC.

### DAMAGE CLASS TABLE

| DC | Killing | Normal | 10-point* | Active Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 pip | 1d6 | ½d6 | 5 |
| 2 | ½d6, 1d6-1 | 2d6 | 1d6 | 10 |
| 3 | 1d6 | 3d6 | 1½d6 | 15 |
| 4 | 1d6+1 | 4d6 | 2d6 | 20 |
| 5 | 1½d6, 2d6-1 | 5d6 | 2½d6 | 25 |
| 6 | 2d6 | 6d6 | 3d6 | 30 |
| 7 | 2d6+1 | 7d6 | 3½d6 | 35 |
| 8 | 2½d6, 3d6-1 | 8d6 | 4d6 | 40 |
| 9 | 3d6 | 9d6 | 4½d6 | 45 |
| 10 | 3d6+1 | 10d6 | 5d6 | 50 |
| 11 | 3½d6, 4d6-1 | 11d6 | 5½d6 | 55 |
| 12 | 4d6 | 12d6 | 6d6 | 60 |
| 13 | 4d6+1 | 13d6 | 6½d6 | 65 |
| 14 | 4½d6, 5d6-1 | 14d6 | 7d6 | 70 |
| 15 | 5d6 | 15d6 | 7½d6 | 75 |
| 16 | 5d6+1 | 16d6 | 8d6 | 80 |
| 17 | 5½d6, 6d6-1 | 17d6 | 8½d6 | 85 |
| 18 | 6d6 | 18d6 | 9d6 | 90 |
| 19 | 6d6+1 | 19d6 | 9½d6 | 95 |
| 20 | 6½d6, 7d6-1 | 20d6 | 10d6 | 100 |

...and so forth.

* This column is included for the sake of convenience; it shows the DCs of Powers such as Drain or many NNDs, which cost 10 Active Points per 1d6.

### COUNTING THE DICE

One of the things that may slow down your *HERO System* combat is counting the damage dice — particularly if you're in a game where characters have high-damage attacks, such as a superhero game. Here are a few tips to make counting the damage dice quicker and easier:

—Group dice into 10s, such as 6-4, 3-3-2-2-, 5-5, and so forth. Then you can quickly add up the 10s and any remainder dice.

—When counting Normal Damage BODY, compare 6s and 1s. If they're equal, then the BODY damage equals the number of dice rolled (the "0 BODY" from the 1s averages out the "2 BODY" from the 6s). If you have more 6s than 1s, you do that many more points of BODY than the dice rolled; if you have more 1s than 6s, you do that many BODY less than the dice rolled.





### ADVANTAGES THAT DIRECTLY AFFECT HOW A VICTIM TAKES DAMAGE

For purposes of calculating the DCs of an Advantaged attack, as described in the text, the GM determines which Advantages "directly affect how the victim takes damage," since different GMs may have different opinions on the issue. Likely candidates include Area Of Effect, AP, AVLD, Autofire, BOECV, Continuous, Cumulative, Damage Shield, Explosion, Does BODY, Does KB, Double KB, MegaScale in some instances, Penetrating, Sticky, Transdimensional, Trigger, Uncontrolled, Usable As Attack, Variable Advantages, and Variable Special Effect.

**Damage Classes Of Advantaged Powers**

Determining the Damage Classes of an attack to which a character has applied Power Advantages is a little more difficult. Each DC remains equal to 5 Active Points, so to figure out how many DCs each dice of damage is worth, you must determine the Active Point cost of 1d6 worth of the Power. To do this, multiply the cost of 1d6 of the Power by the value of all Advantages that directly affect how the victim takes damage (see sidebar). For example, the Power Advantages *No Normal Defense* and *Armor Piercing* would be applied, while *Reduced Endurance* or *Indirect* would not. Then divide that number by 5, and you'll know how many DCs it takes to get an entire 1d6 worth of that Power.

Example: *To determine the Damage Class of an NND Energy Blast, start with the base Power — Energy Blast, which has 1d6 per DC. NND is a +1 Power Advantage, so each d6 costs (5 x (1 + 1)) = 10 Active Points. Dividing 10 Active Points by 5 Active Points yields a 2. Therefore it takes 2 DCs to get 1d6 Energy Blast NND, so each DC of an Energy Blast NND is ½d6 damage.*

*Now something trickier. Assume a character has a Major Transform bought with the Power Advantage Penetrating. Each d6 of Major Transform costs 15 Character Points, and Penetrating is a +½ Advantage, so the total number of Character Points per 1d6 is 22. Divide that by 5, and you discover it takes 4 DCs to add 1d6. Adding or subtracting 1 DC would therefore have no effect (there's no such thing as a quarter-die of damage), but a change in 2 DCs would change the Transform by ½d6.*

## Normal Damage Attacks

Punches, Energy Blasts, blunt weapons like clubs, and concussion explosions are Normal Damage attacks. This type of damage tends to knock an opponent out (by causing STUN damage) rather than kill him (by causing BODY damage).

For Normal Damage, the total on the dice is the amount of STUN damage the attack does. To determine how much BODY damage it does, look at the numbers rolled on the dice: a 1 is 0 BODY; a 2-5 is 1 BODY, and a 6 is 2 BODY. Thus, a 6d6 Normal Damage attack that rolls 6, 5, 4, 4, 2, and 1 does 22 STUN and 6 BODY. The number of BODY done is usually close to the number of dice rolled.

Example: *Randall Irons uses his 25 STR to hit the nefarious Professor Wong. Because Wong is irredeemably evil, Randall decides to do his full damage. Randall rolls 25/5 = 5d6 for damage. He rolls the dice and the following numbers come up: 2, 6, 3, 5, 4. The total of the dice is 20, so 20 STUN is applied to Wong. The 2, 3, 5 and 4 do 1 BODY each, and the 6 does 2 BODY, so the total BODY damage is 6 BODY.*

If a character has to roll a half die (½d6), damage is determined differently. Roll the half die separately, or use a different color or size die to identify it as the ½d6. The face value of the die is multiplied by one-half and rounded up to get the number of STUN done. The ½d6 does 1 BODY if the roll is a 4, 5, or 6.

### NORMAL DAMAGE

| Each die for Normal Attack | BODY done |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 (zero) |
| 2-5 | 1 |
| 6 | 2 |

## Killing Damage Attacks

Claws, knives, bullets, and similar attacks do Killing Damage. This type of damage is more likely than Normal Damage to kill an opponent.

Damage for Killing Damage attacks is determined differently from Normal Damage attacks. The total of the dice is the number of BODY applied to the target. To determine the STUN done, the character rolls a STUN Multiplier — 1d6-1 (minimum of 1) — and multiplies the result by the amount of BODY done.

Example: *Armadillo slashes a policeman with his claws, doing an HKA 2d6. The dice rolled are 3 and 4, for a total of 7 BODY. Armadillo then rolls 1d6 for his STUN Multiplier, rolling a 6. Since Armadillo has a standard HKA, the STUN Multiplier is 1d6-1. He rolled a 6, so the STUN Multiplier is 6 - 1 = 5. The total STUN damage done is 7 x 5 = 35 STUN.*

**STUN Multiplier Variants**

Some GMs may find the 1d6-1 STUN Multiplier difficult to work with. It adds another die roll to combat, and can result in some extremely high (and low) STUN totals for Killing Attacks. If this is a concern in your game, you can use a flat x3 STUN Multiplier for all Killing Damage attacks, rather than the 1d6-1 Multiplier. This reduces dice rolling, math, and the potential for abuse. A ½d6 (or ½d6+1) STUN Multiplier has some of the same effects.

In some campaigns (particularly Heroic ones), the GM may prefer to use the Hit Location Table (see page 414) instead of a rolled STUN Multiplier. In that case, use the STUN Multiplier listed on the table instead of rolling one.

# ADDING DAMAGE

Characters in *HERO System* combats have several ways to increase the damage their attacks do, such as Combat Skill Levels, Martial Maneuvers, and some Combat Maneuvers. The rules in this section explain how to add damage to an attack.

## Doubling Damage

You must always follow a basic rule when increasing damage: *a character cannot more than double the Damage Classes of his base attack, no matter how many different methods he uses to add damage.* A character's extra Maneuver damage, extra STR, damage bonus from movement, and CSLs used to increase damage, put together, cannot more than double the base Damage Classes done by an attack or weapon. For example, a knife (HKA ½d6, or base damage of 2 DCs) cannot do more than Killing Damage 1d6+1 (4 DCs), regardless of how a character adds damage to it. (See below for some exceptions.)

### DETERMINING THE BASE DAMAGE

In most cases, the base damage done by an attack is obvious — it's what the character paid Character Points for, the defined damage for a weapon, or the like. Attacks involving STR are a little different.

With Hand-To-Hand Attacks, HA damage counts as base damage done by STR for purposes of the "doubling damage" rule. For example, a character with STR 20 and HA +2d6 does "base damage" of 6d6, which he can double to 12d6 through various means.

For Haymaker and Martial Maneuvers, a character's STR is the base damage. The basic Maneuver damage — such as +2 DCs from a Martial Strike, or +4 DCs from an Offensive Strike or Haymaker — is not the same thing as Extra DCs purchased for a character's Martial Arts (see below). In other words, the basic damage bonus from a Maneuver remains subject to the normal doubling rules. As an optional rule, GMs for many campaigns, such as most *Ninja Hero* games, allow the damage added by the basic Martial Maneuver to count as base DCs just like HA damage, which avoids the "doubling damage" restriction for low-STR characters.

Example: *Chan Hseng has STR 15 and several Martial Maneuvers, including a Martial Strike (STR +2 DCs) and an Offensive Strike (STR +4 DCs). If he uses his Martial Strike, he does 5d6 damage. If he uses his Offensive Strike, he does 6d6 (6 DCs) damage — not 7d6, because he cannot more than double the base damage provided by his STR (3 DCs). (In some campaigns, the GM wouldn't worry about this and would allow him to do 7d6 damage anyway.)*

*Now suppose Chan Hseng buys an HA +4d6. The damage from an HA counts as base damage done by STR, so his "base damage" for STR is now 7d6. That means he does 9d6 with his Martial Strike and 11d6 with his Offensive Strike — he can add all +4 DCs from the Offensive Strike, since his base damage is equal to or greater than 4 DCs.*

### EXCEPTIONS

There are three exceptions to the "characters cannot more than double the base Damage Classes" rule.

**Normal Damage Weapons In Superheroic Campaigns**

The first is Normal Damage weapons in Superheroic campaigns. Since characters in Superheroic campaigns pay Character Points for their Normal Damage weapons, the weapon's damage simply adds to the character's STR, even if the combined damage is more than double the weapon's damage (as noted above). Thus, a Superheroic character with STR 20 (4d6 HTH damage) and a club (HA +6d6) does 10d6 Normal Damage.

A Heroic character, on the other hand, can only increase the club's damage with STR exceeding its STR Minimum or the other methods described below. In any event, the standard "no

more than double" rule applies — he can't make a club (4d6 Normal Damage) do more than 8d6 Normal Damage.

**Extra Damage Classes For Unarmed Martial Maneuvers**

The second is Extra Damage Classes purchased for a character's *unarmed* Martial Maneuvers. Any Extra DCs that increase an unarmed Martial Maneuver's damage count as base DCs. For example, if a character has a Killing Strike (HKA ½d6, 2 DCs) and has bought two Extra Damage Classes for it, the Killing Strike does 1d6 as its *base damage.* The character may then use STR, movement, CSLs, and the like to increase that 1d6 damage to a maximum of HKA 2d6 damage.

Extra DCs used to add damage to *armed* Martial Maneuvers are considered to be added damage, not an increase to the base DCs. An HKA 1d6 sword used with a Martial Strike with 2 Extra DCs (+4 DCs) does 1½d6 damage, but its base damage is still just 1d6.

**Movement Bonuses To Normal Damage**

Some Combat Maneuvers involve adding damage from movement. When the attack involves Normal Damage, the Maneuver description itself indicates the amount of damage the maneuver adds (velocity/5 for Move Bys, velocity/3 for Move Throughs). The extra dice of Normal Damage added from the Maneuver's velocity can exceed the number of dice in the base attack (whether this is the character's STR, a weapon, or what have you).

Example: *Fastbreak, a speedster in a Champions campaign, has STR 20 and Running 26". He performs a Move By, which does ((STR/2) + (v/5))d6 damage. That means he does (20/2 =10) + (26/5 =5) = 2d6 + 5d6 = 7d6 damage. He can still add the full 5d6 from his velocity despite the fact that he only does 2d6 from STR — movement bonuses to Normal Damage aren't subject to the "no more than double the base damage" rule.*

## No "Half Damage Classes"

For purposes of the rules about adding damage, there's no such thing as a "half Damage Class." Characters can only add damage in whole DCs. For example, a character cannot use one Combat Skill Level to add "half a Damage Class," because there's no such thing as a half Damage Class.

Similarly, when a character calculates the damage bonus from velocity, or the effect of using STR to add damage by exceeding a weapon's STR Minimum, the normal *HERO System* rounding rules *do not* apply. A character has to have a full 3"/5" of movement (depending on the Maneuver used), or full 5 extra points of STR, to get +1 DC — anything less than that has no effect.

## Methods Of Adding Damage

The primary methods for increasing the damage done by an attack are: Combat Skill Levels; Haymaker and Martial Maneuvers; movement (velocity); and in some circumstances Strength.

### COMBAT SKILL LEVELS

Combat Skill Levels (page 53) can increase the damage done by a HTH or Ranged attack or Maneuver.

**CSLs In Heroic Campaigns**

In Heroic campaigns, a character can use *two* CSLs to increase the damage done by a HTH or Ranged attack (whether Killing Damage or Normal Damage) by *one* Damage Class. For instance, a KA 1d6+1 weapon would do 1½d6 if a character used two CSLs to increase its damage; 2d6 if he used four CSLs, and so on — up to a maximum of twice the original Damage Classes, as discussed above.

**CSLs In Superheroic Campaigns**

In Superheroic campaigns, a character can use two CSLs to add +1 BODY to the damage done by a Killing Attack or +3 STUN to the damage done a Normal Damage attack. (This bonus adds to the overall damage, before the STUN Multiplier, if any, is applied; it doesn't add to each die of damage.) This applies to both HTH and Ranged attacks. However, the damage the character does cannot exceed the normal maximum for the attack or weapon. For example, if a character adds +1 BODY damage to a weapon that does 1d6 Killing Damage, the most BODY the weapon can do is 6, regardless of the +1.

### HAYMAKER AND MARTIAL MANEUVERS

The *Haymaker* Combat Maneuver and many different Martial Maneuvers can add a certain amount of Damage Classes (typically two or four) to a character's attack.

**Maneuvers Adding To Normal Damage**

For Normal Damage (including STR damage), each Damage Class added by a maneuver adds one Damage Class to the attack. This typically means +2d6 or +4d6 — +1d6 for every Damage Class the maneuver adds. Thus, a character with 20 STR (4d6 HTH damage) using a basic Martial Strike does 6d6 HTH damage. (Don't forget the rules about the base damage of STR, as described above.)

**Maneuvers Adding To Killing Damage**

For Killing Damage, every *two* Damage Classes added by a Maneuver add *one* Damage Class worth of damage to the attack (whether it's an armed or unarmed attack). For example, a Martial Strike (+2 DCs) adds one Damage Class (not two) to an HKA. Thus, a basic Martial Strike (+2 DCs) increases an HKA 1d6 (3 DCs) to 1d6+1 Killing Damage (4 DCs).

### MOVEMENT

Maneuvers involving movement, such as Move Bys and Move Throughs, add extra damage because of their velocity and momentum. The character must pay END for any movement he uses and for the STR involved. These rules also apply to damage added from growth momentum or Stretching "velocity."

**Movement Adding To Normal Damage**

For Normal Damage, the Maneuver description itself indicates the amount of damage the Maneuver adds (velocity/5 for Move Bys, velocity/3 for Move Throughs). The extra dice of Normal Damage added from the Maneuver's velocity can exceed the number of dice in the base attack (whether this is the character's STR, a weapon, or what have you).

**Movement Adding To Killing Damage**

For Killing Damage, a character can add 1 DC for every 1d6 of bonus Normal Damage dice. However, he still cannot more than double the damage done by the weapon or attack (he cannot add more DCs than the attack normally has). For example, if a character with a sword (HKA 1d6+1) did a Move By at 15", he would add +3 DCs damage from velocity, thus increasing the sword's damage to 2d6+1. At most, between velocity and other methods, he can increase the sword's damage to 2½d6 (twice the weapon's base DCs).

**Movement Adding To Weapon Damage**

When performing Move Bys and Move Throughs with weapons, divide the character's STR by 2 for purposes of calculating extra damage or DC/OCV penalties based on the weapon's STR Minimum. The weapon, not the character, takes the one-third or one-half damage from the maneuver. If the BODY damage done to the target exceeds three times (3x) the weapon's base Damage Classes, the weapon breaks.

### STRENGTH AND HKAs

Strength (STR) adds to the damage done by HKAs. A character gets +1d6 to his HKA for every 15 points of STR used with it (or, to put it another way, +1 DC for every 5 points of STR used with it).

In Heroic campaigns, when weapons are involved, the character's STR does not add to a weapon's HKA damage automatically — it only adds damage if it exceeds the weapon's STR Minimum (see page 478). For every full 5 points of STR the character has above the weapon's STR Minimum, he may add +1 DC of Killing Damage (or, for weapons like staffs that do Normal Damage, +1d6 of Normal Damage).

Example: *Brak the Barbarian (STR 21) wields a dagger (1d6-1 [2 DCs], STR Min 6). Since his STR is 15 above the STR Minimum, he can add +3 DCs to the dagger's damage. However, since the weapon's base damage is only 2 DCs, he can only increase its damage to 4 DCs, or KA 1d6+1.*

*Later, Brak wields a battle axe (2d6 [6 DCs], STR Min 13). His STR is 8 points above the STR Minimum. That means he can only add +1 DC of damage, since he needs 5 full points of STR above the STR Minimum to add a DC. Thus, he does KA 2d6+1 with the battle axe (if he has other ways to add damage, he can increase the axe's damage up to a maximum of 4d6, or 12 DCs). If he had STR 23, he could add +2 DCs, making the axe do KA 2½d6 damage.*

**STR And Maneuvers Combined**

A character may want to add damage to his HKA with a Combat or Martial Maneuver that would normally add to his STR damage. For example, Move By/Through and Martial Strike all involve adding damage to STR damage.

In this situation, the character typically does *not* get to apply his STR damage twice (*i.e.,* once to the HKA, then once to the Maneuver before it adds damage to the HKA). The HKA counts as the base damage. The character then increases that with STR. If he can add more damage to the HKA, he may use the bonuses from the Maneuver to improve it (but he doesn't get to add his STR to the Maneuver first). However, the GM may allow a character to "double-dip" and apply his STR to the Maneuver as well (this may be appropriate for some high-powered campaigns.)

Example: *Chan Hseng has STR 15, a Martial Strike (STR +2d6 damage), and a sword (HKA 1½d6, STR Minimum 10). He uses his STR to increase the damage by +1 DC (to 2d6), then uses his +2 DCs from the Martial Strike to add another +1 DC (to 2d6+1). He does not get to add +5 DCs (3d6 for STR + 2d6 Maneuver bonus) to the HKA, since he's already added his STR. However, if the GM permitted, he could do that, thus adding +2 DCs from the Maneuver instead of +1 (for a total of 2½d6).*

### OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

The GM can also give a character bonus damage dice for extraordinary circumstances or Maneuvers. For example, if a knight in a Fantasy campaign wants to have his horse rear right before he attacks, so that the momentum of the horse's action adds to the force of his attack, the GM might add +1 DC to the attack to reflect that momentum.

## Adding Damage To Attacks With Advantages

Adding damage becomes a little more complicated if the attack has Advantages.

### COMBAT SKILL LEVELS, HAYMAKERS, AND MARTIAL MANEUVERS

Damage bonuses from Haymakers, Martial Maneuvers, and Combat Skill Levels are not affected by Advantages. They add to an attack that has Advantages at the same rate, and by the same rules, as they do to an attack with no Advantages.

Example: *Chan Hseng wields a knife (HKA ½d6 [2 DCs], Armor Piercing). He uses his Martial Strike (+2 DCs) to increase the damage done by the knife. This means the knife does HKA 1d6 damage — the Advantage doesn't affect the way his Martial Maneuver damage bonus applies to the knife's damage. This remains true regardless of what Advantage the knife has — +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Ranged, Penetrating, or what have you.*

This rule also applies in Heroic campaigns to damage added when a character's STR exceeds the STR Minimum of a weapon.

**STRENGTH**

When a character uses his STR to add damage to an attack with Advantages, the main factor in determining how to add damage is the base (unmodified) Active Point value of the attack (*i.e.,* the Active Points in the attack without any Advantages). (This does not apply in Heroic campaigns to damage added when a character's STR exceeds the STR Minimum of a weapon; as noted above, that's unaffected by Advantages.)

**STR And Advantaged HAs**

A character who has a Power Advantage on an HA (or other Normal Damage attack to which he adds STR damage) does not also have to buy that Advantage for his STR, and may apply the Advantage to the dice of damage provided/added by STR, if either of these situations exists:

—the character only uses his STR up to the unmodified Active Point value of the HA

—the unmodified Active Point value of the HA equals or exceeds the character's STR.

"Unmodified" means the Active Points without applying any Advantages. For example, an HA +4d6, Armor Piercing normally has 30 Active Points, but its *unmodified* Active Points are only 20.

If neither of the circumstances described above applies — in other words, if the unmodified Active Points in the HA are less than the character's STR, or the character uses more STR than the unmodified Active Points in the HA — then the character cannot use the HA dice (since the rules don't permit a character to use a Power without using the Advantages bought for it [page 246] and HA dice can only add to STR damage, not be used on their own [page 184]).

Example: *A character has STR 15 and an HA +3d6 (15 Active Points when unmodified). He doesn't have to purchase any Advantage purchased for the HA for his STR. If the HA were Armor Piercing (a modified total of 22 Active Points), then the total attack would do 6d6 Armor Piercing Normal Damage — as long as the unmodified Active Points in the HA equal or exceed the character's STR, the Advantage applies to all the dice of damage.*

*But suppose the attack was an HA +2d6 Armor Piercing, which only has an unmodified 10 Active Points. In that case, the character has several choices. First, he can voluntarily restrict himself to using 10 STR or less, in which case the Advantage on the HA applies to all the dice. Second, he can buy the Advantage for his STR, in which case the Advantage applies to all the dice. Otherwise, he cannot use the HA dice at all.*

There's one exception to this rule: the Advantage *Invisible Power Effects.* A character must always purchase IPE for his STR if he wants an Invisible HA (or other attack to which he can add STR damage) to remain invisible.

**STR And Advantaged HKAs**

If a character adds STR damage to an Advantaged HKA (or other Killing Damage attack), his STR adds to the attack's damage at a lesser rate.

To determine how much STR it takes to add +1 DC, apply the Advantages on the Power to 5 STR (the basic amount used to add 1 DC). The



result is how many points of STR it takes to add +1 DC to the attack. For example, if a character with 30 STR has an HKA 4d6, Armor Piercing, it takes 7.5 points of STR (5 x (1 + ½) = 7.5) to add +1 DC to the attack (so, with 30 STR, the character adds 4 DCs, increasing the attack's damage to HKA 5d6+1; adding +3 DCs would require 22.5 points of STR). As indicated in this example, the standard *HERO System* rounding rules do not apply when determining the amount of STR required to add damage (don't round at all).

For purposes of using this rule with melee weapons, ignore the *Reduced Endurance* Advantage (which all melee weapons must have). STR adds to a weapon with Reduced Endurance as if the weapon were un-Advantaged (or only has whatever other Advantages are applied).

**Advantages For STR**

If a character has an Advantage for his STR but hasn't bought the same Advantage for an attack he adds damage to with STR, the Advantage does not apply to the attack at all (not even to the damage dice added by STR), unless the GM rules otherwise. It only applies to the damage done by the character's STR when he uses STR by itself. For example, a character with 20 STR, Armor Piercing, who uses an Offensive Strike (+4d6) or Haymaker (also +4d6) does 8d6 Normal Damage, with no Armor Piercing effect.

### MOVEMENT

To determine how many DCs movement adds to an attack with an Advantage, multiply the number used to determine the regular DC bonus for velocity (5 for Move Bys, 3 for Move Throughs) by the Advantage to determine how many inches of movement it takes to add +1 DC to the attack. (Again, the standard *HERO System* rounding rules do not apply when determining the amount of velocity required to add damage.) Then divide the inches of movement by that number to obtain the number of DCs added.

Example: *A character who can move 20" does a Move Through with his spear (HKA 2d6, Armor Piercing). Normally the Move Through would add +6 DC (20"/3 = 6 DCs) to the HKA, making it an HKA 4d6. However, since the HKA is Armor Piercing, the character must multiply 3 (the number used to calculate the bonus damage from a Move Through's velocity) by 1.5, just as if the Advantage were applied. This equals 4.5. Dividing 20 by 4.5 yields 4.4, meaning the Move Through adds 4 DCs to the attack (raising its damage to HKA 3d6+1).*

### OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

At the GM's option, characters may ignore Advantages that don't directly affect how a target takes damage, such as *Reduced Endurance, Range Based On STR,* or *Charges,* when determining how STR and other factors add to an attack with an Advantage.

## TAKING DAMAGE

Now that you know how to dish out damage, here's how to take it.

Basically, there are two types of defenses in the *HERO System:*

—*Normal Defenses,* which only protect against Normal Damage. They include a character's natural PD and ED.

—*Resistant Defenses,* which protect against both Normal Damage and Killing Damage. They include Armor, Force Fields, and PD and ED for which a character has bought Damage Resistance. In Heroic campaigns, Resistant Defense usually indicates some form of armor.

Another important distinction is between *physical damage* (such as punches, bullets, swords, falling, clubs, and the like) and *energy damage* (such as fire, lasers, Energy Blasts, and the like). Defenses usually only protect against one type of damage or the other — a character's natural Physical Defense (PD) only works against physical attacks, and his natural Energy Defense (ED) against energy attacks.

### NORMAL DAMAGE ATTACKS

Both Normal Defenses and Resistant Defenses protect a character from Normal Damage. A character's main form of Normal Defense are his natural PD and ED. These can be supplemented by defenses bought as Powers (for example, Limited forms of PD and ED, or Resistant Defenses like Armor or Force Field).

PD (and physical Normal and Resistant Defenses) protects against physical Normal Damage; ED (and energy Normal and Resistant Defenses) protects against energy Normal Damage. Subtract the character's total applicable defense from the total STUN done by the attack, and again from the total BODY done by the attack.

Example: *A troll hits Chiron with a club; the attack does 6 BODY and 23 STUN. He has 4 PD plus leather armor with DEF 3, so he takes 23 - (4 + 3) = 16 STUN and 6 - 7 = -1 or 0 BODY.*

### KILLING DAMAGE ATTACKS

Only Resistant Defenses offer protection against Killing Damage. A character's natural PD and ED do not normally subtract from Killing Damage (unless made Resistant with Damage Resistance).

A character may apply his applicable Resistant Defenses against the BODY done by a Killing Damage attack. Furthermore, if he has any applicable Resistant Defense, he may *also* apply his Normal Defenses to reduce the STUN of the attack.

Example: *A Vegan shoots Andarra with its maser (RKA 2d6) and hits her in a location not covered by her DEF 6 body armor. The Vegan rolls 6 BODY and 12 STUN. Since Andarra has no body armor in that area, and thus no*

*applicable Resistant Defense, she takes all 6 BODY and 12 STUN — her natural ED offers no protection against the Killing Damage.*

*The Vegan's second shot does 8 BODY and 24 STUN, but it hits Andarra's body armor this time. Andarra subtracts her body armor's DEF 6 from the BODY done: 8 - 6 = 2 BODY gets through. Because she has an applicable Resistant Defense, Andarra may also use her Normal Defenses against the STUN damage; she totals her natural ED of 3 and the body armor's DEF 6 and subtracts the total (9) from the STUN: 24 - 9 = 15 STUN gets through.*

# TAKING DAMAGE

Here's a summary of the rules on taking damage:

1. If the attack does Normal Damage (fists, clubs, Energy Blasts):

a. Add all applicable forms of Defense — both Normal and Resistant — together to determine the character's total Defense.

b. Subtract the character's total Defense from the STUN damage done by the attack. The remainder is how much STUN damage he suffers.

c. Subtract the character's total Defense from the BODY damage done by the attack. The remainder is how much BODY damage he suffers.

2. If the attack does Killing Damage (claws, blades, guns):

a. Determine how much of the character's Defense is Resistant (meaning it protects against Killing Damage). Armor, Damage Resistance, Force Field, and Force Wall provide Resistant Defense; so does armor the character wears (chainmail or plate armor, for example).

b. Subtract the character's Resistant Defense from the BODY damage done by the attack. The remainder is how much BODY damage he suffers.

i. A character's Normal Defenses, including his PD and ED (unless modified by Damage Resistance), *do not* reduce the BODY from Killing Damage, even if he has Resistant Defenses.

c. If the character has no Resistant Defenses, he takes all the STUN damage done by the attack.

d. If the character has any Resistant Defenses, add all applicable forms of Defense — both Normal and Resistant — together to determine his total Defense. Subtract his total Defense from the STUN damage done by the attack. The remainder is how much STUN damage he suffers.

3. If the attack does No Normal Defense (NND) damage:

a. If the character has the applicable defense, he takes no damage at all.

b. If the character does not have the applicable defense, he takes all the damage.

Some Advantages, such as *Armor Piercing, Penetrating,* or *Hardened,* may affect how damage applies to defenses.

### MINIMUM DAMAGE FROM INJURIES

Regardless of whether an attack does Normal Damage or Killing Damage, a character automatically takes 1 STUN for every 1 point of BODY damage that gets through his defenses. He can Recover this STUN normally; he doesn't have to heal the BODY damage first.

Example: *Ogre has a PD of 40, but only 5 of it is Resistant. He gets shot by a .44 Magnum revolver and takes 10 BODY, 30 STUN. After applying his defenses, he would normally take 5 BODY, 0 STUN. Because he took BODY damage, he takes a minimum of 1 STUN per point of BODY taken, so he takes 5 STUN regardless of his defenses.*

Other than this automatic (and usually temporary) loss of STUN, the loss of BODY does not affect a character's STUN. A character can have 0 BODY or negative BODY and still have lots of STUN — he's dying, but awake and active.

### ATTACK MODIFIERS

Some Power Advantages enable attacks to ignore (partially or fully) a character's defenses. These Advantages include *Armor Piercing, Attack Versus Limited Defenses, No Normal Defense, Penetrating,* and so forth. Similarly, there are a number of Power Limitations (such as *Reduced Penetration*) which affect the amount of damage an attack does. For a full description of how these Modifiers work, see *Power Modifiers.*

# EFFECTS OF DAMAGE

There are four major effects of damage. In order of severity, they are Stunning, Knockout, Injury, and Death.

## Stunning

If the STUN done to a character (after subtracting defenses) is less than or equal to his Constitution (CON), there's no effect other than the loss of STUN. If the STUN done to a character by a single attack (after subtracting defenses) exceeds his CON, he's *Stunned.*

A Stunned character's DCV instantly drops to ½ (as do the modifiers for making Placed Shots against him). At the end of the Segment, any of his Powers that aren't Persistent, and any Skill Levels of any type, turn off. The character remains Stunned and can take no Action until his next Phase (he cannot even Abort to a defensive Action). A character who is Stunned or recovering from being Stunned can take no Actions, take no Recoveries (except his free Post-Segment 12 Recovery), cannot move, and cannot be affected by Presence Attacks. Stunned characters typically retain their grip on objects they're holding, but this may depend on the object (heavier ones are dropped more often than light ones) and the nature of the attack.

A character is Stunned by any sufficiently large loss of STUN, no matter how he loses it. STUN

damage from an Energy Blast or Killing Attack, reduction of STUN due to a Drain STUN, loss of STUN due to a Dependence or Susceptibility, and the pain of an Ego Attack, to name just a few, can all Stun a target.

**Recovering From Being Stunned**

A Stunned character must take a moment to clear his head and recover from the effects. This is called *recovering from being Stunned.*

Recovering from being Stunned requires a Full Phase, and is the only thing the character can do during that Phase. A character can recover from being Stunned in the Segment in which he was Stunned if he had a Phase in that Segment and his Phase has not yet occurred. If a character becomes Stunned while Holding an Action, he cannot use his Held Action to recover from being Stunned — he simply loses it. A character does not recover from being stunned when he takes a Post-Segment 12 Recovery.

In the character's next full Phase after becoming Stunned, he recovers from being Stunned when his DEX occurs in the Segment. He regains his full DCV (and Placed Shot modifiers return to normal), but he still cannot act until his next Phase — recovering from being Stunned is all he can do that Phase. However, after recovering from being Stunned, a character may, if he wishes, Abort to a defensive Action (even in the same Segment in which he recovers from being Stunned).

Example: *Andarra (DEX 20, SPD 3) is Stunned by an attack on Segment 6. She must use her Phase on Segment 8 to recover; she recovers on DEX 20 (so an enemy attacking her in Segment 8 with, say, DEX 15 would have to hit her at her full DCV). Andarra cannot take any other Action until her next Phase on Segment 12, but may Abort her Phase in Segment 12 in Segments 8 (after her DEX occurs), 9, 10, or 11 if she so desires.*

*If Andarra were Stunned in Segment 4 by an opponent who attacked on DEX 24, she would recover from being Stunned on her Phase in Segment 4, since she had not yet acted in that Phase.*

A character may be hit by an attack in the Phase in which he'll recover from being Stunned before getting to do so (*i.e.,* by another character whose DEX is higher than his). If the character takes no damage from the attack after applying his defenses, he may still recover from being Stunned as normal. However, if the character takes any STUN or BODY damage from the attack, he cannot recover from being Stunned that Phase; he must try to do so on his next Phase instead. (At the GM's option, this also occurs if a character suffers any similar effect, such as losing INT to a Drain INT or taking Knockback.)

Recovering from being Stunned is *not* the same thing as taking a Recovery. A character regains no STUN when he recovers from being Stunned, he merely shakes off the effects of being Stunned (such as having ½ DCV). A character can recover from being Stunned even if he cannot breathe or is holding his breath.

There is no limit to the number of times a character can be Stunned and recover from being Stunned.

## Knockout

If a character's STUN total is reduced to zero or below (whether by one attack or multiple attacks), he is *Knocked Out.*

When a character is Knocked Out, his OCV, DCV, and ECV are instantly reduced to zero (Placed Shot modifiers against him are halved), and any attack that hits him does 2x STUN, just as if he were Surprised while out of combat. At the end of the Segment, any of his powers that aren't Persistent turn off, and he drops any held objects.

If a character is only barely Knocked Out (down to -10 STUN), he's not completely unconscious — in fact, it's more like he's deeply Stunned. Depending upon the character and the nature of the attack, he may even be on his feet, wobbly but still standing, as he tries to shake off the effects of the attack. He's dimly aware of what's going on around him, but is too woozy and dazed to take any action or maintain any power. He can make a PER Roll to perceive something really important, but otherwise he cannot interact with the world; he can't move, Dodge, take any Actions, or do anything but take Recoveries.

If the character has been Knocked Out further (below -10 STUN), he's completely unconscious and has lost contact with the world around him — he's out cold. He falls down, unable to keep his feet at all. A character in this state of unconsciousness can be killed automatically as a Full Phase Action by any character with the means to do so (a Killing Attack or other powerful attack) who makes a successful Attack Roll against the unconscious character.

Regardless of how severely the character has been Knocked Out, he cannot do anything except take Recoveries. He can take his first Recovery on his next full Phase (unless he's deeply unconscious; see below) at the end of the Segment (after all other characters who have a Phase that Segment have acted). However, he cannot take a Recovery in the Segment in which he was Knocked Out, even if he had a Phase that Segment which had not yet been used. A character who's Knocked Out must take Recoveries every Phase (or as often as allowed to) until his STUN total is greater than zero. When his STUN total is positive, the character wakes up, and can take whatever Actions he wants to.

The body of an unconscious character puts its entire energy reserve into waking up. Because of this, when he wakes up, his END equals his current STUN total. (If a character is "awakened" from being Knocked Out due to the addition of STUN from Aid, Healing, or the like, his END equals his STUN total as established by the Aid/Healing or his END total at the time he was Knocked Out, whichever is less.)

Example: *Andarra was Knocked Out by a plant creature with a stun rod; she was reduced to -4 STUN. She has a REC of 7, so she'll have 3 STUN at the end of her next Phase. Since Andarra was Knocked Out, she awakens with the same END total as STUN, so she wakes up with only 3 END.*






A character who's both Stunned and Knocked Out by the same attack begins taking Recoveries in his next full Phase; he does not have to spend a Phase recovering from being Stunned (that's part of waking up from being Knocked Out).

**Taking Recoveries**

A deeply unconscious character may not get a Recovery every Phase. It's up to the GM to determine what qualifies as "deeply unconscious" and how long it takes a character in that state to wake up. As a guideline, the GM can consult the Recovery Time Table for suggestions on how often a character should Recover.

A character can Recover one level better on the table if someone helps him by slapping his face, splashing water on him, or offering similar aid. Helping someone requires a Full Phase Action, and the unconscious character only gets the Recovery benefit as long as someone helps.

Typically, you should only use the guidelines in the Recovery Time Table for PCs, not NPCs. Once an NPC is Knocked Out below the -10 STUN level, even by a little, he should normally remain unconscious until the fight ends (unless it would be dramatically appropriate for him to wake up). Characters shouldn't have to keep hitting an unconscious opponent "just to make sure he won't wake up"; that's unheroic and undramatic. The GM shouldn't force them to do this by constantly having NPCs wake up and start fighting again.

## RECOVERY TIME TABLE

| STUN Total | How Often Character Recovers |
|---|---|
| -0 to -10 | Every Phase and Post-Segment 12 |
| -11 to -20 | Post-Segment 12 only |
| -21 to -30 | Once a minute only |
| -31 or more | GM's option (a long time) |

## Injury

Characters who take BODY damage suffer injuries — cuts, broken bones, wounds, and other such unpleasantries. While this may entail loss of blood, characters won't lose more BODY due to bleeding unless they are at or below 0 BODY (see below) or the GM uses the optional Bleeding rules (see page 417).

The exact nature of an injury depends upon the special effects of the attack that did the damage: fire causes horrendous burns; fists and clubs crush and smash; swords and knives cut; Energy Blasts inflict burns and disrupt tissue; bullets cause puncture wounds, tissue disruption, and hydrostatic shock. At the GM's discretion, this may have effects beyond loss of BODY; for example, a burned character might lose some points of Comeliness until healed.

Ordinarily, the loss of BODY, or dropping into the negative BODY range, doesn't affect a character's CV, Skill Rolls, or the like. However, the GM may apply any penalties he considers appropriate.

**Breaking Limbs**

Gamemasters may use the following optional rules in place of Impairing and Disabling rules (see pages 416-17) to determine whether an attack breaks a target's limbs.

Generally, a limb can take ⅓ of a character's starting BODY before being severed or breaking (or becoming so damaged or mangled as to be useless). Thus, it requires 3 BODY to break a normal person's arm; at the GM's discretion, 1-2 BODY might cause a minor fracture. If the GM is using the Hit Location Table, the limb must take 3 BODY after the BODYx from the Table is applied.

Usually you cannot do more than ⅓ of a character's BODY to him by attacking one of his limbs. If, for example, a barbarian PC uses his sword to cut off an enemy's arm, the enemy should take the 3 BODY necessary to cut off the arm, not the full BODY done by the attack (though you should calculate the STUN based on the full BODY). The injured character may pass out and bleed to death, or die of infection in a few days, but the loss of a limb in and of itself shouldn't kill him.

Example: *Sir Gareth uses his broadsword to attack a goblin. He hits his foe in the Arm (the GM is using the Hit Location Table) and does 12 BODY (and 24 STUN, per the Hit Location Table). Even after the goblin subtracts its 3 points of Resistant Defense and halves the damage due to the location, it still takes 5 BODY. The GM rules the goblin actually only suffers 3 BODY because Sir Gareth has hacked off its arm; the STUN damage is unaffected.*

## Death

A character at or below 0 BODY is dying. He loses 1 BODY each Turn (at the end of Segment 12). This is usually referred to as "bleeding to death," though it doesn't necessarily involve loss of blood.

Death occurs when, either due to attacks or "bleeding to death," the character has lost twice his original BODY (*i.e.,* when he reaches a negative BODY score equal to his starting positive BODY).

Example: *If a character who normally has 10 BODY reaches -10 BODY, he dies. A character with a lower BODY, say 8, would only have to reach -8 BODY to die. If a character who normally has 10 BODY started the game with 6 BODY due to a previous injury, he still won't die until he reaches -10 BODY.*

This unpleasant fate is not inevitable. Another character can stabilize a character at 0 or negative BODY with a successful Paramedics roll (at -1 for every negative 2 BODY). This doesn't give the wounded character back any BODY, it just stabilizes his condition so he doesn't lose any more BODY. The GM should modify this number for circumstances. With good medical care, good food, rest, and warm and dry conditions, the character's chances are greatly improved (+1 to +3). Poor conditions, such as dirt, additional shocks, and extreme cold, would impose a -1 to -3 penalty. See also *Recovering BODY,* page 424.



# OPTIONAL EFFECTS OF DAMAGE



The rules in this section are all optional. They add "realism" and depth to combat, but at the expense of slowing down the action and requiring more effort and time to resolve. It's a good idea to avoid using these rules if there are a lot of players (more than five or six). If you're just learning the game, then it's an even better idea to leave these optional rules for later.

## WOUNDING

This option prevents characters from totally ignoring wounds. A character who takes BODY damage for any reason must make an EGO Roll at -1 for every full 2 BODY the character has taken.

If the roll succeeds, there's no effect beyond the damage normally done by the injury. If the roll fails, the character can't take any offensive action in his next Phase — he can't shoot, strike back, or use any offensive Combat Maneuver. He may still move to Concealment, Dodge, or use any other neutral or defensive Combat Maneuver. This simulates the instinctive response to being wounded (saying "ouch!", clutching the wound, and perhaps ducking back behind a wall).

This rule applies more to NPCs than to PCs. Player characters are assumed to be tough. Sometimes the NPCs don't have the drive or motivation the PCs have.

## HIT LOCATION

You can use the Hit Location optional rule to determine which part of a character's body is hit by a particular attack or blow. There are two ways to use Hit Location. First, GMs can just use the table to see where an attack hit the target, but not use the location to modify the damage taken. Thus, a blow to the head does the same amount of damage as a blow to the arm, and so forth. This gives combat some extra color, but does not actually affect it in the least. This is the recommended way to use Hit Locations in most Superheroic campaigns.

Second, for most Heroic campaigns, the GM might want to use the Hit Location Table to its full effect — that is, to help determine both the location of the attack *and* how much damage the attack does.

### HIT LOCATIONS AND KILLING DAMAGE

To use the Hit Location Table for Killing Damage attacks, do the following after an attack hits:

1. Determine where the attack hit: Roll 3d6 and consult the first two columns of the Hit Location Table to find out where the attack struck the target.

2. Roll the BODY damage: Roll the dice to determine how much BODY damage the attack does.

3. Determine STUN damage: Multiply the BODY rolled by the STUNx for the location hit instead of rolling a STUN Multiplier. The result is the amount of STUN done to the target before his defenses are applied. Subtract the target's appropriate defenses to determine how much STUN he takes.

4. Determine the BODY damage the target takes: Subtract the target's appropriate Resistant Defense from the BODY of the attack to determine the BODY done. Then multiply that BODY total by the BODYx to find out how much BODY the target actually takes.

Example: *Arkelos hits a goblin (ED 5, DEF 3, BODY 15) with his Fire Blast spell (RKA 3d6). He rolls 3d6 to determine Hit Location and gets an 8 — the Arms. He rolls another 3d6 to determine the BODY damage for his spell and gets a 13. Consulting the STUNx column, he finds that the STUN Multiplier for the Arms is x2, so he does 26 STUN to the target. The goblin takes 18 of this after subtracting his defenses. Then the GM subtracts the goblin's 3 DEF from the BODY, leaving 10, which is multiplied by the x½ BODYx for the Arms, so the goblin takes 5 BODY (reduced to 3 because it's a limb wound; see* Breaking Limbs, *above). What was once an arm is now a charred stump.*

### HIT LOCATIONS AND NORMAL DAMAGE

To use the Hit Location Table for Normal Damage attacks, do the following after an attack hits:

1. Determine where the attack hit: Roll 3d6 and consult the first two columns of the Hit Location Table to find out where the attack struck the target.

## HIT LOCATION TABLE

| 3d6 Roll | Location | STUNx | N STUN | BODYx | To Hit |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3-5 | Head | x5 | x2 | x2 | -8 OCV |
| 6 | Hands | x1 | x½ | x½ | -6 OCV |
| 7-8 | Arms | x2 | x½ | x½ | -5 OCV |
| 9 | Shoulders | x3 | x1 | x1 | -5 OCV |
| 10-11 | Chest | x3 | x1 | x1 | -3 OCV |
| 12 | Stomach | x4 | x1½ | x1 | -7 OCV |
| 13 | Vitals | x4 | x1½ | x2 | -8 OCV |
| 14 | Thighs | x2 | x1 | x1 | -4 OCV |
| 15-16 | Legs | x2 | x½ | x½ | -6 OCV |
| 17-18 | Feet | x1 | x½ | x½ | -8 OCV |

If necessary, roll 1d6 to determine left or right side (hands, arms, shoulders, thighs, legs, feet). If you roll a 1, 2, or 3, the left side is hit; if you roll a 4, 5, or 6, the right side is hit.

2. Determine the STUN damage the target takes: Roll the dice to determine how much STUN damage the attack does. Then apply the target's defenses. Multiply the amount of damage the target takes after applying his defenses by the modifier for that part of the body in the N STUN column.

3. Determine the BODY damage the target takes: Count the Normal Damage BODY as usual. Subtract the target's appropriate defenses from the BODY of the attack to determine how much BODY he takes. Then multiply that BODY total by the BODYx for that part of the body to find how much BODY the target actually takes.

### OTHER RULES

"Vitals" is defined as any particularly delicate or vulnerable area on the body; this can include the groin, the heart, a large artery, or many other areas. The GM should choose whatever effect is most appropriate for the attack and the situation.

Attacks that have the *Area Of Effect* or *Explosion* Advantages, or that otherwise affect an entire area, use the standard Hit Location rules — the character rolls a Hit Location, and the GM applies the damage accordingly. The roll indicates the part of the target's body that's the most directly affected by the blast. Alternately, the GM can dispense with the Hit Location rules for Explosions and the like, and just apply the damage generally with a rolled STUN Multiplier.

## Placed Shots

You can also use the Hit Location Table to determine the OCV modifier for aiming at a particular part of the body. This is known as a "Placed Shot," "Called Shot," or "targeting."

Consult the *To Hit* column on the Hit Location Table to determine the OCV modifier for targeting a particular area. If a character makes an Attack Roll after applying the OCV modifier, his attack hits the area listed, doing the BODYx and STUNx listed; if he misses, the attack misses altogether. If applicable, the character can even choose the precise number he would have rolled on the Hit Location dice. (This can be important if the target has sectional defenses.)

At the GM's option, when a Placed Shot hits there may be additional effects based upon the special effects of the Power being used (for example, hitting someone in the face with a blast of fire may cause temporary or permanent blindness).

Examples: *Randall Irons wants to shoot Professor Wong in the Arms. He suffers a -5 on his OCV to hit, plus any other modifiers for Range, Concealment, and so on.*

*Chiron is fighting an armored knight. Chiron aims at the knight's Head, which imposes a -8 OCV to Chiron's OCV. Amazingly, Chiron hits anyway. He can choose whether he hit location 3, 4, or 5. Since the knight has armor covering locations 3 and 4, Chiron chooses location 5, thereby avoiding the armor.*

### PLACED SHOTS AND SURPRISE

Whenever a target is Surprised out of combat (see *Combat Modifiers*), halve the Placed Shot modifiers. For instance, shooting at the head becomes a -4 OCV shot instead of a -8 OCV shot. The same applies to Stunned characters, and in some other situations (see the DCV Modifiers Table on page 373).

A character may place a weapon against some specific location on a completely immobile body as a Full Phase Action. He doesn't need to make an Attack Roll to hit the target in the specific location, and can hit that location as an Action which takes no time (consider this the equivalent of having the target Covered).

### SPECIAL HIT LOCATIONS

Sometimes a character may want to take a Placed Shot at a group of areas on the target instead of just one area. Or perhaps the target is partly Concealed, and only certain areas of his body can be hit. In such circumstances, the attacker should use the Special Hit Location Table. This table lists the different general locations, the OCV modifier to hit those locations, and the dice roll to consult the main Hit Location Table.

**SPECIAL HIT LOCATIONS**

| General Location | OCV | Dice Roll |
|---|---|---|
| Head Shot (Head-Shoulders) | -4 | 1d6+3 |
| High Shot (Head-Vitals) | -2 | 2d6+1 |
| Body Shot (Hands-Legs) | -1 | 2d6+4 |
| Low Shot (Shoulders-Feet) | -2 | 2d6+7* |
| Leg Shot (Vitals-Feet) | -4 | 1d6+12 |

* Count 19 as Feet

Consult the Hit Location table normally. Use the number from the dice roll (indicated in the third column) as the number on the first column of the Hit Location Table.

Example: *Andarra (OCV 7) is shooting her blaster at some space pirates (DCV 4) who are using a bulkhead for Concealment; she can only see their heads and chests. Preferring not to hit the bulkhead, she opts for a High Shot (-2 OCV). She rolls an 8 and hits! A High Shot requires a 2d6+1 roll on the Hit Location Table, so she rolls a 2 and a 1 and adds 1, for a 4 — Head shot! One space pirate takes a blaster bolt between the eyes and falls dead.*

### SECTIONAL DEFENSES

If the GM uses the Hit Location optional rule, then defenses can be sectional — that is, they can only protect certain Hit Locations. This can be used to reflect a steel cuirass or bullet-proof vest that only protects the Chest, a riot helmet that only protects the Head, and so forth. If the campaign allows for sectional defenses, characters should keep track of how much armor they have for each location (if any). The defense against an attack depends on the armor covering the location where the attack hit.

Example: *Andarra has bought a vest of reflective armor which provides 5 points of ED Armor to protect herself against lasers and the like. The vest covers the Chest, Stomach, and Vitals, so it protects Locations 10-13 on the table. This defense applies against any Energy Attack that strikes these locations; the armor has no effect on attacks which hit her in other Locations.*

Sectional defenses are most appropriate for Heroic campaigns. If the GM wants to use this option in a Superheroic campaign, he has two options. First, he can simply use the Power Limitation *Activation Roll*; this simulates defenses that don't always protect their user. Second, if he would like to use the Hit Location rules, then he should use Activation Roll to determine the Limitation for the sectional defense. Refer to the Armor Coverage Table, page 488, for details and examples.



## IMPAIRING EFFECTS

| 1d6 | Time Impairment Lasts |
|---|---|
| 1 | 1 turn |
| 2 | 1 minute |
| 3 | 5 minutes |
| 4 | 1 hour |
| 5 | 5 hours |
| 6 | 1 day |

HEAD: The character may become unconscious (GM's discretion), and upon waking could suffer from temporary amnesia, dizziness, double vision, or impaired speech. The GM could apply a -1 to -3 penalty on the character's CV, Perception, and Skill Rolls to reflect this.

The GM may also decide that an NPC who has taken an Impairing shot to the Head is dead, dying, or at the very least out of the fight. This is a good tool for getting unimportant ruffians out of the way. Used wisely, this rule can add to the drama of an adventure. Player characters should almost never die from an Impairing blow to the head.

HANDS, ARMS, AND SHOULDERS: The character loses the ability to perform delicate actions with that hand. He suffers a -3 OCV for any attacks using that arm, and -3 to any Skill Rolls involving that hand or arm. Striking someone with that arm causes the character to take 2d6 STUN, no defense.

CHEST, STOMACH, AND VITALS: The character no longer receives his Post-Segment 12 Recoveries. An Impairing shot to the Vitals may leave an NPC dead or dying, in the GM's discretion (as for Head wounds).

THIGHS, LEGS, AND FEET: Halve the character's Running. The character is -2 DCV because of his reduced mobility.

## Impairing

You can use this optional rule in conjunction with the Hit Location optional rule.

Whenever the BODY damage done to an area (before or after the BODYx) is more than half the character's total BODY, that area is Impaired. Consult the Impairment Table to determine the effects of Impairment on different parts of the body, and how long those effects last. The Impairment effect for head and torso areas should only occur if the character fails to make a CON Roll, or at the GM's discretion.

These effects are optional. The GM should use his judgment, with due regard for the nature of the attack that caused the wound and the situation. Sometimes applying these effects strictly is not the way to have the most fun. Feel free to alter the effects according to specific circumstances.

Each part of the body is listed, and possible effects of Impairment are discussed after each listing. If a character suffers multiple Impairing wounds that impose penalties on him, those penalties are cumulative.

## Disabling

You can use this optional rule in conjunction with the Hit Location optional rule.

Whenever the BODY damage done to an area (before or after the BODYx) is more than the character's total BODY, that area is Disabled. Consult the text below to determine the effects of a Disabling wound on different parts of the body.

The Disabling effects should occur at the GM's discretion. Generally, unimportant ruffians and NPCs could be considered dead for the sake of faster game play. Player characters should receive the benefit of the doubt — after all, they're the focus of the campaign.

## DISABLING EFFECTS

HEAD: The character will probably suffer a long term effect such as amnesia, impaired speech, partial paralysis, hearing loss, or impaired vision. The GM may decide to reduce some Characteristics such as INT, EGO, or COM to reflect this. Roll 1d6 on the Head Disabling Table to determine the type of damage. This could be a useful plot twist. Perhaps the character forgets who his enemies are!

**HEAD DISABLING TABLE**

| 1d6 | Effect |
|---|---|
| 1 | Lose 1d6 EGO |
| 2 | Lose 1d6 INT (amnesia, impaired speech) |
| 3 | Lose 1d6 COM |
| 4 | -½d6 to Perception Rolls (hearing or vision loss) |
| 5 | -½d6 to all Skill Rolls |
| 6 | Limb paralyzed (see next listing) |

HANDS, ARMS, AND SHOULDERS: The character may have -1d6 STR or DEX in that limb, or it may be totally severed depending upon the nature of the attack and the GM's judgment. If the GM rules that the limb remains attached, the character may try to make a CON Roll. If he fails the roll, the limb is permanently impaired, with the same effects as Impairment. A character who makes a CON Roll can retrain the arm to normal with several months of therapy (and possibly paying Character Points).

CHEST, STOMACH, AND VITALS: Long term effects may include the loss of various Characteristics. Roll on the Chest Disabling Table.

**CHEST DISABLING TABLE**

| 1d6 | Effect |
|---|---|
| 1 | Lose 1d6 STR |
| 2 | Lose 1d6 CON |
| 3 | Lose ½d6 BODY |
| 4 | Lose ½d6 REC |
| 5 | Lose 2d6 END |
| 6 | Lose 1d6 STUN |

THIGHS, LEGS, AND FEET: The character may have decreased movement and/or a distinctive limp. The limb may be totally severed, depending on the nature of the attack and the GM's judgement. If the limb is considered to be still attached, the character may try to make a CON Roll. If the character fails the roll, the limb will be permanently impaired, with the same effects as Impairment. A character who makes a CON Roll can retrain the limb to normal with several months of therapy (and possibly paying Character Points).

If the character makes a CON Roll, the long term effects of a Disabling wound should be less severe, and possibly only temporary in nature (roll on the Impairment Table). A character who fails a CON Roll may have to buy back any lost Characteristics, movement, or Perception at the regular campaign price, depending on the GM.

Disabling effects can create story ideas. The roleplaying possibilities are legion for characters who are suddenly blinded, lose an arm, or become paralyzed. But don't spoil the players' fun by applying the rules in a rigid manner — it's not every player who wants to try to roleplay a blinded character, after all. Technology or magic can often fix any disability a character has. Cybernetic replacements might be used, or a new body part regrown, depending on the campaign.

Each part of the body is listed in the accompanying box with possible Disabling effects.

## KNOCKDOWN

Weapons, especially big ones, can knock people down; so can powerful attacks of just about any kind. This is simulated by Knockdown, an optional rule used with the Hit Location Table. Whenever a character takes an Impairing wound, he must retreat one hex and make a DEX Roll. If he fails the roll, he falls down. Whenever he takes a Disabling wound, he's automatically Knocked Down, and falls back one hex for every 2 BODY rolled on the dice over the character's starting BODY (*i.e.,* the amount of BODY he has when fully healed, such as 10 BODY for a normal human). A Knocked Down character must use a Half Phase Action to get to his feet (if he was in midair or midwater, he must spend a Half Phase reorienting himself).

Example: *A gigantic alien with a blaster (RKA 3d6) does 14 BODY to Andarra, who only has 10 BODY. Andarra is Knocked Down and goes flying back two hexes.*

Knockdown is recommended only for use in Heroic campaigns. Superheroic campaigns should use Knockback (see below).

## BLEEDING

When this optional rule is used, characters may continue to take damage from blood loss after they suffer an injury. Among other uses, this rule allows the GM to have NPCs bleed to death if untended (which is sometimes useful for plot purposes). In situations where a character can get immediate medical care, there's no need to use the Bleeding rules. Generally, you should use Bleeding when a character gets injured, but still wants to keep going.

Whenever a character loses BODY, he will Bleed, thus losing STUN and occasionally some extra BODY. The Bleeding Table lists how much damage characters take from Bleeding. The column *Number of Dice/Turn* is the number of dice of

STUN the wounded character takes per Turn. Wounded characters should roll the dice on Segment 1 of each Turn. The STUN lost from Bleeding may be Recovered normally (see *Recovery*). Whenever the character rolls a six on any of the dice, he loses an additional 1 BODY. This may cause the character to Bleed faster. However, the maximum BODY lost from bleeding is 1 BODY per Turn, even if several sixes are rolled.

## BLEEDING TABLE

| BODY Lost | Number of Dice/Turn | Stop Bleeding |
|---|---|---|
| 1-5 | 1d6 | 1 |
| 6-10 | 2d6 | 2-5 |
| 11-15 | 3d6 | 3-9 |
| 16-20 | 4d6 | 4-13 |
| 21-25 | 5d6 | 5-17 |
| 26 or more | 6d6 | 6-21 |

Thus, a character who has lost 3 BODY due to a wound would lose 1d6 STUN every Turn.

There is a chance Bleeding will stop of its own accord. The character must be unconscious or resting for a full Turn — he cannot engage in any type of combat or perform any Action which takes a Half Phase or Full Phase in any Segment of that Turn. If he meets these conditions, the Bleeding stops if he rolls a number in the range shown in the *Stop Bleeding* column on his Bleeding dice. Characters still take the indicated STUN damage in the Turn the Bleeding stops.

Characters with Paramedics (an Everyman Skill) may attempt to stop Bleeding. Appropriate tools (bandages, pressure packs, antiseptics) can add up to +3 to the roll, as can taking additional time. Extremely poor conditions or medical techniques ("bleeding's good for you") may warrant a penalty (-1 to -3). The Bleeding stops if the character succeeds with a Paramedic roll, per the rules in the section *Death,* above.

Wounds that have stopped Bleeding may reopen if the character exerts himself. The GM should check on Segment 1 if the character used his STR or made a Full Move at any time during the previous Turn. If the GM rolls less than (9 + (number of dice character would Bleed) - (amount Paramedics roll was made by, if Paramedics was used to stop the Bleeding)), the wound reopens and the character begins Bleeding again.

Example: *Andarra has lost 6 BODY. She will lose 2d6 STUN per Turn from Bleeding. Andarra stops to rest. On Segment 1, she rolls the 2d6 and gets a 2 and a 1, totaling 3 STUN lost. Because she did not exert herself, and rolled within the numbers listed under the Stop Bleeding column, she stops Bleeding.*

*Andarra finishes resting and runs toward an enemy's spaceship. To check to see if her wound reopens, she rolls 3d6. She rolls a 13. Since the chance for her wound to reopen was (9 + 2) = 11 or less, she does not start Bleeding again.*

Blunt weapons or Normal Damage (from any kind of attack) are less likely to induce Bleeding. Such damage is considered to be -1 level on the Bleeding table. Thus, a character who has taken up to 5 BODY from only Normal Damage will not bleed; at 6-10 BODY, he'll take 1d6 per Phase; and so on.

# KNOCKBACK

In some types of combat, characters deliver such mighty blows that the combatants get knocked all over the battlefield. To reflect this, characters can do *Knockback* (KB). Knockback is most appropriate for Superheroic campaigns; Heroic campaigns generally should use Knockdown (see above) instead.

Of course, not all attacks do Knockback. You should limit Knockback to attacks that do damage by directly striking the target — for example, punches, Energy Blasts, Killing Attacks, and the like. Attacks that don't damage the target through direct force do not do Knockback. This second category typically includes Powers such as Drain, Transfer, Flash, and Transform.

Since the amount of Knockback a character takes depends upon the BODY damage rolled for an attack that hits him (see below), attacks that don't inflict BODY damage (such as Ego Attacks and Attack Powers bought with the *NND* and *AVLD* Advantages) usually don't cause Knockback. However, characters can buy them, or any other Power that doesn't do BODY, with the Advantage *Does Knockback.* In this case, count the "Normal Damage BODY" the Power would do if it were a Normal Damage attack, and use that to determine the Knockback.

### DETERMINING KNOCKBACK

To determine how much Knockback a character suffers from being hit, the attacker rolls 2d6 and subtracts the total from the amount of BODY rolled for the attack. Use the total amount of BODY rolled on the attack dice, regardless of the target's defenses, how much damage the character takes after applying defenses, Vulnerabilities, Hit Location modifiers, or the like. The one exception is if the damage has to first penetrate a barrier, such as a wall or Force Wall. In that case, base the Knockback on the BODY damage that gets through the barrier; if none gets through, there's no Knockback. (If some does get through, the amount that gets through would be doubled for Double Knockback purposes.)

If the result is negative, no Knockback occurs — the defender remains where he was standing before the attack.

If the result is 0, the defender is Knocked Down. A character who is Knocked Down must spend a Half Phase in his next Phase getting to his feet (or reorient himself if he were in mid-air or mid-water).

If the result is positive, the target is Knocked Back that many inches. He ends up lying on the ground (or imbedded in a wall or other object), and must spend a Half Phase to get up (or getting out of whatever he hit).



If a character is hit by an Autofire attack that does Knockback, the Knockback equals the highest Knockback rolled for any of the attacks that hit, +1" for each additional attack that hit. For multiple-power attacks, and Rapid Fire and Sweep used to hit a single target multiple times, roll the Knockback separately for each hit, and use only the highest result.

**Modifying The Number Of Knockback Dice**

Certain situations modify the number of d6 rolled to determine Knockback. The Knockback Modifiers Table lists the different situations and the modifier to the 2d6 normally rolled (the modifiers are cumulative). For instance, if the target were flying, the GM would only roll 1d6 to determine Knockback; if he were underwater, the GM would roll 3d6. If the attacker used a Killing Strike (a Killing Damage attack and a Martial Maneuver) on an underwater opponent, the attacker would subtract a grand total of 5d6 from his BODY to determine Knockback. Shrinking, Density Increase, Growth, and Knockback Resistance also affect the total Knockback a character takes. The GM can add other modifiers as he sees fit.

## KNOCKBACK MODIFIERS

| Circumstance | Number of dice rolled for Knockback |
|---|---|
| Target is in the air | -1d6 |
| Target Rolled with the Punch | -1d6 |
| Target is underwater | +1d6 |
| Attack was a Killing Damage attack | +1d6 |
| Attack was a Martial Maneuver | +1d6 |
| Target is using Clinging | +1d6 |
| Target is in zero gravity | -1d6 |

Example: *Howler hits Green Dragon with an Energy Blast, doing 31 STUN and 9 BODY worth of damage. Howler gets a 5 on her 2d6 Knockback roll. Green Dragon is Knocked Back away from Howler 9 - 5 = 4" into a wall. He takes 4d6 damage.*

*In his next Phase, Green Dragon succeeds with a Breakfall roll and gets to his feet as a Zero Phase Action. He Half Moves to Howler and hits her with a Martial Kick for 29 STUN and 8 BODY damage. He rolls a total of 2d6 (2d6 -1d6 because Howler is flying +1d6 because he used a Martial Maneuver) and gets a 10. Since 8 - 10 = -2, Howler isn't Knocked Back at all.*

### KNOCKBACK DAMAGE

Knockback can damage a target. A character who is Knocked Back into a wall (or other upright structure) takes 1d6 Normal Damage for every 1" of Knockback taken (though the durability of the wall may limit how much damage he takes; see below). For instance, a character Knocked Back 6" into a wall takes 6d6 damage. A character Knocked Back into another character damages himself and the character he hits; both characters take 1d6 damage per 1" of Knockback.

To determine if a character hits a structure or other large object when he's Knocked Back, the GM simply needs to know which direction he's moving (*i.e.,* opposite the direction from which the attack came) and what's in his way. If the structure or object is big enough, he'll hit it automatically. If it's small or narrow (for example, a tree or another character), the character who did the Knockback

**KNOCKBACK DAMAGE SUMMARY**

The damage from Knockback depends on two factors: number of inches of Knockback taken and objects impacted.

1. If the inches of Knockback taken are greater than the DEF + BODY of the object impacted, the number of dice rolled for Knockback damage equals the DEF + BODY (and the character keeps moving backward as described in the text).

2. If the inches of Knockback taken are equal to or less than the DEF + BODY of the object impacted, the number of dice rolled for Knockback damage equals the inches taken.

3. If the character doesn't hit an object (*i.e.,* he hits the ground when he's Knocked Back horizontally), the number of dice rolled for Knockback damage equals half the inches taken.

damage should make an Attack Roll using his base CV (calculated only from DEX, with no CSLs or other modifiers added) to see if he Knocked the target Back into the object. Use the Target Size rules to determine the structure's or object's DCV. Success indicates he did; failure indicates the target misses the object.

If a character hits a structure or other large object, both he and the structure take damage. Regardless of the amount of Knockback rolled, the most dice of Knockback damage a character can take when he hits a structure equals the DEF + BODY of the structure. If he's Knocked Back for more inches than the structure has DEF + BODY, he takes DEF + BODY dice of damage, the structure (or part thereof) shatters, and he continues through the hole. For every DEF + BODY total worth of structure a character is Knocked Back through, he flies back 1" less. (See *Breaking Things*, page 447).

Example: *Mechanon is Knocked Back 11" by an attack. Two inches behind Mechanon is a 6 DEF, 2 BODY wall. Mechanon flies back 2" and smashes through the wall (because he's been Knocked Back further than 8 [the structure's DEF + BODY]). Mechanon takes 8d6 damage (6 DEF + 2 BODY = 8d6 Knockback damage), blows through the wall, and continues 11-2-8 = 1" more.*

*Suppose that the wall was 6 DEF, 6 BODY instead. In that case Mechanon would take 11d6 damage from hitting it, and would not shatter it and keep moving — its BODY + DEF exceeds the inches of Knockback he took.*

If a character who has been Knocked Back does not impact a structure or other large upright surface, he simply hits the ground. He takes 1d6 damage for every 2" he was Knocked Back — half the damage of hitting an object.

A character may take less Knockback damage if he hits something soft, or more damage if he hits something with jagged edges. If he hits something particularly sharp, the GM can convert the damage to Killing Damage of an equal Damage Class.

Knockback damage is not limited to the amount of dice or damage rolled for the attack that caused the Knockback. It's entirely possible for the Knockback from an attack to do more damage than the attack itself does.

Distance traveled does not reduce Knockback damage. For Knockback purposes, there's no "deceleration" or the like. A character impacting an object takes his full Knockback damage whether he hits it after traveling 1", 8", or any other amount.

**Downward Knockback**

An attacker can, if he chooses, Knock an opponent downward into the earth. He can only do this in HTH Combat, or in Ranged Combat if he can get above his target. To use this option, the attacker must declare his intention before he attacks. He then attacks and rolls Knockback normally. If he rolls any Knockback, the character is knocked prone in his hex. In addition, the character takes 1d6 damage for every 2" of Knockback rolled (if he's attacked directly from above, the GM should treat the ground as a "structure" and have the character take 1d6 per 1" of Knockback). A character who takes downward Knockback can use Breakfall to stay on his feet and avoid the Knockback damage.

**Aerial And Upward Knockback**

A character who's in the air and suffers Knockback typically takes the Knockback damage (if he hits something), not falling damage. However, the GM may, in the interest of common sense and dramatic sense, apply falling damage instead. This makes the most sense when the character falls a long way (particularly if he's also Stunned or Knocked Out). If the character's so high up in the air that he hits nothing, either due to Knockback or because he's able to right himself and fly under his own power before hitting the ground, he takes no damage at all.

If a character takes Knockback in an upward direction (perhaps after being uppercutted by an attacker smaller than he), the inches traveled aren't halved (as they would be for a character using Flight to move straight upward). Calculate the inches traveled using the standard rules. Unless the character happens to hit an object mid-air, he takes no Knockback damage from flying through the air this way, since he doesn't impact anything (even the ground).

**Other Effects**

Being Knocked Back does not affect the CV bonuses a character gains from using a particular maneuver. For example, a character using Martial Strike or Dodge retains the DCV bonus he gets from that maneuver even if he's Knocked Back. Nor does being Knocked Back eliminate the DCV penalty from maneuvers like Sweep.

Knockback does not cancel out or reduce velocity *per se.* However, since the victim of Knockback is "knocked off his feet," taking Knockback stops him from continuing to move until he gets to his feet again. (If he makes a Breakfall roll to stay on his feet, he continues moving at his current velocity in his next Phase, unless he chooses to slow down or stop using the standard rules for doing so.)

## REDUCING KNOCKBACK

Characters have several ways to reduce or eliminate Knockback.

**Knockback And Mass**

Characters or objects that are lighter or heavier than normal ("normal" being 100 kilograms) often take more or less Knockback.

For every 2x mass, a character takes -1" Knockback. Thus, a character who weighs 400 kilograms takes -2" KB. The Density Increase Table and Vehicle Size Table, pages 146 and 463, provide easy references for increased mass.

For every ½ mass, a character takes +1" of Knockback. Since a character's weight decreases to 1/8 normal for every halving of his height, every level of Shrinking causes a character to take +3" Knockback (see the Shrinking Table, page 218).

These and other modifiers don't affect the damage done by the Knockback, just the distance (although this might change the likelihood of the character hitting a structure). (On the other hand, the Power *Knockback Resistance* reduces both the distance and the damage, and the reduction of Knockback gained from Density Increase functions similarly.) For example, if a character who massed 800 kg was Knocked Back 10" by an attack, he'd only go back 7"; but if he hit a wall at that point, he'd take 10d6 of damage.

**Knockback And Breakfall**

A character who's not unconscious or Stunned may attempt a Breakfall roll at -1 per 2" of Knockback to avoid taking damage from Knockback. If the roll succeeds, the character takes no damage. He also lands on his feet, so he doesn't have to waste a Half Phase Action to re-orient himself. Breakfall doesn't help a character who hits a wall or other object, however.

**Resisting Knockback**

A character can use his STR or Flight (if he has it) to resist Knockback. In either case, he must declare in advance of an attack that he's resisting Knockback. Doing so is a Half Phase Action and halves his DCV. A character may Abort to resist Knockback.

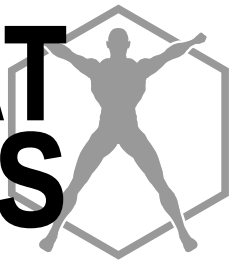
Any character can use his STR to prevent Knockback from a given direction (if he's hit from an unexpected direction, he takes normal Knockback). This requires a reasonably stable ground surface for the character to "dig in." Each 5 points of STR reduces the Knockback by 1".

A character with Flight may declare that he's using part of his Flight to root himself to a single spot (or to remain at a specific location in mid-air, if he's already flying). For every 1" of Flight used to stabilize him, he takes -1" of Knockback. He must declare which direction he's bracing against. If he's hit from an unexpected direction, he takes normal Knockback.

If a character attempting to resist Knockback takes Knockback despite his efforts, he takes full Knockback, just as if he'd done nothing.



# OTHER COMBAT EFFECTS



Here are a few more situations that sometimes arise in combat.

## Crushing Damage

Sometimes characters get crushed under heavy objects (or enemies using Density Increase). To calculate the effects of crushing, determine the STR required to lift the heavy object. Then use that STR to apply damage to whatever it's crushing (to save time, you may want to apply the Standard Effect Rule and have the STR do 1 BODY and 3 STUN damage per d6). As always, the GM may modify this rule to prevent abuse, or in the interest of game balance, common sense, and/or dramatic sense.

**Frequency Of Crushing Damage**

If a character does crushing damage (typically because he has Density Increase and stands on top of another character), the crushing damage applies on each of his Phases. The character has to take an Attack Action and succeed with an Attack Roll to maintain the crushing each Phase after the Phase in which he first crushes the character. If the Attack Roll fails, the victim has somehow resisted being crushed that Segment, but hasn't gotten out from underneath the character crushing him (the GM may rule that a badly failed Attack Roll *does* mean the victim wins free).

Since applying crushing damage this way is an Attack Action, doing it ends the character's Phase, and if the character decides to attack someone else he cannot make an Attack Roll to crush the victim. If a character wants to be able to crush people and still do other things, he should buy a Damage Shield that does damage equivalent to his crushing damage, with appropriate Limitations.

If it's an object or phenomena doing the crushing (for example, if a landslide covers up a character, or a safe falls on him and pins him), the character takes the crushing damage in the Segment when he's first crushed, and then every Turn thereafter. For ease of bookkeeping, the GM can just apply the damage every Segment 12; for greater complication, apply it every Turn in the same Phase when the character was first crushed. (Alternately, the GM could impose crushing damage per Segment, like damage from chemicals, if that seems more appropriate given the circumstances.)

## Inability To Sense An Opponent

A character who cannot perceive his opponent(s) or target(s) with a Targeting Sense (because he's been attacked with a Flash, is in a Darkness field, is otherwise "blinded," or his opponent is Invisible) suffers the following penalties:

—In HTH Combat, the character is at ½ OCV and ½ DCV. This applies both to when he makes attacks in HTH Combat, and is attacked in HTH Combat.

—In Ranged Combat, the character is at 0 OCV and ½ DCV. This applies both to when he makes attacks in Ranged Combat, and is attacked in Ranged Combat.

If a character can make a PER Roll with a Nontargeting Sense (a Half Phase Action) to perceive a particular target, then against that target only he is at -1 DCV, ½ OCV when attacked or attacking in HTH Combat, and full DCV, ½ OCV when attacked from or attacking at Range. Against all other targets he is affected by the standard "lack of Targeting Sense" modifiers described above.

**INVISIBILITY IN COMBAT**

At the GM's option, Invisible characters may get Surprise bonuses when they attack — even if another character knows there's an invisible enemy skulking about, he's still going to have a hard time figuring out exactly where the Invisible character's attack is coming from or getting out of its way. Since being Invisible already confers certain combat benefits (see above), the Surprise bonus should be limited to +1 OCV at most.

When facing an Invisible opponent in combat, a character can try to make a new PER Roll once per Phase to find the Invisible target until he succeeds. This is a Half Phase Action. Once a PER Roll succeeds, usually no further rolls are needed — after that he knows generally where the Invisible character is. However, if he turns his attention somewhere else or becomes Stunned, he must make a new PER Roll to reacquire the Invisible target when he can next act.

If an Invisible character makes a visible attack, the target of that attack (and anyone else who succeeds with a PER Roll to spot the attack) only suffers a -1 to his OCV to attack back, even at Range, until the Invisible character moves. Once the Invisible character moves out of the hex where he was standing when he made the visible attack, his Invisibility affects OCVs as normal.

As discussed on page 192, a character's weapons are covered by his Invisibility except in the Phases he uses them to make attacks, and there are ways to negate many of the benefits of Invisibility in combat.

## Breaking Out Of Entangles And Grabs

If a character who's trying to break out of an Entangle (which doesn't require an Attack Roll) does twice the remaining BODY of the Entangle or more, he's free and has a Full Phase in which to act (*i.e.,* it takes no time at all to break out of the Entangle). If an attack against an Entangle does the remaining BODY of the Entangle or more (but less than twice the remaining BODY), the character is free and may perform a Half Phase Action. If an attack against an Entangle does less than the remaining BODY of the Entangle, the character is still Entangled and may take no more Actions that Phase. (The same applies if a character uses an innate ability, such as an Energy Blast, to try to destroy the Entangle.)

If a Grabbed character's attempt to break out of a Grab does twice as much BODY on his STR Roll as the BODY rolled for the Grabber's STR Roll, the Grabbed character frees himself and has a Full Phase in which to act. If the Grabbed character's attempt to break free does enough BODY to break free (*i.e.,* more BODY than rolled by the character Grabbing him), but less than twice the BODY on the Grabber's STR Roll, the Grabbed character is free, but may take no more Actions that Phase.

At the GM's option, a character does not have to make a complete escape from a Grab or Entangle. Instead, he can try to free only one limb, which he can then use as he sees fit. This allows +5 STR on the attempt to escape or break free, since he can concentrate his efforts on freeing just one limb.

## Casual Strength

A character's Casual STR equals half of his normal STR. He may use Casual STR as a Zero Phase Action to push past or smash through obstacles while moving, break free from Entangles and Grabs, and the like. However, Casual STR may never be used to attack another character or cause damage to him.

Casual STR costs END to use, but a character only has to pay END for his STR once per Phase, no matter how many different things he does with it in that Phase. For example, a character could use Casual STR to break free from an Entangle, use it again to smash through an obstacle, and then punch someone with his full STR, and he only pays END for his STR once.

## Missed And Random Shots

If a character misses with a Ranged attack, generally that's all that happens — the missed attack doesn't hit another character. If an attack would ricochet off some surface or is Missile Deflected, it's assumed not to hit any other target.

At the GM's option, if a character misses his target with a Ranged attack, and there's another potential target it could hit (for example, another goblin standing just a few feet behind the goblin he shot an arrow at), there's a possibility the second, unintended, target gets hit instead. The character should make another Attack Roll, using his base OCV at -3 (*i.e.,* no Combat Skill Levels or weapons modifiers apply). If he succeeds, he hits the unintended target — not necessarily a good thing, since the unintended target might be a friend.

The GM may, if he chooses, decide that a missed attack ricochets and hits something significant. Generally this should not be another character or target, but instead some feature of the environment that makes the situation more dramatic — a barrel that begins leaking a flammable liquid, the safety switch on the nuclear reactor, a fire alarm, a rope holding up a chandelier, and so forth. Characters cannot Missile Deflect an attack into a potentially useful "target" this way; that requires Missile Reflection.

If a character chooses to fire randomly into a crowd hoping to hit someone (not any target in particular, just anyone who happens to be in the way), roll his base OCV (no modifiers) against an appropriate DCV to determine if he succeeds. The DCV should normally be 3 for a relatively tightly-packed crowd; thinner or more spread out crowds should have a higher DCV.

In some cases NPCs will try to use a crowd as "cover" from a character's attacks. If a character insists on trying to hit the NPC anyway, use the normal Concealment rules (page 377); a missed shot generally means the person being used as cover, or a random person in the crowd, gets hit instead.

# RECOVERY



During combat, a character may temporarily lose both STUN and END. To reflect the body's recuperative capacity, each character has a Recovery (REC) Characteristic.

Characters use REC to regain STUN and END. This is known as "Recovering" or "taking a Recovery." When a character Recovers, add his REC to his current STUN and END totals. Characters may Recover STUN and END lost due to injuries, using one's Powers, being attacked with an Ego Attack, or any other cause (unless the rules indicate otherwise).

Characters get to Recover in two situations: Post-Segment 12; and when they choose to do so as a Full Phase Action.

## POST-SEGMENT 12 RECOVERY

After Segment 12 each Turn, all characters (even Stunned ones) get a free Post-Segment 12 Recovery. This Recovery occurs automatically (unless the character is holding his breath [see below] or is deeply unconscious). Characters get a Post-Segment 12 Recovery even if they're taking damage from a Constant attack.

Example: *At the end of Segment 12, Chiron has only 4 END and 13 STUN left. Fortunately, the Turn is over and he gets a Post-Segment 12 Recovery. He has a REC of 5, so he regains 5 STUN and 5 END, for a total of 13 + 5 = 18 STUN and 4 + 5 = 9 END. As the next Turn begins, Chiron has 18 STUN and 9 END.*

## TAKING A RECOVERY AS AN ACTION

Second, a character may choose to take a Recovery as his Action in any of his Phases. Taking a Recovery is a Full Phase Action and occurs at the end of the Segment (after all other characters who have a Phase that Segment have acted). A character who Recovers during a Phase may do nothing else — not even maintaining a Constant Power, or Actions that cost no END or take no time (however, a character may take a Zero Phase Action at the beginning of his Phase to turn off a power). While Recovering, a character is at ½ DCV, and all modifiers for Placed Shots made to hit him are halved as well. A character who Recovers during Segment 12 also gets the Post-Segment 12 Recovery.

A character cannot Hold his Action (or voluntarily lower his DEX) and then Recover. A character cannot Abort to a Recovery.

### Being Attacked While Taking A Recovery

A character may be hit by an attack while taking a Recovery. If he takes no damage from the attack after applying his defenses, he may take his Recovery as normal. However, if the character takes any STUN or BODY damage from the attack, his Recovery has been interrupted. He does not get back any END or STUN and may take no Actions — he has just wasted a Phase. (At the GM's option, this also occurs if a character suffers any similar effect, such as losing INT to a Drain INT or taking Knockback.)

If a character takes damage in a Segment in which he has a Phase, but prior to his DEX in the initiative order (in other words, before he has had a chance to act or declare an Action), he may declare a Recovery when he gets his Phase. The Recovery occurs at the end of the Segment, per the usual rules. If he takes damage *after* declaring his Recovery, the Recovery is spoiled, as described above.

## HOLDING BREATH AND DROWNING

A character who holds his breath does not get to Recover, even on Post-Segment 12. He also expends a minimum of 1 END per Phase. He may lower his SPD to 2 (see page 357) to reduce the amount of END he uses.

A character who runs out of END while not breathing expends STUN as END (see page 425). A character who runs out of STUN then loses BODY, drowning at -1 BODY/Phase.

All characters drown at a minimum SPD of 2; so even a SPD 1 character must expend 2 END per Turn. (Low SPD individuals react more slowly, but they still have to breathe!)

## RECOVERING BODY

Generally, a character Recovers a number of BODY in one month equal to his REC. The GM can apportion this BODY over the course of the month. For instance, Chiron of the preceding example could Recover 5 BODY in a month, or approximately 1 BODY every 6 days. This rate of healing assumes the character takes it easy.

If the character moves around, fights, travels, or engages in similar strenuous activity, the healing rate is halved. If the conditions are very poor, unsanitary, overly cold or hot (he's in jail, perhaps), or otherwise unfavorable for healing, the healing rate is also halved. If a character is suffering from any Impairing or Disabling wounds, that may also double the normal healing time, at the GM's discretion.

On the other hand, hospital care can halve the time needed to heal (thus doubling the amount of BODY a character can Recover in a month). Modern (or even more advanced) medicine may greatly speed up the character's healing rate. If the campaign is high-tech, then the GM may want to adjust the healing rate for characters receiving medical attention. Similarly, in some campaigns healing magic can speed a character's progression back to full health.

# ENDURANCE



Actions require some energy. The *HERO System* reflects this by requiring characters to use Endurance (END) to perform physical feats. The general rule is that 10 Active Points' worth of a Power or STR cost 1 END each Phase to use. Thus, a character using an Energy Blast 2d6 would use 1 END. Characteristics other than STR do not cost END to use, unless noted otherwise.

Of course, a character does not have to use all of his STR, or use a Power at full power if he doesn't want to. Using STR and Powers at partial power is a good way to conserve END.

Some Maneuvers and other Actions don't have a listed STR value. In such cases, a character spends 1 END (unless the GM rules otherwise). This includes Combat Maneuvers such as Block, Dodge, or firing a weapon. Martial Maneuvers do not cost END.

Characters regain at least some of the END they've expended when they get a Recovery (see *Recovery*).

## USING STUN FOR ENDURANCE

A character who runs out of END and still wishes to perform Actions may use STUN as END. The character takes 1d6 STUN Only damage for every 2 "END" (or fraction thereof) used, and no defense is allowed against this damage. Yes, characters can Knock themselves Out using this rule. Isn't it wonderful to be heroic?

## SUPERHEROIC AND HEROIC ENDURANCE

Superheroic Campaigns: Using 10 Active Points of STR or a Power costs 1 END per Phase.

Heroic Campaigns: Using 5 Points of STR costs 1 END per Phase; using 10 Active Points of a Power costs 1 END per Phase.

In Superheroic campaigns, many characters pay END just to maintain their Powers, so END is very important. Superheroes tend to have mighty powers that use up huge quantities of END, and rationing power can be an important consideration in a long battle.

Although END use is usually less of a factor in Heroic campaigns than in Superheroic campaigns, the importance of END varies greatly from campaign to campaign. In modern-day or Science Fiction campaigns, characters use self-powered weapons and devices, and thus rarely run out of END. But in Swords And Sorcery Fantasy, characters typically engage in more HTH Combat, so END is more important.

In most Heroic campaigns, END costs are 1 END for every 5 Active Points of STR, which simulates the prevalence of HTH weapons and combat better, but 1 END for every 10 Active Points of Powers (such as magic spells in a Fantasy campaign).

The GM should feel free to adjust, or even ignore, END costs. He should never require players to keep track of END unless it's important.

## OPTIONAL LONG TERM ENDURANCE LOSS

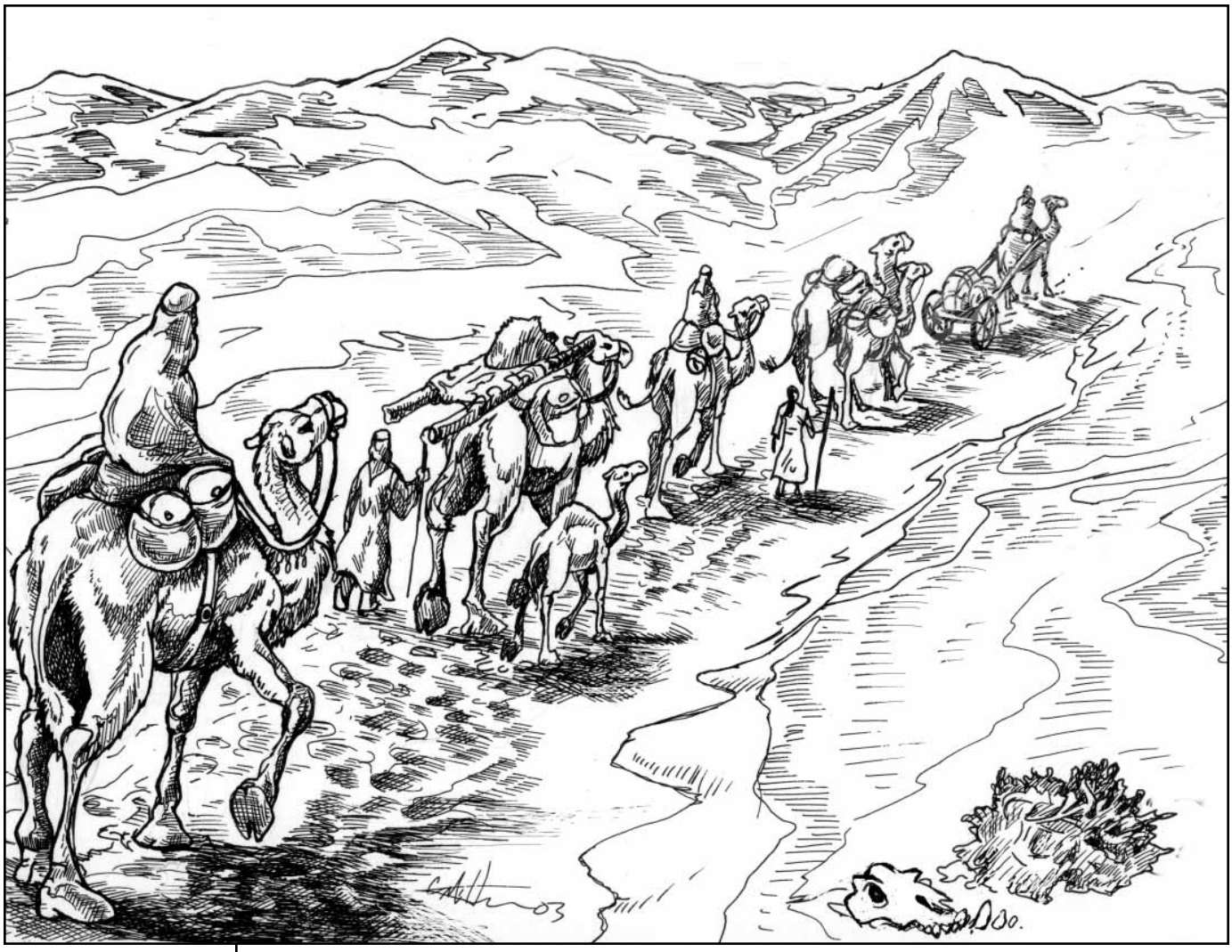
This optional rule involves the use of END over long time periods. It reflects the fact that characters become more and more fatigued if forced to continuously exert END. The Long Term END (LTE) rules are complicated; you should only use them the GM feels they'll enhance the adventure. This rule is particularly useful to keep wizards from casting spells too frequently.

To calculate LTE loss, the character should compare the amount of END used in a Turn to the character's REC. If the END used in a Turn is less than half the character's REC, then the character loses no LTE. If the character uses greater than half his REC, then he begins losing LTE.

Every point of END lost to LTE means one less point of END for a character to use during combat and other situations. If a character's LTE reaches 0, he must stop and rest and cannot take further action until he has at least 1 positive END. Characters cannot use STUN for LTE as they can for standard END.

Example: *Arkelos and his companions are fleeing from some nomads across a desert. Each of them is spending half his REC in END per Turn to move as fast as he can through the arid landscape. As a result, each of them is losing 1 END to LTE every five minutes. Arkelos normally has 40 END when fully rested. After an hour of this pace, he has lost 12 END to LTE, so he only has 28 END to spend when the nomads bring them to bay at an oasis. If Arkelos has to spend more than 28 END, he will have to start using STUN in place of END (although taking Post-Segment 12 Recoveries may delay that unfortunate eventuality for a Turn or two).*

A character does not regain spent LTE with normal Recoveries; Recovering LTE requires longer resting periods. A character recovers his REC in LTE for every five hours of rest; if the character is not resting, he only gets back his REC in LTE once per day. The GM can apportion this over the course of the day if he wants.





Example: *Pulsar (REC 10) tries to blow his way out of his prison cell with his Energy Blast. Since this will take a long time, the GM decides to use the LTE rules. Pulsar's Energy Blast 12d6 costs 6 END to use. Pulsar has a 5 SPD, so he uses 30 END per Turn, assuming he doesn't use any other Powers. 30 is 3x Pulsar's 9 REC, so Pulsar loses 2 LTE each Turn. If he stays active, he'll be able to Recover 10 Long Term END per day, or approximately 1 every 2 hours. If he rests, he can recover 10 LTE every 5 hours, or 2 LTE per hour.*

## LONG TERM ENDURANCE

| (END in Turn)/REC | END lost to Long Term |
|---|---|
| less than ½ | 0 |
| ½ | 1 per 5 Minutes |
| 1 | 1 per Minute |
| 2 | 1 per Turn |
| 3 | 2 per Turn |
| 4 | 4 per Turn |
| 5 | 8 per Turn |

# PUSHING

Occasionally a character needs to exceed the normal limits of his abilities to perform a noble, heroic, or life-saving action. This is called *Pushing*.

## GENERAL RULES

Although Pushing differs slightly in Heroic and Superheroic campaigns (see below), some general rules apply to both types of campaigns.

First, a player must declare that his character is Pushing *before* he makes an Attack Roll (or other appropriate roll). If the Attack Roll misses, the character still must expend the full END cost for Pushing.

Second, Pushing is very tiring. When a character Pushes, he must spend 1 END for every Character Point by which he Pushes his STR or Power, in addition to the normal END cost for the un-Pushed ability. For example, a character who Pushes for 10 points of STR spends the usual 2 END for his STR *plus* 10 END for Pushing. Generally, characters can only Push Powers that cost END. They cannot Push powers that never cost END, that are bought to 0 END, or that have Charges (but can Push powers bought to ½ END).

Third, a character cannot more than double a Power's Active Points by Pushing — he can only add as many Active Points to a Power by Pushing as the Power already has. For example, if a character has Swimming 4" (4 Active Points), he can only add 4" (+4 Active Points) to that Power by Pushing it — he can't exert himself and suddenly Swim 14" per Phase.

Fourth, any Advantages on the Pushed ability automatically apply to the dice or effect gained from Pushing — the character doesn't have to reduce the Pushing effect to account for the Advantages. For example, if a character has an Energy Blast 8d6, Armor Piercing and he Pushes it for 10 Character Points, he fires an Energy Blast 10d6, Armor Piercing. A character cannot increase the extent of his Push by applying Limitations to it.

Fifth, a character normally cannot Push to obtain extra Noncombat Movement or apply an Adder to a Power. However, the GM may, in *rare* circumstances, allow this.

Sixth, *Pushing is only for heroes and important NPCs.* The average man — even the best athletes and warriors — can *never* Push. Pushing is something only heroes (including all PCs) and their enemies can usually do. For example, an Olympic weightlifter cannot Push his STR to lift more weight and win the gold medal — he's not a hero, so he can't Push, even though this is a crucial activity for him. Only in situations requiring true heroism and sacrifice can a normal person Push, and only then at the GM's discretion. For example, a GM might allow a normal person to Push his STR to lift a burning car off of someone who's trapped beneath it, since that's a situation where lives are at stake and the character is putting his own life at risk to save others.

Seventh, *characters can only use Pushing for crucial, heroic, or life-saving actions.* Characters, even heroes and PCs, cannot Push whenever they want to just to look impressive. Pushing is a last-ditch effort to save the day when all else fails, an enemy has to be Knocked Out *now,* regular-strength attacks are not getting the job done, or something terrible will occur if a character doesn't stop it. Generally, characters should not be allowed to Push every Phase as a matter of course, even if they have the END to do it. The GM determines whether a character can Push in a given situation.

## PUSHING IN HEROIC CAMPAIGNS

A character in a Heroic campaign may push his STR or Powers up to 5 Character Points with a successful EGO Roll, +1 Character Point for every 1 point by which he makes the EGO Roll.

The GM may provide a modifier to the character's EGO Roll based on how important the Push is. If Andarra is trying to pull a lever to save the planet Theris from being devoured by a giant space amoeba, the GM might give her a bonus to her EGO Roll. The GM should discourage more casual uses of Pushing by applying a negative modifier to the character's EGO Roll (assuming the GM allows Pushing at all; see above).

## PUSHING IN SUPERHEROIC CAMPAIGNS

Pushing in Superheroic campaigns is a much more common occurrence. A Superheroic character can Push the limits of his Power by up to 10 Character Points. This does not require an EGO Roll.

Example: *Defender has to stop a wall from falling down on a helpless old lady. The GM determines that his STR of 30 isn't enough to hold up the wall. Defender Pushes his STR 10 Character Points up to 40 STR, enough for him to hold up the wall long enough for the lady to escape. The END cost for this heroic feat is 3 for a 30 STR and 10 for Pushing the STR to 40 for a total of 13 END.*

The GM may allow Pushes greater than 10 Character Points in unusual circumstances, such as saving the universe.

# PRESENCE ATTACKS



Powerful individuals are impressive. Some can be so overwhelming that they can make others stop and listen, or even obey commands. The *HERO System* simulates this with *Presence Attacks.*

A Presence Attack is an attempt to influence the target(s), and can have very useful effects. It affects everyone who can hear the character performing it (or sometimes just see him, depending on the Presence Attack), provided it's intended for them. For example, a Presence Attack made by one of the PCs against Ogre might also affect Ogre's henchmen, but wouldn't affect the other PCs at all. Furthermore, the effects of a Presence Attack are reduced by one level when applied to anyone against whom the attack isn't specifically directed.

Although Presence Attacks are most often used in combat (to make an opponent hesitate or surrender), they have plenty of other uses as well. Out of combat, characters can use them to persuade, inspire, or interrogate NPCs. Villains can use them to terrify innocent people or cow victims. Priests and religious characters can use them to proselytize. The possibilities are virtually endless.

To perform a Presence Attack, a character rolls 1d6 for every 5 points of PRE he has. Compare the total of the Presence Attack to the defender's PRE or EGO (whichever is higher), and then check the Presence Attack Table. The effects of a Presence Attack last as long as the GM deems appropriate.

GMs should modify this roll heavily, according to the exact circumstances. The Presence Attack Modifiers Table lists some modifiers the GM can apply.

As the table indicates, a character's Reputation is extremely important when he makes a Presence Attack. If the target of the Presence Attack knows of the Reputation (determining this may require a roll), it may help or hinder a Presence Attack. If the Reputation supports, or agrees with, the Presence Attack, the Reputation adds bonus dice; if the Reputation and the Presence Attack conflict, it subtracts dice. For example, a character with a Reputation for being *Cruel* (Disadvantage, 11-) will suffer a -2d6 modifier to a Presence Attack to "Surrender and you'll be treated well" — anyone who's heard of the character isn't going to trust that promise. Someone with a Reputation for being *Honest* (Perk, +2d6) is much more likely to succeed with that Presence Attack. Of course, a Reputation doesn't affect Presence Attacks at all if the target of the attack is unaware of the Reputation.

Example: *Arkelos, surrounded by four giant trolls, shouts "Surrender or die!" and shatters a tree with his Fire Bolt spell. He has a PRE of 15 (15/5 = 3d6). He is exhibiting a violent action (+1d6), but is in combat and at a disadvantage against 4 opponents (-2d6). He has three levels in the Perk* Reputation: Powerful Wizard *(this adds +3d6), and the trolls know of him. He gets a total of 3 + 1 - 2 + 3 = 5d6 for a Presence attack. Arkelos rolls a total of 17. The trolls have PREs of 15. Arkelos's Presence Attack equals their base PRE, so the trolls hesitate and Arkelos can act first.*

Most Presence Attacks are based on intimidation or fear ("Surrender or die!" is a perfect example). However, characters can use them to evoke and manipulate emotions other than fear. A character could use a Presence Attack to command respect, impress an onlooker, get a crowd's attention, or persuade someone to help him. A character could also use a Presence Attack to inspire friendly listeners, thereby improving their morale.

## PRESENCE ATTACK TABLE

| Presence Attack is | Effect of Attack |
|---|---|
| Target's PRE or EGO | Target is impressed. He hesitates enough so that the attacker may act before him this Phase, or receives +5 PRE only for purposes of resisting contrary Presence Attacks made that Phase. |
| Target's PRE or EGO +10 | Target is very impressed. He hesitates as above, and only performs a Half Phase Action during his next Phase. He considers very deeply what the attacker says, and may comply with requests or obey orders which seem worthwhile to him. He receives +5 PRE only for purposes of resisting contrary Presence Attacks made that Turn. |
| Target's PRE or EGO +20 | Target is awed. He will not act for 1 Full Phase, is at ½ DCV, and possibly will do as the attacker commands. If he's friendly, he's inspired and may follow the character into danger; he will comply with most requests and obey most orders. He receives +10 PRE only for purposes of resisting contrary Presence Attacks made that Turn. |
| Target's PRE or EGO +30 | Target is cowed. He may surrender, run away, or faint. He is at 0 DCV, and will nearly always follow commands. If he's friendly, he becomes inflamed, and will follow character into any danger, comply with virtually any request, or obey virtually any order. |

## PRESENCE ATTACK MODIFIERS TABLE

| Modifier | Situation or Character's Action |
|---|---|
| -1d6 | Inappropriate setting |
| -2d6 | Very inappropriate setting |
| -1d6 | In combat |
| -1d6 | At a disadvantage |
| -3d6 | Covered |
| | Presence Attack conflicts with target's Psychological Limitation |
| -1d6 | Moderate Psychological Limitation |
| -2d6 | Strong Psychological Limitation |
| -3d6 | Total Psychological Limitation |
| | Poor Reputation relevant or contrary to Presence Attack |
| -1d6 | 8- Reputation |
| -2d6 | 11- Reputation |
| -3d6 | 14- Reputation |
| -4d6 | Extreme Reputation |
| -1 to 3d6 | Presence Attack runs against existing-moods |
| Varies | Character has an appropriate *Reputation* Perk (see page 83) |
| | Presence Attack agrees with target's Psychological Limitation |
| +1d6 | Moderate Psychological Limitation |
| +2d6 | Strong Psychological Limitation |
| +3d6 | Total Psychological Limitation |
| +1d6 | Character makes appropriate Interaction Skill Roll |
| +2d6 | Character makes appropriate Interaction Skill Roll by half or more |
| +1d6 | Target is Surprised |
| +1d6 | Exhibiting a Power or superior technology |
| +1d6 | Violent action |
| +2d6 | Extremely violent action |
| +3d6 | Incredibly violent action |
| +1d6 | Good soliloquy |
| +2d6 | Excellent soliloquy |
| +3d6 | Incredible soliloquy |
| +1d6 | Appropriate setting |
| +2d6 | Very appropriate setting |
| +2d6 | Target is in partial retreat |
| +4d6 | Target is in full retreat/has been captured |
| +1d6 | Need (character appealing for help genuinely seems to need it) |
| +1d6 | Logic (statements are extremely logical and well thought out) |

Example: *Howler and her thugs are losing a firefight with some UNTIL agents. Her demoralized henchmen are about to run. Howler, not wanting to face the agents alone, attempts to improve her minions' morale. "Don't worry, we can beat them!" she says. She attacks one of the UNTIL agents with a scream, knocking him through a window and into the street.*

*This is a combat situation (-1d6), and one of the thugs has been hurt (-1d6). However, Howler has a Reputation* Powerful Supervillainess *(Perk, one level [+1d6]), and she exhibited her powers (+1d6) in a violent manner (+1d6). Howler, with her 18 PRE, adds a total of 1d6 to her natural 3½d6 to achieve a 4½d6 Presence Attack. Howler rolls a 21. Since this is equal to the thugs' PRE +10, they are inspired and return to the fight.*

Don't overuse Presence Attacks — repeated ones against the same targets are less effective. Each time a character repeats a Presence Attack, he gets -1d6 of effect (-1d6 on the second attack, -2d6 on the third attack, and so forth).

A Presence Attack is an Action which takes no time. However, if the character wishes to perform an Action along with the Presence Attack (like Arkelos blasting the tree, above), that Action takes the amount of time it normally does.



# EXAMPLE OF COMBAT



Here's an example of the way combat works. It pits Hardpoint, a superhero described on page 500, against a supervillain named Maelstrom (page 502), who has the help of a couple of hired goons (DEX 12, SPD 3) armed with 9mm submachine guns (page 485).

The adventure begins when Hardpoint learns that Maelstrom is robbing the First National Bank. He heads that way immediately, using his Boot-Jets (his Flight) to get there as quickly as possible.

Approaching from the air, Hardpoint notices the bank has a skylight. He decides that's the best way to make a dramatic entrance.

**SEGMENT 12**

The combat begins on Segment 12, so all the characters have a Phase. Maelstrom is DEX 23, Hardpoint is DEX 25, and the thugs are DEX 12. Therefore Hardpoint goes first, followed by Maelstrom and then the thugs.

Hardpoint makes a Half Move to fly through the skylight; the GM decides that qualifies as a Surprise Move (page 381). Since that's pretty impressive, he decides to open with a Presence Attack (page 428): "All right, Maelstrom, you're busted! You and your boys surrender now and you won't get hurt." Hardpoint's PRE is 20, so he gets a base of 4d6. The GM decides to award Hardpoint +1d6 for his violent action. On the other hand, this is a combat situation, so Hardpoint suffers a -1d6 penalty, for a total of 4 + 1 -1 = 4d6. He rolls the dice and gets an excellent result — 21! Maelstrom has PRE 15, so he's only affected enough for Hardpoint to act first (which he is anyway), but the goons only have PRE 10. They hesitate for a Half Phase this Phase, and so can only take a Half Phase Action.

Since the Presence Attack takes no time (page 358), Hardpoint still has a Half Phase left and decides to attack. He fires his Tangler Bombs at Maelstrom. Hardpoint has a base OCV of 8, and +2 Combat Skill Levels he can apply. He decides to put them both in OCV, for a final OCV of 10. Maelstrom is 4" away from him, so the Range Modifier is -0. Maelstrom has DCV 8. Therefore Hardpoint needs to roll 11 + 10 OCV - 8 DCV = 13 or less to hit. He rolls an 11 and hits! Now he has to roll the 6d6 for his Entangle to determine the BODY. He rolls 6, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1, which means a total of 2 + 2 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 0 = 7 BODY. The Entangle has 7 BODY, 6 DEF. That concludes Hardpoint's Phase.

Now it's Maelstrom's Phase. He wants to break free from the Tangler Bombs. Since he's got innate energy powers, he can use one of his Power Blasts to try to break free. He uses Power Blast I, an Energy Blast 12d6. He doesn't have to make an Attack Roll to hit the Entangle, so he just rolls his damage: 6, 6, 6, 5, 4, 3, 3, 3, 3, 2, 2, 1. The STUN doesn't matter, but the BODY is 2 + 2 + 2 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 0 = 14 BODY, a slightly better than average roll. The Entangle has 6 DEF + 7 BODY; after Maelstrom subtracts the 6 DEF he still does 7 BODY damage, so the Power Blast I destroys the Entangle entirely. Since Maelstrom did more than the remaining BODY of the Entangle, but not twice as much BODY, he has a Half Phase Action left (see page 423). He has the Psychological Limitation *Overconfidence,* so the GM decides that instead of attacking, he wastes the time sneering at Hardpoint: "Ha! Do you think your stupid weapons can stop Maelstrom? You're a bigger fool than you look!"

Now the thugs act. Since Hardpoint impressed them with his Presence Attack, they use their remaining Half Phase to run behind the tellers' counter and take cover.

That concludes Segment 12. Now everyone gets a Post-Segment 12 Recovery. No one's taken any STUN, but Maelstrom's used END, so he adds his REC to his END. Since he has a high REC score (10) and only used 6 END, that puts him back at full END.

**SEGMENTS 2, 3, AND 4**

Now the next Turn begins. Maelstrom has SPD 6, so he gets Phases in Segments 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12. Hardpoint has SPD 5, so he gets Phases in Segments 3, 5, 8, 10, 12. The thugs have SPD 3, so they get Phases in Segments 4, 8, and 12. (See the SPD Chart, page 357.)

In Segment 2, Maelstrom has a Phase. He decides to (a) activate his Force Field (a Zero-Phase Action), and (b) fire a Power Blast at Hardpoint — his Power Blast I. He has an OCV of 8, with +3 Combat Skill Levels that he can add. Hardpoint is 4" away from him, so the Range Modifier is -0. Maelstrom decides to apply all three Levels to OCV, giving him a final OCV of 11. Hardpoint has a DCV of 8. He doesn't know what Maelstrom's OCV is (the GM keeps that information secret, of course), but he knows Maelstrom is no pushover and doesn't want to take the chance of getting hit. He decides to Abort his Phase in Segment 3 so he can Dodge, which will give him +3 DCV, for a final DCV of 11.

Maelstrom needs to roll 11 + 11 OCV - 11 DCV = 11 or less to hit. He makes his Attack Roll and rolls a 13 — a miss. Hardpoint's Dodge has paid off!

In Segment 3, Hardpoint has a Phase. However, he Aborted this Phase to Dodge in Segment 2, so he does not get to act. However, he retains the +3 DCV bonus from the Dodge until he gets his next Phase (in Segment 5).

In Segment 4, Maelstrom and the thugs all have a Phase — good thing Hardpoint still has that DCV bonus! Maelstrom fires another Power Blast I, with the same Attack Roll. This time he rolls 11 and hits. Now he rolls his damage: 6, 6, 5, 5, 4, 3, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 1. That's 42 STUN, 13 BODY. Hardpoint has a total of 20 ED, so he takes (42-20 =) 22 STUN and (13-22 =) 0 BODY. His CON is 30, so he's not Stunned (page 410). Now Maelstrom rolls for Knockback (page 418). Ordinarily he would roll 2d6, but Hardpoint is flying, so he only rolls 1d6. He rolls a 5. 13 BODY - 5 = 8, so Hardpoint gets Knocked Back 8" — right into the wall! Maelstrom rolls 8d6 for Knockback damage, getting 6, 5, 4, 4, 3, 3, 1, 1 for 27 STUN, 7 BODY. Hardpoint takes 7 STUN and 0 BODY from that, so he's lost a total of 29 STUN this Phase. He has 35 STUN normally, so he's only got 6 STUN left before he's Knocked Out!

Now it's the thugs' turn. They decide to use their submachine guns on full Autofire (5 shots) against Hardpoint. They have DEX 12, for an OCV of 4. Hardpoint is 16" away from them, for a Range Modifier of -4, and has DCV 6 at present — his normal DCV 11 is halved because he took Knockback and is "prone." That means each of the thugs needs 11 + 4 - 4 -6 = 5 or less to hit. They roll 11 and 12, so both of them miss.

**SEGMENT 5**

In Segment 5, Hardpoint has a Phase. Ordinarily he would have to spend a Half Phase to "get to his feet," but the GM rules that since he's still above ground and can fly, he can combine that with a Half Move. He flies forward 10" (a Half Move), putting him 2" away from Maelstrom and 6" away from the goons. He fires an Pulson Blast at Maelstrom with OCV 8, putting both his Combat Skill Levels into DCV (since he's so low on STUN that he doesn't dare get hit). He needs to roll 11 + 8 - 8 = 11 or less to hit. He rolls a 10 and hits! For damage he rolls 6 + 6 + 6 + 5 + 5 + 5+ 4 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 = 52 STUN, 15 BODY, an excellent roll. Maelstrom subtracts his defenses — 17 ED + 10 ED Force Field — for 25 STUN, 0 BODY. Since Maelstrom only has CON 23, taking 25 STUN damage Stuns him (page 410). At the end of this Phase, all of his powers which aren't Persistent (such as his Force Field) will turn off.

Hardpoint now rolls for Knockback. He rolls 10 on 2d6, so Maelstrom takes 15 - 10 = 5" of Knockback. That Knocks him Back into the teller's counter and he takes 5d6 damage. Hardpoint rolls 5 + 4 + 3 + 1 + 1 = 14 STUN, 3 BODY. Maelstrom's natural PD and Force Field are high enough (total of 23 PD) that he takes no damage from the Knockback.

At the end of the Segment, Maelstrom's Force Field turns off.

**SEGMENT 6**

The only character with a Phase in Segment 6 is Maelstrom. Unfortunately, he's Stunned, so he has to spend his entire Phase recovering from being Stunned (page 411). At the end of his Phase, he becomes un-Stunned.

**SEGMENT 8**

In Segment 8, all four characters have a Phase. Hardpoint (DEX 25) goes first. Since Maelstrom's not yet out, he decides to fire another Pulson Blast. Hardpoint has OCV 8. Maelstrom's DCV would normally be 8, but he's prone (lying on the ground), so it's halved to 4.

At this point, Maelstrom does not have his Force Field active — it shut off when he became Stunned. He could Abort his Phase in Segment 8 to turn it on, or to Dodge, but he's got a Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence. The GM decides Maelstrom's opinion is: "He can't hit me... and even if he can, I can take it!".

Hardpoint needs to roll 11 + 8 - 4 = 15 or less to hit. He rolls an 11 and hits. He rolls 6 + 5 + 5 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 1 + 1 = 41 STUN, 11 BODY. Maelstrom only has his natural ED of 17, so he takes 24 STUN and 0 BODY. He had already taken 25 STUN in Segment 5, so he's now lost a total of 49 STUN. Unfortunately, he only has 40 STUN, so he's Knocked Out (page 411). As indicated by the Recovery Time Table (page 412), he's not badly Knocked Out (-9 STUN), so he gets to take a Recovery every Phase and on Post-Segment 12 (he doesn't get a Recovery this Segment, even though he has a Phase he hasn't taken yet, because this is the same Segment in which he was Knocked Out; see page 411).

Now the thugs get to act. They try the same thing they did last Phase — full Autofire with their submachine guns against Hardpoint. This time the Range Modifier is only -2 OCV, since they're 6" away from him. That means they need 11 + 4 - 2 - 10 = 3 or less to hit him. One rolls an 11 and misses; the other, to the GM's astonishment, rolls a 3! Using the Autofire rules (page 376), the GM determines that two of the second thug's bullets hit Hardpoint.

The 9mm submachine gun does RKA 1d6+1 damage with a 1d6-1 STUN Multiplier. The thug rolls a 4 for BODY damage for the first bullet, so the attack does 5 BODY. Then he rolls the STUN Multiplier and gets a 4, so the attack does 15 STUN (5 x 3). But Hardpoint has Armor (15 PD) plus 5 PD, so the bullet just bounces off him, doing no damage at all! The thug rolls 2d6 for Knockback (-1d6 because Hardpoint's flying, but +1d6 because he used a Killing Attack) and gets an 8. 5 - 8 = -3, so the attack does no Knockback. The second bullet doesn't do any better — 3 BODY, 9 STUN, and no Knockback.

**SEGMENT 10**

In Segment 10, Maelstrom and Hardpoint both have an Action. Maelstrom can only take a Recovery, and that occurs at the very end of the Segment.

Hardpoint decides to use his Tangler Bombs on one of the thugs. First he makes a Half Move toward them to eliminate the Range Modifier. He needs an 11 + 8 - 4 = 15 or less to hit them. He rolls a 10 and hits easily. He rolls 6d6 to determine the BODY of his Entangle: 2 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 0 = 6 BODY, so the thug is caught in a 6 DEF, 6 BODY Entangle. The thug can't use his gun




while Entangled (since it's an Obvious, Accessible Focus), and can only hope to do 4 BODY at most with his STR 10, so he's completely immobilized and will remain that way until someone frees him.

Maelstrom applies his REC 10 to his STUN. He was at -9 STUN, he now has 1 STUN. That means he only has 1 END (page 411).

**SEGMENT 12**

Everyone has a Phase this Segment. Hardpoint attacks the other thug with his Entangle and hits him easily, with results similar to the other thug. Maelstrom's hired goons are now out of the picture.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of Maelstrom. But he knows he's weak, so he plays possum and takes another Recovery. He's now at 11 STUN, 11 END.

After Segment 12, everyone gets a Post-Segment 12 Recovery. That puts Hardpoint at 26 STUN and 80 END (he used 18 END last Turn — 6 END for flying [since he hovered on three of his Phases and only moved a short distance the other two], and 12 for making two Pulson Blasts at 6 END each). It puts Maelstrom at 21 STUN, 21 END.

**SEGMENT 2**

A new Turn begins. In Segment 2, Maelstrom re-activates his Force Field and flees, flying away at 10", which is enough to get him outside the bank.

In Segment 3, Hardpoint pursues him — in fact, he decides to try a Move Through with his Flight 20" to tackle Maelstrom and smash him to the ground. He'll be at -4 OCV (20" movement divided by 5) and -3 DCV, giving him OCV 4, DCV 5. His Combat Skill Levels with his Blaster Array don't apply because he's not using his Multipower, but he has 1 Level with HTH Combat he can use. However, the GM rules that this counts as attacking Maelstrom "from behind," so Maelstrom has only half his DCV (4). Hardpoint needs an 11 + 5 - 4 = 12 or less to hit. He rolls an 11 and hits! He's going to do 8d6 (his STR damage) plus 6d6 (20" divided by 3, which rounds down to 6 because you can't add part of a Damage Class) = 14d6 damage! He rolls 6 + 6 + 5 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 47 STUN, 13 BODY. Maelstrom subtracts his total Physical Defense of 23 and takes 24 STUN, 0 BODY (Hardpoint takes half damage, or 23 STUN, 0 BODY; he loses 3 STUN after applying his defenses). That leaves Maelstrom at -3 STUN — he's Knocked Out again!

The GM rules that the fight is over, since Hardpoint can inflict more damage or restrain Maelstrom before Maelstrom can get back into fighting shape. Once again Good triumphs over Evil!

chapter three:



# THE ENVIRONMENT

# FALLING



**THE ENVIRONMENT**

It's a tough world out there.

The environment is often a source of danger for daring characters. They can fall off cliffs, be struck by lightning, get mauled by wild animals, and so forth. However, characters can affect the environment, too — primarily by breaking and smashing things that get in their way.

This chapter provides rules for these situations. Of course, the multiverse is a big place, so it's not possible to cover all the objects and circumstances that characters could encounter or which occur in a campaign. If necessary, the GM should use the rules in this section as guidelines to help him adjudicate situations which aren't specifically covered.

Occasionally a character may suffer the misfortune of falling from a great height. Falling itself does no damage whatsoever to a character — but the impact with the ground can be mighty painful.

Falling objects have a downward velocity based on how long they've been falling. They move every Segment at the DEX on which they started to fall; thus, the object falls its velocity in inches each Segment.

On planets with a gravity similar to Earth's, an object's velocity increases by +5" each Segment due to the acceleration of gravity. The additional acceleration is applied before the character moves. Thus, when an object begins to fall, it starts with a velocity of 5". An object beginning its fifth Segment of falling has a velocity of 25" (the 20" from the fourth Segment, plus an additional 5"). The maximum velocity based on gravity is 30"/Segment.

If someone attacks a falling character, the character has his base DCV. He can't apply Combat Skill Levels, Maneuvers, or the like to increase his DCV unless the GM permits him to.

## FALLING TABLE

| Segments Since Fall Began | Total Current Velocity | Distance Fallen |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5" | 5" |
| 2 | 10" | 15" |
| 3 | 15" | 30" |
| 4 | 20" | 50" |
| 5 | 25" | 75" |
| 6 | 30" | 105" |
| 7 | 30" | 135" |
| 8 | 30" | 165" |

...and so forth

## Damage From Falls

When a character hits the ground, he takes damage from his fall. Falling damage is usually physical Normal Damage. However, at the GM's option, falling onto sharp objects may convert the damage to Killing Damage (1 DC per 1" fallen for short falls; 1 DC per 1" of velocity for long falls). Conversely, falling into softer surfaces such as tree branches, snowbanks, or awnings could decrease the damage done to the character.

GMs using the Hit Location optional rule can roll on the Hit Location Table to find out which part of the character's body strikes the ground first, and apply the majority of the damage to that body part. Generally, you should only use the Hit Location rules for short falls (that's how, for example, a character might suffer a severe head injury from just a minor fall); for long falls, apply the damage to the whole body.

The damage from a fall depends upon whether it's a short fall (10" or less) or a long fall.

Short Falls (10" or less): A character who falls 10" or less takes 1d6 damage per 1" fallen. For example, a character falling off a four-story building 8" high would take 8d6 Normal Damage.

Long Falls (11" or more): A character who falls 11" or more takes 1d6 Normal Damage for every 1"/Segment of velocity he has at the time he strikes the ground (see the Falling Table). For example, a character hitting the ground at a velocity of 25" takes 25d6 of damage.

## Avoiding Falling Damage

Regardless of which system you use to determine falling damage, there are several ways to avoid the full effects of a fall.

**Breakfall**

A character with Breakfall can use it to reduce or eliminate falling damage (see *Breakfall*). Of course, given the standard -1 per 2" fallen modifier to Breakfall, this method is rarely of much help for long falls.

**Catching A Falling Character**

One way to save a falling character is to catch him. The character who attempts the catch must make an Attack Roll to Grab the falling character (who typically has a base DCV of 3 for these purposes). If the Grab fails, the falling character is not caught, but the character trying to catch him takes no damage. If the Grab succeeds, the falling character has been caught. The falling character may subtract 1d6 from his falling damage for every 5 points of STR the character Grabbing him has; if the damage is reduced to 0d6 or less, neither character takes any damage. Any dice of velocity damage remaining after the Grabbing character's STR are taken by both characters. (If appropriate, the GM may use not just the velocity of the falling character, but the relative velocity of the two characters, to calculate the damage.)

If the rescuer attempts the catch in midair and is Stunned or Knocked Out by the impact, both characters fall (or keep falling). Their velocity equals the falling character's velocity minus 1" per 5 STR used to try to catch him.

Example: *Defender (STR 55) tries to catch Ironclad (who will, if he completes his fall normally, take 30d6 damage). Defender succeeds with an Attack Roll to Grab Ironclad. However, his STR*



*only subtracts 11 dice from the damage, so he and Ironclad both take 19d6 from the maneuver. The damage rolled is 76 STUN, 21 BODY. After subtracting his PD (total of 26), Defender is Knocked Out by the impact. He and Ironclad are now both falling at the rate of (30" - 11) = 19" per Segment. They will accelerate at 5" per Segment, per the normal falling rules.*

**Reducing Velocity**

A falling character can try to lower his falling velocity by grabbing onto or falling through something. At the GM's option, he must make an Attack Roll using his base OCV (calculated from DEX only; no CSLs or other modifiers apply) to grab or hit the object.

If a falling character grabs or falls through something (such as a tree branch or flagpole), he subtracts from his falling velocity a number of inches equal to the total DEF+BODY of the object he grabbed. (When you use the standard system for a short fall, the character's velocity is assumed to equal the total number of inches he will fall.) If the character has more inches of velocity than the object's DEF+BODY, the object breaks and the character keeps falling (at a slower velocity, fortunately — but, at the GM's option, after taking falling damage from hitting the object he fell through!).

If the character has fewer inches of velocity than the object's DEF+BODY, the object does not break. The character may make a STR Roll (at -1 per 2" of velocity) to hold on to the object and stop falling entirely. If he fails the roll, he keeps falling, but at reduced velocity. At the GM's option, an Acrobatics roll can be substituted for a STR Roll.

Example: *As he's falling, Ironclad spies a flagpole (DEF 4, BODY 2). He tries to use it to break his fall. Ironclad makes a successful Attack Roll and catches the flagpole. The flagpole snaps (Ironclad's 30" velocity exceeds its DEF+BODY), but it slows Ironclad's descent by 6". He slams into the ground at 24".*

**Leaping**

As an optional rule, GMs can allow conscious characters to use their ability to leap (whether based just on their STR, or on Leaping) to reduce the damage they take from a fall. The character must Hold an Action, and then leap "upwards" at the moment when he hits the ground (this simulates a character absorbing the damage when he lands). For every 1" of vertical leap the character can subtract 1" of velocity. A character who can leap 60" (30" vertically) thus takes no damage from a landing he can prepare for.

## Falling On Other Planets

If a planet's gravity differs from Earth's, falling speeds there will be proportionately higher or lower. Similarly, the maximum falling velocity is affected by the density of the planet's atmosphere — it will be faster than 30"/Segment in atmospheres thinner than Earth's, slower than 30"/Segment in thicker atmospheres. Since few characters survive a long fall in any case, GMs should set the value which seems to fit the situation.

Example: *While Andarra skulks about on Alpha Talos VII, someone pushes her off a kilometer-high atmosphere reprocessing center. Since the planet has an extremely high gravity and thin atmosphere, the GM decides Andarra accelerates downwards at 6" per Segment with a maximum velocity of 40" per Segment (which would inflict 40d6 if Andarra hits the ground). Andarra earnestly hopes she remembered to recharge the battery on her jetpack.*

## Dropped Objects

If someone drops an object (such as a piano or an anvil) on a character, the GM should determine how many dice of damage that object would take if it fell to the character's location using the standard system. The character takes that many dice of damage, to a maximum of the object's DEF+BODY.

If a heavy object is dropped from a short height, the GM may wish to impose a minimum of dice of damage equal to the STR needed to lift the object — an anvil dropped on one's head *hurts,* even if it only falls for 1".

# OPTIONAL VELOCITY DAMAGE

This system presents more complicated, and thus optional, rules for determining damage based on velocity. This includes falling, Move Bys, Move Throughs, and the damage done to or by a thrown object.

This system is useful for gamers who (a) would prefer a more "realistic" system for determining velocity damage (as compared to, for example, the simplified system used to determine falling damage), and/or (b) find that Move Bys and Move Throughs do so much damage that they unbalance the campaign.

## VELOCITY FACTOR TABLE

| Inches/Turn | Velocity Factor | MPH |
|---|---|---|
| 1-4" | 0 | 1 |
| 5-6" | 0 | 2 |
| 7-8" | 0 | 3 |
| 9-12" | 1 | 4 |
| 13-16" | 1 | 6 |
| 17-24" | 1 | 9 |
| 25-32" | 2 | 12 |
| 33-48" | 3 | 18 |
| 49-64" | 4 | 24 |
| 65-96" | 5 | 36 |
| 97-128" | 6 | 48 |
| 129-192" | 7 | 72 |
| 193-250" | 8 | 93 |
| 251-375" | 9 | 140 |
| 376-500" | 10 | 186 |
| 501-750" | 11 | 280 |
| 751-1,000" | 12 | 372 |
| 1,001-1,500" | 13 | 560 |
| 1,501-2,000" | 14 | 688 (about Mach 1) |
| 2,001-3,000" | 15 | |
| 3,001-4,000" | 16 | |
| 4,001-6,000" | 17 | 2,237 (Mach 3+) |
| 6,001-8,000" | 18 | |
| 8,001-12,000" | 19 | |
| 12,001-16,000" | 20 | |

## Velocity Factor

The key to the Optional Velocity Damage system is a character's *Velocity Factor* ("VF"), a number derived from his velocity in inches traveled per Turn. It indicates the effect of his velocity in damage calculations. Velocity Factor, and thus velocity damage, increases geometrically, rather than arithmetically as it does in the standard system. Thus, characters gain much less damage for velocity when performing Move Throughs and Move Bys using these rules. To determine a character's VF in a given Phase, use the Velocity Factor Table.

Example: *Defender has SPD 5 and 25" of Flight. This means he can travel 125" per Turn, giving him a VF of 6. In Phase 8, he needs to move quickly, so he accelerates to Noncombat Movement (Flight 50"). For that one Phase, his VF increases to 8, since at the rate of 50" per Phase he travels 250" per Turn.*

## Controlled And Uncontrolled Velocity

Movement in the Optional Velocity Damage system is Controlled or Uncontrolled. Controlled movement means the character (or object) moves under its own guidance when attempting to hit or ram the target, so it's prepared for the impact. Uncontrolled movement means the character (or object) is not under its own control or prepared for the impact; this includes falling damage and damage from being thrown.

# Velocity Damage

The Velocity Damage Table summarizes information concerning the various Maneuvers and other situations in which velocity modifies damage.

## VELOCITY DAMAGE TABLE

| Action | OCV | DCV | Damage/Effect |
|---|---|---|---|
| Falling | +0 | +0 | (MASS + (VF)d6) x2 |
| Grab By | -3 | -4 | Move By and Grab object, +(VF)d6 to STR |
| Move By | -2 | -2 | STR/2 + (VF)d6 |
| Move Through | -(VF) | -3 | STR + (VF)d6 |
| Throw | +0 | +0 | Varies |

### FALLING

Under the Optional Velocity Damage system, falling is a form of Uncontrolled movement. Calculate the damage as if the character performs an Uncontrolled Move Through on the object he impacts and does no Knockback (*i.e.,* the character and the object he hits both take full damage) — and then *double it.* Substitute the character's mass for his STR for purposes of determining damage: figure out what STR is needed to lift the character (for example, 10 STR for a normal human of 100 kilograms mass) and use that to calculate the Move Through damage.

Example: *Ironclad has been thrown off of a tall building by one of his enemies. He is falling, and will reach terminal velocity (30"/Segment, or 360"/Turn) before he hits the ground. Ironclad has bought Density Increase and weighs 6,400 kilograms. It requires a 40 STR to lift him, so when he hits the ground he'll take ((8d6 [damage from STR] + 9d6 [VF]) x 2) = 34d6 of Normal Damage. Ouch!*

The Optional Falling Table provides rough guidelines for how far a character will fall, and how fast, in Earth gravity.

## OPTIONAL FALLING TABLE

| Segment | Velocity/ Segment | VF | Distance Fallen | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5" | 4 | 2" | 2nd story |
| 2 | 10" | 6 | 10" | 6th story |
| 3 | 15" | 7 | 22" | 13th story |
| 4 | 20" | 8 | 40" | 22nd story |
| 5 | 25" | 9 | 62" | 33rd story |
| 6 | 30" | 9 | 90" | 50th story |
| 7 | 30" | 9 | 120" | 65th story |

### MOVE BY; MOVE THROUGH; GRAB BY

Move By and Move Through are forms of Controlled movement in which a character moves past someone and strikes them (Move By) or deliberately runs into ("rams") another character or an object (Move Through). They work as they do under the standard rules (pages 389, 391), but the damage done depends on the character's VF, not his inches of movement.

Grab By is a form of Controlled movement in which the character moves past someone and Grabs an object from him. It works as it does under the standard rules (page 388), but the bonus to the character's STR derives from his VF, not his inches of movement.

### THROW

A Throw is a form of Uncontrolled movement in which a character or object is propelled at another character or object by the Thrower's STR.

If a character throws an object at a target, standard rules for throwing objects (pages 35, 382, 447) and for the size and shape of a weapon (page 382) apply. Of course, if the object in question is defined as a power (for example, a Throwing Knife bought as an HKA 1d6, Ranged), it does the damage bought for it, not damage based on its DEF+BODY and the thrower's STR.

If a character throws another character, the Optional Velocity Damage system comes into play. The Thrown character is performing an Uncontrolled Move Through on whatever he hits, and automatically takes full damage. However, the Thrower's STR is halved for purposes of calculating damage, and the OCV and DCV modifiers for a Throw are not based on those for a Move Through.

To determine the VF for such a throw, consult the Throwing Table (page 35) to determine how far the thrower could throw the victim in a Phase. Multiply that number by 12 to determine a velocity per Turn, then consult the Velocity Factor Table above to get a VF. If the object is unbalanced, subtract -1 from the VF; if it is non-aerodynamic, subtract -1 from the VF.

Example: *Grond (STR 65) wants to throw Lazer (who weighs 200 kg, counting all of the equipment he's carrying) into a wall. Since it only requires 15 STR to lift 200 kg, Grond has an extra 50 STR. He is making a Running Throw, so he can throw Lazer 40". Multiplied by 12, this gives a velocity per Turn of 480", which means a VF of 10. However, Lazer is unbalanced and nonaerodynamic, so Grond must subtract 2 from the VF, for a total of 8. Thus, if Grond hits the wall with Lazer, Lazer and the wall will take (7d6 [13d6 from STR x ½] + 8d6 from VF) = 15d6 damage. Lazer will probably break through the wall and keep going.*

### DROPPED OBJECTS

Dropped objects are performing an Uncontrolled Move Through on whatever they hit (such as a hapless PC), but this Move Through cannot be Blocked. Calculate the dice of damage as for Falling. Whoever or whatever is hit with the falling object takes that many dice of damage, to a maximum of the object's DEF+BODY.

# ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS



Characters often interact with their environment as much as they interact with each other. Even relatively insignificant factors, such as temperature or rainfall, can cause serious problems in certain situations. This section contains optional rules for modeling environmental effects and using them in your game.

Since these rules generally require more bookkeeping, you probably won't want to use them all the time. One of the best uses is for the GM to determine just how long characters can survive in certain conditions; he can then use this information for dramatic effect. For instance, the GM can determine how far characters can walk across a desert after they run out of water, and then make sure he puts an oasis at just the right spot. In an exploration scenario, a mysterious stranger can arrive in time to rescue the characters from the freezing blizzard. Similarly, these rules make it easier for players to determine whether their characters have adequate supplies for a journey.

Environmental effects can (and often do) affect characters simultaneously. For instance, a character could be dehydrated, starving, and crossing a hot desert all at once. He'd suffer the listed effects for all of these conditions, which would put him in pretty bad shape fairly quickly.

Remember, in non-combat situations, everyone is considered to act at SPD 2 at all times. This is important when evaluating the long term effects on an environment. Also, even in a combat situation, characters may elect to act at a lower than normal SPD, down to a minimum of SPD 2. This significantly reduces the effects of the environment on a character.

## DARKNESS

Adventurers often get into situations where the lighting is poor... or non-existent. The Sight Modifiers Table on page 353 lists the standard Sight Group PER Roll modifiers for conditions of less than optimal lighting, including -2 for nighttime and -4 for a dark night (such as might occur on a moonless night way out in the country, far from any of the lights of civilization). Those penalties do not apply to characters' CVs, but the GM may want characters to make PER Rolls each Phase to determine what they can accurately perceive, and impose non-perception penalties (page 349) if they fail. (Characters with Nightvision, which cancels out the PER penalty for dark conditions, don't suffer these problems.)

## DEHYDRATION

Normal people die in about two to three days without water at normal temperatures. Since there's water in food, eating can help a character last longer. The appropriate *Survival* Skill, along with related Knowledge Skills (for the area, plant and animal life, geology, and so on), can help a character find water. If he finds water, he can postpone or counteract these dehydration effects — at least temporarily.

After a character has not drunk any water for 24 hours, the basic level of dehydration sets in. This means he suffers 1d6 Normal Damage (no defense) every 6 hours. The character Recovers the lost STUN normally. The GM can consider this STUN loss to be a dizzy spell or period of lightheadedness (occurring, of course, at an appropriately dramatic moment during the six-hour period of effect); or it can occur gradually over the time period. The character regains his BODY through the normal healing process. Once he reaches 0 BODY, he loses 1d6 BODY every hour until he dies.

High temperature hastens the effects of dehydration. Each Temperature Level above the Comfort Zone (see *Temperature,* below) adds 1d6 to the dehydration effect; for instance, Temperature Level 3 would mean 4d6 of dehydration every 6 hours. Of course, Temperature Level usually varies throughout the six hour time; if necessary, the GM should establish an average Temperature Level for each 6 hour period.

While this may not seem like too much of an effect, it's important to note that the effects of dehydration are in addition to the effects of high temperatures. The combination of the two can kill a man in hours. See the *Temperature* section for more information on Temperature Levels.

## FROSTBITE

Extreme cold causes *frostbite* — an unpleasant condition in which the flesh actually freezes and dies. The dead flesh can become gangrenous if not removed. Typically it affects the extremities (fingers, toes, limbs, ears, nose). Some of the BODY damage caused by low Temperature Levels (see below) can be frostbite. Frostbite isn't a particularly dramatic or interesting condition to inflict on PCs; it's useful to point out as a danger in extreme cold conditions, and as a spur to action for the heroes, but isn't really a fun thing to have happen to a hero.

## STARVATION

Normal people die after about two weeks without food. Of course, a lot depends on the initial health and weight of the starving person, and the amount of activity he experiences while starving. Starvation takes a long time to occur, and thus rarely factors into a roleplaying game. However, the occasional desert expedition or a prisoner locked in a dungeon may experience some starvation. An appropriate *Survival* Skill helps a character find food in the wilderness, if that happens to be his situation.



Starvation doesn't begin to have effects until a character hasn't eaten for about two to three days (the GM can adjust this period to account for activity and other conditions). After that time, he suffers 1d6 Normal Damage per day (no defense). He Recovers the lost STUN normally, and heals the lost BODY normally as well (but he won't get his monthly BODY Recovery until the starvation ends). The GM can use the STUN loss as a dizzy spell or light-headedness for dramatic purposes, as mentioned under *Dehydration,* above.

In addition to the STUN and BODY lost through starvation, the starving character also loses STR, DEX, and CON at the same rate as BODY. For simplicity, you can just roll one die and use that to determine the amount of all Characteristics lost (*e.g.,* if you roll a 3, you lose 3 STUN, 1 BODY, 1 STR, 1 DEX, and 1 CON). For more variable results, you can roll a separate die (looking for Normal Damage BODY) for STR, DEX, and CON. The STR, DEX, CON, and BODY are recovered at the normal rate for lost BODY (1 REC per month). Poor conditions will double or triple this recovery time; excellent conditions will halve it. Of course, characters cannot Recover until the starvation ends.

**SUNBURN**

Sun exposure can cause bad burns on exposed skin; the degree of sunburn depends on the character's skin tones, amount of exposure, and the latitude he's at. The equatorial sun is much fiercer than the sun at high latitudes, which is why people who live near the equator have dark skins and dwellers at high latitudes have light skins.

Sunburn causes Normal Damage (no defense); the amount of damage depends on the amount of skin affected. One way to decide this is by Hit Locations. The head is 1d6, each arm is 1d6, the legs are 2d6 apiece, and the torso is 3d6. (If multiple locations are exposed to the sun, add the dice of damage together.) Those figures are for the entire body, front and back. The GM determines the amount of your body exposure and the time of exposure. The damage listed is for the worst possible exposure which results in second degree burns. For milder cases of sunburn, take no BODY damage, just STUN. Use half the amount of dice for even milder cases. (Note that even these "mild" cases are more severe than most people would ever get.)

Hours of exposure are usually necessary to cause severe sunburn, though once again this depends on many factors. In a roleplaying game situation, this is most likely to occur during long journeys outdoors (especially in deserts or the like), or when a character is Knocked Out and left in the sun. In such a circumstance, a fully clothed character would only be burned on his face and maybe hands, which would cause ½d6 or perhaps just 1 point of STUN.

Once treated, a sunburned character can take a Recovery once per day for the STUN loss. *Paramedics* Skill reduces this time, or with modern painkillers you could remove the STUN loss entirely. Recovering the BODY from sunburn takes the normal amount of time.



## Change Environment

Characters can create environmental effects using several Powers, primarily *Change Environment* (see page 135). That Power includes guidelines for how to build a particular effect, and how long that effect lasts. Characters can use the *Extra Time* and/or *Gradual Effect* Limitations to simulate environmental changes that take a long time to build up to full strength, and the *Long-Lasting* Adder for Change Environment to keep the effects from dissipating quickly.

### FOG

Basic fog causes a -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls for anyone inside, or looking into, the affected area (characters can make thicker fogs, which impose greater modifiers on Sight Group PER Rolls, if they wish). Fog affects most forms of Sonar the same way.

### HIGH PRESSURE

Higher than normal atmospheric pressure is not immediately dangerous as long as the pressure is equalized internally and externally (if not, treat this as an attack). When a character moves suddenly from a high-pressure environment to a lower-pressure environment, though, he suffers from the bends — bubbles of nitrogen gas in the blood that can cause excruciating pain, severe injury, and death.

Basic high pressure causes 1 point of NND Killing Damage (the defense is LS: Safe Environment: High Pressure); characters may cause more damage by spending more points. The damage occurs not when the high pressure field is imposed, but when the pressure suddenly returns to normal. Halve the damage for every time interval over 1 Turn that the affected characters remain in the field (*i.e.,* halve the damage at 1 Minute, halved it again at 5 Minutes, and so forth). Thus, if a character wanted to use a High Pressure Change Environment as an attack, it would take one Phase to impose the High Pressure and his next Phase to drop it; the damage would occur on the second Phase.

### LIGHT, SHADOW, SOUND, AND SILENCE

Use Images or Darkness, not Change Environment, to create light, sound, and silence. Images can be bought with a -1 Limitation (such as *Only To Create Light*) to reduce the cost; use the standard rules for those Powers to expand the area affected.

Shadow typically imposes a -1 Sight Group PER Roll for anyone inside, or looking into, the affected area (characters can make gloomier shadows, which impose greater modifiers on Sight Group PER Rolls, if they wish). Light can impose similar penalties by making an area so bright that characters cannot see clearly.

### LOW PRESSURE

Reducing the pressure to less than atmospheric normal (which occurs on Earth at heights above 5,000 feet) has several interesting effects, most relating to the relative lack of oxygen in such environ-

ments. First, characters must spend a minimum of 1 END per Phase, even if not active; if they're active, this loss is in addition to any they spend to perform actions. Characters who run out of END burn STUN and then BODY, just like drowning.

Second, fire does not burn as well under low pressure. Such environments can simply reduce damage from fire by a point or two, or the air can become so thin that fires go out (or cannot be lit). Similarly, sound does not carry as well in low pressure, and sonic-based powers may suffer from reduced effectiveness.

Third, characters have a harder time taking Recoveries in low pressure. Depending upon how low the pressure becomes, reduce REC to three-fourths, half, or one-quarter of normal — or even all the way to zero.

Due to these varying effects, the easiest way to simulate low pressure is not with Change Environment alone, but Change Environment Linked with Drain. Use CE to force characters to spend 1 END per Phase. Use Drain with a +2 Advantage to reduce a character's REC and any Powers with a fire or flame special effect simultaneously.

### MAGNETIC FIELDS

At low levels of effect, you can simulate magnetic fields with Change Environment, using Telekinesis STR in place of causing damage or Skill Roll modifiers. At high levels of effect, buy magnetic fields as Telekinesis, Area Of Effect, that *Only Works On Ferrous Materials* (-½). Either type of field suffices to trigger Susceptibilities or Limitations based on powerful magnetic fields.

### RADIATION

Characters can create low-intensity radiation with Change Environment causing minor levels of NND damage (Normal or Killing). Typically the character applies a *Gradual Effect* Limitation so the victim only accumulates the damage once per day after lengthy exposure. Higher intensity forms of radiation are bought as Drains, RKAs, or other Attack Powers. See *Living In A Dangerous World,* below, for further guidelines on radiation.

### RAIN/SNOW

Basic rain and snow are Change Environment which causes a -1 PER Roll for Sight and Hearing in the affected area. Characters can increase the effect to lessen visibility, to cause minor NND damage due to freezing cold, or to reduce CV to simulate the slippery conditions (at least in some places; slippery asphalt won't affect CV much). Rain may also act as a Drain for fire-based powers.

Of course, creating rain or snow often depends, in part, on the local environment and conditions. Summoning rain in a desert may be difficult; making it snow in such a high-temperature region would be virtually impossible (the snow would turn to rain instantly as it appeared).

### TEMPERATURE

Extreme temperatures can have many effects. The rules below merely indicate general effects; the actual ambient temperature could be quite different. The important thing for the GM to determine is the Temperature Level, which defines the effects. The exact temperature, wind speed, humidity, and other factors are more of a special effect, which the GM should feel free to specify or not, as he sees fit.

The normal range of temperatures in an environment depends on a variety of factors, including wind, sun, humidity, and other environmental conditions. In the temperate regions of an Earth-like planet, the temperature generally ranges from around 4° Celsius (40° Fahrenheit) to around 32° Celsius (90° Fahrenheit). In equatorial or arctic regions, hotter and lower temperatures prevail.

#### Establishing The Temperature Level

To gauge the effects of temperature, the GM must determine the current *Temperature Level* at the characters' location. Temperature Level is a way of measuring the effects of temperature on characters in game terms. Temperature Levels are rated in numbers — negative numbers represent cold temperatures, positive numbers hot ones.

Both high and low Temperature Levels can adversely affect characters. To determine when these effects start to occur, the GM must establish a *Comfort Zone* of temperatures in which characters suffer no measurable negative effects. For campaigns featuring human or near-human characters, the GM can assume that the Comfort Zone ranges from about 10° Celsius (50° Fahrenheit) to around 27° Celsius (80° Fahrenheit). At colder or hotter temperatures, characters lose REC and END (see below).

Typically, each Temperature Level represents about 3°-5° Celsius (10°-20° Fahrenheit) difference, though the GM should set the exact parameters based on the campaign, the environment, and other factors. On Earth, the actual Temperature Levels a character might encounter range from about -6 to +3 (though a raging Antarctic blizzard might be colder than -6). In a desert setting, the Temperature Level might only hit +3 (or, rarely, +4) for a couple of hours at midday; it's cooler earlier or later in the day, and at night can dip down to -1. The GM can define areas by the range of Temperature Levels that occur in that area.

#### Changing The Temperature Level

At its base level, Change Environment can alter the Temperature Level by +/-1. For every 3 additional Character Points spent, the character can alter it by +/-1 level. Note that this alteration could be up (hotter) and/or down (colder), depending on the nature of the power. For purposes of Change Environment, consider the Comfort Zone to be a single "level," no matter how large it is in comparison to true Temperature Levels.

A Change Environment power has to work with the Temperature Level of the environment — it alters the existing temperature, it doesn't establish an all-new temperature. For example, if the GM says a desert is Temperature Level 2, then a

Change Environment (raise the Temperature Level) for three levels adds to that, resulting in a Temperature Level of 5. Using the same power in an extremely cold area (Temperature Level -4) would warm things up to -1. On the other hand, a Change Environment (reduce the Temperature Level) with three levels of effect creates a Temperature Level of Comfort Zone.

If appropriate, a character with a Change Environment power can specify the exact temperature he creates within a given Temperature Level or the Comfort Zone.

**The Effects Of Temperature**

Characters who are in the Comfort Zone suffer no adverse effects from temperature. They might be chilly or hot, but in game terms the temperature doesn't inhibit or harm them.

Once the Temperature Level rises or falls above the Comfort Zone, this changes. At a given Temperature Level, characters lose some of their REC and a certain amount of END every 20 minutes. Reduce the character's REC and END by the value of the Temperature Level until the character leaves the area or alters the Temperature Level in his favor somehow. For example, Temperature Level 2 and -2 both reduce a character's REC and END by 2. The END lost is Long Term END; the character must rest for 5 hours to Recover it.

When a character is at 0 END, any action he tries to take burns STUN points (see page 425). When his REC reaches 0, he may soon find himself burning STUN to act. The STUN is, of course, not Recovered, since at that point he no longer has REC. And when his STUN is gone, he uses BODY as END to stay alive. At that point, death isn't far away.

## TEMPERATURE LEVELS

| Temperature Level | REC Lost | END Lost per 20 minutes |
|---|---|---|
| Comfort Zone | — | — |
| 1 (-1) | -1 | -1 |
| 2 (-2) | -2 | -2 |
| 3 (-3) | -3 | -3 |
| 4 (-4) | -4 | -4 |
| 5 (-5) | -5 | -5 |
| 6 (-6) | -6 | -6 |

...and so forth

**Protection From Temperature**

Characters can do several things to reduce the effects of temperature, such as wearing appropriate clothing and taking shelter.

Activity: The Temperature Level rules assume the characters are active. Resting lowers the Temperature Level by 1. In other words, it's a good idea to rest in the heat, but staying still and not moving in the cold can make things worse.

Clothing: The Temperature Level rules assume the character wears normal clothing for average weather. Appropriate clothing reduces the Temperature Level by 1, or even 2 (in the case of cold, the Temperature Level moves toward the Comfort Zone; for instance, a character wearing Level 2 arctic gear in Temperature Level -3 conditions is effectively at Temperature Level -1). Cold weather gear is far more effective than hot weather gear — modern clothing can provide up to Level 5 protection from cold, but only Level 2 protection from heat. Characters can buy better clothes as Life Support through a Focus, if you want to use high-tech solutions.

With no clothing at all, or clothing designed for hot weather, being in the cold is one Temperature Level lower (wearing a swimsuit makes Temperature Level -1 into Temperature Level -2; Temperature Level 2 becomes Temperature Level 1).

Shelter: Shelter makes a big difference, too. Characters in a modern climate-controlled environment can completely ignore the outside temperature. For a character stuck out in the wilderness, some shade can reduce the Temperature Level by 1. Building a snow cave can improve the Temperature Level by 1-2. The GM should provide modifiers like these to improve the survival chances for the heroes and make the story more interesting.

Survival Rolls: A successful Survival roll provides the character making it (and possibly his comrades) with a 1-step Temperature Level shift in a beneficial direction; a half roll creates a 2-step Temperature Level shift. Only one Survival roll per day per group is allowed (although the GM can treat other characters' *Survival* Skills as Complementary Skills).

Wetness: Being wet shifts the Temperature Level down one — it's helpful in a hot climate but bad in a cold one.

Wind: The wind also affects Temperature Levels, especially when it's cold ("wind chill"). Reduce the Temperature Level by 1 to 3 depending upon the strength of the winds.

**WIND**

Low-level winds can impose -1 to Hearing Group PER Rolls, and -1 OCV for muscle-powered ranged attacks (such as arrows or thrown knives). You can simulate these effects with Change Environment. Create higher-level winds with Change Environment or Telekinesis.

Wind can also be useful in other circumstances, depending on conditions. If it happens to be really dusty or sandy in an area, Wind can cause -1 Sight PER Rolls (depending on the GM's judgment, this could be higher or lower). At sea, Wind can add to a ship's rate of movement.

Creating wind works better with ambient conditions. If it's already windy, Change Environment: Wind increases the strength of the existing winds (or is counteracted by them, if they try to blow in opposite directions). Even the base amount of Wind translates to a pretty stiff breeze — about 25 mph or so.



## Life Support

The various "Safe Environment" forms of Life Support provide broad protection from most environmental effects, whether they're natural or created with Change Environment. Safe Environment: Intense Heat and Intense Cold provide immunity from the effects of high and low Temperature Levels, respectively. Safe Environment: High Pressure provides immunity to the damage and other effects caused by high pressure; Low Pressure/Vacuum does the same for the opposite condition. Safe Environment: Radiation allows the character to wander around in nuclear wastelands without fear of genetic damage or other ill effects (rampaging packs of mutants are, of course, another matter entirely).

Note that the immunity to damage which Life Support provides applies *only* to damage caused by Change Environment, ambient environmental conditions, and the like. Life Support offers *no* protection from damage caused by other Powers using similar special effects, such as an Energy Blast defined as a "heat wave" or "radiation bolt."

# LIVING IN A DANGEROUS WORLD



Here are descriptions of a few common circumstances and the damage (or other effects) characters might suffer from them.

## Chemicals

Caustic chemicals can be found in factories, the laboratories of alchemists and scientists of various sorts, the blood of aliens or demons, and many other places. The number of dangerous chemicals is nearly infinite, but their basic combat effects — which depend on whether the chemicals are weak or strong, diluted or undiluted — are simple.

The damage listed in the Chemicals Table assumes the character has been splashed with or exposed to about one quart of the substance. For much larger quantities, add 1-2d6; if the character is immersed in the chemicals, add 2 or more dice.

The damage indicated on the table is Normal Damage, NND, Does BODY. The defenses are to be covered by a substance the chemicals cannot affect (like a chemical-proof sealed suit) or to have a Force Field (or other Power that keeps the chemicals from touching the character). At the GM's discretion, chemical damage may be Penetrating. Some chemicals also cause or emit fumes; these do 2d6 NND damage (STUN only); the defense is appropriate Life Support.

A character takes damage from chemicals for every Segment of exposure until the chemicals are washed off of him or otherwise removed. Sometimes a chemical can only be removed with special chemicals designed to neutralize it; in such cases, exposing the chemical to water may actually worsen the problem (an explosion of 2-12d6 Normal Damage can sometimes result). Appropriate safety measures are usually located near where dangerous chemicals are stored.

Damage from chemicals may result in scars and disfigurement (permanent reduction of COM). Consider this a Transform whose results can only be reversed via plastic surgery, some types of healing magic, or similar methods.

### CHEMICALS TABLE

| Type Of Chemicals | Damage |
|---|---|
| Diluted, Weak | ½d6 per Segment |
| Diluted, Strong | 2d6 per Segment |
| Concentrated, Weak | 1d6 per Segment |
| Concentrated, Strong | 4d6 per Segment |

## Electricity

There are plenty of ways for characters to get electrocuted — being Knocked Back into a junction box, accidentally touching a live wire, or being struck by a random lightning bolt, for example. Three factors determine how much damage results: the voltage of the attack; the current from the attack; and how well grounded the character is. Since the voltage and current of most common wires are standardized, the Electricity Table below is sufficient for most situations.

On the other hand, grounding — how easily electricity can flow through the character and into the ground — can vary. Characters who are well-grounded will have more electricity flowing through them, and thus be more powerfully zapped. For the sake of simplicity, characters should be defined as Well Grounded, Poorly Grounded, or Insulated. Well Grounded includes such states as standing in water or holding onto a metal pipe stuck into the ground. Insulated includes flying, standing on a rubber mat, or wearing a special insulating suit. The rest of the time, the character can probably be considered Poorly Grounded.

The attacks listed on the Electricity Table are all alternating current (AC). When a character is hit with an AC charge, his muscles spasm and throw him away from the source of the attack. If the character wants to hold on to the source (perhaps to prevent it from touching someone else), he must make an EGO Roll (at -1 per 5 STUN which he takes after applying defenses) to keep his grip; furthermore, he continues to take damage from the electricity every Segment.

In some strange laboratories, or perhaps at a power plant, characters might encounter direct current (DC). When a character touches a source of DC power, his muscles tend to lock themselves onto the source, thus causing him to take damage every Segment until he dies. To pull away, the character must make an EGO Roll (at -1 per 5 STUN which he takes after applying defenses).

## Fire

Raging fires and devastating blasts of heat can emanate from many sources — bonfires, blast furnaces, torches, a house on fire. The Fire Table indicates some common sources of fire damage (other than weapons) and the damage they cause.

For large fires, assume the listed damage

## ELECTRICITY TABLE

| Power Type | Insulated | Poorly Grounded | Well Grounded |
|---|---|---|---|
| Household Current | 1d6 S | 2d6 | 1d6 K |
| Heavy Household Current | 3d6 S | 5d6 | 2d6 K |
| Light Industrial Current | 5d6 S | 8d6 | 3d6 K |
| Heavy Industrial Current | 7d6 | 11d6 | 4d6 K |
| High Tension Line | 9d6 | 14d6 | 5d6 K |
| Automobile Spark Plug | 2d6 S | 5d6 | 2d6 K |
| Lightning Bolt | 5d6 S | 10d6 | 4d6 K+ |

S: STUN only damage
K: Killing Damage

## FIRE TABLE

| Fire Type | Heat Damage | Other Damage |
|---|---|---|
| Torch | 1 pip — 1d6 K | +2d6 HA |
| Lantern, Flaming Oil | 1 pip — 1d6+1 K | |
| Wood or House Fire | 1 pip — 2d6 K | 0-2d6 NND (Smoke) |
| Oil or Chemical Fire | 1 pip — 3d6 K | 0-3d6 NND (Smoke) |
| Electric Burner/Heater | ½-1d6 K | |
| Superheated Steam | 2-3d6 K | 10d6 Normal (physical), if in blast |
| Boiling Oil or Tar | 2-4d6 K | May have Sticky effect |
| Molten Metal | 4d6 K | 14d6 Normal (physical) |
| Blast Furnace | 6d6 K | 12d6 Normal (physical), if in furnace |
| Rocket Exhaust | 6-8d6 K | 18d6 Normal (physical) |
| Acetylene Torch | 2d6 K AP | |
| Oxy-Hydrogen Torch | 2½d6 K AP | |
| Laser Torch | 3d6+1 K AP | |
| Plasma Torch | 4d6 K AP | |

AP: Armor Piercing
K: Killing Damage
NND: No Normal Defense (STUN only)

occurs *per hex.* Thus, if a character runs through a bonfire 4" wide, he takes bonfire damage for each hex (each attack applies to his defenses separately). Of course, the damage can vary from hex to hex; a raging fire may do 2d6 K at its center, but only ½d6 K in the hexes near the edge. The damage from fire or heat is energy damage.

The damage caused by inhaling smoke is usually the same number of dice as caused by the fire itself in that hex. The defense is not having to breathe (*i.e.,* appropriate Life Support). In some situations, such as when certain types of plastics are burned, the smoke and fumes may become an NND which does STUN and BODY. Characters who breathe through a filter (such as a wet cloth) take -1d6 from smoke inhalation.

## Radiation

Radiation can be extremely dangerous. Typically, exposure to radiation has no immediate effect on a character. However, depending upon the strength of the radiation he was exposed to, from days to years later effects may develop. These include radiation burns, radiation sickness, cancer, and even death. These effects are difficult to adjudicate in game terms; in most cases they're best handled as a plot device that gradually unfolds in the game (this also gives the characters the chance to find a cure, if possible). Radiation burns can cause minor damage (perhaps ½d6 NND Killing Damage to several different locations on the body), but this damage takes a very long time to heal (triple the normal healing time, at best). It may also cause scars (resulting in loss of COM). Radiation sickness can cause reduction of Characteristics (typically a Drain of CON, STUN, and STR, with an extremely long recovery period) and, eventually, death.

## Vehicle Impact

When a vehicle runs into a character, determine the damage as you would for a Move By (for sideswipes and glancing impacts) or a Move Through (for full collisions). The vehicle's STR depends on its base STR and Size only (do not include any extra STR bought for it).

Example: *A typical automobile (25 STR — base of 10, plus 15 for Size) is traveling at 20" per Phase when its driver suddenly performs a Move Through on a nearby building. Assuming it hits, the vehicle does ((25/5) + (20/3)) = 12d6 damage.*

The vehicle and all passengers in it take one-third (for Move Bys) or half (for Move Throughs) of the damage done. The damage done to passengers is halved if they have seatbelts, airbags, or similar restraint systems.

Damage from vehicle impacts is Normal Damage unless the vehicle has sharp edges, a spike on the front, or some other feature that would convert it to an equivalent number of DCs of Killing Damage.

## Everything Else

Here are some guidelines for substances and phenomena not covered above.

**Duration**

First, the GM needs to decide whether the substance or phenomenon would cause its damage instantly and then stop, or would keep working over time (*i.e.,* every Segment). If the attack is immediate, the GM need only determine how much and what type of damage it does. If it keeps working, the GM must figure out not only its damage, but how much of the damage applies per Segment. Furthermore, he should know how many Segments it does damage for and how to

## LETHALITY TABLE

| Lethality Level | STUN Damage | Normal Damage | Killing Damage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Weak | 1-4d6 | 1-3d6 | 1 pip — ½d6 |
| Strong | 5-10d6 | 4-7d6 | 1d6-1½d6 |
| Powerful | 11-16d6 | 8-12d6 | 2-3d6 |
| Very Powerful | 17d6+ | 13d6+ | 3d6+ |

Note: If the damage is NND or AP, reduce the lethality by one step up the chart; thus, a Strong Normal NND attack would have 1-3d6 in it, not 4-7d6.

make it stop working (in other words, how the affected character can neutralize it).

**Types Of Damage**

You can define most phenomena as doing one (or more) of three types of damage: STUN Only; Normal; and Killing. Additionally, the GM can apply Advantages such as NND (either regular NND, or NND Does BODY) and Armor Piercing if necessary to represent the phenomena or substance correctly in game terms. The Types Of Damage Table provides some examples.

## TYPE OF DAMAGE TABLE

| Type Of Damage | Example |
|---|---|
| STUN Only | Small shocks |
| STUN Only AP | Hits to pressure points |
| STUN Only NND | Nonlethal gasses |
| Normal | Damage spread over an area |
| Normal AP | Damage concentrated at a point |
| Normal NND (does BODY) | Corrosive substances; some lethal gasses |
| Killing | Sharp objects |
| Killing AP | Extremely sharp or hypervelocity objects |
| Killing NND (does BODY) | Intense radiation, poisons, some lethal gasses |

**Amount Of Damage**

For ease of analysis, define the potential strength of the damaging substance or phenomenon into one of four classes: Weak; Strong; Powerful; and Very Powerful. (Of course, these terms are from the point of view of a normal person; PCs in some campaigns may be able to shrug off damage that would kill a normal person instantly.)



# BREAKING THINGS



Many fights inevitably involve property damage. What would a barroom brawl be without smashed chairs? The following section describes how to determine when things are broken.

## ATTACKING AND DAMAGING OBJECTS

An object's DCV depends on its size. A human-sized or hex-sized inanimate object typically has a DCV of 3. If the object is larger or smaller than that, you apply the Target Size modifiers (page 382) to the attacker's OCV, thus effectively "decreasing" or "increasing" the object's DCV.

Each object has a Defense (DEF) value and a BODY total. The object's DEF works like a character's PD and ED; DEF is Resistant. When a character makes an attack against an object, subtract its DEF value from the BODY done (regardless of whether the attack was physical or energy). If the remainder is 0 or less, the object suffers no damage; subtract any amount left from the BODY total. Only the BODY done matters in breaking an object — objects don't have STUN, so attackers can ignore it.

Example: *Chiron tries to cut through a wall with an axe. He chops into a DEF 5, 6 BODY wall, and rolls 10 BODY of damage. The GM subtracts the wall's DEF 5 from the 10 BODY, yielding 5 BODY. The wall takes 5 BODY. Since the wall has a total of 6 BODY, it is damaged but still standing — another good blow will cut through it easily.*

The number of BODY an object has depends on its size, shape, weight, and durability (or lack thereof). For example, a machine with a heavy steel casing and fragile inner mechanisms would have a high DEF but few BODY.

The BODY and DEF of an object can change depending on the level of technology. Generally, the higher the technology, the more BODY and DEF the object has. This shows that more materials are available — high-tech worlds avoid fragile materials for the practicality of sturdier ones — and that the methods for making things have improved.

The Object Table covers some common items which characters may try to break. This list just suggests DEF and BODY for these items; the GM should change them to fit a particular adventure. In the case of devices, the listed BODY refers to the amount of damage necessary to break the device; to destroy it fully takes twice as much damage. The same type of object may have different DEF and BODY from one example to another. For example, Altarian spacesuits might be sturdier than Denebian ones, so they have +1 DEF and BODY.

### Using Objects As Weapons

If a character uses an object as a weapon, the maximum amount of damage he can do with it equals its combined DEF+BODY — if he tries to do additional damage, the object simply breaks (generally, it's then unusable as a weapon). The DEF+BODY doesn't add to his STR; rather, it represents an upper limit on how much damage he can do with the object.

Example: *Defender (STR 55) decides to use a handy telephone pole (DEF 5, BODY 5). to hit Spark, since he wants to avoid touching Spark's Damage Shield. Although Defender normally does 11d6 (55/5) in HTH Combat, since the DEF+BODY of the object he's using as an impromptu weapon is only 10, the most damage he can do with it is 10d6. If he tries to do more damage than 10d6, all he'll do is 10d6 and the pole will break.*

## DETERMINING THE BODY AND DEFENSE OF AN OBJECT

If an object isn't listed on the Object Table, use the listed objects as guidelines for how much DEF and BODY it should have. Alternatively, the GM can determine the DEF and BODY by using the Object BODY Table and Materials Defense Table.

On the Object BODY Table, an object's BODY depends on its total mass; each doubling of mass is +1 BODY. The GM may wish to increase an object's BODY based on its size or the materials it is made of.

On the Materials Defense Table, the DEF of an object depends primarily on the material it's made from. Since an object is no stronger than its weakest major part, generally you should use the DEF of the material an object's weakest major part is made from when determining an object's overall DEF.

When determining the DEF and BODY of an object, the GM should first look at the object's function. If the function comes from several different parts of the object, then figure out each part separately.

Example: *Storvak hits a large automated drill press with an Area Of Effect attack. The attack does 6 BODY to each portion of the machine. The computer control is a 50 kg complex machine in a cast plastic casing. It would have DEF 2 and 4 BODY. The attack destroys the machine beyond any possibility of repair. The drill press is a 200 kg simple machine — the weakest part is sheet metal. It has DEF 4, BODY 8. It takes 2 BODY and is only partially damaged.*

# OBJECT TABLE

| Material or Object | DEF | BODY |
|---|---|---|
| **Doors** | | |
| Airlock door | 8 | 7 |
| City gates, small | 5 | 10 |
| City gates, large/heavy | 8 | 20+ |
| Interior wood door | 2 | 3 |
| Interior spaceship door | 6 | 4 |
| Exterior wood door | 4 | 3 |
| Metal fire door | 5 | 5 |
| Safe door | 10 | 9 |
| Large vault door | 16 | 9 |
| **Furniture** | | |
| Chamber pot | 2 | 2 |
| Computer, personal | 2 | 2 |
| Furniture, light wood | 3 | 3 |
| Furniture, heavy wood | 4 | 5 |
| Furniture, plastic | 2 | 3 |
| Furniture, steel-reinforced | 5 | 5 |
| Glass | 1 | 1 |
| Glass, reinforced | 2 | 1 |
| Hearth/fireplace | 5 | 10 |
| Lamp post (breakaway) | 5 | 3 |
| Lantern | 1-2 | 2 |
| Mantel | 3 | 3 |
| **Locks** | | |
| House door lock | 3 | 2 |
| Magnetic lock | 5 | 3 |
| Padlock | 4 | 3 |
| Machinery | | |
| Light machinery | 5 | 4 |
| Medium machinery | 7 | 6 |
| Heavy machinery | 9 | 8 |
| Spacesuit | 2 | 3 |
| **Outdoor Items, Misc.** | | |
| Awning | 3 | 1 |
| Boulder (single) | 5 | 13 |
| Bridge, small (1.6 ktons) | 9 | 21 |
| Bridge, large (100 ktons) | 9 | 27 |
| Bushes | 2 | 2 |
| Cobblestone, single | 4 | 4 |
| Dirt (per hex) | 0 | 10 |
| Flagpole (breakaway) | 4 | 2 |
| I Beam (per 2m length) | 9 | 8 |
| Manhole cover | 9 | 5 |
| Railroad tracks | 4 | 5 |
| Roadway (.5m thick) | 5 | 11 |
| Stone (per hex) | 5 | 19 |
| Telephone pole | 5 | 5 |

| Material or Object | DEF | BODY |
|---|---|---|
| **Trees** | | |
| Small tree (less than 1") | 4 | 5 |
| Medium tree (less than 5") | 5 | 8 |
| Large tree (5" or more) | 5 | 11 |
| **Vehicles** | | |
| Armored car | 8 | 18 |
| Automobile | 3 | 15 |
| Bicycle | 3 | 2 |
| Cart, small | 3 | 8 |
| Cart, large | 4 | 12 |
| Chariot | 4 | 8 |
| Helicopter | 3 | 14 |
| Hovercraft | 5 | 14 |
| Jetpack | 4 | 4 |
| Motorcycle | 3 | 11 |
| Plane, Light | 3 | 13 |
| Plane, Twin engine | 3 | 15 |
| Plane, Multi-engine | 3 | 19 |
| Railroad car | 6 | 15 |
| Spaceship, small | 10 | 10 |
| Spaceship, medium | 10 | 20-40 |
| Spaceship, large | 15 | 30-80 |
| Submarine | 10 | 20 |
| Tank (front armor) | 20 | |
| Tank (side, top, rear, bottom) | 16 | 19 |
| Truck or bus | 4 | 17 |
| Wagon, covered | 3 | 12 |
| **Walls** | | |
| Armored wall | 13 | 7 |
| Brick wall | 5 | 3 |
| Concrete wall | 6 | 5 |
| Home inside wall | 3 | 3 |
| Home outside wall | 4 | 3 |
| Reinforced concrete wall | 8 | 5 |
| Spaceship interior wall | 8 | 6 |
| Wooden wall | 4 | 3 |
| **Weapons** | | |
| Heavy weapon | 6 | 8-9 |
| Pistol | 4 | 3-4 |
| Rifle | 4 | 5-7 |
| Sword | 4 | 4-6 |
| Very large heavy weapon | 6 | 12 |
| **Miscellaneous** | | |
| Barrel | 3 | 6 |
| Control console (per hex) | 4 | 4 |
| Drum, 55-gallon, steel | 4 | 6 |
| Wooden crate (1" square) | 4 | 7 |

# WALL BODY

| | Thickness (millimeters) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Material** | **4** | **8** | **16** | **32** | **64** | **125** | **250** | **500** | **1m** | **2m** |
| Wood | — | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| Stone | — | — | — | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 11 | 13 |
| Metal | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 15 | 17 | 19 |
| Plastic | 1 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 13 | 15 |

## OBJECT BODY TABLE

| Mass | Living or vehicle | Unliving | Complex |
|---|---|---|---|
| 200g | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 400g | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 800g (grenade) | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 1.6kg | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| 3.2kg | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| 6.4kg (assault rifle) | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| 12.5kg | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| 25kg (TV Set) | 8 | 5 | 3 |
| 50kg | 9 | 6 | 4 |
| 100kg (man) | 10 | 7 | 5 |
| 200kg (piano) | 11 | 8 | 6 |
| 400kg (chariot) | 12 | 9 | 7 |
| 800kg (sportscar) | 13 | 10 | 8 |
| 1.6t (small car) | 14 | 11 | 9 |
| 3.2t (garbage truck) | 15 | 12 | 10 |
| 6.4t (small jet) | 16 | 13 | 11 |
| 12.5t (subway car) | 17 | 14 | 12 |
| 25t (frigate) | 18 | 15 | 13 |
| 50t (tank) | 19 | 16 | 14 |
| 100t (Space Shuttle) | 20 | 17 | 15 |
| 200t (Statue Of Liberty) | 18 | 16 | |
| 400t (trawler) | 22 | 19 | 17 |
| 800t (drilling rig) | 23 | 20 | 18 |
| 1.6kt (small bridge) | 24 | 21 | 19 |
| 3.2kt (loaded freighter) | 25 | 22 | 20 |
| 6.4kt (unloaded destroyer) | 26 | 23 | 21 |
| 12.5kt (temple) | 27 | 24 | 22 |
| 25kt (large bridge) | 28 | 25 | 23 |
| 50kt (medium cruise ship) | 29 | 26 | 24 |
| 100kt (aircraft carrier) | 30 | 27 | 25 |

g = gram
kg = kilogram
t = ton (1000 kg)
kt = kiloton (1000 t or 1,000,000 kg)

## MATERIALS DEFENSE TABLE

| Substance | DEF |
|---|---|
| Wood | |
| Thin board | 2 |
| Plywood | 3 |
| Heavy wood | 4 |
| Very heavy wood | 5 |
| Metal | |
| Sheet metal | 4 |
| Chain or heavy tube | 5 |
| Heavy bar | 6 |
| Plate | 7 |
| Casting | 8 |
| Hardened casting | 9 |
| Light armor | 10 |
| Medium armor | 13 |
| Vault doors | 16 |
| Heavy armor | 19 |
| Stone | |
| Brick | 5 |
| Concrete | 6 |
| Reinforced brick | 7 |
| Reinforced concrete | 8 |
| Plastic | |
| Light plastic | 1 |
| Plastic castings | 2 |
| Light fiberglass | 4 |
| Heavy fiberglass | 6 |
| Armored plastics | 8 |

## DEVICE MALFUNCTION TABLE

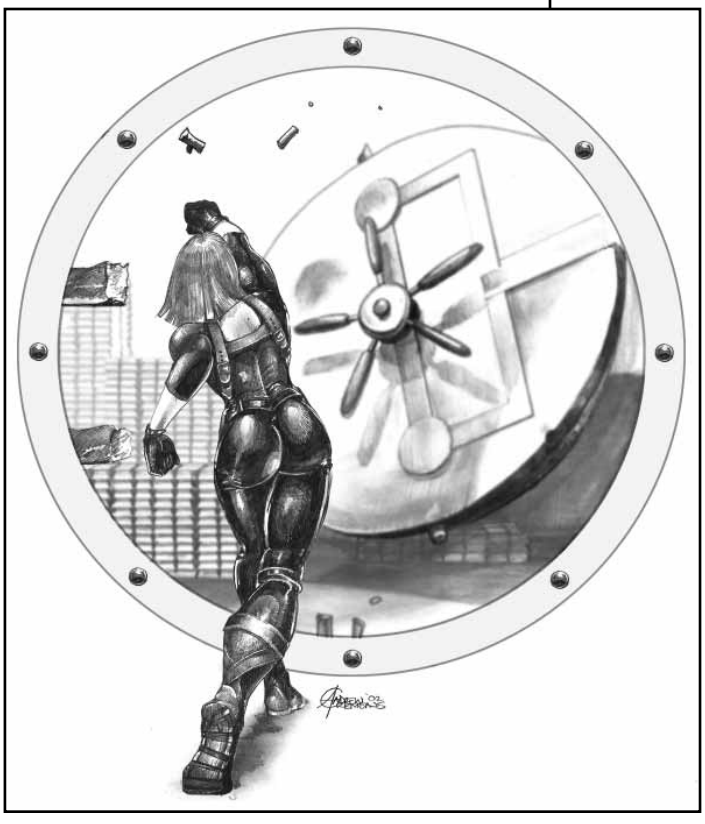
| Damage | Chance to Work Properly |
|---|---|
| Less than ¼ BODY damage | 14- |
| ¼ to ½ BODY damage | 11- |
| Greater than ½ BODY damage | 8- |

## Broken Machinery

An object that takes more damage than it has BODY is broken. However, partially damaged objects might malfunction even before they're completely disabled. The GM should decide whether a damage device still works, or roll on the accompanying optional table.

## Wall BODY

Of course, with walls and similar structures, a character may not need to destroy an object completely — he might just want to blow a hole through it. In this case, use the wall's thickness, according to the following table. A character who exceeds the wall's BODY has created a human-sized hole in it. The size of the hole doubles for every +1 BODY inflicted over the wall's base BODY.



# CONCEALMENT



There are many things a character might want to conceal — weapons, equipment, papers, microfilm, and so on. A character uses the *Concealment* Skill to hide objects in a room or on his person. The *Concealment* Skill is used versus the searcher's Concealment roll (or PER Roll) in a Skill Versus Skill Contest.

Each object or weapon has a Perception Modifier ("PER Mod") that provides a rough indication of its size and shape. Likewise, clothing and other items (such as briefcases) have a PER Mod rating as a hiding place, indicating how easy it is to conceal something beneath or inside it. If the object's PER Mod is less than or equal to the PER Mod rating of the hiding place, it's hidden from view and can only be found with a search (see below) and successful Concealment Versus Concealment (or PER Roll) Contest. If the object's PER Mod is larger than the PER Mod rating of the hiding place, then it might be spotted.

If the object is hidden, a viewer may still notice that something's hidden if he looks hard. If a character specifically asks the GM about the possibility of hidden objects — for example, "Is he carrying something under his jacket?" — he may make a Concealment or PER Roll to check. He suffers a -1 penalty to his Concealment or PER Roll for each +1 PER Mod the object is smaller than its hiding place.

Example: *"Bull" Robinson carries an AMT Backup (PER Mod +1) under his surf jacket (PER Mod 2). The gun won't be noticed by casual observers; anyone specifically looking for it will take a -1 on his Concealment or PER Roll to find it.*

If the object's PER Mod exceeds the PER Mod rating of the hiding place, anyone can notice the object — it causes an unsightly bulge, or the like. Anyone the character deals with notices the bulge with a successful Concealment or PER Roll.

Example: *Bull later decides to carry a Llama Super Comanche .44 magnum revolver (PER Mod +3) under his jacket. Because the gun is bigger than the jacket's PER Mod rating, casual observers can notice it. People are starting to talk about Bull.*

Concealment or PER Rolls tell a character someone's carrying a hidden object, but not what the object is. As long as clothing (or the like) still covers an object, the object's exact identity remains unknown. However, some information about the object may be available. If an observer notices a bulge under the character's left armpit, it's probably a gun... but the observer won't know what type of gun it is until it comes out into view.

## CONCEALMENT TABLE

| Location/Item | PER Mod |
|---|---|
| Armor | 1 |
| Boots | 1 |
| Briefcase, backpack | 4 |
| Camera case | 2 |
| Cloak | 5 |
| Coat (heavy, long jacket) | 4 |
| Handbag, large | 3 |
| Handbag, small | 1 |
| Hat | 1 |
| Jacket, men's suit | 2 |
| Jacket, windbreaker | 3 |
| Overcoat (trenchcoat) | 5 |
| Saddlebags | 3 |
| Shirt, blouse, tunic, tabard | 1 |
| Skirt, dress, or robes | 1 |

The PER Mod rating of the jackets and coats given in the Concealment Table represents them buttoned up. If a jacket is left unbuttoned, the PER Mod rating of its hiding spaces increases by 1. But when a character moves while wearing an unbuttoned jacket, there's a chance of 1 on 1d6 (1 or 2 if he's running) for the jacket to open and reveal any objects hidden under it.

If a character has clothing specifically tailored for one piece of equipment or weapon, the PER Mod rating goes up by 1. A suit jacket specifically designed to hold a Colt Anaconda (PER Mod +3) would have a PER Mod rating of 3 and just barely hide the gun.

Some objects are so large a character can't hid them in a given area. If a hiding place's PER Mod is 2 or more points smaller than the object's PER Mod, the object is not considered hidden. Don't even try hiding a +7 PER Mod machine gun under your hat.

The Concealment Table lists the most common concealment spots for objects and weapons. The PER Mods of various items are listed in the Concealed Objects Table. If an item is not listed, use the listed objects as guidelines to determine an appropriate PER Mod.

Anything less than PER Mod +0 may be hidden on a character's person with Concealment. Such objects can't be found visually, but only with a Strip Search and a Concealment Versus Concealment Contest. Such items are considered so small they can fit behind belt buckles, in shoe heels, or inside specially created pockets.

### SEARCHING A PERSON

Whenever a character gets captured, his captors will probably search him. There are three kinds of searches: a Fast Patdown; a Thorough Patdown; and a Strip Search. All three work on the basic Concealment Versus Concealment (or PER Roll) system.




A *Fast Patdown* only takes one Phase and will find most large items hidden on a character's torso. The searcher rolls his Concealment or PER Roll, using the PER Mod of any object the character is carrying on his torso as a bonus. The searcher finds each item if he makes his Concealment or PER Roll for each one. The chance is pretty good for him to find a gun, but there's still a small chance to miss one.

A *Thorough Patdown* takes a full Turn and will find most large items hidden anywhere on a character's body. The searcher still must make his Concealment or PER Roll (with an extra time bonus), but he can now find objects hidden anywhere on a character.

A *Strip Search* is exactly what it sounds like. It takes at least one minute, and often five or ten minutes or more. The searcher removes all of the subject's clothing and searches it, sometimes even systematically destroying each item of clothing to make sure everything hidden in it is found. Anything not hidden with the Concealment Skill will automatically be found; anything hidden with Concealment will be found if the searcher wins a Skill Versus Skill Contest. After searching the clothing, the searcher turns his attention to the subject and searches him thoroughly, right down to his body cavities; hiding anything is almost impossible. In general, performing a Strip Search grants +5 (or more) to the searcher's Concealment roll — and, of course, taking extra time to search gives the searcher further bonuses.

## CONCEALED OBJECTS TABLE

| Item | PER Mod |
|---|---|
| Assault rifle | +5 to +7 |
| Bag/purse of coins | +1 to +3 |
| Binoculars | +2 to +3 |
| Book, notebook, papers | +1 to +3 |
| Bow, long | +4 to +7 |
| Bow, short | +3 to +5 |
| Cash, roll of | +1 |
| Coin | +0 |
| Crossbow | +4 to +7 |
| Film, roll of | +0 |
| Gemstone | +0 |
| Grenade | +1 |
| Knife | +1 |
| Knife (small), shuriken | +0 |
| Laptop computer | +3 |
| Pistol | +2 to +3 |
| Rifle, shotgun | +4 to +7 |
| Ring | +0 |
| Staff | +4 to +7 |
| Submachine gun | +3 to +5 |
| Sword, broad/bastard | +4 to +6 |
| Sword, short | +2 to +3 |
| Wand | +2 |

# ANIMALS

In the *HERO System,* you create animals from the same base as human characters. Thus, they have ratings of 10 in the eight Primary Characteristics, a free Running 6", and so forth. Animals are often bought with Powers to simulate their defenses, attacks, and Senses; these Powers are almost always intrinsic to the animal (no Foci). Many animal attacks are bought with the Power Limitation *Reduced Penetration.*

Animals do not receive Disadvantages just for being animals — for being unable to speak, relate to humans, and so forth. However, most animals receive a Disadvantage for having no manipulatory limbs — they cannot use tools, dial a telephone, and the like. This is a Frequent, Greatly Impairing Physical Limitation (15 points).

Here are some example animals the GM can use in his campaign.



**AMERICAN BLACK BEAR**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23 | STR | 13 | 14- | Lift 600 kg; 4½d6 [2] |
| 15 | DEX | 15 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 8 | PD | 3 | | Total: 8 PD (2 rPD) |
| 6 | ED | 2 | | Total: 6 ED (2 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 5 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 10 | REC | 2 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 33 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 57 (+3 with NCM)** | |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 1"/2"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 15 | *Bite:* HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR) | 1 |
| 16 | *Claws:* HKA 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 2 |
| 4 | *Growl:* +10 PRE; Only For Fear-Based Presence Attacks (-1), Incantations (must growl or roar; -¼) | 0 |
| 2 | *Tough Skin/Fat:* Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED) | 0 |
| 1 | *Burst Of Speed:* Running +3" (9" total); Increased Endurance Cost (x8 END; -3½) | 8 |
| 4 | *Bear's Nose:* +2 PER with Smell/ Taste Group | 0 |
| | **Talents** | |
| 3 | Lightsleep | |
| | **Skills** | |
| 5 | +1 Hand-To-Hand | |
| 3 | Climbing 12- | |
| 2 | Concealment 11-; Self Only (-½) | |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 55**
**Total Cost: 112**

| 75+ | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Hibernates In Winter (Infrequently, Fully Impairing) |
| 0 | Physical Limitation: Human Size |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Poor Eyesight, suffers -2 to all Sight PER Rolls (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 10 | Physical Limitation: Poor Hearing, suffers -2 |

to all Hearing PER Rolls (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
5 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, can only leap 1" (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

**LION**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23 | STR | 13 | 14- | Lift 600 kg; 4½d6 [2] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 20 | CON | 20 | 13- | |
| 14 | BODY | 8 | 12- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 12 | COM | 1 | 11- | |
| 10 | PD | 5 | | Total: 10 PD (1 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 1 | | Total: 5 ED (1 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 10 | REC | 2 | | |
| 40 | END | 0 | | |
| 36 | STUN | 0 | | **Total Characteristics Cost: 84 (+5 with NCM)** |

**Movement:** Running: 7"/14"
Leaping: 5"/10"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 25 | *Bite:* HKA 1½d6 (3d6 with STR) | 2 |
| 16 | *Claws:* HKA 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 2 |
| 4 | *Roar:* +10 PRE; Only For Fear-Based Presence Attacks (-1), Incantations (must roar; -¼) | 0 |
| 1 | *Tough Skin:* Damage Resistance (1 PD/1 ED) | 0 |
| 2 | *Swift Runner:* Running +1" (7" total) | 1 |
| 9 | *Cat's Senses:* +3 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | *Cat's Eyes:* Nightvision | 0 |
| 5 | *Cat's Nose:* Tracking with Normal Smell | 0 |

**Skills**

15 +3 Hand-To-Hand

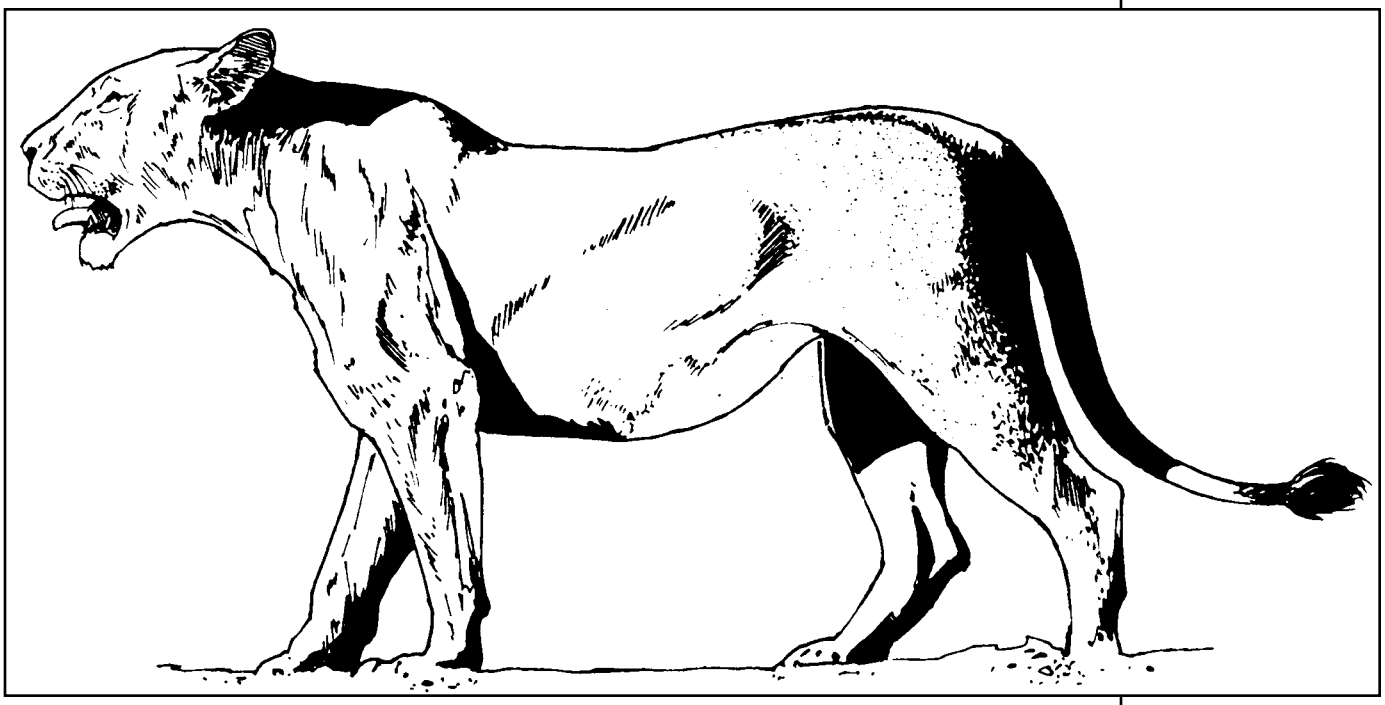
3 Climbing 13-
2 Concealment 11-; Self Only (-½)
3 *Camouflage Coloration:* +4 to Concealment; Self Only (-½), Only In Home Environment (-1)
5 Stealth 14-
1 *Camouflage Coloration:* +1 to Stealth; Only In Home Environment (-1)
3 Tactics 11-
3 Teamwork 13-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 102**
**Total Cost: 186**

**75+ Disadvantages**

15 Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
0 Physical Limitation: Human Size
15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
81 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 186**



## HORSE (LIGHT WARHORSE)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | STR | 15 | 14- | Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [2] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 20 | CON | 20 | 13- | |
| 16 | BODY | 12 | 12- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 16 | PRE | 6 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 7 | PD | 2 | | Total: 7 PD (1 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 0 | | Total: 4 ED (1 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 2 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 9 | REC | 0 | | |
| 40 | END | 0 | | |
| 39 | STUN | 0 | | **Total Characteristics Cost: 69 (+9 with NCM)** |

**Movement:** Running: 12"/24"
Leaping: 5"/10"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | *Bite:* HKA 1 point (½d6 with STR) | 1 |
| 10 | *Kick/Rear:* HA +3d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) | 1 |
| 1 | *Tough Skin:* Damage Resistance (1 PD/1 ED) | 0 |
| 1 | *Combat-Acclimated:* +3 PRE; Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks (-1) | |
| 6 | *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -3" | 0 |
| 12 | *Horse's Legs:* Running +6" (12" total) | 1 |
| 6 | *Sharp-Eared And Keen-Nosed:* +2 PER with all Sense Groups but Sight Group | 0 |

**Skills**

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | +1 with Bite, Kick/Rear |
| 2 | PS: Attack 11- |
| 2 | PS: Stop Attacking 11- |
| 1 | Riding 13-; Complementary To Rider's Skill Only (-1) |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 49**
**Total Cost: 118**

**75+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 5 | Physical Limitation: Large (4m; -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Domesticated (Very Common, Strong) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 130**



chapter four:



# EQUIPMENT

# EQUIPMENT



This chapter provides rules for constructing various types of equipment — automatons (such as robots), computers, vehicles, bases, and weapons — in the *HERO System.* It also includes lists of different types of weapons and vehicles. Characters who need a fancy broadsword or a cool car can find it here — and if they can't find what they're looking for, they can build their own.

## BUILDING AND BUYING EQUIPMENT

Characters build equipment with Character Points, using the rules for each particular type of equipment as described below. Most equipment is built with Powers, though Skills are often bought for some types of equipment.

In Heroic campaigns, characters typically don't have to pay Character Points for their equipment. Instead, they pay money. However, they have to pay Character Points for the appropriate Skills to use their equipment, such as Transport Familiarity and Weapon Familiarity.

Superheroic characters not only build equipment with Character Points, they must pay Character Points for it as well. A character (in any type of campaign) never has to buy a Skill to use weapons or equipment he bought with Character Points, unless some Limitation requires him to. However, this does not extend to other equipment of that same type. For example, if a character pays Character Points for a motorcycle, he doesn't gain TF: Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles for free — he just has the ability to drive that one motorcycle.

The minimum cost of any piece of equipment is 1 Character Point, as with anything in the *HERO System*.

### THE 5-POINT DOUBLING RULE

At the GM's option, characters in any type of campaign may double the number of a particular piece of equipment, weapon, or object they have for +5 points. Thus, if a sword costs 20 Character Points, for 25 points the character could have two such swords. This is a quick and easy way to simulate characters who carry lots of "back-up" weapons or who want to own a fleet of vehicles. If the equipment is unusual (such as an Unbreakable Focus, an enchanted item, or the like), the character should get the GM's permission to buy it using this rule.

The 5-point doubling purchase is a separate cost, not a part of the equipment being purchased. Therefore it doesn't affect the purchased equipment's Active Points or the like. If a character applies the 5-point doubling rule to a gadget built with Limitations, those Limitations do not apply to the +5 points — the +5 points aren't subject to Power Modifiers. The +5 points also cannot be put in Power Frameworks.

If a character wants to buy multiple items of equipment that cost less than 5 points, he can buy the items individually or using the 5-point rule, whichever is cheaper. For example, if a Vehicle only costs 1 point, a character could buy 8 of them for 1 point apiece. Even then, though, the character may reach a point where the 5-point method is cheaper. For example, if he buys two 4-point gadgets, it's cheaper to buy them individually; if he wants eight such gadgets, the 5-point method is cheaper.

Items of equipment bought with the 5-point doubling rule are considered "separate" from the original item. They're distinct from each other, each with its own identity and uses even if they're defined identically in *HERO System* rules terms. Thus, a character could use two of them for Two-Weapon Fighting, or a multiple-power attack, or the like. In the interest of game balance, common sense, or dramatic sense, the GM may forbid any uses of double-bought equipment that he deems inappropriate.

If a character uses the 5-point doubling rule to buy multiple weapons or gadgets, each of them has to be identical. However, if he uses this rule (or a corresponding rule) to buy extra Computers, Followers, Vehicles, or Bases, the various items can differ — they just all have to be built on that same point total or less. For example, a character could buy four 200-point Vehicles, defining them as a car, a motorcycle, a boat, and a mini-copter.

Characters may not apply the 5-point doubling rule to innate powers or abilities.

# AUTOMATONS



Automatons are "individuals" who, although active, aren't alive in the traditional sense. Robots, zombies, golems, skeletons, mechanical constructs, and the like are all automatons. An automaton is more like a device than a free-willed person.

Automatons, in their various forms, are popular in adventure literature, especially as servants for master villains — they never ask questions, don't require food, never lose morale, and rarely form unions. Characters usually buy Automatons as Followers, or obtain them via the Power *Summon.*

## DESIGNING AUTOMATONS

To create an automaton, design a character normally. Thus the automaton starts with a 10 STR, 2 SPD, 6" Running, standard human Senses, and so on. The designer purchases increased Characteristics, Skills, and Powers, as appropriate. However, there are a few changes or considerations to keep in mind.

First, since an automaton isn't really a sentient, living being, it automatically has a 0 EGO and is immune to all Mental Powers. An automaton cannot make EGO Rolls and does not have the ability to make its own decisions.

Second, automatons often sell back their END to 0, and then buy all their Powers down to 0 END (or power them with an END Reserve).

Third, although automatons have Presence, and can make crude Presence Attacks (usually involving fear or intimidation), they are immune to all Presence Attacks.

Fourth, instead of having its own INT, an automaton may sell its INT back to 0 and install a computer brain (or, in a Fantasy campaign, some magical instructions). The computer gives the automaton orders, and the computer's INT makes PER Rolls for the automaton. For rules on designing and buying computers, see *Computers,* below.

Fifth, an automaton has no Everyman Skills or free languages — it must buy all of these things with points.

See below for information on buying Powers for automatons; many Powers, particularly Life Support, are very appropriate for automatons. Automatons may also buy Talents (for example, a robot might have Absolute Time Sense to simulate an internal chronometer). Automatons generally should not buy Perks.

## USING AN AUTOMATON

Because an automaton has no free will, it can only follow commands. An automaton can have a number of simple commands, or programs, equal to its INT (or the INT of its computer brain, if it has one). An automaton's commands can include statements like "Shoot anyone who comes through this door and isn't wearing a badge" or "Drive this car to headquarters."

An automaton must know the appropriate Skill to execute a command. If commanded to fire a gun, it must have WF: Handguns or suffer the standard nonproficiency penalty. If commanded to drive a car, it must have TF and City Knowledge (unless someone can give it orders/directions). Remember, automatons have no Everyman Skills.

Usually an automaton follows the last order it received. If an automaton has not received an order, it stands lifeless, gathering dust. The way an automaton receives commands is defined when it is created. This can be as simple as giving a verbal command or as complex as downloading a computer program.

Example: *The Zombie is an automaton created by the Evil High Priest. It has INT 5, so it can have five simple commands at any one time. The EHP has also created the Zombie so it can accept voice commands, but only if those commands are in the EHP's voice, and only when preceded by the phrase "Your dark lord commands..." If someone were to discover the key phrase, and properly mimic the EHP's voice, he could also command the Zombie.*

## AUTOMATONS IN COMBAT

Automatons are affected by damage just like normal characters — their PD and ED are Normal (nonresistant), they take STUN damage, and so forth. However, because they have no free will, automatons are completely unaffected by all Mental Powers or mentally targeted attacks (those requiring an Ego Attack Roll). However, some automatons purchase special Automaton Powers (see below) or take Disadvantages which affect how they take damage.

Similarly, automatons attack and do damage in the usual fashion. Unless bought with natural attacks (such as claws), they must learn the Skills to use weapons, and obtain weapons to attack with.

# POWERS

You can simulate the special effects and abilities of many "classic" automatons with regular Powers and effects. In particular, anyone constructing an automaton should look especially closely at the individual parts of Life Support; few automatons need to eat, sleep, or breathe.

## Automaton Special Powers

Here are some special Powers for automatons. They're unique to automatons; PCs cannot purchase them. They are all Self Only, Inherent, cost no END, and should be considered Defense Powers and Special Powers.

### CANNOT BE STUNNED

Cost: 15 Character Points

An automaton with this Power is never Stunned, even if it takes STUN damage that exceeds its CON. It remains able to fight until it is Knocked Out or destroyed.

### DOES NOT BLEED

Cost: 15 Character Points

An automaton with this Power does not "bleed" or lose additional BODY when under 0 BODY. It also is not subject to Bleeding rules, if the campaign uses them. Common special effects for this Power include a lack of blood or a mechanical infrastructure that keeps damage from spreading.

### NO HIT LOCATIONS

Cost: 10 Character Points

An automaton with this Power has no particularly vulnerable or better defended locations on its body — a hit for, say, 5 BODY and 20 STUN does that much damage whether the automaton is hit in the head or the hand. In short, the optional Hit Location Table is useless against this automaton.

### TAKES NO STUN

Cost: 45 Character Points to take only BODY and to lose abilities each time an attack does BODY; 60 Character Points to only take BODY

An automaton with this power ignores the STUN damage from any attack: it only takes the BODY. This is the most important automaton Power; you can use it to simulate robots, zombies, and skeletons — any mindless being that continues fighting until it is completely destroyed. The base cost for this Power is 45 points.

An automaton which buys this Power has no STUN Characteristic. It does not get any points for this, and cannot sell back its STUN.

Takes No STUN affects the automaton's defenses. Base PD and ED are divided by 3, and the cost of all additional defenses and Defense Powers (other than special Automaton Powers, and any other Powers the GM exempts) is multiplied by 3 (before applying any Advantages or Limitations). This does not affect the power's END cost (if any). The automaton's base defenses are not Resistant; if an automaton wants Resistant defenses, it has to pay for them.

Example: *The Zombie is a 9 PD/6 ED automaton with Takes No STUN. Its defenses become 3 PD/2 ED. If it wants to increase these in any way, the cost will be triple. For example, another point of PD would cost 3 Character Points, instead of the usual 1 Character Point.*

An automaton with this Power cannot be Stunned or Knocked Out, because it takes no STUN damage. However, if it takes BODY damage from any attack after applying its defenses, it loses one of the following: one Power; 10 STR; 1 SPD; or 1 normal Sense. What exactly is lost is up to the GM.

Some automatons are even tougher than this: they take no effect from attacks except to take the BODY damage. This costs an additional 15 points; such an automaton is completely unaffected by attacks until it runs out of BODY, at which point it's destroyed.

Example: *Mechanon has constructed a robot to help him destroy all sentient life on Earth. This robot has 40 BODY and is purchased with the Power Takes No STUN (60 points). In battle, the robot fights relentlessly. It cannot be Stunned or Knocked Out, nor will it fall apart. It fights until it takes all its BODY in damage, at which point it is destroyed.*

An automaton with either version of this Power stops functioning when its BODY falls to 0 or below, and is completely destroyed when its negative BODY total equals its normal BODY. For example, a 10 BODY automaton ceases functioning after it has taken 10 BODY, and is destroyed after it takes 20 BODY (which would reduce it to -10 BODY).

When evaluating whether an automaton with this Power is suitable for a campaign, the GM should mentally multiply its defense by three. For example, an automaton with a 7 PD is roughly equal to a normal character with a 21 PD.

# COMPUTERS

In modern-day and futuristic campaign settings, computers are often very common. Useful for reference, entertainment, analysis, and a thousand other tasks, they can be slow and stubborn or fast and user-friendly. Extremely advanced computers can even possess their own intelligence.

In the *HERO System,* characters can use computers for a variety of purposes. Besides acting as a source of information, they can control weaponry, vehicles, and bases. With the AI rules, they can also be used to create intelligent devices, magic items, and the like.

Computers are normally bought as part of a Base or Vehicle or as a type of Follower.

## Constructing A Computer

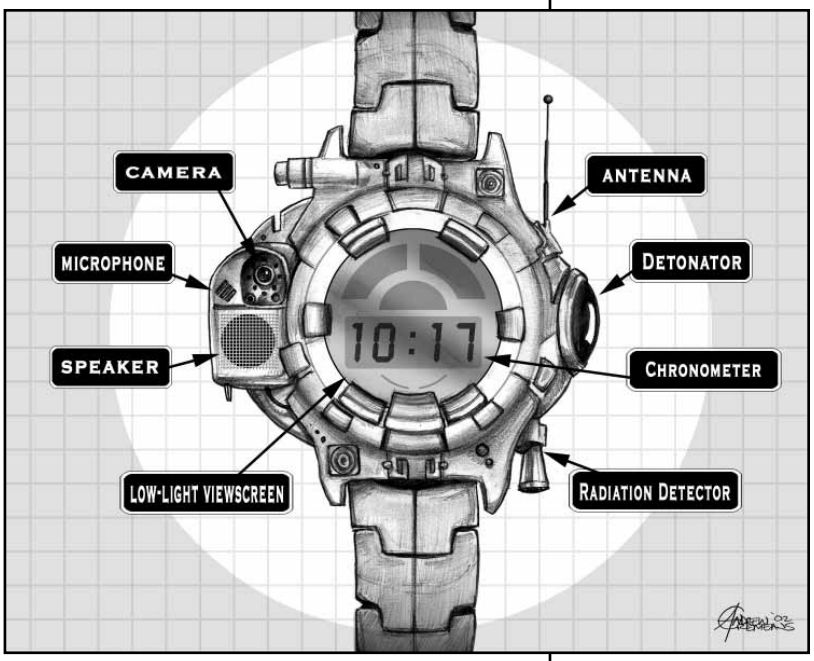
Characters design computers just like normal characters, but they only have four Characteristics: INT; DEX; SPD; and, if they're Artificial Intelligence ("AI") devices, EGO. The starting values for these Characteristics for a computer are the same as for a human character, and if appropriate may be sold back (down to a minimum of 1).

Computers are subject to certain restrictions. They have no movement ability. They cannot, by themselves, "perceive" — unlike automatons, they don't come with the basic suite of Senses for free. They have to be hooked into sensory systems (like the security cameras at a base, or the sensors on a starship) to give them the ability to perceive, or the builder has to buy the computer specific Senses (see page 162 for costs). If bought with the ability to perceive, a computer can make PER Rolls based on its INT, and can recall things it has perceived with an INT Roll.

### COMPUTER CHARACTERISTICS TABLE

| Characteristic | Starting Value | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| INT | 10 | 1 |
| EGO | 10 (AIs only) | 2 |
| DEX | 10 | 3 |
| SPD | 1 + (DEX/10) | 10 |

| Normal Computers have: | AIs have: |
|---|---|
| 1) Characteristics: DEX, INT, SPD | 1) Characteristics: DEX, INT, EGO, SPD |
| 2) Skills | 2) Skills |
| 3) No Psychological Limitations | 3) Psychological Limitations |
| 4) Programs (1 point each) | 4) Programs (1 point each) |
| 5) No self will | 5) Self will: can initiate own actions with EGO Roll. |




Almost all computers have Eidetic Memory to reflect their ability to store information indefinitely. Computers without Eidetic Memory are either extremely limited (*e.g.,* a personal data storage device, which only has to "remember" things like addresses, phone numbers, and someone's schedule), or prone to memory loss for some reason. Eidetic Memory thus defined doesn't allow a computer to record anything it perceives, as if it were a camera or tape recorder. (To have that ability, the computer has to buy Eidetic Memory a second time.)

Computers cannot buy Skill Enhancers, such as Scholar and Traveler.

Programs for a computer cost 1 Character Point each.

## Normal Computers

Normal computers do not think for themselves. They have Skills, programs, and three Characteristics (INT, DEX, and SPD). They cannot have Disadvantages. All they can do is execute a program, such as "Fly from planet A to planet B," "Test all weapon systems," or "Incarcerate any intruders."

Once a computer starts a program, it continues doing the same thing until it reaches a logical conclusion (such as arriving at its destination) or someone stops the program. Normal computers have no common sense, instincts, or self-will: they follow their program regardless of the consequences. For example, once instructed to "Attack," a normal computer continues to attack until the

**COMMON AI PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS**

Self-Preservation Instinct (Common, Strong): 15 points

Code Against Killing Humans (Very Common, Strong): 20 points

Considers Mission Goals More Important Than Crew's Lives (Common, Total): 20 points

Secret Programmed Goals The Crew Doesn't Know About (Uncommon, Total): 15 points

Must Obey Orders From Humans (Common, Total): 20 points

## EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

| Program | Required Skill(s) |
|---|---|
| Attack and Destroy Target | Weapon Familiarity |
| Diagnose Ship Malfunction | Mechanics, Electronics |
| Diagnose a Character's Disease | Paramedic; SS: Medicine |
| Drive from Location A to Location B | Transport Familiarity, Combat Driving, AKs |
| Search Nearby Space for other Spaceships (alerts crew if one is found) | Systems Operation |
| Search Reference Material for Information on a Topic | Knowledge Skills |
| Show Entertainment | Knowledge Skills |

target is destroyed (or something else stops it, like lack of ammunition), even if doing so results in the destruction of the computer itself.

However, this lack of self-will does not necessarily make normal computers stupid; they may have very sophisticated programs. The general sophistication of a computer's program depends on the computer's INT: whenever a computer encounters a problem in achieving its goal, it must make an INT Roll, with modifiers as determined by the GM. If the INT Roll succeeds, the computer comes up with an appropriate response or clever action. If the INT Roll is unsuccessful, the computer reacts in a very simple way.

Example: *A computer autopilot on a spaceship is fighting an enemy ship that suddenly turns invisible. The computer makes an INT Roll. If it succeeds, it realizes the enemy is using an invisibility screen and hunts for it with all available detectors. If it fails, it may conclude that the enemy has been destroyed, stop fighting, and turn off all its ship's Force Fields. A badly failed roll may even result in the computer randomly selecting another nearby ship to attack.*

Computers may run several programs simultaneously. A character with the *Computer Programming* Skill can modify, erase, or replace programs, though this usually takes at least a few hours.

As an optional rule, the GM can limit the number of programs a computer can run at once to INT/5. This encourages characters to build high-INT computers.

**PROGRAMS AND SKILLS**

Programs are not the same as Skills. Computers with Skills but no programs are powerful but not "user friendly." Only characters who succeed with Computer Programming rolls can use them. However, it's easy to use computers with both Skills and programs — they can often be used by anyone, and may even respond to voice commands (this requires buying one or more Languages for the computer).

For example, a computer chauffeur with Transport Familiarity and no program can drive a limousine, but requires constant supervision by a computer programmer. Anyone can use a more "friendly" computer with both a Transport Familiarity and the program "Drive from A to B"; it doesn't require supervision (the program can handle that).

If a computer and a character have the same Skill, the computer's Skill can act as a Complementary Skill. Most programs require one or more Skills to be useful. The accompanying table has a list of example programs and required Skills; players and GMs can make up more programs as needed.

All programs cost 1 Character Point.

Since they have no self-will, normal computers cannot be reasoned with. They only accept commands to switch from one program to another or to change the operation of the current program. The only Mental Powers which work against them are those which affect the Machine class of minds (see page 117; substitute INT for EGO), but even they may not always work well (the GM can impose negative modifiers to any rolls.)

## Artificial Intelligence Computers

Artificially intelligent computers (AIs) can think; they may have instincts, a personality, and even Psychological Limitations. AIs have the same Characteristics as normal computers, plus one: EGO. The base EGO for an AI is 10. AIs can be affected by Mental Powers that affect the Machine class of minds, and sometimes by Mental Powers affecting Human minds as well (depending on just how advanced they are). AIs have programs just like Normal computers, but they may also initiate their own actions if they make a successful EGO Roll.

For example, an AI with the Psychological Limitation *Self-Preservation Instinct* may decide to run away from combat even if ordered to fight. Attempts to persuade a stubborn AI make great roleplaying, and may be decided by a Skill Versus Skill Contest, with the AI pitting its EGO Roll against a character's Persuasion or Computer Programming.

## Operating A Computer

A computer's OCV and DCV equal its DEX/3. Computers get Phases according to their SPD and DEX just like characters. If a computer runs more than one program at once, such as Pilot Ship and Attack And Destroy Target, each program may act on each of the computer's Phases. A computer can fire any weapons which it's hooked up to.



## Example Computer

This is a bare minimum, normal starship computer — the ECSP-7000. The ECSP-7000 can drive a starship on routine flights, as long as no emergencies arise. Its SPD of 1 may seem too slow for safe piloting, but it maintains a Held Action for emergencies. If some emergency arises, the ECSP-7000 tries to continue towards its destination with the best plan its 11- INT Roll can devise.

Since the ECSP-7000 can only run two program at a time, it turns off all entertainment when landing, checking its position, and making course corrections. The 8- entertainment programs represent a dreary, small selection of movies, music, and games (it has only an 8- chance of having any particular item).

## ECSP-7000 SHIPBOARD COMPUTER

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll: 11- |
| 10 | DEX | 0 | 11- | OCV: 3/DCV: 3 |
| 1 | SPD | -10 | | Phase: 7 |

| Cost | Skill |
|---|---|
| | Basic Abilities |
| 3 | *Clock:* Absolute Time Sense |
| 5 | *Memory:* Eidetic Memory |
| 3 | *Math Processor:* Lightning Calculator |
| 4 | *Scanner:* Speed Reading |
| | Autopilot Skills |
| 3 | Combat Piloting 11- |
| 2 | KS: Flight Protocols 11- |
| 1 | *Voice Command Recognition:* Language: PanGalactic Tradespeak |
| 2 | Navigation (Space) 11- |
| 3 | Systems Operation 11- |
| | Entertainment Skills |
| 1 | Popular Movies 8- |
| 1 | Popular Music 8- |
| 1 | Video Games 8- |
| | Programs |
| 1 | Drive Ship from A to B (A and B must be on the Navigation Maps) |
| 1 | Show Entertainment |
| **19** | **Total Cost** |

# VEHICLES AND BASES



These rules describe how characters can create bases and vehicles. Vehicles range from a barbarian warrior's chariot, to the souped-up coupes and sportscars driven by pulp heroes and *Dark Champions* action heroes, to the faster-than-light spaceship of an intergalactic smuggler. Similarly, bases can range from a medieval castle, to the sprawling underground headquarters of a supervillain, to Space Station Gamma-9. Regardless of their origin or technological level, all bases and vehicles use the same rules.

Buying a base or vehicle is like buying any other type of equipment. In Heroic campaigns, characters must pay money. In this case, the GM usually designs the vehicle or base, and he also sets the price. Players can design their own vehicles or bases, but only with the GM's permission.

Characters in Superheroic campaigns pay for bases and vehicles with Character Points. These points can come from one individual or several. Typically, vehicles and bases cost 1 Character Point per 5 points in the vehicle or base; see *Vehicles And Bases,* page 84. As with anything else in the *HERO System,* the minimum cost of a vehicle or base is 1 Character Point.

## VEHICLE CHARACTERISTICS

Vehicles have six Characteristics. Like the Characteristics for characters, Vehicle Characteristics reflect the attributes and abilities of the vehicle. Vehicles also have one or more types of movement.

### SIZE

Vehicles have a default starting size just like characters, but their longest dimension is length (horizontal), rather than height (vertical). Thus, the default vehicle size is 1 hex long and ½ hex wide. You can increase vehicle Size with the Vehicle Size Table. Each increment of Size on the table (beyond the default Size 0) costs 5 Character Points.

### VEHICLE CHARACTERISTICS

| Characteristic | Starting Value | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Size | 1 hex | See Vehicle Size Table |
| STR | 10 | 1 |
| DEX | 10 | 3 |
| BODY | 10 | 1 |
| DEF | 2 | 3 |
| SPD | 1 + (DEX/10) | 10 |
| Movement | 6" Ground Movement | See Vehicle Movement Table |

Example: *Defender would like to build a vehicle the size of a chariot. To increase its Size by 2 increments costs 10 points. The vehicle now has a STR of 20, weighs 400 kg, and has 12 BODY.*

As a vehicle's Size increases, so does its BODY and STR. This means the vehicle is harder to disable and can carry more weight. Also, since passengers take up space, a larger vehicle can carry more passengers than a smaller one. On the other hand, the larger a vehicle is, the easier it is to hit in combat.

The lengths and widths presented in the Vehicle Size Table are not absolute; you can alter them somewhat so long as the total number of hexes remains the same. The interior size of a vehicle equals half the external size; with a minimum of ½ hex. A normal passenger takes up ½ hex of space, although it is possible to squeeze many more characters in.

The rules regarding two equivalently large or small characters fighting each other (pages 126-27) apply to vehicles.

### STRENGTH (STR)

This is the lifting STR of the vehicle, indicating how much the vehicle can carry (in addition to its own mass). The base STR for a vehicle is 10; this increases automatically as the vehicle's Size increases. Vehicles can also buy STR separately, to reflect an especially powerful, but small, vehicle. STR bought independently costs 1 Character Point per point of STR.

Vehicle STR can lift exactly as much as character STR. Encumbrance rules apply and may slow down heavily-loaded vehicles.

A vehicle's innate STR based on its Size, and additional STR bought as a Characteristic, automatically costs no END. Any additional STR bought as a Power must be bought to 0 END or draw on a source of END such as an Endurance Reserve.

### DEXTERITY (DEX)

This represents the intrinsic handling ability and maneuverability of the vehicle. The higher a vehicle's DEX, the more difficult it is to hit in combat. Thus, a fighter plane has a higher DEX than a bulldozer. When in combat, a vehicle's CV derives from its own DEX or the DEX of its driver, whichever is lower. For more information, see *Vehicle Combat,* below.

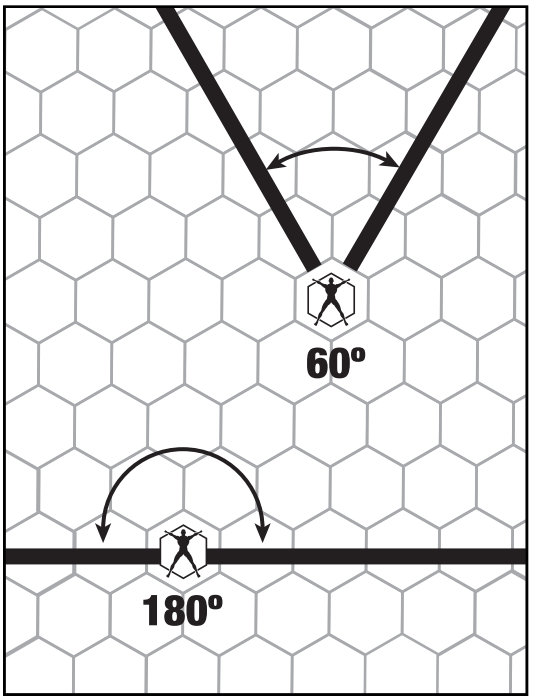
A vehicle begins with DEX 10; each +1 DEX cost 3 Character Points.

### BODY

BODY indicates the structural integrity of the vehicle — how much damage it can take before it falls apart. The base BODY for a vehicle is 10; this

## VEHICLE SIZE TABLE

| Cost | Size Category | Length (hexes) | Width (hexes) | Area (hexes) | Mass | DCV | STR | KB | BODY | Example |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 1 or less | .5 or less | .5 or less | 100 kg or less | 0 | 10 | 0 | 10 | Bicycle |
| 5 | 1 | 1.25 | .64 | .8 | 200 kg | 0 | 15 | -1 | 11 | Motorcycle |
| 10 | 2 | 1.6 | .8 | 1.25 | 400 kg | -1 | 20 | -2 | 12 | Chariot |
| 15 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 800 kg | -2 | 25 | -3 | 13 | Sportscar, stagecoach |
| 20 | 4 | 2.5 | 1.25 | 3.2 | 1.6 ton | -2 | 30 | -4 | 14 | Four-door automobile |
| 25 | 5 | 3.2 | 1.6 | 5 | 3.2 ton | -3 | 35 | -5 | 15 | Limousine, IFV |
| 30 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 6.4 ton | -4 | 40 | -6 | 16 | Tank |
| 35 | 7 | 5 | 2.5 | 12.5 | 12.5 ton | -4 | 45 | -7 | 17 | School bus |
| 40 | 8 | 6.4 | 3.2 | 20 | 25 ton | -5 | 50 | -8 | 18 | Attack helicopter, Lear jet |
| 45 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 32 | 50 ton | -6 | 55 | -9 | 19 | Locomotive, jet fighter |
| 50 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 50 | 100 ton | -6 | 60 | -10 | 20 | Large cargo plane |
| 55 | 11 | 12.5 | 6.4 | 80 | 200 ton | -7 | 65 | -11 | 21 | ICBM |
| 60 | 12 | 16 | 8 | 125 | 400 ton | -8 | 70 | -12 | 22 | Trawler, trireme |
| 65 | 13 | 20 | 10 | 200 | 800 ton | -8 | 75 | -13 | 23 | Cutter, longship |
| 70 | 14 | 25 | 12.5 | 320 | 1.6 kton | -9 | 80 | -14 | 24 | Freighter |
| 75 | 15 | 32 | 16 | 500 | 3.2 kton | -10 | 85 | -15 | 25 | Jetliner (*e.g.,* Boeing 747) |




## LIMITED DEF TABLE

| Coverage Protects | Limitation |
|---|---|
| 60 Degrees (one hex side) | -1 |
| 180 Degrees (3 consecutive hex sides) | -½ |
| Only on the same horizontal Level | -¼ |
| Coverage does not protect passengers (like a motorcycle or skateboard) | -½ |

increases automatically as the vehicle's Size increases. A vehicle can also buy BODY independently; in this case the cost is 1 Character Point per BODY.

### DEFENSE (DEF)

DEF is the defense of the vehicle; it functions as both PD and ED and is Resistant. A vehicle begins with 2 DEF; this can be increased by +1 DEF for every 3 Character Points (the same as buying +1 PD/+1 ED Armor).

DEF normally protects all parts of the vehicle, but characters can buy DEF that only protects the vehicle from attacks from a certain direction. The Limitation, which is applied only to the DEF in the limited area, depends on the size of the area protected.

Example: *Renegade builds an armored van. Overall, it has DEF 6, but Renegade wants some extra DEF on the front of the vehicle to protect him against collisions. He buys +4 DEF (12 Active Points), Limited Coverage (60 Degrees [front of vehicle only]; -1) (total cost: 6 points).*

### SPEED (SPD)

Vehicles have a SPD, just like characters. The vehicle's SPD controls how often the vehicle moves (not how fast) and how often the driver can adjust the vehicle's direction. Responsive vehicles, like sportscars, have a higher SPD than vehicles such as dump trucks or station wagons. It is possible for a vehicle to have a SPD higher than its driver's SPD; in this case the vehicle is "too responsive," so the driver can't use it to its fullest potential. For more information, see *Vehicle Combat,* below.

A vehicle begins with a starting SPD equal to 1 + (DEX/10); each +1 SPD cost 10 Character Points (see page 38 for rules about buying SPD).

### MOVEMENT

This is the vehicle's actual movement capability. All vehicles begin with Ground Movement 6" (Running), Swimming 2", and a x2 Noncombat Movement multiplier in both modes of movement. Vehicles which would lack either or both of those types of movement (such as some boats, which have no Ground Movement) can sell back their Ground Movement and/or Swimming. Vehicles can buy additional movement according to the rules in the *Powers* section. The Vehicle Movement Table summarizes the prices for various modes of movement.

All vehicle movement has a x2 Noncombat Movement multiplier for free — in other words, a vehicle can travel twice as fast if it travels at Noncombat velocities. You can double a vehicle's Noncombat Movement for +5 Character Points. Vehicles do not have to pay END for their movement (but their movement remains perceivable by three Sense Groups).



### VEHICLE AND BASE DEFENSE

For the sake of simplicity, the DEF and BODY of a base or vehicle apply throughout — every wall within the structure has the same DEF and BODY, and so forth — unless the base or vehicle's outer walls have more BODY or DEF with the *Limited Coverage* or *Partial Coverage* Limitations. In the interest of "realism" and common sense, a character can voluntarily declare that different parts of his base or vehicle have lower DEF or BODY than what he's paid for overall. (Alternately, the GM may require this.)

Example: *Defender builds a gyrocopter. He buys 10" of Flight for 20 points. He then spends +10 points for an additional x4 Noncombat Movement multiple. The final Noncombat Movement multiple is x8, so the gyrocopter can fly 80" per Phase when flying at Noncombat velocities.*

You can also build vehicles with special modes of movement like Extra-Dimensional

Movement and FTL Travel, and movement-related Powers such as Clinging. Buy these Powers for vehicles just like you would for characters.

## VEHICLE MOVEMENT TABLE

| Movement Mode | Cost per 1" | Base |
|---|---|---|
| Ground Movement | 2 points | 6" |
| Flight | 2 points | 0" |
| Swimming | 1 point | 2" |
| Gliding | 1 point | 0" |
| Leaping* | 1 point | 0" |
| Swinging | 1 point | 0" |
| Teleportation† | 2 points | 0" |
| Tunneling | 5 points | 0" |
| Extra-Dimensional Movement | N/A — 20 points | |
| FTL Travel | N/A — 10 points | |
| Clinging | N/A — 10 points | |

*: Vehicles all start with Leaping 0"; they do not get any "free" inches of Leaping from their STR.

†: A Teleporting vehicle can automatically Teleport itself, and all of the weight it can carry inside itself based on its STR, without paying for any *Increased Mass* Adders. Any Increased Mass it does buy starts by doubling the amount it can lift with its STR.

All vehicles, even those using Ground Movement, have a Turn Mode when turning, just like characters with Flight in personal combat. See page 367 for more information about Turn Modes.

#### MOVEMENT LIMITATIONS

To reflect how certain types of vehicles work, their movement can be bought with Limitations.

**Limited Maneuverability**

Some vehicles are so unwieldy that, regardless of their Turn Mode, they cannot turn around in a Phase. Vehicles with this -¼ Limitation can only make a maximum of two equally spaced turns (instead of the 3 or more usually needed to turn around) over the course of a Phase while moving at Combat Movement speeds. When moving at Noncombat Movement speeds, a vehicle with this Limitation can only make one turn over the course of the Phase.

**Stall Velocity**

Stall Velocity means a flying vehicle has to maintain a certain airspeed or risk stalling. Ordinarily, vehicles with Flight have no stall velocity, so their flight is effectively momentumless — they can hover in place, fly straight upward, and so forth. However, if you buy a vehicle's Flight with this Limitation, the vehicle may "stall" if it doesn't fly quickly enough to exceed its stall velocity. (Of course, any flying vehicle can safely slow down to land.)

If the Stall Velocity is half the vehicle's maximum combat velocity, this is a -¼ Limitation. If the Stall velocity equals the vehicle's combat velocity, Stall Velocity is a -½ Limitation (such a vehicle could only stay airborne by making Full

Moves every Phase or moving at Noncombat Movement velocities).

A stalled vehicle is at ½ DCV and begins to fall normally. A skilled pilot (one with the Skill *Combat Piloting*) can attempt to pull out of a stall by succeeding with a Combat Piloting roll.

# BASE CHARACTERISTICS

The rules for constructing bases are similar to those for building vehicles, with one important difference: bases don't move. Thus, they do not have SPD or DEX; bases are defined by only 3 Characteristics. (However, for purposes of determining the END usage of Constant Powers and the like, assume that all bases have SPD 3.)

## BASE CHARACTERISTICS

| Characteristic | Starting Value | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Size | 8 hex | See Base Size Table |
| BODY | 2 | 1 |
| DEF | 2 | 3 |

### BODY

BODY indicates the structural integrity of the base's walls (interior and exterior) and roof. Because a base's BODY spreads out over a large area, a base's walls start with only 2 BODY, and their Size does not affect this. Each +1 BODY costs 1 Character Point; this BODY applies to the entire base.

### DEFENSE (DEF)

DEF is the defense of the base's interior and exterior walls; it functions as both PD and ED and is Resistant. A base begins with 2 DEF; each +1 DEF costs 3 Character Points (the same as buying +1 PD/+1 ED Armor). This DEF protects all parts of the base.

When a base is attacked, the attack hits either the walls, ceiling, or floor. Damage to the base is determined using the *Breaking Things* rules (see page 447). It's also possible to target particular pieces of equipment (see below).

**Partial Coverage**

A character can build parts of a base (or, in special cases, a vehicle) with more armor or BODY than the rest of the base. Because this DEF or BODY doesn't protect the entire base, the cost of the extra DEF or BODY may take the *Partial Coverage* Limitation.

To derive the value for Partial Coverage, determine the overall size of the base and the size of the heavily protected section. For each increment of Size reduction (each step upwards on the Base Size Table), the DEF for the smaller section receives a -¼ Limitation (maximum of -2).

Example: *Defender constructs a base 500 hexes large. The base, a normal building, has DEF 2, BODY 2 walls, but it has a super-secure vault which is only 15 hexes large. Because this is 8 increments up the table, the defense for that area receives a -2 Limitation.*

## BASE SIZE TABLE

| Cost | Size Category | Length (hexes) | Width (hexes) | Area (hexes) | DCV |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 8 | -4 |
| 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 15 | -4 |
| 4 | 2 | 6.4 | 3.2 | 20 | -5 |
| 6 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 32 | -6 |
| 8 | 4 | 10 | 5 | 50 | -6 |
| 10 | 5 | 12.5 | 6.4 | 80 | -7 |
| 12 | 6 | 16 | 8 | 125 | -8 |
| 14 | 7 | 20 | 10 | 200 | -8 |
| 16 | 8 | 25 | 12.5 | 320 | -9 |
| 18 | 9 | 32 | 16 | 500 | -10 |
| 20 | 10 | 40 | 20 | 800 | -10 |
| 22 | 11 | 50 | 25 | 1,250 | -11 |
| 24 | 12 | 64 | 32 | 2,000 | -12 |
| 26 | 13 | 80 | 40 | 3,200 | -12 |
| 28 | 14 | 100 | 50 | 5,000 | -13 |
| 30 | 15 | 125 | 64 | 8,000 | -14 |
| 32 | 16 | 160 | 80 | 12,500 | -14 |
| 34 | 17 | 200 | 100 | 20,000 | -15 |
| 36 | 18 | 250 | 125 | 32,000 | -16 |

### SIZE

The minimum Size for a base is 8 hexes (4" x 2"). You can increase a base's Size with the Base Size Table. Each increment of Size on the table costs 2 Character Points.

### OTHER BASE ATTRIBUTES

In addition to Size and Characteristics, Bases have certain other attributes.

**Location**

The location of the base may affect its price. This reflects the availability of land, transporting building materials, ease of maintenance, and so forth. The standard base is located in or near a city or equivalent population center. If the character distributes the area of his base among two or more locations (see below), determine the location cost from the most expensive of the locations (unless the GM rules otherwise).

City: The base is located in a major city in the campaign setting (usually the city where the campaign takes place), and is easily accessible to PCs, their enemies, the authorities, ordinary people, and the like.

Suburb: The base is close to the city, but not actually within the city limits. It may take some time for characters to get from the base to events happening in the city, and vice-versa.

## BASE LOCATION TABLE

| Location | Cost |
|---|---|
| City | 0 |
| Suburb | 5 |
| Distant | 10 |
| **Modifiers** | |
| Floating in water | +5 |
| Deep Wilderness | +5 |
| Airborne | +10 |
| Underwater | +15 |
| Underground | +20 |
| In Space | +25 |
| Another Dimension | +30 |

Distant: The base is far away from the city. Such isolation makes the base very private and secure from unexpected visitors. However, characters cannot reach the city quickly unless they have a very fast transportation system.

Floating In Water: The base is on a ship or raft. This usually makes it easier to reach the water, but also makes the base susceptible to waves, hurricanes, sea monsters, and the like.

Deep Wilderness: The base is located in deep wilderness, like the Arctic, the Amazon jungle, a mountaintop in the Himalayas, a remote island, or someplace similar. It enjoys great solitude, but the night life is very dull. The base may need Life Support to protect the residents from harsh local conditions.

Airborne: The base is suspended above the ground by some device (but it's still immobile; if you want a mobile flying "base," design a large vehicle instead).

Underwater: The base is located underwater. This protects it from most waves and winds, but has problems of its own in the form of high pressure, underwater flora and fauna, and the like.

Underground: Just what it sounds like. Really secure, but essentially a hole in the ground.

Space: A great view, very stable weather, room to grow — but getting anywhere requires spaceships, teleportation machines, or extremely tough residents.

Another Dimension: For the ultimate in far-out accommodations. This base is located in another dimension; characters using it need dimensional travel technology or powers to move between the campaign's home dimension and the base.

**Floor Plans**

The designer determines the internal arrangement of a base. He should make sure the base has all the facilities required (such as bathrooms).

A character can may distribute the area of his base vertically as well as horizontally. Many bases have several floors, especially in skyscrapers. He could even decide that some of the hexes are in a different location. For example, a character wants to have a stable which contains most of his horses and chariots far from his castle. He could create a 500-hex base, set aside 50 for the stable, and use the remaining 450 for the castle. If a character "splits" his base this way, he can also split the base's grounds (see below); the split need not be proportional.

In short: a character buys the overall space his base has, and then can arrange that space as he sees fit (and the GM allows). For example, to have a five-story base, with each story having a 200 square hex area (20" x 10"), a character should buy 1000 square hexes worth of Size.

**Grounds**

A base's Size represents a building or similar installation. In addition, a base can have grounds or a yard equal to the size of the base itself. You can double the area of the grounds for +1 Character Point; this has no effect on the Size of the base itself. Of course, a base cannot have unlimited tracts of land, especially in an urban setting; the GM is the final arbiter as to whether the grounds surrounding a base would "fit."

The grounds have neither walls nor rooms. At the builder's options, the grounds can be sur-



rounded by 2 BODY, 2 DEF fence (you can increase this BODY and DEF like the BODY and DEF of the rest of the base).

**Visibility**

Normally a base is relatively easy to find and recognize. Anyone can find the base with a little research; anyone looking at the base instantly knows what it is.

However, a base can be both hard to find and hard to recognize if its builder so desires. To make a base hard to locate, the builder should purchase the *Concealment* Skill for the base. This will have an 9- roll for 3 Character Points (bases get no bonus for INT); you can improve the roll normally. Whenever someone tries to locate the base, roll the base's Concealment versus the searcher's skill (Computer Programming, Concealment, PER Roll, and so forth) in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. If the searcher wins, he finds the base; otherwise it remains hidden.

You can also disguise a base's function so that it doesn't necessarily appear to be a base. To do this, purchase the *Disguise* Skill for the base. This costs 3 Character Points for a 9- roll; you can improve the roll normally. Whenever someone tries to determine the function of the base, roll his Disguise or PER Roll against the base's Disguise in a Skill Versus Skill Contest. If the viewer wins, he knows that the base is, in fact, a base; otherwise, the building's function remains hidden. Of course, a curious individual can always go to the base and ask what its function is.

Example: *Defender wants to make his base hard to find and recognize. To make it hard to locate, he buys Concealment on a 16-; this costs 3 + 14 = 17 points. He then buys Disguise on a 15-; this costs 3 + 12 = 15 points. The base is now extremely hard to locate and recognize.*

# OUTFITTING A BASE OR VEHICLE

After determining the Size of your base or vehicle, you can outfit it. Buying resources and equipment costs Character Points, and these points count toward the overall cost of the base or vehicle.

Any base or vehicle equipment must be self-powered; that is, it must normally cost no END, be bought to 0 END, use Charges, or have an Endurance Reserve. It's possible to have a single large Endurance Reserve for an entire base or vehicle; this would simulate the large power plant and batteries possessed by many bases and vehicles.

## GENERAL ABILITIES

A base or vehicle can have a Power or Talent that affects all of it. (Generally, bases and vehicles shouldn't be allowed to buy Perks, though the GM can permit this if appropriate.) For these all-inclusive abilities, the builder should simply buy the Power with appropriate Advantages and Limitations. Since the base or vehicle is considered a single "character," you do not have to buy a Power that affects all of it (typically a Defense Power or Life Support) with the *Area Of Effect* Advantage, nor must you buy such Powers as *Usable On Others* (inhabitants and passengers can use them automatically).

Life Support is one of the Powers most frequently bought for a base or vehicle. It often takes the -½ Limitation *Costs Endurance,* meaning it must be turned on and has to be hooked up to an Endurance Reserve (or some other power source).

You may also purchase special defenses such as Lack Of Weakness or Hardened defenses for a vehicle or base. A base or vehicle could also purchase Force Field, Force Wall, and the like. A base or vehicle could even have Desolidification or Invisibility, although these should only be bought in special cases. Of course, the GM has final say as to what can and cannot go into a base or vehicle; not all Powers will be appropriate (for example, buying Mental Defense for a vehicle or base would require a good justification).

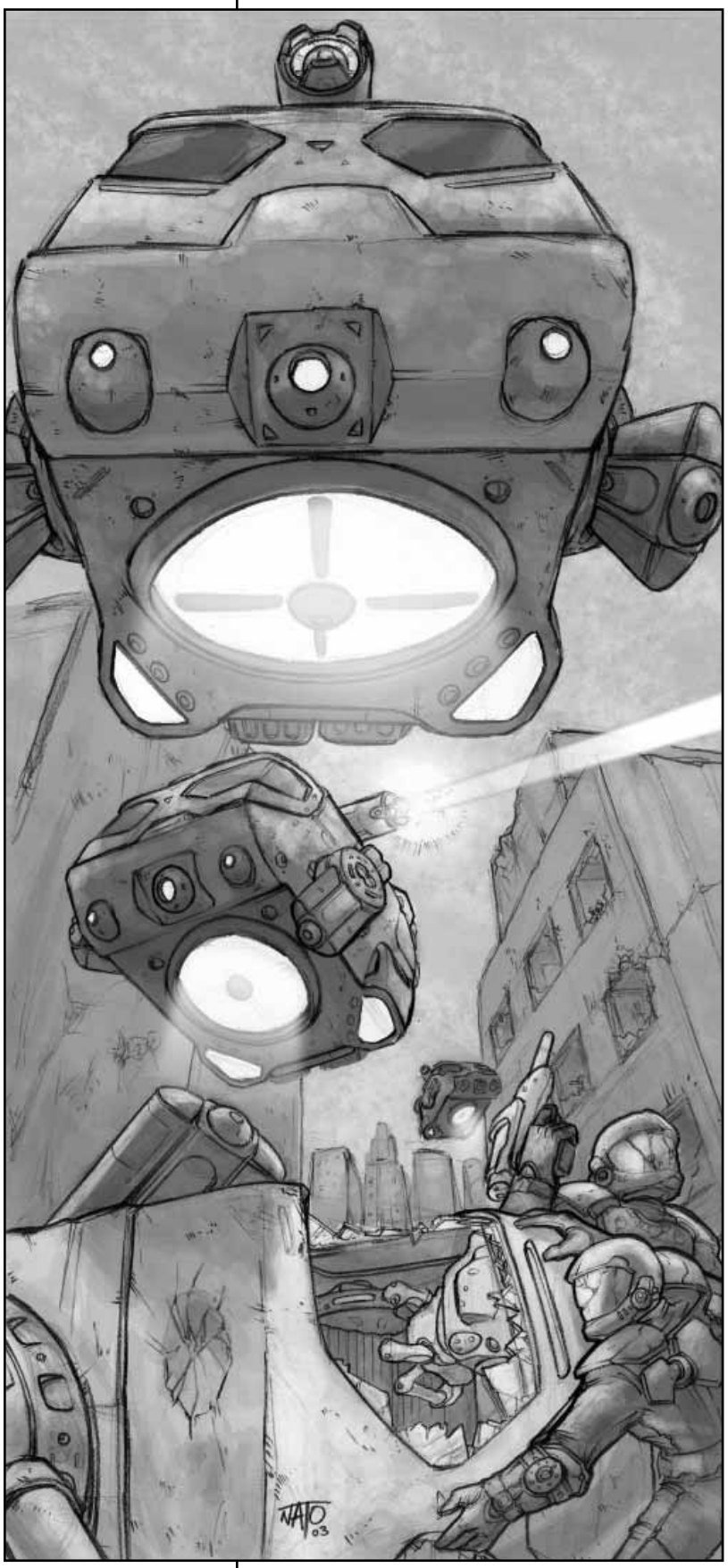
## COMPUTERS

You can install a computer in a base or vehicle. Determine the computer's cost separately using the standard rules (see page 459), then add it to the cost of the base or vehicle after you calculate that cost.

Example: *Defender buys a 100-point computer for his base (costing 100 /5 = 20 points). When he finishes building his base, he'll add this 20 points onto the base's final cost.*

## PERSONNEL

A base or vehicle can have personnel associated with its operation — workers, guards, chauffeurs, pets, and even robots. Build personnel with the Follower rules. As with computers, calculate the cost of the Followers separately and then add it to the cost of the base or vehicle after you calculate that cost.



Example: *Defender has spent 120 points on his base so far, and would now like to buy some guards for it. He buys 64 agents built on 100 Character Points (costing 100/5 = 20 points, x64 = 30 points; total 50 points). When Defender finishes calculating the cost of his base, he'll add 50 points to it.*

### VEHICLES

Bases sometimes have their own vehicles. In this case, calculate the cost of the Vehicle(s) and then add it to the cost of the base after you calculate that cost.

### LABS AND SKILLS

A vehicle or base can have laboratories. Labs help characters do research and improve certain Skills, provide a way to analyze data about mysterious events, and so forth. Don't let the term "lab" confuse you; they're not restricted to the hard sciences. A base could have a "lab" stocked with Disguise equipment, gymnasium equipment for practicing Acrobatics, or lockpicking tools and practice locks.

To build a lab, simply buy the appropriate Skill — this indicates what the lab is designed for. This skill can be a Familiarity for poor labs, or a normal skill for better ones. When a character uses the lab, its roll acts as a Complementary Skill Roll to his own roll. Because labs don't have any Characteristics, the base roll for a lab Skill is always 9-. Of course, the lab only helps the character with his Skill; if he doesn't have the Skill in the first place the lab does him no good. (Most people couldn't make heads or tails out of the equipment in Einstein's laboratory, for example.)

All labs require a minimum of one hex of space; many need much more than that.

Example: *Because he's the one who has to design the base, Defender decides that he's going to build himself an electronics lab. The cost for an electronics lab is 3 Character Points; this gives a lab with an Electronics roll of 9-. Defender buys +8 with the skill; this costs 16 points (total of 19 points). The lab now has a 17- Electronics Roll that serves as a Complementary Skill to anyone doing Electronics research there.*

Computers and AIs may also be given control over the laboratories, though of course the computer or AI must have the requisite Skill to use it. The computer needs either Extra Limbs, a robot, or a person in the lab to help it use the facility.

### CELLS

You can build cells in bases or vehicles to hold enemies or villains. You build them with extra DEF using the *Partial Coverage* Limitation described above. You may also apply unusual defenses or Advantages to the walls to hold unusual prisoners — Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation to stop characters with Teleportation, Mental Defense to keep mentalists from using their powers effectively, Affects Desolidified to keep Desolidified characters

from simply walking out, or Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing) so that it's airtight (meaning characters with Shrinking can't escape through the cracks). All of these Powers and Advantages can also take the *Partial Coverage* Limitation to reflect the size of the cell(s).

**POWER**

Bases can hook up to the normal power grid for no point cost; this provides enough power to run all normal lighting, ventilation, and laboratory needs. If the base is outside normal power sources (like on the moon), it has internal generators for these purposes. However, if the base has to power weapons or other equipment built with Powers, it needs an Endurance Reserve.

**SENSORS**

You can buy external sensors for a base as Clairsentience with the appropriate Enhanced Senses. Of course, if no one monitors the sensors, they won't help much (although a computer or AI can serve as an effective monitor). External Sensors are usually bought with Limitations (such as Activation Roll) to reflect imperfect coverage; the GM may require this.

Buy internal sensors the same way, but they can take the *Partial Coverage* Limitation, if not all of the base is under surveillance.

Sensors can function as security systems, and may be disabled with a successful Security Systems roll.

**TRAINING FACILITIES**

Many bases have training facilities where characters can practice Skills and other abilities. These range from a combat practice ground and jousting field at a castle, to the "danger room" of a superhero team's base, to the holo-gymnasium on a space station.

Training facilities may offer some or all of the following benefits:

1) They allow characters to buy off Vulnerabilities and Susceptibilities, and possibly other Disadvantages as well. A character can expose himself to the attacks and substances he takes (extra) damage from and build up tolerance and resistance. Of course, buying off a Disadvantage requires the expenditure of Experience Points and the GM's permission.

Similarly, a character could train to overcome (*i.e.,* buy off) Limitations on his Powers. For example, a character whose RKA *Only Works Against Metal* (-1) could work at expanding his range of effect. He might go from only affecting metals, to affecting any inorganic substance (-½) to any non-living substance (-¼), to anything or anyone.

2) Learning new Skills and abilities. A character can use training facilities to learn things from his comrades or on his own. For example, if one of the characters knows WF: Staff, he can use the Training Facility to teach another character how to use that weapon.

Practicing in a Training Facility is a particularly good justification for buying Combat Skill Levels (representing intense practice with a particular attack or group of attacks) or the *Teamwork* Skill (representing a group of characters working together to hone their battlefield tactics and ability to Coordinate). The GM might even allow a character to buy extra defenses or CSLs for DCV to represent training in resisting or counteracting particular types of attacks.

3) Learning about other characters' abilities, strengths, and weaknesses. By observing other characters as they train, a character may learn valuable information about them. What he learns, and how he learns it, depends upon his ability to perceive things, the situation, how well the other character hides things, and the GM's discretion.

4) Learning about different environments. By experiencing other environments — such as zero gravity, vacuum, underwater, high altitude, extreme heat, extreme cold, different atmospheres, or different gravities — a character can learn how to overcome the problems they pose. This is a good justification for buying the *Environmental Movement* Talent.

**EQUIPMENT**

Bases and vehicles can also have equipment, ranging from weaponry, to luxury items, to communication devices.

Equipment is usually bought with a *Focus* Limitation unless it is intrinsically a part of the base or vehicle. All vehicle equipment receives an extra -½ Limitation in addition to the normal value of the *Focus* Limitation — it's a Bulky, but mobile, Focus. However, don't halve a vehicle's DCV for carrying it; that effect only applies if a character detaches the item from the vehicle and carries it himself. All base equipment receives an extra -1 Limitation in addition to the normal value of the *Focus* Limitation (*i.e.,* it is an Immobile Focus).

Characters can apply the 5-point doubling rule (page 456) to base and vehicle equipment.

Example: *Defender wants to install some defensive weaponry in his base. He buys an Energy Blast 10d6 with the Limitations Obvious Accessible Focus (including an extra -1 for being an Immobile Focus) and 16 Charges. The cost for one blaster is 50 / (1+1+1+0) = 17 points. He decides to buy 16 of the blasters; this costs an additional +20 points. The total cost for 16 blasters is 17+20 = 37 points.*

Sometimes a character can destroy a vehicle's or base's equipment without destroying the vehicle itself or the base's walls. Accessible Foci are outside the DEF of the vehicle or base; they get the normal DEF for a Focus (see page 293). Inaccessible Foci, on the other hand, get both their own DEF and the DEF of the vehicle or base. Obvious Foci are recognizable for what they are and the function they perform. Inobvious Foci are hidden or resemble ordinary parts of the vehicle or base.

Some vehicle and base equipment is intended for the use of the occupants, not the vehicle or base itself. For example, a space station or starship might have a

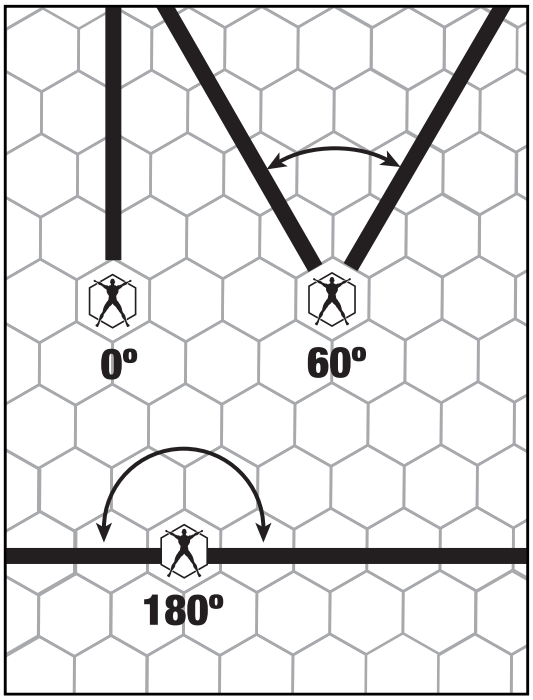
Teleportation Platform so people can easily enter and exit it. Obviously this device doesn't allow the base or vehicle itself to Teleport — it's for the use of people. Similarly, the occupants of a vehicle or base may be able to use its sensors, weapons, and other equipment instead or, or in addition to, the vehicle or base itself being able to do so.

**Limited Arc Of Fire**

You can buy vehicle weaponry (and sometimes base weaponry as well) with a special Limitation: *Limited Arc Of Fire.* A weapon with a Limited Arc Of Fire cannot fire in all directions; instead, it can only cover certain areas. The value of the Limitation depends on the size of the arc and whether the weapon can only fire on targets on the same horizontal level as itself.

## LIMITED ARC OF FIRE

| Arc Of Fire | Bonus |
|---|---|
| One hex row | -¾ |
| 60 degrees | -½ |
| 180 degrees | -¼ |
| **Additionally** | |
| Only on same horizontal level | -¼ |




# VEHICLE AND BASE DISADVANTAGES

A vehicle or base can have Disadvantages, just like a character. Disadvantages serve to give the base or vehicle flavor; they also decrease the number of points the builder has to pay to build the vehicle or base. GMs should carefully examine the Disadvantages to make sure that they fit into the campaign and don't just give the base or vehicle free points; some Disadvantages may be Mystery Disadvantages (page 328), thus allowing the GM to make sure they fit the campaign. GMs can also set a maximum number of Disadvantages for the base or vehicle.

Dependent NPC: The base or vehicle has an individual who is almost always in or near it. A DNPC is different from personnel because the builder of the base or vehicle feels a special need to protect the DNPC from harm. The DNPC will often be especially defenseless or close to the builder.

Example: *Defender has an out-of-work brother who's staying at Champions HQ because he doesn't have anywhere else to live. He keeps himself busy by fixing things up around the base, and acts as a DNPC 14-.*

Distinctive Features: A base or vehicle that's particularly distinctive can have Distinctive Features.

Example: *The Star Galleons of the Varanyi Empire are constructed to inspire fear in opponents. They have Distinctive Features (Unconcealable) and cause an extreme reaction, for a total of 25 points. Onlookers are always able to recognize a Star Galleon, and associate it with death and destruction — they usually shoot on sight.*

Hunted (Watched): Many bases or vehicles are Watched by some organization or group. This can even be part of a deal which enables the characters to build the base or vehicle in the first place ("We'll let you build your headquarters, but we'll be keeping an eye on you"). The Character Point value for having someone Watch the base or vehicle is covered in the Hunted rules (page 335).

If the group Watching is the government (as is often the case), then there will probably be other repercussions. The Government will often want information about anyone who uses the base or vehicle. Of course, the Government also insists on detailed reports of all group activities, especially detailed descriptions of all enemies encountered. Any unusual magic or technology "found" by the group must be turned over to the Government for examination by the "top men in the field."

"Who?"

"Top men. *Top* men. Don't worry, it's all being taken care of."

Social Limitation: Publicly Known: Just like a character with a Social Limitation: Public Identity, a base or vehicle can be Publicly Known. This means



everyone knows its (current) location, who owns it, its prominent features, what can be found inside, and so forth.

Unluck: The vehicle or base itself is a nexus for unfortunate events. Equipment malfunctions, windows break, the computer starts printing out poetry, the AI gets hooked on video games, escalators suddenly reverse directions, the base weapons fire by accident, and so forth. Unluck can be even worse if the base or vehicle is in a hostile environment: the hull could be punctured by a meteor which flew out of clear space, the airlock door falls off, and so on.

Vulnerability: The vehicle or base is particularly Vulnerable to certain types of attacks.

# VEHICLE COMBAT

The *HERO System* handles vehicle movement and combat similarly to character movement and combat. You can have a combat between several characters with vehicles, or between a mixed group of vehicles and pedestrians, all without breaking a sweat, using the streamlined vehicle combat system below. Although not designed to cover every possible contingency in vehicle combat, these rules enable you to run most vehicle-oriented combats quickly and easily.

For ease of description, these rules refer to "driving" vehicles and the Skill *Combat Driving*. Substitute "piloting" (or "flying") and Combat Piloting if appropriate.

## Vehicle Movement

Vehicles have a base movement in inches. This movement is the number of inches the vehicle can move at Combat Movement velocity in a single Phase. A vehicle can move more quickly if the driver (or pilot) moves at Noncombat Movement velocity (which of course reduces the vehicle's OCV to 0 and halves its DCV). A vehicle's Phases derive from its SPD, just like a character. A vehicle with a SPD 4 moves on Segments 3, 6, 9, and 12. (For details on Noncombat Movement and acceleration, see page 363-64.)

A vehicle's effective SPD in combat equals its SPD or the driver's SPD, whichever is *lower.* If the vehicle is driven on the Phases for this SPD (or a lower SPD), it has a normal Turn Mode for all of its types of movement. In addition, the vehicle may

### SENTIENT VEHICLES

Of course, some vehicles don't need a driver — they have their own computer drivers, autopilot systems, or the like. Some vehicles may even be alive!

In this case, the vehicle moves on its own DEX and SPD, and anyone riding in the vehicle is a passenger and acts on his own DEX and SPD. If a computer driver has a different DEX and SPD than the vehicle does, treat the computer as a driver and use the rules in the main text.

## VEHICLE DAMAGE TABLE

| Roll 1d6 | Vehicle Loses |
|---|---|
| 1 | One 2x Noncombat Movement multiplier |
| 2 | 5" of Combat Movement |
| 3 | Vehicle's largest Power |
| 4 | 10 STR |
| 5 | 5 DEX |
| 6 | 1 SPD |

receive a DCV bonus if the driver has Combat Driving (see below).

If the driver has a higher SPD than the vehicle, the vehicle simply isn't responsive enough for him. He has to Hold his Actions so that he acts on the Phases in which the vehicle can act if he wants to maintain full control over the vehicle. Alternately, he can perform other actions (such as making an attack) on any Phase which he has but the vehicle does not. (Making attacks is discussed below.)

If the vehicle has a higher SPD than the driver, the driver has two choices. First, he can, as described above, have the vehicle only move on his Phases (in essence, he makes the vehicle Holds its Action until he can control its movement). However, he can, if he wishes, try to drive the vehicle at its SPD instead of his own, lower, SPD. If the vehicle moves in a Phase which it has but the driver does not, it is considered to be moving at Noncombat Movement velocity (regardless of how many inches of movement it actually uses) and thus to be at 0 OCV, ½ DCV. It cannot accelerate or decelerate; it must continue moving at the velocity it had on its last Phase. It is also harder to turn — it must continue moving in the direction it was moving, since the driver can only adjust the vehicle's direction or velocity when he has an Action (*i.e.,* on one of his Phases) or if he Aborts one of his Phases to do so. The vehicle can only attack when its driver has an Action, except for Move Throughs — if it runs into something, it does Move Through damage (see below), regardless of whether its driver had a Phase that Segment.

A vehicle can never move at a SPD higher than its own (a vehicle can only be so responsive).

Example: *Fast Eddie (SPD 2) is driving a Corvette (SPD 4). Eddie can drive the vehicle at SPD 2, thus driving at Combat Movement velocity. Alternatively, he can really open it up and drive the vehicle at SPD 4. On the Phases which the 'vette has but Eddie does not, it's considered to be traveling at Noncombat Movement velocity (regardless of how many inches it moves) and is at 0 OCV, ½ DCV. In addition, Eddie can only adjust the vehicle's course or velocity in his Phases (Segments 6 and 12), even though the car moves on Segments 3, 6, 9, and 12).*

## Hitting A Vehicle

Vehicles have an effective DEX equal to their DEX or their driver's DEX, whichever is *lower.* Use this DEX to determine their CV.

**Vehicular DCV**

Determine a vehicle's DCV from its effective DEX. The vehicle's Size and other modifiers affect its DCV, but it can never fall below 0 DCV.

Furthermore, vehicles are normally driven at Noncombat Movement velocity, so in a typical situation a vehicle's DCV is halved. If driven at Combat Movement velocities, it will have its full DCV.

The driver's skill (or lack thereof) may also modify a vehicle's DCV. If the driver does not have Combat Driving, the vehicle is at ½ DCV (regardless of whether it's traveling at Combat or Noncombat velocity). DCV can only be halved once, so a vehicle driven at Noncombat velocity by an untrained driver is only at ½ DCV, not ¼ DCV. If the driver has Combat Driving, the vehicle gets its full DCV when moving at Combat Movement velocities.

Optionally, you can also determine a vehicle's base DCV from its velocity; see page 364.

Vehicles can "Dodge" in a fashion. If the driver does nothing but drive in a Phase (*i.e.,* does not attack and does not have to make any Combat Driving rolls to avoid obstacles or to maneuver), he may make a Combat Driving roll and eliminate the Size modifier to his vehicle's DCV.

**Damage To Vehicles**

Vehicles that take damage slowly fall apart. Each time a vehicle takes BODY from an attack, the GM should roll on the Vehicle Damage Table to determine the effects. When a vehicle has lost all of its BODY it falls apart, or blows up, at the GM's option.

## Vehicle And Passenger Attacks

Determine a vehicle's OCV from its effective DEX, just like its DCV. If the driver has Combat Driving, the vehicle has its full OCV; if he does not have Combat Driving, halve the vehicle's OCV.

Use the vehicle's OCV for attacks with weapons built into the vehicle, and for ramming (Move Through) and sideswipe (Move By) attacks.

If the driver or passengers want to make their own attacks with their own weapons or Powers, they may do so; they act on their own Phases and DEXs. All such attacks suffer an automatic -2 OCV penalty — it's hard to aim straight in a moving vehicle. The driver suffers an additional -1, since he has to devote some of his attention to controlling the vehicle. If the driver has made any Combat Driving rolls at more than a -1 modifier that Segment to control or maneuver his vehicle, all attacks he or his passengers make suffer an additional -1 modifier.

# OPTIONAL NON-MAPPED VEHICLE COMBAT

It is not always best to play out vehicular combat on a hex map — vehicles move extremely quickly, and are often "off the map" in only a matter of Segments. Similarly, it can be extremely tedious to manage a running chase between two vehicles with a map.

A GM who wants to simplify combat can keep track of the distance between the two vehicles. To do this, he needs to know the *MAX,* or the total distance a vehicle could cover in a Turn.

**MAX = Vehicle's SPD x Maximum Noncombat Movement**

A driver can change the distance between the vehicles or lose a pursuer by succeeding in a Combat Driving Versus Combat Driving contest. Two examples of non-mapped vehicle combat, Dogfight Combat and Intercept Combat (for use with vehicle combats which take place in three dimensions, such as aerial, space, or submarine combat), follow.

## Dogfight Combat

Whenever vehicles are at close range, the GM can use Dogfight Combat. Vehicles can enter a Dogfight whenever the range between them is less than their combined MAX.

A "dogfight" is a pilot's term to describe close-in air combat where the planes circle like fighting dogs trying to snap at each other's backs. Dogfight Combat simplifies all of the combat maneuvering of two circling opponents down to several die rolls. Vehicles fighting at long range while moving at Noncombat Movement speeds use the rules for Intercept Combat (see below).

You conduct dogfights in full Turns; each dogfight Turn equals one full Turn on the ground. All you need to keep track of in a dogfight is the number of Turns needed to Escape (discussed later), each vehicle's current velocity, and, most important, the relative positions of the vehicles. There are four different positions in a dogfight: neutral, head on, side on, and tail chase.

When a dogfight starts, the GM can set the initial position of all the vehicles, or determine it randomly. During a dogfight, each player rolls his Combat Piloting roll. If no pilot makes his roll, the vehicles are in a neutral position and the next Turn begins.

If at least one pilot makes his roll, the pilot who made his Combat Piloting roll by the greater amount becomes the attacker. Subtract the amount the other pilot made his roll by (this can be negative) from the amount the attacker made his roll by. This number gives you the relative positions of the aircraft from the Dogfight Table. Each pilot's roll is modified by several factors, listed on the Dogfighting Piloting Roll Modifiers table.



## DOGFIGHTING PILOTING ROLL MODIFIERS

| Bonus | Condition |
|---|---|
| +1 | To attacker's roll, if the number of attackers outnumber the defenders. |
| +1 | To attacker's roll, for every 2x the attackers outnumber the defenders. |
| +1 | If your vehicle's current velocity is faster than your opponent's vehicle's current velocity. |
| +1 | For every 2x your vehicle's current speed is faster than your opponent's vehicle's current speed. |
| +1 | If you were the attacker in a side on position last Turn |
| +2 | If you were the attacker in a tail chase last Turn |
| +1 | If you are Surprising your opponent |
| -2 | If you are attempting to Escape |
| -2 | If the other pilot has successfully executed an Escape |

## DOGFIGHT TABLE

| Attacker - Defender | Relative Position |
|---|---|
| +0 to +1 | Both vehicles neutral; neither may fire. |
| +2 to +3 | Both vehicles are head on; both may fire once. |
| +4 to +5 | Attacker faces Defender's side; both may fire once. |
| +6 or +7 | Attacker is tail chasing the Defender. Attacker may fire once. |
| +8 or more | Attacker is tail chasing the Defender. Attacker may fire as many times as he has SPD. |

## GUNNERY MODIFIERS TABLE

| Relative Position | Attacker's OCV Modifier | Defender's OCV Modifier | Range |
|---|---|---|---|
| Head on | -2 | -4 | x1 |
| Side on | -4 | -4 | x2 |
| Tail chase +6, +7 | -4* | -4* | x2 |
| Tail chase +8 | -4* | -4* | x1 |
| Tail chase +9 or more | -0 | -4* | x½ |

*Guns mounted to the rear, or with 360 degree field of fire, may fire at an attacker in a tail chase.

The Dogfight Table assumes both vehicles can only fire in their front 180 degree arc. The GM should make special allowances for vehicles that can attack to the rear. Also, in a head-on position, the attacker may elect to fire, in which case the defender gets to fire back at him that Turn. Alternately, the attacker may elect to evade, in which case neither pilot gets to fire that Turn.

The most important part of a dogfight is shooting the other vehicle down. Use the normal combat rules, but determine range by the vehicles' velocities, and apply special Attack Roll modifiers (see the Gunnery Modifiers Table) to represent the high speed fleeting shots which are available in a dogfight.

Each position in Dogfight Combat has an OCV modifier and a range between targets figured as a multiple of the attacking vehicle's current velocity. To find the range, multiply the attacking vehicle's current velocity by the number listed in the Range column of the Gunnery Modifiers Table, relative to the position. The Gunnery Modifiers Table also lists any special OCV modifiers for either side.



### LEAVING A DOGFIGHT

There are several ways out of a Dogfight. If both pilots break off, the Dogfight ends. If one pilot wishes to break off and the other doesn't, it's more complicated. The pilot who wants to leave must execute one or more Escapes.

Cover of some kind can normally be found, even in an aerial battle. Clouds, the sun, large trees, or friendly fire can all help a pilot lose his pursuer. In space, ducking into the nearest meteor swarm or asteroid field is always a good move; in a submarine battle, captains may be able to use thermal differentials and other underwater phenomena to hide from an enemy's sonar.

Before the Dogfight begins, the GM should determine how many Turns of Escape are necessary for a vehicle to leave the Dogfight. The more cluttered the battlefield, the fewer Escapes needed. If the GM doesn't want to decide, he can roll 1d6 and use that as the number of Escapes necessary to break off combat.

A pilot executes an Escape by declaring "Escape" before the Turn begins. Both pilots roll normally. If the Escaping pilot wins the roll or has a tie, he has successfully made one Escape. If the other pilot wins, combat proceeds normally. If the Escaping pilot has a higher current velocity, he gets credit for an Escape even if he lost the roll. Losing does not force the pilot to take a minus on his Combat Piloting roll next Turn, and has no effect on the fire directed at him.

After the pilot executes his required number of Escapes, the Dogfight ends. Depending on the situation, the fight may move on to an Intercept Combat. The number of Escapes a pilot has executed is cumulative; that is, a pilot may execute an Escape early in the fight, and then execute another Escape later in the fight and have credit for two Escapes.

## Intercept Combat

Use Intercept Combat only when two vehicles are at long range. Intercept Combat is executed in full Turns. You must keep track of range, target position, and target velocity in Intercept Combat.

There are two conditions where vehicles may be in Intercept Combat. First, two vehicles flying at each other but still at a range greater than their combined MAX can engage in Intercept Combat. Second, two vehicles may engage in Intercept Combat after Escaping from a Dogfight; in that case, the range starts at the vehicles' combined velocities.

Intercept Combat starts by defining the range between targets. The quality of the sensory equipment (radar, sonar, long-range sensors, and so forth) carried on the vehicles will determine the range at which Intercept Combat begins (or ends). So long as the vehicles could theoretically perceive each other they are within range, and if one wishes to fight, they are in Intercept Combat.

Next the GM must define the vehicles' *Intercept Velocities.* Positive Intercept Velocities represent moving towards the enemy, negative Intercept Velocities represent moving away from the enemy. The vehicle's Intercept Velocity is equal to plus or minus its MAX (see below).

To conduct Intercept Combat, follow these steps:

### JINKING FACING TABLE

| Roll 1d6 | Facing |
|---|---|
| 1-2 | Front |
| 3-4 | Side |
| 5-6 | Rear |

(1) Declare maneuver (Close, Jink, or Disengage). *Close* means to fly towards the enemy, *Jink* means to circle or maneuver to deny the enemy a shot, and *Disengage* means to fly away from the enemy. The Intercept Velocity of a closing vehicle is equal to its MAX, the Intercept Velocity of a jinking vehicle is 0, and the Intercept Velocity of a disengaging vehicle is minus its MAX.

(2) Determine the facing of the vehicles. Each vehicle's maneuver determines which face he shows to the enemy. Closing vehicles show their front to the enemy. Disengaging vehicles show their rear to the enemy. Jinking vehicles roll on the Jinking Facing Table to determine their facing.

(3) Determine Range between enemy vehicles. Subtract each vehicle's Intercept Velocity from the Range. Remember that subtracting a negative number is equal to adding. If the range becomes negative the vehicles have passed. Multiply the range by -1 to make it positive again.

(4) Make Attack Rolls. Each player can fire any or all of his weapons once per Turn (a player must make a separate Attack Roll for each weapon unless his character uses a multiple-Power attack). Be sure to check the maximum range of a weapon to see if the enemy is in range.

(5) Repeat steps 1-4 until both vehicles break off, or the vehicles are out of sensory range.

A vehicle may only attack if it is showing its front or side to the enemy. If the vehicle is showing its side it takes a -4 OCV because of the difficulty of the shot. This assumes the vehicle can only fire in the front 180 degrees. The GM must make allowances for vehicles that can fire to the rear.

Unless the vehicles have very special weapons with long ranges the GM may normally dispense with Intercept Combat and go right into Dogfighting. If a vehicle is specially equipped for long range combat it can use Intercept Combat to take advantage of its weapons.

# VEHICLE TABLE

| Name | Size | DCV | Mass (KB) | STR | DEF | BODY | DEX | SPD | Move | MAX | Cost | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Miscellaneous Cars** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Compact | 2"x1" | -2 | 800kg (-3) | 25 | 3 | 13 | 15 | 3 | 18"x4 | 216" | 45/9 | |
| Midsize | 2.5"x1.25" | -2 | 1.6t (-4) | 30 | 3 | 14 | 15 | 3 | 25"x4 | 300" | 56/11 | |
| Full-Size | 3.2"x1.6" | -2 | 1.6t (-4) | 30 | 3 | 16 | 14 | 3 | 24"x4 | 288" | 55/11 | |
| Limousine | 3.2"x1.6" | -3 | 3.2t (-5) | 35 | 3 | 15 | 12 | 3 | 24"x4 | 288" | 54/11 | |
| Pickup Truck | 3.2"x1.6 | -3 | 3.2t (-5) | 40 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 3 | 24"x4 | 288" | 74/15 | 1 |
| Sports Utility Vehicle | 2.5"x1.25" | -2 | 1.6t (-4) | 35 | 4 | 14 | 14 | 3 | 23"x4 | 276" | 60/12 | |
| Van | 3.2"x1.6" | -3 | 3.2t (-5) | 40 | 3 | 18 | 12 | 3 | 23"x4 | 276" | 61/12 | |
| Panel Truck | 4"x2" | -4 | 6.4t (-6) | 45 | 3 | 19 | 10 | 3 | 21"x4 | 252" | 60/12 | LM |
| School Bus | 5"x2.5" | -4 | 12.5t (-7) | 45 | 4 | 17 | 10 | 2 | 22"x4 | 176" | 52/10 | LM |
| Tractor-Trailer | 10"x5" | -6 | 100t (-10) | 60 | 4 | 20 | 10 | 3 | 21"x4 | 252" | 92/18 | LM |
| Armored Car | 4"x2" | -4 | 6.4t (-6) | 45 | 8 | 20 | 10 | 3 | 20"x4 | 240" | 79/16 | LM |
| Police Car | 2.5"x1.25" | -2 | 1.6t (-4) | 30 | 3 | 14 | 15 | 3 | 27"x4 | 324" | 59/12 | 2 |
| **Sportscars** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lamborghini Diablo | 2"x1" | -2 | 800kg (-3) | 25 | 3 | 13 | 23 | 4 | 35"x4 | 560" | 80/16 | 3 |
| Lotus Esprit Turbo | 2"x1" | -2 | 800kg (-3) | 25 | 3 | 13 | 21 | 4 | 30"x4 | 480" | 72/14 | |
| Porsche 911 | 2"x1" | -2 | 800kg (-3) | 25 | 3 | 14 | 23 | 4 | 31"x4 | 496" | 77/15 | |
| **Motorcycles** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Harley-Davidson V-Rod | 1.25"x.64" | -0 | 200kg (-1) | 25 | 4 | 11 | 18 | 4 | 24"x4 | 288" | 57/11 | 4 |
| Kawasaki ZX12R Ninja | 1.25"x.64" | -0 | 200kg (-1) | 15 | 4 | 11 | 23 | 4 | 32"x4 | 512" | 65/13 | |
| **Military Land Vehicles** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HMMWV "Humvee" | 2.5"x1.25" | -2 | 1.6t (-4) | 30 | 4 | 17 | 16 | 3 | 15"x4 | 180" | 56/11 | 5 |
| M1A1 Abrams MBT | 4"x2" | -4 | 6.4t (-6) | 55 | [30/20] | 25 | 10 | 3 | 18"x2 | 108" | 445/89 | 6 |
| M113A2 APC | 2.5"x1.25" | -2 | 1.6t (-4) | 35 | 10 | 18 | 14 | 3 | 19"x2 | 114" | 151/30 | 7 |
| **Civilian Air Vehicles** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bell Jetranger Helicopter | 5"x2.5" | -4 | 12.5t (-7) | 25 | 4 | 17 | 18 | 3 | 30"x4 | 360" | 94/19 | |
| Boeing 747-400 | 32"x16" | -10 | 3.2kt (-15) | 85 | 5 | 25 | 10 | 3 | 11"x16 | 528" | 130/26 | SV 5" |
| Learjet 31A | 6.4"x3.2" | -5 | 25t (-8) | 42 | 4 | 18 | 18 | 3 | 15"x32 | 1440" | 107/21 | |
| Piper PA-28 Cherokee | 4"x2" | -4 | 6.4t (-6) | 22 | 4 | 16 | 16 | 3 | 17"x8 | 408" | 74/15 | SV 8" |
| **Military Air Vehicles** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F-15E Eagle | 10"x5" | -6 | 100t (-10) | 50 | 6 | 20 | 23 | 5 | 38"x8 | 1520" | 445/125 | 8, 9 |
| AH-1W SuperCobra | 8"x4" | -6 | 50t (-9) | 30 | 10 | 20 | 20 | 4 | 29"x4 | 464" | 293/59 | 10 |
| AH-64 Apache | 6.4"x3.2" | -5 | 25t (-8) | 42 | 12 | 20 | 23 | 4 | 25"x4 | 400" | 392/78 | 11 |
| **Boats** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Speedboat, medium | 3.2"x1.6" | -3 | 3.2t (-5) | 35 | 3 | 15 | 17 | 3 | 27"x2 | 162" | 58/12 | |
| Yacht, medium | 6.4"x3.2" | -5 | 25t (-8) | 50 | 3 | 18 | 10 | 2 | 24"x2 | 96" | 47/9 | |

**KEY**

LM: Limited Maneuverability

SV: Stall Velocity

Size: The length and width of the vehicle. This does not include the wings on airplanes, the rotors of helicopters, or the like.

DCV: The DCV Mod of the vehicle for its size.

Mass (KB): The mass of the vehicle when empty and its Knockback modifier.

STR: The maximum lifting Strength of the vehicle. Use the rules for Encumbrance to determine if a vehicle is too overloaded to move at full speed.

DEF: The DEF of the vehicle. If the defense is listed as #/#, the first number is the defense from the front, the second number is the defense from the sides, bottom, top, and rear. If the defense is in brackets, it is Hardened.

BODY: The amount of BODY the vehicle can take before it stops running.

DEX: The maximum effective DEX which can be used when driving the vehicle.

SPD: The maximum effective SPD which can be used when driving the vehicle.

MOVE: This is listed as #x#; the first number is the vehicle's maximum Combat Movement, and the second number is the vehicle's Noncombat multiple.

MAX: The maximum amount of inches the vehicle can travel in one full Turn at Noncombat Movement velocities.

Cost: The cost of the vehicle, expressed as Active Points/(points divided by 5).

**NOTES**

For complete information on these and dozens of other vehicles, see *The Ultimate Vehicle* and *The HERO System Vehicle Sourcebook.*

1. Pickup Trucks have +3 to counteract offroad driving penalties with Ground Movement.

2. Police Cars include Radio, Emergency Lights and Siren, Public Address System, +1 with Ground Movement, and possibly various police weapons.

3. All the listed sportscars have +3 with Ground Movement (the Porsche only has +2) and Distinctive Features.

4. A Motorcycle's DEF is bought with the Limita-




tion *Does Not Protect Occupant* (-½). All the listed motorcycles have Skill Levels with their Ground Movement (+2 for the Harley, +3 for the Kawasaki) to reflect their excellent handling.

5. The HMMWV (High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle; "Humvee") or "Hummer" is the U.S. Army's modern all-purpose vehicle. Depending on how an individual unit is outfitted, it can function as an ambulance, communications center, cargo transport, and so forth. It can also be equipped to carry weapons such as TOW missile launchers and 7.62mm or .50 caliber machine guns. The listed Humvee has no weapons.

6. The M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank has a crew of four. It has Distinctive Features. It is armed and equipped with a main gun (120mm cannon, RKA 8d6, +1 STUN Multiplier, 55 Charges), two 7.62mm machine guns (RKA 2d6+1, Autofire (10), +1 STUN Multiplier; 11,400 Charges), one 12.7mm machine gun (RKA 3d6, Autofire (10), +1 STUN Multiplier; 1,000 Charges), smoke generators, NBC protection, and a nightvision system.

7. The M113A2 APC (Armored Personnel Carrier) has a crew of 2 and can carry up to 11 soldiers. It is amphibious. It has Distinctive Features. The standard model is equipped with a 12.7mm machine gun (RKA 3d6, Autofire (5), +1 STUN Multiplier; 2,000 Charges). It can be reconfigured for many different types of missions and weapons.

8. Military planes have Distinctive Features and two Skill Levels with Flight. Most have common equipment including an ECM system, ejection seat, infrared sensors, life support, 360-Degree Radar with, and HRRP.

Military helicopters have Distinctive Features. If the moving rotors hit something, they will do 2d6 Killing Damage in about a 4-7" radius. Military Helicopters usually have two or more Skill Levels with Flight.

9. The F-15E Eagle jet fighter can fly at about Mach 2.5 (it also has 2" of MegaScaled Flight to represent this). It's armed with a 20mm cannon (RKA 4d6, Autofire (10), +1 STUN Multiplier, 940 Charges), up to 11,000 pounds of ordnance (represented here by 24 one thousand pound bombs [RKA 4d6, Explosion]), eight Sidewinder and Sparrow missiles, and various electronic warfare systems.

10. The AH-1W SuperCobra is equipped with an M197 20mm cannon (RKA 4d6, Autofire (10), +1 STUN Multiplier, 750 Charges) and two AGM-114 anti-tank missiles (RKA 4d6, AP, Explosion). It can carry a variety of other weapons, and also has anti-infrared systems, IR sensors, radar, and HRRP.

11. The AH-64 Apache has four hardpoints. This allows it to carry four pods of four Hellfire missiles, four 19-tube 2.76-inch FFAR rocket launchers, or some combination of the two. It also has a 30mm chain gun (RKA 4½d6, Autofire (10), AP, +1 STUN Multiplier, 1,200 Charges). It also has anti-infrared systems, IR sensors, radar, and HRRP.

# WEAPONS AND ARMOR



Characters use weapons for a variety of purposes, such as hurting an opponent or breaking out of a prison cell. Weapons can improve a character's accuracy, his ability to do damage, or both. Armor, of course, helps to keep the character from getting hurt in the first place.

### BUYING WEAPONS AND ARMOR

How characters obtain weapons and armor depends on the type of campaign they're in.

**Superheroic Campaigns**

In Superheroic campaigns, weapons and armor are simply special effects for Powers — characters must buy them with Character Points, like any other Power. If a character wants to simulate a specific type of weapon or armor, he should consult the weapons charts in this chapter for the cost and effect of the desired item. Characters who want to create their own weapons can use the rules and guidelines provided in this chapter.

**Heroic Campaigns**

In Heroic campaigns, characters buy normal weapons and armor with money (or, for that matter, find or steal them). This includes all the weapons on the charts in this section, although some weapons may be difficult to locate or available only in certain areas. And of course the GM will limit the list of available weapons based on the type of campaign he runs; a character couldn't find a submachine gun in a Fantasy setting, for example.

Heroic characters who want to build special weapons or armor (for example, a magic weapon) must pay Character Points and use the rules and guidelines provided in this chapter.

## WEAPONS

The way characters use weapons varies according to the nature of the campaign. Since characters in Heroic campaigns don't pay Character Points for weapons, they must instead know the appropriate Weapon Familiarity or suffer a -3 OCV penalty for nonproficiency.

Since characters in Superheroic campaigns pay Character Points for their weapons, they automatically know how to use them. They don't need WFs — a character never has to have a Skill to use a weapon he's paid Character Points for (unless a Limitation on the weapon requires a Skill).

### General Rules For Building Weapons

The following rules apply to building both ranged and melee weapons.

#### STRENGTH MINIMUM

In Heroic campaigns, weapons have a STR Minimum that defines the minimum STR required to use them properly. STR Min is an optional statistic, and the GM shouldn't use it if he doesn't want to. It should not be used in Superheroic campaigns.

A weapon's STR Minimum is the minimum STR required not to lift it or wield it, but to wield it *effectively*. A character with -15 STR is fully capable of picking up a Broad Sword, and can even swing it around in combat if he wants to. But it takes a 12 STR to wield a Broad Sword effectively — to use it in combat Phase after Phase; to make it go exactly where you want it to go; to control its motion, momentum, and aim with precision. Thus, it has a 12 STR Minimum.

When a character lacks the STR to use a weapon effectively, he suffers a -1 OCV *and* -1 DC penalty for every 5 points (or fraction thereof) his STR is below the STR Minimum. Conversely, a character can add 1 Damage Class to a melee weapon's damage for every 5 full points by which his STR exceeds the STR Minimum (up to a maximum of twice the weapon's Damage Class). (Characters cannot add damage to guns, arrows, and similar Ranged attacks because of a high STR, but could add damage to HKAs bought with the *Ranged* Advantage, and can still suffer OCV penalties for not having sufficient STR to use a weapon properly.) This rule applies to both Normal Damage and Killing Damage weapons. See *Adding Damage,* page 405, for further information, including rules on adding damage to weapons bought with Advantages.

Wielding weapons costs Endurance, but the END cost depends on the STR used, not the Active Points the weapon is built on: 1 END for every 10 STR used (or 5 STR in some Heroic campaigns). Weapons themselves are built with *Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½).*

Example: *Drak the Barbarian has 18 STR. When wielding a dagger (1d6-1, or 2 DCs; STR Min 8), he takes no penalty for using the weapon. In fact, he can add up to 2 DCs to the dagger's damage, raising its DC from 1d6-1 to 1d6+1. He could not raise the damage any higher (by doing a Haymaker, for example) because he is already at twice the weapon's Damage Class.*

*Later Drak tries to use a huge trollish war axe (STR Min 28). Because his STR is 10 below the STR Minimum, he will be at -2 OCV and -2 DCs every time he attacks with the axe.*



**Modifiers To STR Minima**

Using Two Hands: If a character uses two hands to wield a weapon that normally only requires one, reduce the weapon's STR Minimum by 3.

Using One Hand: If a character uses a one-and-a-half-handed weapon with one hand, add +2 to the STR Minimum (or, in the case of rifles and other weapons for which the STR Minimum doesn't affect damage, impose a -1 OCV penalty for one-handed use). If he uses a two-handed weapon with one hand, add +3 to the STR Minimum (or impose a -2 OCV penalty for rifles and the like).

Autofire: Autofire weapons have a +5 STR Minimum unless fired in single-shot mode (or thrown one at a time).

Bipod: A weapon fired from a bipod has a -10 STR Minimum. (A weapon which can only be fired from a weapons mount should not be built with STR Minimum at all.)

Braced: When a character Braces (see page 386) while using a Ranged weapon, subtract 5 from the weapon's STR Min.

**Calculating STR Minima**

STR Minimum is a Limitation. The STR required to wield the weapon effectively determines the Limitation's value (see accompanying table).

To determine the proper STR Minimum for a weapon, consider its nature, size, mass, and unwieldiness (if any). A light, slim rapier has a lower STR Minimum than a big, heavy, awkward club. The weapons lists below provide guidelines for appropriate STR Minima for various types of weapons.

You should build guns, bows, and like weapons with the additional *STR Min Cannot Add/Subtract Damage* Limitation. Characters cannot add damage to such weapons by having a higher than necessary STR, but conversely don't lose any damage if they're too weak to wield the weapon effectively. They can, however, still suffer OCV penalties for lack of STR.

## STR MINIMUM TABLE

| STR Min | Limitation |
|---|---|
| STR Min = 1-5 | -¼ |
| STR Min = 6-14 | -½ |
| STR Min = 15-17 | -¾ |
| STR Min = 18 or greater | -1 |
| **Limitation Modifiers** | **Additional Modifier** |
| STR Min Cannot Add/Subtract Damage | -½ |

**REQUIRED HANDS**

With melee weapons and some Ranged weapons, you must also consider how many hands a character needs to use it. Most weapons only require one hand. However, some weapons, such as bows, great swords, and rifles, require two hands to use. Consult the Required Hands Table to determine whether a weapon receives a Limitation for the number of hands needed to use it.

The default weapon type, as indicated by the -0 value of the Limitation, is One-Handed: characters can use all weapons with one hand unless the weapon takes one of the other Limitations. If a character wields a one-handed weapon with two hands, reduce the STR Minimum by -3. (This may not be possible with all one-handed weapons; there's only so much room on the haft of a dagger, after all.)

Characters normally use One-And-A-Half-Handed Weapons ("1½H") with two hands; their listed STR Minima assumes two-handed use. However, if necessary characters can use them one-handed without too much difficulty. If a character uses the weapon with only one hand, increase its STR Minimum by +2 (or impose a -1 OCV penalty for weapons for which the STR Minimum Cannot Add/Subtract Damage).

Two-Handed Weapons ("2H") require two hands for best effect; use this Limitation for weapons such as great swords, bows, rifles, and pole arms. In some cases, as with bows and pole arms, it generally isn't possible to use the weapon one-handed at all. However, characters can use some two-handed weapons (such as great swords) with one hand; if so, increase the STR Minimum by +3 (or impose a -2 OCV penalty for rifles and other weapons for which the STR Minimum Cannot Add/Subtract Damage).



## REQUIRED HANDS TABLE

| Value | Limitation |
|---|---|
| -½ | Two-Handed Weapon |
| -¼ | One-And-A-Half-Handed Weapon |
| -0 | One-Handed Weapon |

The size or species of the user may affect the number of hands required to use a weapon. For example, a giant can easily wield a human's two-handed sword with one hand, and a race of four-armed aliens might create swords no human could ever hope to use.

### REAL WEAPON

Weapons require constant maintenance, or else they lose their effectiveness. Characters must clean and sharpen their swords and knives, lest they become too dull and rusty to cut through anything harder than butter; and they must clean and oil their firearms, lest they jam or fail to work. Similarly, some weapons just can't damage some things (or only damage with difficulty) — for example, it's not normally possible to hack through a brick wall with a knife.

The Limitation *Real Weapon* (-¼) reflects these sometimes unpleasant realities. Characters must devote time to maintaining weapons with this Limitation, or else begin to suffer penalties to OCV and DCs, and perhaps increased risk of having them break or jam. The exact results are up to the GM's fiendish imagination. Furthermore, GMs should limit the nature and type of objects they can damage, if appropriate.

## Hand-To-Hand Weapons

This section covers knives, clubs, swords, and other weapons a character can use in Hand-To-Hand Combat.

When building HTH weapons in Heroic campaigns, you should normally use the following Power Modifiers: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (calculate the weapon's END cost from the STR required to wield it); Focus (OAF; -1), STR Minimum, Required Hands, and Real Weapon. Weapons which characters can throw as well as use in HTH Combat take the Advantage *Range Based On STR* (+¼). Superheroic campaigns may or may not use any of these Modifiers (see above).

### WEAPON LENGTH

Some weapons are defined as "Long" weapons. These weapons provide 1" Stretching (Stretching 1", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (7 Active Points); OAF (-1), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), Only To Cause Damage (-½), No Velocity Damage (-¼) (total cost: 2 points)). (An "L2" weapon provides Stretching 2".) This provides a significant advantage in some forms of combat, often granting the character wielding the Long weapon automatic initiative when he first encounters an opponent. However, Long weapons are often virtually useless once an opponent "gets inside" of them (gets past the damaging parts on the tip of the weapon), so a character using one should have a back-up weapon as well.

# HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS

| Weapon | OCV | Damage | STUNx | STR Min | A/R Cost | Length | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Axes, Hammers, Maces, And Picks** | | | | | | | |
| Axe, Battle | 0 | 2d6 | 0 | 13 | 45/15 | M | 1½H |
| Axe, Francisca# | 0 | 1½d6 | 0 | 12 | 44/16 | M | Can Be Thrown |
| Axe, Great | 0 | 2d6+1 | 0 | 16 | 52/15 | M | 2H |
| Axe, Hand (Hatchet)# | 0 | 1d6 | 0 | 6 | 26/9 | S | Can Be Thrown |
| Axe, Small | 0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 8 | 30/11 | M | |
| Hammer# | 0 | 1d6 | +1 | 10 | 26/9 | M | |
| Hammer, Small# | 0 | 1d6-1 | +1 | 8 | 21/8 | M | |
| Hammer, War# | -1 | 1d6+1 | +1 | 13 | 35/10 | M | 1½H |
| Mace | 0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 10 | 30/11 | M | |
| Mace, Great | 0 | 2d6 | 0 | 15 | 45/13 | M | 2H |
| Mace, Small | 0 | 1d6 | 0 | 8 | 22/8 | M | |
| Maul# | 0 | 1½d6 | +1 | 18 | 44/12 | M | 2H |
| Pick* | 0 | 1d6 AP | 0 | 11 | 30/11 | M | |
| Pick, Great* | 0 | 1½d6 AP | 0 | 14 | 50/15 | M | 2H |
| Pick, Military* | 0 | 1d6+1 AP | 0 | 13 | 40/13 | M | 1½H |
| Pick, Small* | 0 | 1d6-1 AP | 0 | 8 | 24/9 | M | |
| **Clubs (Do Not Require Weapon Familiarity)** | | | | | | | |
| Baton/Shillelagh | 0 | 3d6 N | — | 8 | 22/7 | M | |
| Club | 0 | 4d6 N | — | 10 | 30/9 | M | |
| Club, Great | 0 | 6d6 N | — | 15 | 45/11 | M | 2H |
| Club, War | 0 | 5d6 N | — | 12 | 37/11 | M | 1½H |
| Stick | 0 | 2d6 N | — | 5 | 15/6 | S | |
| **Swords And Knives** | | | | | | | |
| Dagger/Dirk# | 0 | 1d6-1 | 0 | 6 | 21/8 | S | Can Be Thrown |
| Knife# | 0 | ½d6 | 0 | 4 | 17/7 | M | Can Be Thrown |
| Stiletto& | 0 | ½d6 AP | 0 | 5 | 22/9 | S | Can Be Thrown |
| Sword, Bastard | 0 | 1½d6 | 0 | 13 | 37/12 | M | 1½H |
| Sword, Broad/Long | 0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 12 | 30/11 | M | |
| Sword, Great | +1 | 2d6 | 0 | 17 | 50/15 | M | 2H |
| Sword, Short | 0 | 1d6 | 0 | 10 | 22/8 | M | |
| **Polearms** | | | | | | | |
| Javelin# | 0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 8 | 35/13 | L | Can Be Thrown |
| Pole Arm | -1 | 2d6 | 0 | 16 | 52/13 | L | 2H |
| Spear, Long | -1 | 2d6 | 0 | 13 | 60/17 | L2 | 2H |
| Spear, Medium# | 0 | 1½d6 | 0 | 10 | 51/18 | L | Can Be Thrown |
| Spear, Short# | 0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 8 | 35/13 | L | Can Be Thrown |
| **Flails** | | | | | | | |
| Flail# | 0 | 1d6 | 0 | 9 | 27/10 | M | |
| Flail, Battle | 0 | 2d6 | 0 | 18 | 56/15 | M | 2H |
| Flail, Bladed | 0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 13 | 37/13 | M | |
| Flail, Military | -1 | 1½d6 | 0 | 15 | 46/13 | M | 1½H |
| Flail, War# | 0 | 1d6 | +1 | 13 | 32/11 | M | |
| **Unusual Melee Weapons** | | | | | | | |
| Lance | 0 | 1½d6 | 0 | 13 † | 44/10 | L2 | Only on horseback |
| Quarterstaff | +1 | 4d6 N | — | 10 | 35/11 | M | 2H |
| Whip | 0 | ½d6 | 0 | 5 † | 9 | M | 3" reach, can Grab |
| **Science Fiction Melee Weapons** | | | | | | | |
| Electric Whip | 0 | 1d6 E | 0 | 6 | 44/16 | M | 3" reach, can Grab |
| Energy Saber | +1 | 1½d6 E | +1 | 10 † | 49/15 | M | |
| Shock Prod | 0 | 3d6 N E | — | 6 † | 22/7 | M | |
| Vibro-blade | +1 | 1½d6 AP | 0 | 11 | 42/15 | M | |

# HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS (NOTES)

**Adding Damage:**

#: Add +1 DC of damage per full +6.25 points of STR used above the STR Minimum.

*: Add +1 DC of damage per full +7.5 points of STR used above the STR Minimum.

&: Add +1 DC of damage per full +8.75 points of STR used above the STR Minimum.

†: STR Minimum Cannot Add/Subtract Damage

**KEY**

1½H: One-And-A-Half-Handed Weapon

2H: Two-Handed Weapon

AP: Armor Piercing

Can Be Thrown: The weapon has the *Range Based On STR* (+¼) Advantage.

E: Energy damage

N: Normal Damage (all other weapons do Killing Damage), bought as a Hand-To-Hand Attack (but to which characters add damage only by exceeding the STR Minimum)

Only on horseback: Characters can only wield this weapon while mounted (a -½ Limitation)

RP: Reduced Penetration (-¼)

All HTH Combat weapons are built as HKAs (or HAs) with the Advantage *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +½) and the Limitations *OAF* (-1), *Real Weapon* (-¼), and *Strength Minimum* (varies). Many also have the *Required Hands* Limitation.

OCV: This is applied as a bonus or penalty against all attacks made with the weapon. OCV bonuses are bought as 5-point Combat Skill Levels with the *OAF, Required Hands,* and *Real Weapon* Limitations. OCV penalties are a minor Side Effect (automatically occurs; -½) for the weapon.

Damage: The amount of damage the weapon does. An "N" indicates Normal Damage; otherwise damage is Killing.

STUNx: This is the STUN Multiplier for Killing Damage weapons (a 0 means "no modification"; use the standard 1d6-1 STUN Multiplier). Apply the STUNx modifier to the STUN Multiplier roll (or to the STUNx for the Hit Location struck, if the campaign uses Hit Location rules). For example, if a character with a War Flail (STUNx +1) hit an opponent in the Head, the total STUNx would be 6.

STR Min: STR Minimum. See page 478 for rules. Remember to apply the rules in *Adding Damage,* page 405, when using STR to increase the damage of a weapon bought with Advantages.

A/R Cost: The Active Point/Real Point cost of the weapon.

Length: The weapon's length — Short, Medium, or Long. L2 indicates a weapon with 2" Stretching.

Notes: This catch-all category includes any information not listed elsewhere.



## Muscle-Powered Ranged Weapons

This section covers bows, crossbows, throwing knives, and other Ranged weapons powered, in some part, by the user's muscles (as opposed to by gunpowder).

In Heroic campaigns, these weapons are built with some or all of the following Limitations: Focus (OAF; -1), STR Minimum, Required Hands, Real Weapon, and Charges (indicating the number of rounds of ammunition the average user carries). Superheroic campaigns may or may not use any of these Modifiers (see above).

## MUSCLE-POWERED RANGED WEAPONS TABLE

| Weapon | OCV | RMod | Damage | STUNx | STR Min | Shots | A/R Cost | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arbalest | 0 | +2 | 2d6 | 0 | 16 † | 4 RC | 30/8 | 2H, Conc, ‡2 |
| Bow, Very Light | 0 | 0 | 1d6-1 | 0 | 5 † | 10 RC | 15/4 | 2H, Conc |
| Bow, Light | 0 | 0 | 1d6 | 0 | 8 † | 10 RC | 19/4 | 2H, Conc |
| Bow, Medium | 0 | 0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 9 † | 10 RC | 25/6 | 2H, Conc |
| Bow, Heavy | 0 | 0 | 1½d6 | 0 | 10 † | 10 RC | 31/7 | 2H, Conc |
| Crossbow, Light | 0 | +1 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 12 † | 10 RC | 28/6 | 2H, Conc, ‡1 |
| Crossbow, Heavy | 0 | +1 | 1½d6 | 0 | 14 † | 10 RC | 34/7 | 2H, Conc, ‡1 |
| Longbow, Light | 0 | +1 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 10 † | 10 RC | 28/6 | 2H, Conc, no horse |
| Longbow, Medium | 0 | +1 | 1½d6 | 0 | 12 † | 10 RC | 34/8 | 2H, Conc, no horse |
| Longbow, Heavy | 0 | +1 | 2d6 | 0 | 15 † | 10 RC | 40/9 | 2H, Conc, no horse |
| Sling | 0 | -1 | 1d6+1 | +1 | 8 † | 10 RC | 30/6 | 2H, Conc |
| Staff Sling (Fustibal) | 0 | 0 | 1½d6 | +1 | 10 † | 10 RC | 37/9 | 2H, Conc |
| Throwing Knife | 0 | 0 | 1d6 | 0 | 7 | 4 RC | 15/4 | RBS |

**KEY**

2H: Two-Handed Weapon

Conc: Concentration (½ DCV "throughout" the loading and/or firing process, see text; -½)

No horse: Characters cannot fire this weapon while mounted (a -¼ Limitation)

RBS: Range Based On STR

RC: Recoverable Charge

†: STR Minimum Cannot Add/Subtract Damage

‡: Extra Time (Full Phase to use; -½)

‡1: Extra Time (1 Phase to reload between shots; -¾)

‡2: Extra Time (2 Phases to reload between shots; -¾)

Ranged weapons are built as RKAs with some or all of the following Limitations: Focus (OAF; -1), STR Minimum, Required Hands, Real Weapon, Beam, and Charges (indicating the number of rounds of ammunition the average user carries).

OCV: This is applied as a bonus or penalty against all attacks made with the weapon; see the Hand-To-Hand Weapons Table for more information.

RMod: This represents a modifier to the weapon's accuracy at Range. Positive values (bought as 3-point Penalty Skill Levels versus the Range Group with the *Focus* and *Required Hands* Limitations) help to offset the standard Range Modifier; negative values (a minor Side Effect (automatically occurs; -½)) add to it. RMod can never raise a character's base OCV, it can only negate penalties.

Damage: The amount of damage the weapon does.

STUNx: This is the STUN Multiplier for Killing Damage weapons (a 0 means "no modification"; use the standard 1d6-1 STUN Multiplier). Apply the STUNx modifier to the STUN Multiplier roll (or to the STUNx for the Hit Location struck, if the campaign uses Hit Location rules). For example, if a character with a Sling (STUNx +1) hit an opponent in the Head, the total STUNx would be 6.

STR Min: STR Minimum. See page 478 for rules. Most muscle-powered ranged weapons do not allow characters to add damage from STR; for such weapons, the STR Minimum indicates the STR needed to hold, draw, and/or cock the weapon.

Shots: The standard amount of ammunition carried by a user of the weapon. Typically a character can only fire/throw/shoot one round of ammunition in a Phase; thereafter he must reload his weapon (or ready a new one). Reloading/readying may or may not take time; see the text.

A/R Cost: The Active Point/Real Point cost of the weapon.

Notes: This catch-all category includes any information not listed elsewhere.

# Firearms

More technically known as "non-muscle-powered ranged weapons," these weapons use gunpowder or other means to fire a projectile or energy beam at the target.

In Heroic campaigns, characters build gunpowder firearms with some or all of the following Limitations: Focus (OAF; -1), STR Minimum (including STR Minimum Cannot Add/Subtract Damage in all cases), Real Weapon, Beam, and Charges (indicating the number of rounds of ammunition in the gun's cylinder, clip, or battery). Rifles and shotguns also have Required Hands. Superheroic campaigns may or may not use any of these Modifiers (see above), and may also add No Knockback.

## OPTIONAL FIREARMS MALFUNCTIONS

You can use this optional rule to make gun combat more exciting. It won't come into play very often, but when it does, it has devastating effects. These are the end results of the *Real Weapon* Limitation — the sorts of things that go wrong when characters don't keep their guns in good condition.

There are several ways a firearm can malfunction. The two main types of problems are jamming and misfiring. In addition, weapons with the *Autofire* Advantage are subject to runaway fire. Compare all Attack Rolls made to shoot firearms to the accompanying table.

**Misfire**

Damaged or improperly loaded rounds may fail to fire when the character pulls the trigger. This is very dangerous, since the round is still live. The gun will not fire until someone removes the round from the chamber. A character with Weaponsmith (Firearms) Skill can clear a misfire with a successful Skill Roll as a Half Phase Action. If he fails his Skill Roll, clearing the misfire takes a full Phase.

## FIREARMS MALFUNCTIONS TABLE

| Attack Roll | Problem |
|---|---|
| 18 (17-18) | Misfire |
| 17 (16) | Jam |
| 16 (15) | Runaway (only for weapons with Autofire) |

Use the numbers in parentheses if the weapon is dirty, has gone without maintenance, or is otherwise in less than perfect condition.

A character without Weaponsmith (Firearms) can attempt a DEX Roll to clear the misfire as a Full Phase Action. If he makes the DEX Roll, he clears the misfire. If the roll fails, the round explodes, doing its listed damage to the character's hand (apply the effects of that Hit Location). If the character takes two Full Phases, he can clear the round without making a DEX Roll, and therefore without risking blowing up his hand.

**Jamming**

Sometimes a round fails to feed properly into the firing chamber. This causes a jam, and the gun won't fire until someone clears the jam. It takes one full Phase for a character to clear a jam (or half a Phase if the character knows Weaponsmith (Firearms)). Once someone clears the jam, the weapon can fire normally. Revolvers and single-shot bolt action weapons will not jam.

**Runaway**

Weapons with Autofire can "runaway" when firing more than one bullet. A runaway gun continues to fire even after the firer releases the trigger and expends all its rounds in one Phase. This does not affect the character's Attack Roll. After the shooter reloads the gun, it fires normally.

## SIGHTS

Certain technological devices allow anyone to shoot more accurately. Special vision devices let a gunman work in very low light or total darkness. The attacker must first be Braced and be sighted in to use most of the sights listed on the accompanying table. Each sight has an OCV modifier and modifier to the Range Modifiers. If a gun has no sights, the character using it receives only the usual bonuses for Bracing (see page 386).

## SIGHTS TABLE

| Name | OCV | RMod |
|---|---|---|
| Iron Sights (normal) | +0 | +0 |
| Micrometer Sights | +1 | +0 |
| Standard Scope | +1 | +1 |
| High-Power Scope | +1 | +2 |
| Laser Sight* | +1 | +1 |
| Infrared Scope† | — | — |
| Nightsight Scope‡ | — | — |

* Need not Brace to use; only works for shots to 64"; may not be usable against brightly colored backgrounds, through fog, or in other conditions.

†: Provides Infrared Perception (Sight Group)

‡: Provides +3 to Sight Group PER Rolls to counteract darkness modifiers.

# FIREARMS TABLE

| Weapons | OCV | RMod | Damage | STUNx | Shots | STR Min | A/R Cost | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Revolvers** | | | | | | | | |
| .38 Derringer | -2 | -2 | 1d6 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 15/3 | |
| .38 S&W Model 10 | +0 | +0 | 1d6 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 15/3 | |
| .357 M Colt Python | +1 | +0 | 1½d6 | 0 | 6 | 10 | 30/8 | |
| .41 M S&W Model 57 | +0 | +0 | 1½d6 | 0 | 6 | 10 | 25/6 | |
| .44 M Llama Super Comanche | -1 | +0 | 2d6 | +1 | 6 | 12 | 37/8 | |
| .45 Colt Peacemaker | +0 | +0 | 2d6-1 | +1 | 6 | 10 | 34/8 | |
| **Semi-Automatic Pistols** | | | | | | | | |
| .22 LR High Standard Trophy | +1 | +1 | 1d6-1 | 0 | 10 | 6 | 20/6 | |
| .30 Luger P-08 | +1 | +0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 32 | 8 | 30/9 | |
| .380 A Walther PPK/S | +1 | -1 | 1d6 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 20/5 | |
| 9mm R Makarov PM | +0 | -1 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 20/4 | |
| 9mm Browning Hi Power | +0 | +0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 20 | 7 | 25/7 | |
| .44 Automag | +0 | +0 | 2d6 | +1 | 7 | 14 | 37/9 | |
| .45 ACP Colt M1911/M1911A1 | +1 | +0 | 2d6-1 | +1 | 7 | 9 | 39/10 | |
| .50 AE Desert Eagle | +1 | +0 | 2d6+1 | +1 | 9 | 13 | 49/14 | |
| **Submachine Guns** | | | | | | | | |
| .223 Bushmaster | +1 | +1 | 2d6 | +1 | 30 | 12 | 68/20 | AF5 |
| .32 Cz Model 61 Skorpion | +1 | -1 | 1d6 | 0 | 20 | 8 | 31/8 | AF5 |
| 9mm Uzi | +1 | +0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 40 | 12 | 45/13 | AF5 |
| 9mm H&K MP5 | +1 | +0 | 1d6+1 | 0 | 30 | 12 | 40/12 | AF5 |
| .45 ACP Ingram MAC-10 | +1 | +0 | 2d6-1 | +1 | 32 | 12 | 59/17 | AF5 |
| .45 ACP M3A1 "Grease Gun" | +0 | +0 | 2d6-1 | +1 | 30 | 12 | 54/15 | AF5 Only |
| .45 ACP Thompson M-1928 | +0 | +0 | 2d6-1 | +1 | 50 | 14 | 61/17 | AF5 |
| **Rifles** | | | | | | | | |
| 7.62 R SVD Dragunov | +1 | +2 | 2d6+1 | +1 | 10 | 15 | 67/19 | 2H |
| .30-06 Springfield M1903 | +1 | +1 | 2d6+1 | +1 | 5 | 13 | 52/12 | 2H |
| .30-06 M-1 Garand | +0 | +1 | 2d6+1 | +1 | 8 | 15 | 47/10 | 2H |
| .450 M H&H African | +0 | +2 | 2½d6 | +1 | 2 | 16 | 56/11 | 2H |
| **Assault Rifles** | | | | | | | | |
| .30 M-2 Carbine | +0 | +1 | 1½d6 | 0 | 30 | 14 | 47/12 | 2H, AF5 |
| 5.56mm Colt M16/M16A1 | +1 | +1 | 2d6 | +1 | 30 | 13 | 71/19 | 2H, AF5 |
| 5.45mm AK-74 | +1 | +1 | 2d6 | +1 | 30 | 14 | 71/19 | 2H, AF5 |
| 7.62mm R AK-47/AKM-47 | +1 | +1 | 2d6 | +1 | 30 | 14 | 68/18 | 2H, AF5 |
| 7.62mm FN-FAL | +1 | +2 | 2d6+1 | +1 | 20 | 16 | 98/27 | 2H, AF5 |
| **Shotguns** | | | | | | | | |
| .410 Shot | +0 | +0 | 1½d6 | +1 | 5 | 8 | 44/8 | 2H, AE1, LR(20"), RR, RP |
| .410 Slug | +0 | +0 | 1½d6 | +1 | 5 | 8 | 31/6 | 2H, LR(50") |
| 12 Shot | +0 | +0 | 2½d6 | +1 | 5 | 12 | 70/13 | 2H, AE1, LR(20"), RR, RP |
| 12 Slug | +0 | +0 | 2½d6 | +1 | 5 | 12 | 50/10 | 2H, LR(50") |
| **Heavy Weapons** | | | | | | | | |
| 7.62mm M60 LMG | +1 | +1 | 2d6+1 | +1 | 250 | 16 | 152/40 | AF10, Bulky |
| .50 M2HB HMG | +1 | +4 | 3d6 | +1 | 110 | 20 | 163/32 | AF10, Bulky, Crew3 |
| M72A3 LAW Rocket | +0 | +1 | 6½d6 X | +1 | 1 | 12 | 228/26 | 2H, AP, ET(EP), SFW |
| Wire Guided Missile | +0 | +0 | 8d6 X | +1 | 1 | 12 | 420/56 | AP (x2), Crew4, ET(1T), IRM5, NRM |
| 57mm M18 Recoilless Rifle | -1 | +3 | 6d6+1 | +1 | 1 | 15 | 181/29 | 2H, AP, Crew2 |
| FIM-92A Stinger SAM | +2 | +0 | 5d6 X | +1 | 1 | 12 | 197/23 | 2H, Crew2, ET(1T), IMR5, NRM, SFW |
| **Science Fiction Pistols** | | | | | | | | |
| Blaster Pistol | +1 | 0 | 9d6N E | — | 8 | 32 | 84/24 | |
| Gyrojet Pistol | +2 | -1 | 2d6 | +1 | 7 | 16 | 52/17 | |
| Laser Pistol | +1 | 0 | 2d6 AP E | 0 | 9 | 32 | 72/21 | |
| Neutron Pistol | +1 | 0 | 4d6 N NND | — | 7 | 32 | 50/15 | |
| **Science Fiction Rifles** | | | | | | | | |
| Blaster Auto Rifle | +1 | +2 | 12d6 N E | — | 64 | 12 | 131/35 | AF5, 2H |
| Gyrojet Auto Rifle | +2 | +1 | 3d6 | +1 | 32 | 10 | 80/23 | 2H |
| Laser Auto Rifle | +1 | +2 | 3d6 AP E | 0 | 64 | 12 | 123/33 | AF5, 2H |
| Neutron Auto Rifle | +1 | +2 | 5d6 N NND | — | 64 | 11 | 73/20 | 2H |
| **Science Fiction Special Weapons** | | | | | | | | |
| Micro-rocket Launcher | 0 | 0 | 3d6 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 45/11 | |
| Bolo Gun | 0 | 0 | 6d6 Entangle | — | 6 | 10 | 60/13 | 2H |
| **Grenades** | | | | | | | | |
| Fragmentation | +0 | +0 | 2d6 X | 0 | 1 | — | 45/10 | RBS |
| Concussive | +0 | +0 | 8d6 NX | — | 1 | — | 45/10 | RBS |

# FIREARMS TABLE (NOTES)

**KEY**

2H: Two-Handed

AE1: Area Of Effect (One Hex)

AF: Autofire; the number after the letters indicates the maximum number of shots

ACP: Automatic Colt Pistol

AP: Armor Piercing

Auto: Automatic

Crew: Requires Multiple Users (number indicates standard size of crew)

Cz: Czech

ET: Extra Time (1T means 1 Turn; EP means Extra Phase)

IMR: Increased Maximum Range (the number indicates the multiplier)

LR(X"): Limited Range (number indicates range)

M: Magnum

N: Normal Damage

NRM: No Range Modifier

Only: Autofire only, no single shots (a -0 Limitation)

R: Russian

RBS: Range Based On STR

RP: Reduced Penetration

RR: Reduced By Range

SFW: Shoulder-fired weapon (characters need WF: Shoulder-Fired Weapons to use properly)

X: Explosion

**NOTES**

OCV: This is applied as a bonus or penalty against all attacks made with the weapon; see the Hand-To-Hand Weapons Table for more information.

RMod: This represents a modifier to the weapon's accuracy at Range; see the Ranged Muscle-Powered Weapons Table for more information.

Damage: The amount of damage the weapon does. An "N" indicates Normal Damage; otherwise damage is Killing.

STUNx: This is the STUN Multiplier for Killing Damage weapons(a 0 means "no modification"; use the standard 1d6-1 STUN Multiplier). Apply the STUNx modifier to the STUN Multiplier roll (or to the STUNx for the Hit Location struck, if the campaign uses Hit Location rules). For example, if a character with a Colt M1911A (STUNx +1) shot an opponent in the Head, the total STUNx would be 6.

Shots: The standard amount of ammunition in the gun's cylinder, magazine, or battery. Once a weapon depletes its ammunition, the shooter must reload it; this typically takes one Phase.

STR Min: The STR Min necessary to use the weapon effectively. See page 478 for rules. Guns have the *STR Min Does Not Add/Subtract Damage* modifier, so a character without sufficient STR to fire a gun doesn't do any less damage, but does suffer the specified OCV penalty.

A/R Cost: The Active Point/Real Point Cost of the weapon, in Character Points.

Notes: This catch-all category includes any information not listed elsewhere.



## Explosives

Characters in *HERO System* games may occasionally (or frequently) want to use explosives — say, to blow up a dam, rescue innocents trapped under a rockslide, obliterate an invading alien ship, you name it. The possibilities are limitless.

The accompanying table lists some common explosives which characters might use. To hit a target with an explosive, the attacker need only hit the target hex — not the target himself. The listing for each explosive includes the amount used, amount and type of damage done, and other notes. These are only estimates; the exact damage done by an explosive varies according to the shaping of the charge, nearby structures, and many other factors. The type of explosive can also affect the damage: black powder detonates less efficiently than dynamite, which itself works less well than plastique. GMs should add or subtract damage if the explosive being used is somehow extraordinary.

## Poisons

When explosives and guns are too crude for the job, the more subtle touch of poison may be what a character needs. Characters buy lethal poisons as RKAs, NND Does BODY (defense is appropriate LS: Immunity); OAF Fragile (poison and possibly some means of projecting it, injecting it, or having it ingested, -1¼), No KB (-¼), No Range (-½), and 1 Charge (-2) (total -4); Gradual Effect usually also applies. Nonlethal poisons are typically bought as Drains.

Curare (blade poison): *RKA 4d6, NND Does BODY (defense is appropriate Immunity; +2) (180 Active Points); Common Limitations (-4), Blade Attack Must Do BODY (-¼). Total cost: 34 points.*

Cyanide Gas: *RKA 5d6, Area of Effect (7" radius; +1), NND Does BODY (defense is appropriate Immunity; +2) (300 Active Points); Common Limitations except for No Range (-3½), Does Not Work In Winds Or Rain (-¼). Total cost: 63 points.*

Strychnine: *RKA 5d6, NND Does BODY (defense is appropriate Immunity; +2), Invisible (hide cause of death after rictus grin fades, +¼) (244 Active Points); Common Limitations (-4), Gradual Effect (symptoms begin from immediately to fifteen minutes after injection/ingestion, death occurs from two minutes to two hours after injection/ingestion, -2). Total cost: 35 points.*

## EXPLOSIVES

| Explosive | Damage | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Fragmentation Grenade | 2d6 EX | Thrown; Range Based On STR |
| Concussion Grenade | 6d6 N EX | Thrown; Range Based On STR |
| Dynamite (1 stick) | 5d6 N EX | |
| Dynamite (2 sticks) | 6d6 N EX | |
| Dynamite (4 sticks) | 8d6 N EX | |
| Nitroglycerine (1 Liter) | 12d6 N EX | |
| Gas Tank (48 Liters) | 15d6 N EX | |
| Plastic Explosive (1 block) | 15d6 N EX | |
| Mortar Round | 4d6 EX | |
| Howitzer Round | 5d6 EX | Loses 1 DC per 2 hexes |
| Heavy Bomb | 6d6 EX | Loses 1 DC per 3 hexes |

## ARMOR

Characters may want to wear armor to partially or wholly protect themselves from damage. Personal armor can range from a policeman's kevlar vest to a knight's plate hauberk. Most armor functions as both PD and ED Armor, although some armor only protects against one category of attacks. All the body armor listed in the accompanying table is fully Resistant, although a character could have armor that was Normal (like a padded suit).

The protective value of armor derives from the material it is constructed from, and the skill with which it was put together. Armor is often heavy, although high-tech armor can be lightweight. Most armor only covers a portion of the body, so it is only effective some of the time (see *Sectional Defenses,* page 415).

## Buying Armor

Character buy armor with the Power *Armor* (how apropos). The Armor Types Table lists the Defense provided by various materials.

After choosing an appropriate amount of Armor, apply the Limitations *Focus* (OIF; -½), *Real Armor* (-¼), and *Mass* (varies). Real Armor signifies that the character must spend time cleaning, repairing, and maintaining his armor, or it begins to fall apart on him, providing less and less defense until it becomes completely ruined and useless. As a rule of thumb, for every two weeks during which a character does not maintain his armor, subtract 1 from its defense. Furthermore, the character must put the armor on and take it off (often a time-consuming chore), and it may restrict his ability to swim, become extremely uncomfortable in many climates, and so forth.

Mass represents the fact that armor is heavy, which factors into Encumbrance and may even slow the character down enough to affect his DCV or movement. A full coverage suit of armor has a mass based on the armor's largest defense. The base mass is equal to 5.0 kg. at DEF 2, and doubles for every +2 DEF. If the defense is an odd number then use a base mass of 7.0 kg. at DEF 3, and doubles for every +2 DEF. Some armors (such as modern-day kevlar body armor) weigh less than this, and therefore get a correspondingly lesser Limitation.

**ARMOR TYPES**

| Fantasy | DEF |
|---|---|
| Cloth | 1 |
| Leather | 2 |
| Boiled Leather | 3 |
| Brigandine | 4 |
| Scale | 5 |
| Chain | 6 |
| Plate and Chain | 7 |
| Full Plate | 8 |
| **Modern** | **DEF** |
| Soft Body Armor | 6† |
| Hard Body Armor | 9† |
| Advanced Body Armor | 11† |
| **Science Fiction** | **DEF** |
| Light Reflect | +3 ED§ |
| Full Reflect | +6 ED§ |
| Advanced Polymers | 12† |
| Plasteel | 15† |

†: x½ Mass
§: x¼ Mass

# WEIGHT TABLE (KG)

| | Activation Roll | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Defense** | **8-** | **9-** | **10-** | **11-** | **12-** | **14-** | **15-** | **Full coverage** |
| 1 | .9 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.5 |
| 2 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 2.5 | 3.1 | 3.8 | 4.4 | 4.8 | 5.0 |
| 3 | 1.8 | 2.6 | 3.5 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 6.1 | 6.7 | 7.0 |
| 4 | 2.5 | 3.8 | 5.0 | 6.3 | 7.5 | 8.8 | 9.5 | 10.0 |
| 5 | 3.5 | 5.3 | 7.0 | 8.8 | 10.5 | 12.3 | 13.3 | 14.0 |
| 6 | 5.0 | 7.5 | 10.0 | 12.5 | 15.0 | 17.5 | 19.0 | 20.0 |
| 7 | 7.0 | 10.5 | 14.0 | 17.5 | 21.0 | 24.5 | 26.6 | 28.0 |
| 8 | 10.0 | 15.0 | 20.0 | 25.0 | 30.0 | 35.0 | 38.0 | 40.0 |
| 9 | 14.0 | 21.0 | 28.0 | 35.0 | 42.0 | 49.0 | 53.2 | 56.0 |
| 10 | 20.0 | 30.0 | 40.0 | 50.0 | 60.0 | 70.0 | 76.0 | 80.0 |

# ARMOR LIMITATIONS

| Mass | Limitation Value |
|---|---|
| No Mass | -0 |
| Half Mass | -½ |
| Normal Mass | -1 |
| Double Listed Mass | -1½ |
| Real Armor | -¼ |

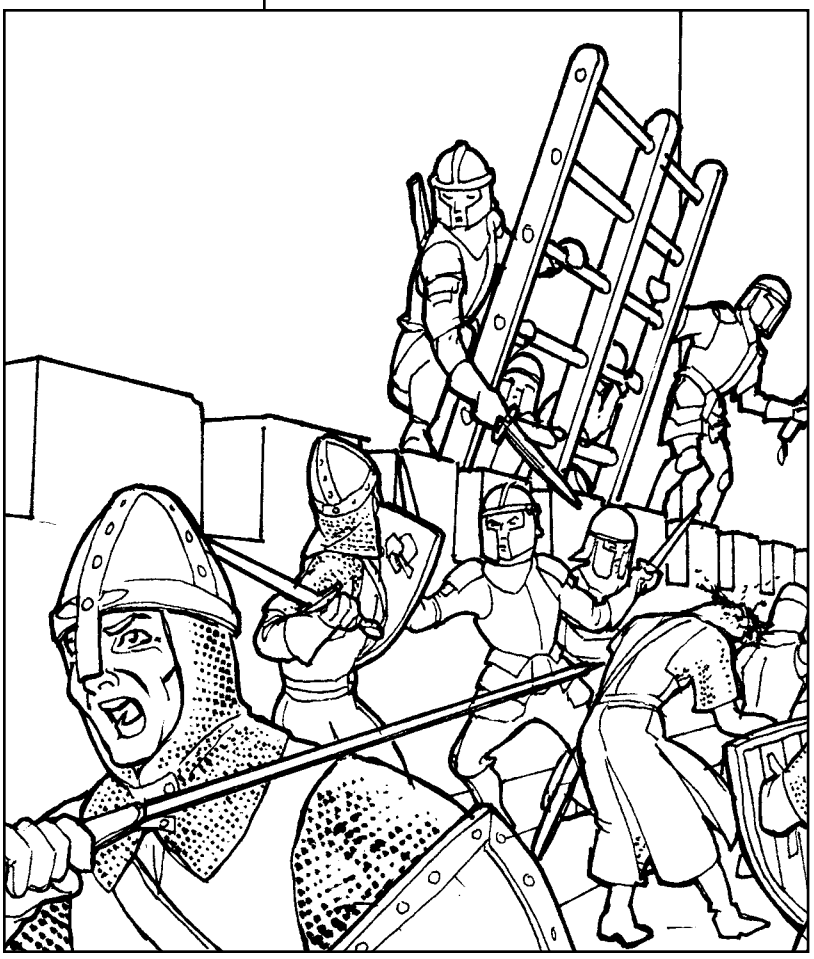
Consult the Weight Table and Armor Coverage Table for a quick method of calculating the weight of a character's armor.

The fact that a suit of armor does not cover all of a character's body is simulated by applying an Activation Roll. The Armor Coverage Table provides Limitation values based on the amount and locations of the body the armor protects. See *Sectional Defenses,* page 415, for more information.

# ARMOR COVERAGE TABLE

| Protects Locations | Limitation (Value) | Example |
|---|---|---|
| 12-13 | 8- (-2) | Short Vest |
| 11-13 | 9- (-1½) | Standard Vest |
| 10-13 | 10- (-1¼) | Cap, Long Vest |
| 4-5, 9-13 | 11- (-1) | Helmet, Jacket |
| 3-5, 9-14, 16-18 | 12- (-¾) | Full Coverage Helmet, Long Jacket, High Boots |
| 3-5, 7-14, 16-18 | 14- (-½) | Full Coverage Helmet, Long Jacket with Sleeves, High Boots |
| 3-14, 16-18 | 15- (-¼) | Full Coverage Helmet, Long Jacket with Gauntlets, High Boots |

The GM can modify these numbers as he sees fit. He should make sure characters don't get too much protection for their points.



# SHIELD TABLE

| Shield | DCV | Weight (KG) | STR Min | A/R Cost |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Small Shield | +1 | 2 | 5 | 5/2 |
| Normal Shield | +2 | 4 | 13 | 10/4 |
| Large Shield | +3 | 7 | 18 | 15/5 |

## Shields

Shields protect a character by raising his DCV against frontal attacks. A shield is assumed to be "in the way" even when a character isn't doing a Block maneuver. If a character performs a Block maneuver he can add his Shield DCV bonus to his OCV.

Build shields as 5-point Combat Skill Levels for DCV with the *Focus* (OAF) and *STR Minimum* Limitations applied to them. For every 5 points (or fraction thereof) a shield's user's STR is below the shield's STR Minimum, reduce the DCV bonus it provides by 1.

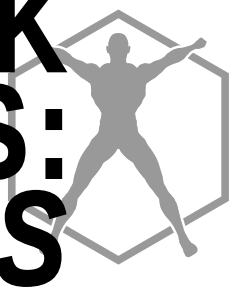
chapter five:




THE *HERO SYSTEM*

# GENRE BY GENRE

# COMIC BOOK SUPERHEROES: *CHAMPIONS*



**GENRE BY GENRE**

One of the best things about the *HERO System* is that once you learn the rules, you can use it to create games for *any* genre, time period, or setting. Campaigns as diverse as gritty modern espionage, Fantasy tales featuring demigods, epic Science Fiction wars with starships and battlemechs, and crimefighting four-color superheroes all work with the *HERO System.*

To help you get started learning the *HERO System* and deciding what sort of game you want to run, this chapter provides a brief overview of the major genres common to roleplaying games, and shows you how to play characters and campaigns in them using the *HERO System.* It reviews some of the major elements or important features of each genre, and explains how you can simulate them with the *HERO System* rules. Each section also includes one or two sample characters you can use as guidelines for creating your own characters or NPCs for scenarios you plan to run.

Men with the strength to lift battleships, flying through the air wearing gaudy, caped costumes. Mighty heroes in armor made not of simple leather and steel, but advanced polymers and alloys and circuitry, and equipped with enough weaponry to defeat a tank battalion. Beautiful women who can fire power-bolts from their eyes. Megalomaniacal villains determined to conquer the world... or destroy it. Villainous organizations, powerful occult conspiracies, the highest of high technology. All this, and more, you can find in the pages of comic books — and in the roleplaying campaigns inspired by them.

## Campaign Guidelines And Standards

In *HERO System* terms, *Champions* campaigns are almost always Superheroic. Typically characters are built as Standard Superheroic characters, with 200 Base Points and up to 150 more points from Disadvantages. Gamemasters who prefer slightly less powerful characters are more likely to choose Low-Powered Superheroic (150 Base Points + 100 Disadvantages); other GMs want their players to have more points to work with, and use the High-Powered or even Very High-Powered guidelines.

As discussed on page 545, many *Champions* GMs choose to impose restrictions, or "caps," on the amount of Active Points a *Champions* character can have in any one power. Fifty, 60, or 75 point caps are the most common for a typical Standard Superheroic game, 40 or 50 points for a lower-powered game, and sometimes as much as 90 points or more for higher-powered campaigns. The other guidelines and restrictions listed in the tables on page 28 are usually also applied. On the other hand, some GMs prefer not to set point caps and just evaluate each character and his powers individually.

## Genre Conventions And Features

The superhero genre is so large and varied that it's difficult to provide any sort of capsule description of it. Even when two comic books look similar from the outside, they can prove to have very different stories and artistic styles on the inside. The genre ranges from the most ridiculous and childish of four-colored stories, to the darkest and grimmest "realistic" heroes, with everything in between appearing somewhere during the history of the medium. So, the possibilities for a *Champions* campaign are just about endless.

Nevertheless, there are a few common "bits" that most people associate with comic book superheroes. Here are a few of them, and how you can simulate them using the *HERO System* rules.

Costumes: More than anything besides superpowers, what distinguishes superheroes from heroes in other genres is their clothing — or, more precisely, their costumes. Ranging from skintight suits, to powered armor, to stylish leathers, costumes tend to be bright and colorful, often revealing without being too risqué, or in other ways attention-grabbing. Even costumes supposedly designed for stealth are usually visually distinctive. Many come with masks (to hide the character's identity) and capes.

In game terms, there's usually nothing you have to do to "build" or create your costume — you just get to have fun dreaming it up, and maybe even drawing it (or having someone draw it for you). However, in some cases, the costume itself provides powers — a suit of powered armor has defensive and weapons technology, a magical cape allows its wearer to fly, a high-tech headband grants the owner psychic powers. Costumes like that you have to pay Character Points for. To create them, you buy whatever Powers or abilities you want, and then apply an appropriate Limitation. Costumes are usually a *Focus* (see page 292), though it's better to buy some costumes (such as some types of powered armor) with the Limitation *Only In Heroic Identity* (page 302) instead.

Impossible technology and super-science: Most comic books are full of amazing technology that simply cannot exist in the real world — everything from blaster pistols, to suits of powered armor that increase the wearer's strength a thousandfold, to time travel devices, and beyond. This sort of "super-science" (and characters able to manipulate it) are a staple of most comic book settings.

In *HERO System* terms, most personal items of technology (such as weapons, shields, and magic wands) are bought as Powers with the Limitation *Focus.* If the Focus is easily taken away from a character (like a gun, an enchanted amulet, a power-staff, or a shield), it's an Accessible Focus. Foci that are harder to remove (suits of armor, power rings, bracers) are Inaccessible. Most Foci in a superheroes campaign are Obvious, but a few are Inobvious. See page 292 for more information about Focus.

Bigger types of technology — vehicles, secret headquarters, robots, and the like — are bought differently. Chapter Four has rules for creating Automatons (robots, golems, the undead, and so forth), Bases, Vehicles, and Weapons using the *HERO System*.

Radiation accidents: "Radiation accident" is the slang term for the amazing coincidences and accidents that give ordinary people superpowers. Most superhumans have far-fetched — but fun! — explanations for how they got their powers.

The origin you choose for your character may have all sorts of consequences in the game. Primarily, it explains where your character's superpowers come from, and what they're like. As you develop the origin story more, and think about your character in more detail, you may think of additional powers your character should have, or that he might acquire someday. Additionally, your character's origin may help you determine who his enemies are, why he fights crime, and many other fascinating details.

Secret identities: In most comic book settings, most superheroes maintain secret identities. Because they don't want their homes and loved ones threatened by maniacal supervillains and other enemies, they wear masks and take other steps to keep their true names and identities concealed from the world at large.

In *HERO System* terms, a secret identity is a Disadvantage — a form of *Social Limitation* that your character receives more points for. See pages 338-39 for more information.

Superpowers: What makes a superhuman a *super*human is that he has *superpowers* — strange abilities beyond those of ordinary men. The range of superpowers is virtually infinite, ranging from super-strength, to super-speed, to the power to walk through walls, to the ability to control other peoples' minds, to walking effortlessly up walls, to anything in between.

The *HERO System* is ideally suited for creating superhero characters because its rules offer you complete flexibility in the creation of these all-important superpowers. Using Powers, Power Modifiers, and other game elements, you can create just about any ability you can think of. If you don't want to create your own right away, you can use the hundreds of example powers listed in the sidebars of Chapter One. You can also look at example characters, like the ones in this chapter, and use their powers as guidelines and inspiration.

Superteams: Unlike many other adventure genres, the comic book superheroes genre has a long and proud tradition of using groups of characters — superteams — instead of focusing on just a single character all the time. This makes the genre a good one for gamers, who usually play in gaming groups.

Superteams typically have something in common, be it a mutual origin, common goals (like "protect the world from evil and injustice!"), or ties of friendship and romance. They often share resources, such as vehicles and headquarters. In *HERO System* terms, you can take Perks like *Vehicle/Base* (page 84) to represent a team's technology, *Fringe Benefit: National Police Powers* (page 82) to represent their government sanction, and the Power *Enhanced Senses* (page 160) to create advanced communicators for each member to carry.

Truth, justice, and the American way: Most comic books feature heroes who obey strict, if informal, codes of conduct. They don't use unnecessary violence, and in particular they never kill their opponents. They stand for all that's right and good, promoting "truth, justice, and the American way" not only through their actions on the battlefield, but their conduct in day-to-day lives. They don't hesitate to oppose injustice or risk their life to save others.

Because living up to the "superhero code" can restrict a character's actions and make him put himself in danger, the *HERO System* represents it through a Disadvantage called *Psychological Limitation* (see page 336). Characters can express the superhero code through many different types of Psychological Limitations. The most common is *Code Versus Killing;* in other campaigns, characters take *Fearlessly Heroic, True-Blue Hero,* or *Code Of The Hero* instead of, or in addition to, a "CVK."

Of course, not every superhero follows the code; some famous and beloved characters achieved their popularity in part because they choose to fight crime a different way. You can do the same thing with your character in most games. If you have any questions or concerns, talk with the GM to determine what sort of characters he wants to have in his campaign, and how he suggests you represent them with Psychological Limitations.

World threats: In comic books, particularly those featuring entire teams of superheroes, the freedom, security, and/or existence of Earth itself become endangered from time to time (sometimes, almost every issue!). Whether it's a megalomaniacal supervillain bent on world conquest, an alien armada sent to subjugate humanity, or a madman's threat to unleash a fatal plague, the heroes find themselves pitting their might against their enemies in contests where the fate of the entire world is on the line.

In game terms, the basic outline of the plot or story the characters participate in is up to the GM. He may decide to start a story in which, say, Mechanon threatens to kill everyone on Earth. But it's up to the players to decide how their characters oppose this threat and what they do to stop the fiendish robotic master villain.

### CHARACTER SHEET NOTATION

Generally, the text of the character sheets in this book should be pretty straightforward and easy to understand. Consult the Glossary (page 16) and the example powers in this book, if you have any questions about abbreviations, terms, or notations.

In a Multipower, a "u" next to the cost indicates a Fixed (or "ultra") slot, and an "m" a Flexible (or "multi") slot.

Under the END column, a number in brackets indicates Charges (however, the bracketed number next to STR is an END cost).

## Character Archetypes

Because the superhero genre is so varied, you can create a character with just about any combination of powers and abilities you can think of. But to at least some degree, most characters tend to fall into certain "archetypes." Some of these archetypes are:



**Brick**

"Brick" is gamer slang for characters whose main superpowers are super-strength and superior resistance to injury. In game terms, a brick character has high STR (usually as high as the campaign standards allow), CON, and PD and ED. He may buy Damage Resistance or Armor so he can bounce bullets off his skin. Using Powers, you can build all sorts of "Brick Tricks" for the character, such as the ability to clap his hands together so hard he creates a deafening shockwave (a Hearing Group Flash Attack with the *Explosion* Advantage).

**Energy Projector**

An "energy projector" is a character with the ability to manipulate some form of energy, be it fire, ice, a mysterious "cosmic energy," or the weather. Most "EPs" (as some gamers call them) have Energy Blast, Flight, and Force Field among their typical powers, and often some other, unusual abilities (like Absorption, Aid, Telekinesis, or Teleportation).

**Gadgeteer**

The gadgeteer is a hero who relies upon his skill with technology and devices — "gadgets" — to fight crime. He doesn't usually possess superpowers himself, but instead builds them in the form of jetpacks (Flight), blaster pistols (Energy Blast), personal cloaking screens (Invisibility), defensive shields (Force Field), and so on. (A few gadgeteers do have powers like the ability to manipulate machines with their minds, however.)

There are two main ways to create a gadgeteer character using the *HERO System.* The first, and easiest for someone new to the game, is simply to buy each gadget the character wants individually. The GM might let you place some gadgets in a Power Framework to save points. The other way, which is more complicated but also more flexible, is to use a Variable Power Pool. A VPP gives your character the ability to change his gadgets in mid-game, but that requires some work on your part. See pages 322-25 regarding VPPs; there's even an example "Gadget Pool" you can use.

**Martial Artist**

A martial artist uses his skills at fighting to combat crime. He's usually been trained in the fighting arts (*i.e.,* he has the *Martial Arts* Skill; see pages 64, 398), and he typically has other acrobatic and athletic abilities as well.

Most martial artists spend a lot of points on Skills — by percentage, significantly more than other characters. However, they often supplement their Skills with various powers and equipment, such as weapons, extra inches of Running or Leaping, reconnaissance gear, heightened senses, and so forth. With clever use of Powers (and Talents), you can create all sorts of interesting abilities for them.

**Mentalist**

A mentalist (also called a "psi") relies on the awesome powers of the mind. He can control the will of others, create illusions so real they injure his enemies, locate another person's mind from miles away, blast his enemies with psychic attacks, and so forth.

To create a mentalist character, you should increase his EGO (which is important for mental combat) and then buy him plenty of Mental Powers, often in a Multipower or other Power Framework (see page 310). Some mentalists favor psychokinetic powers, which they can simulate with Telekinesis, Force Wall, Missile Deflection, and the like. For an unusual surprise attack, a mentalist can buy powers with the Advantage *Based On Ego Combat Value.*

**Metamorph**

"Metamorph" is a catch-all term for superhumans who can change the shape, size, or structure of their bodies. Some can become much larger (or smaller) than normal humans, while others can contort their bodies in all sorts of ways.

If you want to create a metamorph, take a look at the Body-Affecting Powers (page 114) and Size Powers (page 126). Most of the abilities you want you can find listed among those Powers.

**Mystic**

A "mystic" is a character who relies on his ability to evoke and control magical forces, or his magical nature, to fight crime. A mystic might be a powerful spellcaster, a kindhearted person cursed with lycanthropy, an enchanted warrior from another dimension, or a demon kicked out of Hell for being too nice.

Like gadgeteers, mystics can be difficult to build, because you want to allow for a wide range of abilities while keeping the character easy to play. The main ways to do this are the same, too: either buy the character's main abilities individually (or perhaps, in part, through a Power Framework), or use a "Magic Pool" created with a Variable Power Pool. You should also consider some appropriate Knowledge Skills and perhaps some other interesting abilities (such as Martial Arts) to round the character out.

**Patriot**

A "patriot" is a character whose outlook, abilities, and/or appearance embody some concept or theme (typically one associated with the United States or some other nation, hence the name).

Patriots don't have any particular unifying set of powers, since their abilities derive from whatever theme or subject they embody. A patriot who's the living manifestation of surrealism has very different abilities from one embodying the fighting spirit of America. Thus, most patriots also fit into some other archetype (often martial artist or brick).

**Powered Armor**

A "powered armor" character (sometimes also called a "battlesuit") derives his powers from a suit of high-tech armor that contains defensive and offensive capabilities. As such, he combines some features of the gadgeteer and the energy projector, sometimes with aspects of the brick and the weaponmaster as well.

Powered armor characters often have a lot of different powers, but most fall into a few specific categories. First, they have at least one strong defensive power — usually Armor, but sometimes Force Field and/or Damage Reduction. Second, they have built-in weaponry, usually defined as a Multipower of Attack Powers. They may also have high STR. Third, they have Flight (a few armored suits rely on other forms of movement). Fourth, they have a collection of miscellaneous useful abilities built into their armor — Enhanced Senses, Life Support, and so on.

Most powered armor characters define their armor as an Obvious Inaccessible Focus, taking that Limitation on most (if not all) of the Powers they buy. For greater security, some prefer to use the *Only In Heroic Identity* Limitation instead. Most also have some Skills and abilities they can use when not in their armor (including the Skills needed to create the armor in the first place) — after all, it's not very heroic to be helpless most of the time!

**Speedster**

A speedster is a character who relies on movement, usually very rapid movement, as his primary superpower.

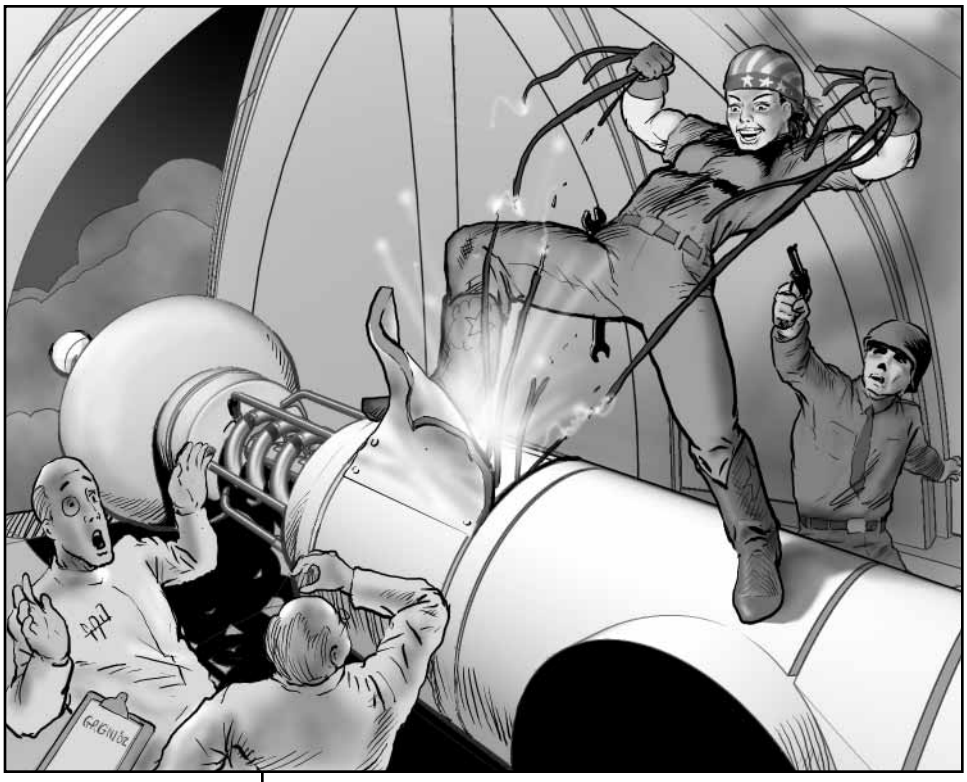
To create a speedster, you first need to choose your character's primary movement power, and buy a lot of it. Most speedsters rely on Running (or on a variant, Flight *Only In Contact With A Surface,* so they can easily run up buildings and across the surface of bodies of water). However, speedsters based on Flight, Teleportation, or other forms of movement are possible.

In combat, speedsters find ways to use their ability to move at hypervelocity to hurt or impair their foes. They often have Combat Skill Levels and/or extra defenses for performing Move Bys and Move Throughs, or create special abilities like "super-fast punching" (a large HA, defined as "I punch him 100 times in the blink of an eye") or "dismantle gadgets" (typically bought as a type of Dispel). Plenty of possibilities exist.

**Weaponmaster**

A weaponmaster character picks a particular type of weapon, such as the bow or the sword, and becomes so skilled with it that he can compete in the superhuman arena. Alternately, he may possess a weapon with special properties or magical powers.

To create a weaponmaster, first you need to make sure he has the right type of weapon. It might be an ordinary weapon, a heavily-modified high-tech version of a normal weapon, or even an enchanted (or otherwise unique) weapon. Many weaponmasters define their weapons with Multipowers, since they can do so many things with them, but this isn't required. A weaponmaster usually also has a generous helping of Skills — Combat Skill Levels with his weapon, Martial Arts for when an enemy disarms him, stealth and infiltration abilities, and so forth.



## Subgenres

There are many different "subgenres" and styles of superhero game, each simulating or reflecting a particular period in comics history, or a particular type of character or storytelling.

**Golden Age Champions**

"The Golden Age" refers to the comics in the period around World War II and some years thereafter, and usually focuses on the activities of superheroes and villains during the War. While the adventures typically consist of fighting enemies and villains on the homefront, some campaigns allow the PCs to invade Europe, participate in famous battles, and the like.

Golden Age Champions superheroes are usually built on fewer points than other heroes (often the Low-Powered variant of 150 Base Points + 100 Disadvantages), and are usually simpler and easier to construct than later superhumans. They tend not to have complicated or unusual powers — after all, at this stage of history, superhumans are a new thing, and just having a plain old Energy Blast or Flight ability is remarkable enough without slapping lots of Advantages on it!

**Silver Age Champions**

Comics historians and fans use the term "the Silver Age" to describe the period from roughly 1956 to 1972 (although some choose different dates). During this time, many classic characters (including all the most famous Marvel characters) were created or re-defined, and many motifs and themes now common to comics (such as a focus on the perils and problems that come from being a superhero) emerged. The style is eclectic, often retaining some of the innocence and pure heroism of the Golden Age, but tinged (particularly later on) with the social awareness and "realism" that became important in comics in later years. Heroes are typically colorful, with bright costumes and larger-than-life attitudes.

In many ways, Silver Age Champions represents the "typical" or "default" type of *Champions* campaign. It's a great era for teams of superheroes, and features all the common "bits" without altering any of them too much. It appeals to gamers who don't want their games to become too serious or "gritty" — who enjoy a combination of action and humor touched by drama. Silver Age heroes are usually built on the Low-Powered total of 150 Base Points + 100 Disadvantages.

**Bronze Age Champions**

"The Bronze Age" refers to the comics of the 1970s and early '80s. Comics during this period are marked primarily by a slow shift away from the "Comics Code"-oriented stories and characters of the Silver Age to more mature themes. Heroes sometimes found themselves confronting issues of mortality, societal unrest, drug abuse, and the like.

Bronze Age heroes are usually built on the Standard 200 Base Points + 150 Disadvantages. Some variations on the theme focus on lower-powered heroes and how they interact with normal humans (who are much more of a potential threat to them than they are to normal, four-color superheroes).

**Iron Age Champions**

"The Iron Age" refers to comics from the mid-1980s until the present day. During this time, the trends that began in the Bronze Age continued. The Comics Code was often ignored altogether, as heroes and stories shifted from gaudy costumes and "simple" heroic attitudes and conduct, and more towards "realism" and "grittiness": characters favor darker costumes, leather, and the like; they're more likely to kill or seriously injure their opponents; they have a harder, more practical, attitude toward superheroing; and they spend more time coping with the "realistic" implications of having superpowers, the effects of their powers on the world around them, and so forth. The settings are often more likely to be inner-city environments or other "realistic" places instead of a supervillain's secret headquarters or a space station. In short, the heroes often are no longer "four-color," as gamers sometimes call Golden and Silver Age characters. Iron Age heroes are usually built on the Standard 200 Base Points + 150 Disadvantages.

**Galactic Champions**

"Galactic Champions" refers to superhero campaigns taking place away from Earth and/or in the far future (or which simply involve higher point totals and more powerful superhumans than most *Champions* games). The superheroes in this case are usually similar to Silver Age heroes, but come from



a dizzying variety of sentient species and planets. In many cases a hero's powers are not true superpowers *per se,* but simply manifestations of abilities native to his species — it's just that his species is so rarely encountered that he's distinctive in the regions where the team operates.

Galactic Champions characters are usually built with High-Powered, or greater, Superheroic character guidelines. After all, they're fighting crime on a cosmic scale, saving the entire universe from all kinds of threats. They have to be tough — most of them need to be able to survive unprotected in the vacuum of space, or in unusual atmospheres. Given the high-tech nature of the setting they usually operate in, most have a few technical Skills as well.

**Teen Champions**

Comic books sometimes focus on superheroes who are young and new to crimefighting — teen heroes. Characters in these campaigns are usually powerful but one-dimensional. They're new to their powers and haven't learned how to use them to full effect yet. Instead of having a Multipower of different Energy Blasts, they have a single Energy Blast — and no Combat Skill Levels. They may have speedster powers, but they can't always stop in time or keep them under control. They can teleport, but only themselves and only over short distances. As time goes by and they gain more experience (in game terms, Experience Points), they develop more powers, learn how to use their powers more effectively, and so forth.

Teen Champions campaigns also focus on the characters' real lives. It's tough to save the world when you have a term paper due the next day and you haven't asked anyone to the prom yet! There's a lot of potential for humor, drama, and gaming fun.

To get the right feel for a Teen Champions campaign, most GMs require players to build Low-Powered Superheroic characters, or sometimes characters with even *fewer* Character Points (say, 100 Base + 100 Disadvantages). That way they can't buy a lot of powers and have to "grow into" their abilities.

**Character Type-Specific Campaigns**

Some comics and *Champions* campaigns focus on a particular type of character, rather than on a setting, time period, or social theme. Perhaps the most common example here is the "Mystic World" campaign, which features characters with magic powers and abilities exclusively. The PCs are heroic mystics who oppose dimensional conquerors, powerful demons, evil sorcerers, and the like in a shadowy war that most of humanity has no knowledge of.

# Sample Characters

Here are four sample *Champions* characters: Taurus, a super-strong hero; Eagle-Eye, a hero who uses his heightened senses to fight crime; Hardpoint, an armored hero; and Maelstrom, a villain with energy powers.

**TAURUS**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 50 | STR | 40 | 19- | Lift 25 tons; 10d6 [5] |
| 23 | DEX | 39 | 14- | OCV: 8/DCV: 8 |
| 30 | CON | 40 | 15- | |
| 20 | BODY | 20 | 13- | |
| 14 | INT | 4 | 12- | PER Roll 12- |
| 12 | EGO | 4 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 20 | PD | 10 | | Total: 20 PD (10 rPD) |
| 20 | ED | 14 | | Total: 20 ED (10 rED) |
| 5 | SPD | 17 | | Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 |
| 20 | REC | 8 | | |
| 60 | END | 0 | | |
| 60 | STUN | 0 | | **Total Characteristics Cost: 206** |

**Movement:** Running: 11"/22"
Leaping: 10"/20"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 44 | *Shockwave:* Area Of Effect (10" Radius; +1¼) for up to 50 STR, Hole In The Middle (one hex; +¼); Only Affects Targets On The Ground (-¼), Extra Time (Extra Segment; -½) | 8 |
| 20 | *Braced For Impact:* Missile Deflection (all Ranged attacks) | 0 |
| 15 | *Bull's Horns:* HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR) | 1 |
| 10 | *Tough, Leathery Skin:* Damage Resistance (10 PD/10 ED) | 0 |
| 10 | *Charge!:* Running +5" (11" total) | 1 |
| 6 | *Animal Senses:* +2 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |

**Perks**

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | Contact: a PRIMUS agent 8- (very useful Skills, access to major institution) |
| 2 | Money: Well Off |
| 4 | Reputation: heroic "monster" (in the United States) 11-, +2/+2d6 |

**Skills**

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 | +2 Hand-To-Hand |
| 1 | Computer Programming 8- |
| 3 | Deduction 12- |
| 2 | AK: Millennium City University 11- |
| 2 | KS: History 11- |
| 2 | KS: The Superhuman World 11- |
| 2 | KS: Track And Field 11- |
| 2 | KS: Trivia 11- |
| 1 | KS: VIPER 8- |
| 1 | Language: German (basic conversation; English is native) |
| 3 | Power: Brick Tricks 14- |
| 1 | Systems Operation 8- |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 144**
**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 15 | DNPC: Billy Burleson (little brother) 11- (Normal) |
| 25 | Enraged: Berserk if takes more than half his BODY as damage (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 11- |
| 30 | Hunted: VIPER 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 25 | Hunted: PSI 11- (Mo Pow, Capture/Kill) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Fearlessly Heroic; Risks His Life Even In Obviously Lethal Situations (Very Common, Strong) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Common, Total) |
| 15 | Social Limitation: Public Identity (Matt Burleson) (Frequently, Major) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

Background/History: Mark Burleson was once an ordinary college student, with a major in history and a place on the Millennium City University track and field team. All that changed when the villainous organization VIPER kidnapped him for use as a "guinea pig" in their experiments mixing human and animal genetic material. When they infused Mark's body with the genetic material of a bull, it triggered a latent mutation that caused his body to transform into a minotaur-like shape, with the head of a bull and the body of a man. The change also made him immensely strong and resilient. He broke free and destroyed the VIPER lab, but it was too late — there was no way to reverse the process. His life had been changed forever.

Not one to dwell on misfortune, Mark decided to put his abilities to good use, so he became a superhero. As Taurus, he has fought many battles and teamed up with other heroes on many occasions. VIPER wants him back so they can analyze what happened in the experiment (and, hopefully, duplicate the effect); PSI, a group of evil psychics, wants revenge on him for the times he's thwarted their plans. Since Mark can't pass as a normal human, he never bothered to maintain a secret identity — with the unintended consequence of causing his little brother Billy, a high school freshman, to want to tag along on his "adventures."

Personality/Motivation: On the surface, Taurus is everything people think a superhero should be: altruistic, self-sacrificing, and willing to risk his life to protect innocent people against evil. Without a thought for his personal safety, he has charged into danger time and time again to rescue trapped disaster survivors, save crime victims, and stop supervillains dead in their tracks. Despite his enormous strength, he tries not to inflict serious harm on his enemies, and would never even think of trying to kill another human being (except on those rare occasions when he's so badly injured he loses control).

But himself, that's another matter. Although he's deeply repressed them, Taurus has significant feelings of bitterness and anger over his transformation. He feels cut off from humanity, alone, and unlovable. His willingness to risk his life in the service of others is a way of trying to connect with

the world at large — and a subconscious way of expressing his secret belief that his life really isn't worth much anymore. In time, he can probably overcome these feelings and learn to accept himself for who and what he is, and to be glad of the silver lining behind the cloud, but it's going to be a hard road before he gets there.

Quote: "You think you can beat me? Bull!"

Powers/Tactics: Taurus's powers derive from his immense strength and minotaur form. He's particularly good at charging opponents, using the speed he developed as a runner and the strength of his transformed body to knock his foes out (or, if they're robots or other unliving enemies, he might gore them with his horns instead). He's even learned how to brace himself to bounce attacks off his super-strong body, and how to smash his fists into the ground to cause a small shockwave around him that can hurt anyone standing on the ground. (The GM should note that the "shockwave" power significantly violates the Active Point cap in most *Champions* campaigns, and scale it back accordingly if it causes game balance problems.) The GM may allow him to pull other "tricks" with his Strength using his *Brick Tricks* Skill (which is based on DEX, to reflect his control over his abilities).

Appearance: Taurus resembles a classic minotaur. He has the body of a man, the head of a bull (complete with horns), and hooves instead of feet. Short black-grey fur covers his body, with an especially thick patch covering up his midsection. He often wears golden bracers on his wrists.



## EAGLE-EYE

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [2] |
| 24 | DEX | 42 | 14- | OCV: 8/DCV: 8 |
| 20 | CON | 20 | 13- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 18 | INT | 8 | 13- | PER Roll 13- |
| 12 | EGO | 4 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | PD | 6 | | Total: 21 PD (11 rPD) |
| 8 | ED | 4 | | Total: 19 ED (11 rED) |
| 6 | SPD | 26 | | Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 0 | | |
| 40 | END | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 125** | |

**Movement:** Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 10"/20"
Swinging: 15"/30"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 40 | *Sense Weak Points:* Find Weakness 15- with all Martial Maneuvers | 0 |
| | *Martial Arts: Karate* | |
| | Maneuver OCV DCV Notes | |
| 4 | *Atemi* Strike -1 +1 4d6 NND(1) | |
| 4 | Block +2 +2 Block, Abort | |
| 4 | Disarm -1 +1 Disarm, 50 STR | |
| 4 | Dodge +0 +5 Dodge all attacks, Abort | |
| 3 | Legsweep +2 -1 9d6; Target Falls | |
| 4 | Knifehand Strike -2 +0 1d6+1 HKA (2½d6 with STR) | |
| 4 | Punch/ Snap Kick +0 +2 10d6 Strike | |
| 5 | Side/Spin Kick -2 +1 12d6 Strike | |
| 16 | +4 Damage Classes (already added in) | |
| 16 | *Bulletproof Costume:* Armor (8 PD/8 ED); OIF (-½) | 0 |
| 7 | *Swingline:* Swinging 15"; OAF (-1) | 0 |
| 6 | *Fast Runner:* Running +3" (9" total) | 1 |
| 6 | *Strong Leaper:* Leaping +6" (10" total) | 1 |
| 12 | *Uncanny Senses:* +4 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | *Uncanny Eyes:* Nightvision | 0 |
| 10 | *Uncanny Ears:* Targeting for Normal Hearing | 0 |
| 15 | *Radar-Sense:* Radar | 0 |
| | **Talents** | |
| 6 | Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED) | |
| | **Skills** | |
| 10 | +2 Hand-To-Hand | |
| 3 | Acrobatics 14- | |
| 3 | Breakfall 14- | |
| 3 | Climbing 14- | |
| 3 | Concealment 13- | |
| 3 | Contortionist 14- | |
| 3 | Criminology 13- | |
| 3 | Deduction 13- | |
| 2 | KS: Millennium City Underworld 11- | |
| 3 | Lockpicking 14- | |
| 1 | Paramedics 8- | |
| 2 | PS: Writer 11- | |
| 3 | Security Systems 13- | |
| 3 | Shadowing 13- | |
| 3 | Sleight Of Hand 14- | |
| 3 | Stealth 14- | |
| 3 | Streetwise 12- | |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 225**
**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 25 | DNPC: Lila Wilborn (girlfriend) 14- (Normal; Unaware of Eagle-Eye's Social Limitation: Secret Identity) |
| 20 | Hunted: Millennium City Police Department 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 15 | Hunted: Cabrona Mafia Family 11- (As Pow, Capture/Kill) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Determined To Wipe Out The Mob (Common, Strong) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Code Against Killing (Common, Total) |
| 10 | Reputation: wanted criminal, 11- |
| 15 | Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Patrick Penhurst) (Frequently, Major) |
| 10 | Susceptibility: to Flashes and other intense sensory stimuli, 1d6 damage instantly (Common) |
| 20 | Vulnerability: 2 x Effect from Flashes (Common) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

Background/History: Patrick Penhurst seemed like an ordinary boy growing up, but that changed when he reached puberty and his mutant powers manifested. Suddenly his senses went into overdrive — he could hear conversations from a block away, see clearly in the dark of night, feel the slightest breeze rasp across his skin. The onslaught of sensory stimuli threatened to drive him insane; he spent many years in almost total isolation while undergoing medical and psychological treatments.

Eventually, Patrick learned to master his phenomenally acute senses, though even today he finds intense stimuli painful and debilitating. He did so in part by training his body to a peak of physical fitness, the better to resist pain and keep himself under control. He soon supplemented his exercise regimen with acrobatics and martial arts training. As time went by, his senses continued to develop. He even manifested a strange radar-like sense that went beyond the normal five human senses.

A chance encounter with organized crime put him on the path of heroism. One evening he chanced to hear, from across a crowded classroom building, one of his criminology professors being shaken down by mobsters. It seemed his professor had a gambling problem, and owed the Cabrona mob more than a little money. Covering his face with a ski mask, Patrick charged to the rescue, using his karate skills to knock the mobsters out cold.

Finding he enjoyed being a hero, and that his heightened senses made him a powerful combat-

ant, Patrick decided to become a superhero. Sewing himself a costume, he took the name "Eagle-Eye" and set out to help keep the streets safe.

Unfortunately, all did not go as planned. Eagle-Eye soon got involved in a serious war with the Cabrona mob (and sometimes other Mafia families), and they decided to get rid of him. Rather than simply kill him, they framed him for murder — he showed up at the scene of a hit right before the police did, and all the evidence pointed to him. Unwilling to take his chances in court, Eagle-Eye fled. He's been wanted by the police ever since. Despite the fact that he keeps on fighting the mob, as far as the public's concerned, he's just another costumed criminal trying to make a name for himself.

Outside of his crimefighting career, Patrick is trying to earn a living as a writer. He's attempting to put his experiences to work and become a true-crime writer. So far he's sold enough articles to keep himself fed, but what he really needs is a book contract. His girlfriend Lila (who has no idea he's secretly Eagle-Eye) keeps telling him it's just a matter of time.

Personality/Motivation: Eagle-Eye is a genuinely heroic individual, someone who's taken a condition that could have crippled him for the rest of his life and turned it into an asset in the war on crime. He's a striver, the sort of person who's never satisfied with things the way they are, always looking for a way to make them better — and to do better and be better himself. It's that sort of passion that's driven him to conduct a one-man war against the Mafia. Between his own experiences, and what he's learned through his criminology studies, he knows just what a plague organized crime is on society, and he's determined to end it. Sometimes his enthusiasm verges into obsession, but so far he's kept himself under control.

Quote: "You can't get away from me, Franetti... I can smell that cheap cologne you were wearing yesterday."

Powers/Tactics: Eagle-Eye is a gifted martial artist and naturally talented athlete and acrobat, but his real powers come from his heightened senses. Besides simply remaining hyper-aware of his surroundings, he's learned to use them to detect the weak points in any target. This ability, combined with his powerful punches and kicks, allows him to deliver devastating blows. But he's always careful to hold back so he doesn't cause death or serious injury.

Eagle-Eye has two main weaknesses. First, he lacks the ability to attack at range; he has to close with his opponent to fight. As he gains more experience, he'll probably learn to use some throwing weapons to compensate for this. Second, and more seriously, he has difficulty handling intense sensory input — Flash attacks, mainly, but also any extremely loud noise (*e.g.,* a gun going off right next to his head), bright light, or strong smell. They have extra effect on him, and cause him brief but extreme pain. Try as he might, he can't overcome this problem; it seems his augmented senses are sometimes a curse as well as a blessing.

Appearance: Patrick Penhurst is a young white man in his middle 20s, six feet tall, brown hair and eyes, with the well-developed physique of an athlete who has intense, regular workouts. As Eagle-Eye, he wears a blue bodystocking, boots, gloves, and half-face mask, with a gold or darker blue stylized eagle motif on his torso and shoulders.



## HARDPOINT

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | STR | 15*† | 17- | Lift 6,400 kg; 8d6 [4] |
| 25 | DEX | 22*† | 14- | OCV: 8/DCV: 8 |
| 30 | CON | 20*† | 15- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 20 | INT | 10 | 13- | PER Roll 13- |
| 15 | EGO | 10 | 12- | ECV: 5 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 14 | COM | 2 | 12- | |
| 5 | PD | 3 | | Total: 20 PD (15 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 3 | | Total: 20 ED (15 rED) |
| 5 | SPD | 20* | | Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 |
| 20 | REC | 21* | | |
| 80 | END | 20* | | |
| 35 | STUN | 13 | | **Total Characteristic Cost: 173** |

*: OIF (Powered Armor; -½)
†: No Figured Characteristics (-½)

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 8"/16"
Flight: 20"/40"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 40 | *Blaster Array:* Multipower, 60-point reserve; all OIF (Powered Armor; -½) | |
| 4u | 1) *Pulson Blast:* Energy Blast 12d6; OIF (-½) | 6 |
| 4u | 2) *Pulse-Blast:* Energy Blast 8d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½); OIF (-½) | 6 |
| 1u | 3) *Laser Bolt:* RKA 3d6; OIF (-½), Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1½), Activation Roll 14-, Burnout (-¼) | 16 |
| 3u | 4) *Tangler Bombs:* Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF; OIF (-½), 12 Charges (-¼) | [12] |
| 4u | 5) *Flare Blast:* Sight Group Flash 12d6; OIF (-½) | 6 |
| 4u | 6) *Enervator Ray:* Drain STR 4d6, Ranged (+½); OIF (-½) | 6 |
| 30 | *Powered Armor:* Armor (15 PD/15 ED); OIF (-½) | 0 |
| 40 | *Boot-Jets:* Flight 20", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½) | 0 |
| 8 | *Communications Suite:* HRRP; OIF (-½) | 0 |
| 3 | *Heat Sensors:* Infrared Perception (Sight Group); OIF (-½) | 0 |
| 3 | *Nightsight Sensors:* Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group); OIF (-½) | 0 |

**Skills**

| | |
|---|---|
| 6 | +2 with Blaster Array |
| 5 | +1 Hand-To-Hand |
| 3 | Computer Programming 13- |
| 3 | Electronics 13- |
| 3 | Inventor 13- |
| 2 | CK: Millennium City 11- |
| 3 | Mechanics 13- |
| 2 | SS: Chemistry 11- |
| 3 | SS: Physics 13- |
| 3 | Streetwise 13- |

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 197**
**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 20 | DNPC: Sherry Chen (girlfriend) 11- (Normal; Unaware Of Hardpoint's Social Limitation: Secret Identity) |
| 20 | DNPC: Alice Tanagawa (sickly mother) 8- (Incompetent; Unaware Of Hardpoint's Social Limitation: Secret Identity) |
| 20 | Hunted: ARGENT 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 20 | Hunted: VIPER 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 10 | Hunted: Armadillo 8- (As Pow, Kill/Capture) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Common, Total) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Macho Bravado; Mustn't Ever Show Weakness Or Fear, Even In Obviously Dangerous Situations (Very Common, Strong) |
| 5 | Reputation: daredevil (can easily be lured into traps by insults and appeals to his masculinity) 8- |
| 15 | Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Mark Tanagawa) (Frequently, Major) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

Background/History: Mark Tanagawa, son of a Japanese father and an American mother, displayed a talent for gadgeteering from an early age. When he was only four, he took apart some of his toys, used the pieces to build a "shock pistol," and shot the family dog with joy buzzer-like zaps. His parents quickly put him in a special program for "gifted and talented" children where his abilities could be nurtured... and watched.

After finishing college at age 20, Mark was at a loss for what to do. He was already making enough money off his patents to live on, and didn't much like the idea of a research or teaching job. Inspired by his love of Japanese *anime* videos and superheroes, he decided to become a hero himself! Taking his cue from one of his favorite heroes, Defender, he built himself a suit of powered armor and hit the streets (and skies) as Hardpoint, protector of the innocent!

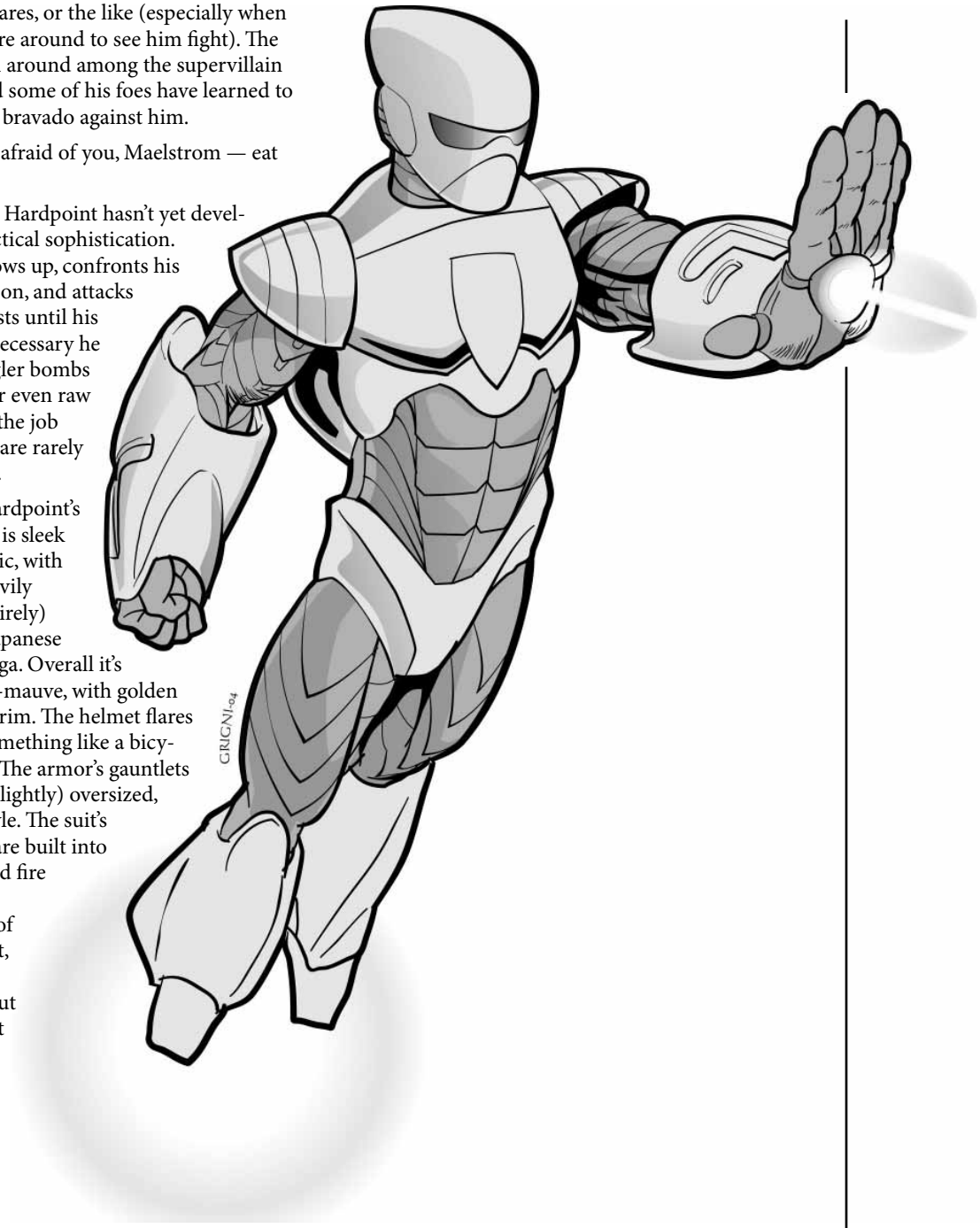
Personality/Motivation: Hardpoint is still a little new to crimefighting, and it shows. His heart is in the right place, and his armor is pretty powerful, but his tactics and flashy methods aren't as effective as they could be. In particular, he doesn't want to look "weak," cowardly, or stupid, and doesn't respond

well to taunts, dares, or the like (especially when pretty women are around to see him fight). The word has gotten around among the supervillain community, and some of his foes have learned to used his macho bravado against him.

Quote: "I'm not afraid of you, Maelstrom — eat pulsons!"

Powers/Tactics: Hardpoint hasn't yet developed a lot of tactical sophistication. Typically he shows up, confronts his opponent head-on, and attacks with pulson blasts until his enemy falls. If necessary he switches to tangler bombs or flare blasts, or even raw strength, to get the job done, but those are rarely his first options.

Appearance: Hardpoint's powered armor is sleek and aerodynamic, with an aesthetic heavily (though not entirely) influenced by Japanese anime and manga. Overall it's a sort of purple-mauve, with golden highlights and trim. The helmet flares back slightly, something like a bicyclist's headgear. The armor's gauntlets and boots are (slightly) oversized, in the anime style. The suit's main weapons are built into the gauntlets and fire from nozzles in the palms. Out of his armored suit, Hardpoint is a white male, about 5'9" tall. He's got a fairly athletic build, but is by no means muscular.



## MAELSTROM

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1] |
| 23 | DEX | 39 | 14- | OCV: 8/DCV: 8 |
| 23 | CON | 26 | 14- | |
| 14 | BODY | 8 | 12- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 11 | EGO | 2 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 12 | COM | 1 | 11- | |
| 13 | PD | 10 | | Total: 23 (10 rPD) |
| 17 | ED | 12 | | Total: 27 (10 rED) |
| 6 | SPD | 27 | | Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 |
| 10 | REC | 4 | | |
| 46 | END | 0 | | |
| 40 | STUN | 6 | **Total Characteristic Cost: 145** | |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"
Flight: 10"/20"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 60 | *Energy Powers:* Multipower, 60-point powers | |
| 6u | 1) *Power Blast I:* Energy Blast 12d6 | 6 |
| 6u | 2) *Power Blast II:* Energy Blast 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) | 0 |
| 6u | 3) *Stun-Blast:* Energy Blast 6d6, NND (defense is ED FF; +1) | 6 |
| 2u | 4) *Powered Punch:* Hand To Hand Attack +5d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) | 2 |
| 50 | *Maelstrom Field:* Energy Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (4" Radius; +1), Personal Immunity (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); No Range (-½) | 3 |
| 30 | *Force Field:* FF (10 PD/ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) | 0 |
| 30 | *Power-Flight:* Flight 10", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) | 0 |
| | **Skills** | |
| 9 | +3 with Energy Powers Multipower | |
| 3 | Stealth 14- | |
| 3 | Streetwise 12- | |

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 205**
**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 20 | Hunted: Champions 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 20 | Hunted: ARGENT 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Very Common, Moderate) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate) |
| 15 | Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Emilio Franconi) (Frequently, Major) |
| 30 | Vulnerability: 2 x STUN from Electricity attacks (Very Common) |
| 20 | Vulnerability: 2 x Effect from Drains (Common) |
| 15 | Experience Points |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

Background/History: Emilio Franconi was once an unscrupulous scientist working for the techno-criminal organization ARGENT. Despite the fact that he was well paid for his work, his greed got the best of him and he sold some of ARGENT's technological data to the supervillainous mercenary the Warlord. When ARGENT's leaders found out, they used Franconi as a "test subject" for a dangerous experiment involving a process they called "energy infusion."

To their astonishment, the process didn't kill Franconi — it gave him strange energy manipulation powers. Eager to make use of this new asset, they brainwashed him into serving them. After several years of forced servitude, Franconi (now known as Maelstrom) broke free when a superhero's punch knocked him into a generator and the electrical shock eliminated the mind-control effect.

Since then, Maelstrom has been a freelance supercriminal, sometimes working for himself, sometimes for others. As long as the money's good, he doesn't care. ARGENT remains on the lookout for him, since it wants to bring him back into the fold.

Personality/Motivation: Maelstrom is tough and powerful... and he knows it. His powers have given him a hefty dose of overconfidence. He thinks he can beat just about anyone, despite repeated evidence to the contrary. He often wastes time or energy in combat doing things he thinks are "impressive" because he's so certain he's going to win.

Maelstrom's other main motivation is greed. He loves money and luxuries, and wants all he can get. He rarely wastes his talents on penny-ante takes, though he's been known to break into stores and steal items that captured his fancy even though they weren't particularly expensive.

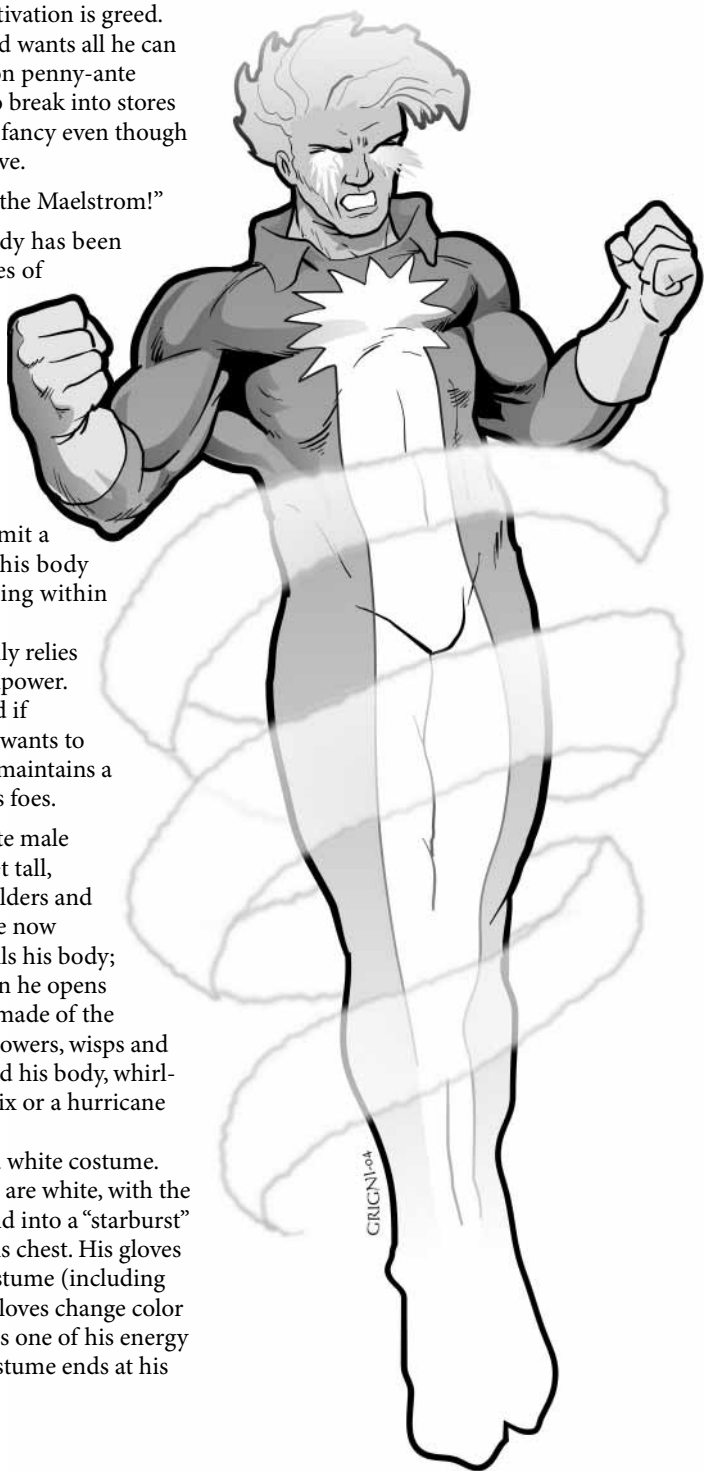
Quote: "Now, feel the power of... the Maelstrom!"

Powers/Tactics: Maelstrom's body has been infused with the strange energies of an ARGENT experimental device, giving him the power to manipulate those energies for various effects. He can project devastating blasts, surround his fist with energy to create a devastating punch, or use energy to shield himself or fly. Most spectacularly, he can emit a swirling field of energy around his body that damages anyone and anything within about 25 feet of him.

In combat, Maelstrom usually relies on the Energy Blasts in his Multipower. He'll turn on his Maelstrom Field if it's tactically advantageous or he wants to impress someone. If possible he maintains a distance between himself and his foes.

Appearance: Maelstrom is a white male standing nearly six and a half feet tall, with proportionately broad shoulders and a well-muscled body. His eyes are now the golden-orange energy that fills his body; this energy can also be seen when he opens his mouth. His hair seems to be made of the same energy. When he uses his powers, wisps and streamers of this energy surround his body, whirling around him almost like a helix or a hurricane (hence his name).

Maelstrom wears a blue and white costume. The inner half of both of his legs are white, with the white flowing up over the belt and into a "starburst" sort of pattern in the center of his chest. His gloves are also white. The rest of the costume (including boots) is royal blue, though his gloves change color to match his energy when he fires one of his energy blasts. He wears no mask; the costume ends at his neck in a sort of stylized collar.



# CYBERPUNK: *CYBER HERO*



Street fighters "chromed" with advanced cybernetic and biological systems, making them as much machine as man. Computer wizards, surfing the "virtual reality" of the Cybernet, living their lives more in the world of silicon and data than the world of flesh and bone. Powerful megacorporations, flouting the laws or making their own laws as they choose. Rampant consumerism, societal decay, and urban blight. Welcome to the world of cyberpunk Science Fiction — the world of *Cyber Hero.*

Technically speaking, *Cyber Hero* is really not a genre by itself, but a subgenre of *Star Hero,* since cyberpunk is a type of Science Fiction. But it's so distinctive, and so popular among gamers, that it deserves some discussion of its own.

## Campaign Guidelines And Standards

In *HERO System* terms, *Cyber Hero* campaigns are usually Heroic. Most characters are built on the Standard Heroic point totals of 75 Base Points + 75 Disadvantages. However, since cyberware (technological, and sometimes biological, enhancements of the body) is a common element of the setting, some GMs prefer the higher point totals of Powerful or Very Powerful Heroic characters, to give the PCs more points with which to augment themselves. As with most Heroic campaigns, in *Cyber Hero* games characters typically obtain normal equipment (but not cyberware) with in-game money instead of Character Points, are subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima by default, and use the Hit Location rules and many other such options.

## Genre Conventions And Features

Cyberpunk stories typically take place in the near future — during the mid-to-late twenty-first century — rather than the far future like most Science Fiction. This allows them to portray a setting somewhat different than, but clearly derived from and ultimately grounded in, the modern day.

The cyberpunk genre has a lot of features that distinguish it from other types of Science Fiction, and from modern-day action campaigns (though it shares some elements of both those genres). Here are a few common "bits" most gamers associate with cyberpunk, based primarily on the writings of authors such as William Gibson, Walter Jon Williams, and Bruce Sterling.

Computers and Cyberspace: Computers crop up constantly in cyberpunk stories, not only as tools the characters use, but as obstacles they must overcome, weapons for their enemies to use against them, and sometimes even direct threats. In fact, so prevalent have computers become in cyberpunk settings that they are all linked together in a vast "virtual reality" referred to as "cyberspace," "the Net," or "the matrix." A character "jacks in" to the Cybernet, using a piece of cyberware called a dataport to directly interface his mind with the machine. Once inside, he sees a vast electronic world in which telephone lines are roads and paths, and collections of data are represented by buildings, fancy icons, geometric symbols, or similar constructs. Programs with defined functions, such as security, often have distinctive appearances as well — for example, a program for locating a particular type of data might look like a cybernetic bloodhound.

The best way to represent the Cybernet is with Extra-Dimensional Movement. Although the character doesn't really enter another "dimension" in the classic sense, he does enter another "world," and while he's there he no longer truly interacts with the real world. (Other possibilities for simulating cyberspace include Duplication and the special effects of bonuses to the *Computer Programming* Skill.) The dataport, unlike most forms of cyberware, qualifies as an OIF — it's easy to block or plug it so the character can't use it. Here's an example:

> The Cybernet: *Extra-Dimensional Movement (any location in the Cybernet corresponding to the physical location where the character jacks in), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (33 Active Points); OIF (dataport; -½), Meat Body (character's body remains in the real world, but cannot move, perceive, or act, and damage to either the virtual form [in cyberspace] or the real body [in the real world] can hurt or kill the character; -1). Total cost: 13 points.*

The programs a character buys for use in cyberspace are usually defined as Skills or Powers with the Limitations *Only In Cyberspace* (-2) and *OAF* (the cyberdeck the character stores his programs on). Thus, to create a security-penetration program, a character might go for the stealthy approach (Invisibility), the puzzle-solving approach (Lockpicking and Security Systems), or the brute force approach (Hand-To-Hand Killing Attack). There are lots of options and possibilities for creative use of the *HERO System.*

Consumerism and the power of money: The cyberpunk ambience is shot through with cynical

reminders of the hold exerted by the consumer mentality on the minds of PCs and NPCs alike. Most characters know the brand name or manufacturer of their equipment, identify themselves through the brands they use or scorn, and so forth. It's modern American consumer culture taken to a greater extreme, and clever GMs use it to give their *Cyber Hero* settings more appeal. Just spending a few minutes assigning manufacturer and product names to the weapons and gear used frequently in the campaign goes a long way toward bringing this element into the game.

Corporate power: In cyberpunk settings, corporations are large and powerful — in fact, so powerful, they're often beyond the reach of ordinary governments, and may even have taken their place! They maintain "corporate enclaves" where their laws, not civil law, apply, they have their own security organizations and military units, and they basically can do whatever they want — unless another corporation objects, in which case espionage, assassination, and financial maneuvering becomes the order of the day.

Cyberware: Characters in cyberpunk settings often undergo surgical procedures in which surgeons install special technology — cyberware — in their bodies. Cyberware either augments normal functions, replaces weak tissues with something stronger, or provides a character with abilities he lacks. Examples include "handrazors" (blades that can pop out from beneath the fingernails), cybereyes, metal lacing to make bones unbreakable, dermal armoring to provide protection against blades and guns, artificial muscles sewn to existing ones to enhance strength, and many, many more.

Similarly, characters are often bio-engineered or genetically altered. This ranges from replacing existing organs with better ones (for example, an enhanced liver that can filter venoms and poisons from the character's body), to changing the character's form and structure, to grafting DNA from animals into the character's body to improve him somehow (for example, to give him a cat's reflexes).

As discussed on page 306, the Limitation *Restrainable* at the -¼ level is appropriate for many types of cyberware. Typically electromagnetic pulses, electric shocks, and the like can disable or destroy them (a fact security guards and cops take advantage of frequently!). On the other hand, things like bone lacing and replacement organs usually aren't Limited much, if at all, and are usually just bought as normal Powers or abilities.

Because cyberware can unbalance the game, many *Cyber Hero* GMs establish rules regarding how much a character can have. They may limit the total Active Points' worth of cyberware and other modifications each character can buy, or the total Real Points, or establish some other system (like "10 Active Points per point of BODY the character possesses").

Globalism: In the world of cyberpunk, Earth is a small place. Rapid travel from one side of the planet to the other is possible and frequent (though also too expensive for most people). High-tech products are manufactured all over the world ("Hey, do you guys have any of those hot new chips from Bali?"), and the influence of Asian cultures on the rest of the world, particularly America, is marked. Chinatowns have grown in size and influence, and especially in the large urban areas like New York and California the Japanese and/or Chinese exert a lot of behind-the-scenes control. Many American businessmen have to learn Asian languages just to do business.

In game terms, GMs can simulate this element by including KS: Asian Culture in the Everyman Skill list for the campaign, putting 1 Character Point worth of Japanese in the Package Deals for many professions, and so forth.

Societal decay: Cyberpunk settings usually feature a high degree of societal decay. Cities are vast urban blights where one often takes one's life in one's hands just by going for a walk. The gap between the enormous numbers of the poor, and the few ultra-rich, is wide and marked — which is one reason for the well-protected corporate enclaves mentioned above. Corruption, scandal, bribery, and crime are rampant. Often the characters' goals include survival and prosperity before anything else — though, if they're to be true heroes, they have to grow beyond that.

Violence: In a cyberpunk world, violence, ranging from fistfights to brutal murders, is a fact of everyday life. Characters usually go around armed to the teeth, carrying everything from boot knives to salvaged chainguns. In game terms, this is just a matter of having a well-stocked equipment list for the PCs to choose from, and including a fight or two in almost every adventure.

## Character Archetypes

The archetypes in *Cyber Hero* games usually aren't quite as pronounced as they are in *Champions* or *Fantasy Hero,* but they do exist. They include:

**The Computer Wizard**

Also called a "console cowboy," "decker," "technomancer," or "hacker," this character specializes in using the computer, working in cyberspace, and so forth. He always has Computer Programming and a dataport, and he often branches out to include Cryptography, Electronics, Lockpicking, Security Systems, and Systems Operation in his Skill suite.

**The Corporate Suit**

"Corporate suit" refers to any character who works for one of the corporations dominating the campaign setting — or who at least looks and acts like he does. Skills such as Conversation, High Society, KS: High Finance, Language: Japanese, Persuasion, and PS: Businessman predominate, and the character also tends to have a lot of Contacts, Fringe Benefits, and other Perks.

**The Driver/Pilot**

Some characters specialize in operating vehicles, either ground, air, or both. In some cyberpunk settings, they can "jack in" to the vehicle, the same

### EXAMPLE CYBERWARE

Bone Lacing: Armor (1 PD/1 ED) (total cost: 3 points) **plus** Armor (3 PD/3 ED) (9 Active Points); Only Works Against BODY Damage (-1), Only To Protect Against Breaking Bones (-2) (total cost: 2 points) **plus** HA +2d6 (10 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) (total cost: 7 points). Total cost: 12 points.

Enhanced Chemoreception: +2 PER with Smell/Taste Group (total cost: 4 points) **plus** Tracking for Normal Smell (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 9 points.

Hot Reflexes II: +2 SPD (20 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-½), Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1½), Restrainable (-¼). Total cost: 6 points.

Cybernetic Arm: +10 STR (10 Active Points); Only When Using The Right Arm (-¼), Restrainable (-¼), No Figured Characteristics (-½). Total cost: 5 points.



way a computer wizard jacks into his computer, to almost "merge" with the vehicle and get better performance out of it. The character must have Combat Driving (and/or Combat Piloting), and probably has Mechanics and a bunch of TFs as well.

**Ganger**

This character survives by belonging to (or perhaps leading) a street gang that controls part of the turf in one of the major cities of the campaign setting. He typically has plenty of streetfighting skills (Martial Arts: Dirty Infighting, WF: Blades), TF: Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles, perhaps a small bit of cyberware (or two), and lots of minor (but useful!) KSs and Contacts related to his "turf." If he leads the gang, he can buy them as Followers.

**Samurai**

The ultimate street warrior, the samurai is heavily "chromed" (filled with cyberware and other modifications). The chrome is his calling card, his mark of distinction — it's how his employers know they're getting a skilled professional, not some thug off the street. In addition to paying Character Points for lots of cyberware, samurai have plenty of fighting Skills (Demolitions, Martial Arts, WFs, Weaponsmith) and relatively high Characteristics (also resulting from cyberware, typically).

# Sample Character

Here's Slash, an example of the "samurai" archetype. You can bring him into your game as an NPC or PC, or use his cyberware for other characters.

**SLASH**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 15 | CON | 10 | 12- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 10 | EGO | 0 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 7 | PD | 4 | | Total: 10 PD (3 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 2 | | Total: 8 ED (3 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 30 | END | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 4 | | **Total Characteristics Cost: 65** |

**Movement:** Running: 9"/18"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | *Handrazors:* HKA ½d6; No STR Bonus (-½) | 1 |
| | *Martial Arts: Razor Dancing* | |
| | Maneuver — OCV — DCV — Damage/Effect | |
| 4 | Block +2 +2 Block, Abort | |
| 4 | Dodge — +5 Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort | |
| 5 | Jab +1 +3 Weapon Strike | |
| 4 | Slash +2 +0 Weapon +2 DC Strike | |
| 9 | *Dermal Armoring:* Armor (3 PD/3 ED) | 0 |
| 6 | *Enhanced Legs:* Running +3" (9" total) | 1 |
| 5 | *Cybereyes:* Infrared Perception (Sight Group) | 0 |
| 9 | *Cybereyes:* +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group | 0 |
| 3 | *Hot Reflexes I:* +1 SPD; Restrainable (-¼), Costs Endurance (-½), Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1½) | 4 |
| | **Skills** | |
| 3 | +1 with Razor Dancing | |
| 3 | Bribery 12- | |
| 3 | Computer Programming 11- | |
| 2 | Gambling (Card Games) 11- | |
| 1 | KS: Football 8- | |
| 2 | CK: Hudson City 11- | |
| 3 | Lockpicking 13- | |
| 3 | Security Systems 11- | |
| 3 | Stealth 13- | |
| 3 | Streetwise 12- | |
| 3 | WF: Small Arms, Hand Razors | |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 85**
**Total Cost: 150**

| 75+ | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| 5 | Distinctive Features: Chromed (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable) |
| 15 | Hunted: Detective Murrow 8- (As Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Resists Corporate Influence (Common, Strong) |
| 10 | Reputation: wanted criminal and terrorist, 11- |
| 15 | Social Limitation: Lacks National Security Number (can't vote, pass through secured checkpoints, use many government services, and so forth) (Frequently, Major) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

Background/History: Hernan Flores born in the worst part of Hudson City in 2047. Growing up in grinding poverty, he quickly took to petty crime. Only an interest in computers, and a fair bit of skill with them, kept him going to school. But it wasn't easy. Small and skinny, Hernan was picked on and beaten up a lot by bigger kids. He learned the hard way that success went only to the strong.

Unwilling to become nothing more than a glorified electron jockey for some corporation after he finished school, he used his computer skills to steal enough money to hire a cyber-surgeon to augment him. His normal muscles were interwoven with high-strength artificial muscle fiber. Armored plastics were implanted just beneath his skin, making him strong and tough. His eyes were replaced with artificial versions that can see in the dark and focus in on distant objects better than human ones. Best of all, long, sharp "razors" were implanted underneath his fingernails, just waiting for him to flex his muscles the right way to "snik" out of their sheaths. Hernan practiced long and hard with the razors, becoming a skilled streetfighter.

When he had healed from the operations and finished his training, Hernan hit the streets, picking up work as a bodyguard and enforcer. His technical skills got him some jobs that wouldn't go to ordinary "samurai," earning him more money and contacts. Today, he's well-known around the Hudson City underworld.

Personality/Motivations: Hernan — or "Slash," as he's known on the street — may be successful and relatively well-off, but he's not satisfied. After years of looking out only for Number One, he's slowly come to the realization that he doesn't like himself, or society, very much. After a lot of studying, he's concluded that the real problems in society stem mostly from undue corporate influence over... well, over pretty much every aspect of people's lives! He's decided he doesn't like that very much, and intends to do something about it. Although he still puts up the usual "tough street fighter" facade, he's begun working against the corps on his own, and taking jobs against them for cheaper than normal fees. The corps have responded by having him labeled a terrorist, and siccing one of their pet cops, Detective Murrow, on his trail. It's only a matter of time




## SAMURAI PACKAGE DEAL

**Abilities**

| Cost | Ability |
|---|---|
| 20 | 20 points' worth of cyberware |
| 10 | Martial Arts |
| 2 | WF: Small Arms |
| 9 | 9 points' worth of Skills from the following list: Bribery, Combat Driving, Combat Piloting, Computer Programming, Fast Draw, Lockpicking, Security Systems, Stealth, Streetwise, Systems Operation, Tactics, any Background Skill |

**Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 41**

**Disadvantages**

| Value | Disadvantage |
|---|---|
| 5 | Distinctive Features: Chromed (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable) |

**Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 5**

before he and Murrow meet face-to-face and find out who's the better man....

Quote: "Cash, up front. No refunds. Your guarantee is that you're hiring me... and when I take the money, I get the job done."

Powers/Tactics: Slash's abilities are a combination of chrome and training. He's been extensively cybernetically augmented, and in fact hopes to undergo even more cyber-surgery in the near future (he's got his cyber-eyes on a sweet little bone augmentation package, and this great hot-reflex upgrade...). But what sets him apart from a legion of other cyber-samurai are his other skills — his deft touch with a computer keyboard, and his ability to bypass security and locks without tripping alarms.

Slash usually goes heavily armed. Besides his handrazors, he always carries at least one small "holdout" pistol. If he's expecting trouble, he'll have a large pistol with him, and maybe even some military-spec weaponry to boot.

Appearance: Slash is a short (5'9") Hispanic male in his early 20s, with black hair and dark eyes. His body has obviously been cybernetically enhanced; the dermal armoring shows wherever his skin is visible, and even on casual inspection his eyes were clearly made in a factory. He dresses stylishly, in clothes tailored to fit his small but oddly bulky frame. He never wears fingered gloves, wanting to have his razors ready for action at all times.

# FANTASY: *FANTASY HERO*



Armored knights hunting dragons to keep the lands safe from their depredations. Mighty wizards able to quell the storm, summon demons, and blast their foes with lightning with but a word and a gesture. Wise priests invoking the powers of mighty gods who still, sometimes, walk the world. Wily thieves using their skills to obtain illicit wealth and outwit their foes. Mighty kings in tall-spired castles. Alchemists, swords, prophecies, monsters, ancient magics, and much, much more. Such is the stuff of Fantasy.

## Campaign Guidelines And Standards

In *HERO System* terms, *Fantasy Hero* campaigns are usually Heroic, with characters built on the Standard Heroic point totals of 75 Base Points + 75 Disadvantages. However, Fantasy encompasses many settings and styles of play, and in some games the characters are so powerful they are built with more points, or even on Superheroic standards. In Heroic *Fantasy Hero* campaigns, characters typically obtain normal equipment (but not necessarily enchanted items) with in-game money instead of Character Points, are subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima by default, and use the Hit Location rules and many other such options.

## Genre Conventions And Features

"Fantasy" is so broad — broader even than the superheroes genre — that it defies easy description. Even a casual discussion of major genre "bits" would be too long for this chapter, and a thorough review of the elements of the genre could easily fill an entire book! However, three things stand out as defining what "Fantasy" is for gaming purposes: magic; alternate worlds; and low technology.

### MAGIC

The first, and most important, feature of Fantasy is *magic.* The existence and effects of magic almost define "Fantasy" by themselves; only in the lowest of Low Fantasy (see below) is there no magic whatsoever. Magic ranges from minor and rare to extremely commonplace and powerful, depending on subgenre. In many cases it consists of cast spells and evoked effects that player characters can control (or be harmed by); in other settings it's mostly an element of the ambience, something that may help or hinder the characters indirectly, but over which they exert little control.

**Creating And Casting Spells In The *HERO System***

The *HERO System*'s flexibility and adaptability allow you to create pretty much any sort of magic system you can imagine, whether it's a copy of one you read about in a novel, or an original creation of your own. You simply use the game elements to define what spells do, how characters cast them, and any related effects.

In *HERO System* terms, spells are usually created using Powers (and sometimes Talents or Skills), with appropriate Advantages and Limitations. In most *Fantasy Hero* campaigns, the following Limitations apply to most spells: Focus (a wizard's staff, a material component the spell consumes, or the like); Gestures; Incantations; and Requires A Magic Roll (*Magic* being a use of the *Power* Skill; for priests, you might call this *Prayer, Piety,* or *Faith* instead). Concentration, Extra Time, and Side Effects are also fairly common. The sidebar on page 510 provides several example spells, and there are dozens more in the sidebars in Chapter One.

The GM also needs to decide how characters pay for spells. First, does a spellcaster have to buy a Skill (like Magic), or perhaps a special Perk or Talent, to cast spells, or can pretty much anyone work magic? Does a character have to buy each spell individually, or can he put them in a Power Framework? Does the setting impose any restrictions on how many spells a character can learn, or have active at one time, or cast during a single day? The answers to each of these questions shape how magic works in the campaign, and how characters can best make use of it.

Casting a spell usually counts as an Attack Action (though this may depend on the type of spell used). If the spell has the *Requires A Skill Roll* Limitation, or other Limitations controlling whether (or how) it functions, the caster must comply with all those restrictions to make it work properly. If not, the spell fails or cannot be cast.

### ALTERNATE WORLDS

The second feature of Fantasy is *an alternate world.* Although a few types of Fantasy (such as Urban Fantasy) take place here on good old Earth, most Fantasy stories are set in an alternate reality that bears some resemblance to our own in terms of technology and customs, but has plenty of differences to distinguish it. Even fantasies set in earlier eras on Earth, or in "secret places" in our world, essentially take place in "alternate worlds." For many Fantasy gaming campaigns, the better realized the world — the more detailed and flavorful the GM makes it, the more "dramatic verisimilitude" it has — the better the game.

### SAMPLE SPELLS

Levitation Spell: Flight 5" (10 Active Points); OAF Expendable (feather; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Only To Go Straight Up And Down (-½). Total cost: 3 points.

Magesight: Detect Magic (INT Roll), Discriminatory (10 Active Points); OAF (wizard's staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 3 points.

Magic Bolt: RKA 1d6, NND (defense is Power Defense; +1), Does BODY (+1) (45 Active Points); OAF (wizard's staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 15 points.

Spell Of Many Tongues: Universal Translator (INT Roll) (20 Active Points); OAF Expendable (jadeite pebble with rune of comprehension etched on it, Difficult to replace; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 6 points.

Thendric's Spell Of Concealment: Invisibility to Sight Group (20 Active Points); OAF Expendable (small piece of shaped and polished glass, Difficult to replace; -1¼), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 6 points.

Vandular's Chaotic Corruscations: Energy Blast 6d6, Area Of Effect (6" Radius; +1¼) (67 Active Points); OAF (wizard's staff; -1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½). Total cost: 22 points.

### LOW TECHNOLOGY

The third feature of Fantasy is low technology. Characters in Fantasy games can't call each other on the phone, don't have indoor plumbing, and lack modern medicine. They use swords, not guns; they ride on horses, not in cars; they have to use muscle power instead of engines and electricity. There are some exceptions (such as, again, Urban Fantasy, or games where magic essentially takes the place of technology), but most *Fantasy Hero* campaigns follow this rule.

**Weapons And Armor**

The most prevalent examples of the low technology in Fantasy worlds are the implements of violence: swords, bows and arrows, armor, and the like. Most characters are at least familiar with them, and characters such as warriors are quite skilled with them.

Chapter Four contains plenty of weapons and armor suitable for *Fantasy Hero* games, and rules on how to create more if you want to. In many Fantasy games, GMs ignore the standard Encumbrance rules when it comes to armor, instead imposing a straightforward DCV penalty (typically -1 DCV per 3 DEF, or some similar formula) to represent the bulkiness and hindering effects of armor. That makes "light fighters" (characters who use speed and accuracy to fight effectively, instead of brute strength and defense) a viable option in many campaigns.

**Horses**

Many *Fantasy Hero* characters know how to ride, since that's usually the fastest way to cross land in a Fantasy campaign (aside from magic, of course!). Page 454has a writeup for a typical Light Warhorse. For information on mounted movement and combat, see page 368.

## Character Archetypes

Although Fantasy is a broad and varied genre, in most cases Fantasy characters fall into one of several standard archetypes. These include:

**Priest**

A devotee of a god or gods, gifted by his patron deity(ies) with magical powers. Usually priests' magic relates to healing, defense, and succoring the weak, but some priests are more militant, using their divinely-granted gifts to smite the foe and convert the pagan. Many priests are skilled with weapons as well, but some prefer the paths of peace. Common Skills for a priest include Healing (Paramedics), Oratory, Persuasion, Power: Faith, and various Knowledge Skills relating to the liturgy, cosmology, and lore of the priesthood he belongs to and god(s) he serves.

**Rogue**

"Rogue" is a catch-all term for characters who live primarily by their wits and guileful skills, rather than strength of arms or magical prowess. The category typically includes thieves, scouts, explorers, treasure-seekers, game designers, bards, assassins, burglars, and bounty hunters. Some of these rogues rely on skills of deception (Disguise, Mimicry, Ventriloquism), others on skills of persuasion and trickery (Conversation, Persuasion, Seduction, Sleight Of Hand), and others on skills of infiltration (Lockpicking, Security Systems). Almost all have Stealth and Streetwise, and the ability to use at least some weapons (typically small, easily-concealed ones like daggers, short swords, slings, and hatchets). A few, such as the assassin and bounty hunter, emphasize fighting prowess more than the others.

**Warrior**

Warriors rely primarily on skill at arms to overcome their enemies and achieve their aims. In addition to lots of Weapon Familiarities, they often have Skills like Martial Arts (weapons-based fighting arts, usually), Oratory (for rallying the troops), Riding, Stealth, Survival, Tactics, Tracking, and Weaponsmith.

Many gamers divide warriors into two broad groups: heavy fighters and light fighters. Heavy fighters use high STR, high-DEF armor, and large weapons to cause lots of damage to their foes. Light fighters prefer little or no armor, favoring DEX, speed, and accuracy over brute force. Fortunately, the *HERO System*'s flexibility allows you to mix and match elements to achieve just the right blend for the character you have in mind.

You can make the ordinary warrior more interesting by tailoring his abilities and background a little. Examples include:

—the *barbarian,* a primitive tribesman who relies on his wilderness skills and powerful muscles to overcome more sophisticated foes. Barbarians typically have high STR and use large weapons, but prefer light (or no) armor so they can dodge and move quickly.

—the *knight,* a heavy fighter who's also a skilled horseman. Knights commonly use weapons such as swords, lances, and axes, and are often bound by oaths of loyalty to a liege-lord or beloved lady.

—the *paladin,* a knight-like warrior who promotes some holy cause. Paladins often have divinely-granted powers similar to, but less flexible than, the spells of priests.

—the *ranger,* a warrior specializing in wilderness campaigns and scouting. Rangers usually have high Survival, Stealth, and Tracking rolls, and are skilled with Ranged weapons such as the bow.

**Wizard**

Wizards are masters of arcane lore with the ability to cast spells and manipulate magical effects. In many Fantasy worlds, they know little (if anything) about arms and armor, since they rely on their learning and powers instead of mundane means of combat. Wizards typically have a *Magic* Skill, lots of appropriate Knowledge Skills, relatively low Characteristics (except for INT, EGO, and PRE, which they favor), and lots of points devoted to buying spells.



In many Fantasy games, wizards "specialize" in a particular type of magic: Necromancy, Alchemy; Thaumaturgy; Conjuration; and so on. Sometimes this is because of the way people learn and teach magic in the campaign world, other times it relates to specific game benefits and rules established by the GM.

## Subgenres

Fantasy has many subgenres. Some of the most important include:

**Epic Fantasy**

Epic fantasies are grand, romantic, monumental stories of the heroes' struggle against a vast, and often overwhelmingly powerful, enemy. Typically this entails a great quest to find, destroy, create, or awaken the person or talisman needed to defeat the enemy. Epic Fantasy stories feature detailed worlds with extensive histories (and often lots of prophecies); magic that's usually subtle, flavorful, and evocative, and usually low-key though not necessarily low-powered; and conflicts on scales small and large, where the actions of both individual heroes and entire armies are necessary for victory.

The quintessential Epic Fantasy is, of course, J.R.R. Tolkien's magnificent *Lord Of The Rings;* many stories that imitate his work also belong to this category. Other examples include Patricia McKillip's "Riddlemaster of Hed" trilogy, *The Belgariad* series by David Eddings, and some bodies of myth and legend (such as the Arthurian tales or some parts of Norse mythology).

**High Fantasy**

High Fantasy is a subgenre characterized mainly by extensive, common, and/or powerful magic. Unlike Epic Fantasy, where wizards are something of a rarity, in some High Fantasy games you can't take ten steps without tripping over someone who can cast spells. In some High Fantasy games, magic controls the fate of entire kingdoms (or worlds), and can devastate entire regions; in others it substitutes for technology (cities have magical lighting at night, everyone has running water because of aquamancy spells, and people drive self-propelling enchanted wagons).

In a gaming context, High Fantasy campaigns usually feature a plethora of sentient races — elves, dwarves, gnomes, little sneaky people, orcs, hobgoblins, trolls — though in literature this is much less common. They also often have a lot of magical creatures and fantastic beasts. At their best, they allow for the creation of grand and wondrous stories of adventure and enchantment, and verge toward Epic Fantasy. At their worst, they often descend into nigh-mindless hack-and-slash campaigns devoted solely to killing monsters, getting treasure, and acquiring magical items.

Examples of High Fantasy include the typical *Dungeons & Dragons* gaming campaign, *Master Of The Five Magics* by Lyndon Hardy, the *Earthsea Trilogy* of Ursula LeGuin, some bodies of myth and legend (such as certain Greek myths), the *Deed Of Paksennarion* trilogy by Elizabeth Moon (though many of its High Fantasy elements are rather muted), and some of the tales written by Lord Dunsany and James Branch Cabell.

### CROSSWORLDS FANTASY

One sort of Fantasy subsubgenre is *Crossworlds Fantasy,* in which the heroes are people from the real world (often children) who somehow cross over into a Fantasy world and become involved in adventures there. Often the heroes are the subjects of prophecy, or possess some power, ability, or insight that inhabitants of the Fantasy setting lack. Crossworlds Fantasies usually involve Epic or High Fantasy worlds.

Examples of Crossworlds Fantasy include *The Chronicles Of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis, *The Chronicles Of Thomas Covenant* trilogy and *Mordant's Need* duology by Stephen Donaldson, and Alan Garner's *The Weirdstone Of Brisingamen.*

**Low Fantasy**

Low Fantasy is the opposite of High Fantasy — it features little magic (sometimes none whatsoever). What magic does exist is usually difficult to cast (it's hard to learn, or tires the user out), relatively low-powered and/or subtle, and quite rare. The characters are most likely to face mundane opponents — city guards, the king's soldiers, political rivals, or the like — instead of hordes of orcs or a rampaging dragon.

Examples of Low Fantasy include most of the Fantasy novels of Guy Gavriel Kay, the various Deryni novels of Katherine Kurtz (which feature about as much magic as a story can have and still remain "Low Fantasy"), and John Morrissey's *Iron Angel* trilogy.

**Swords And Sorcery**

Swords And Sorcery Fantasy focuses on primarily on warriors, emphasizing that only the tough survive and that fighting skills are, in most cases, better than other types of skills. The sword-wielding hero fights terrible monsters, rescues helpless maidens, and thwarts evil plots all with the strength of his mighty muscles and his refusal to become corrupted by the "softness" of more civilized life.

Wizards and priests get short shrift in Swords And Sorcery tales. Typically magic is so slow, or so limited, that a sword-wielding hero can cleave a spellcaster in two before he can complete his magic (which often involves a curse, or the conjuration of some monster). However, this changes in Swords And Sorcery tales where the hero himself can wield some magic.

Examples of Swords And Sorcery Fantasy include Robert E. Howard's Conan stories, Michael Moorcock's stories about Elric of Melniboné, Fritz Lieber's tales of Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser, Karl Edward Wagner's novels about Kane, and many others.

**Urban Fantasy**

Urban Fantasy mixes modern-day, real world settings with magic. Typically there's a "hidden history" — a secret, underground, and/or behind-the-scenes community of spellcasters and fantastic creatures most people remain completely oblivious to. The magic is usually relatively low-powered, and often flavorful. The hero often gets involved in some conflict between the forces of good and evil, or has to find a way to use magic to correct some societal problem.

Examples of Urban Fantasy include many of the novels of Charles deLint, Tim Powers, and Simon Hawke, as well as some of Lord Dunsany's marvelous short stories.

# Sample Characters

Here are two sample characters to get you started in *Fantasy Hero:* Darien, a bold warrior; and Belakar, a wizard who uses the example spells from the sidebar accompanying this section.

**DARIEN THE BOLD**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18 | STR | 8 | 13- | Lift 300 kg; 3½d6 [2] |
| 15 | DEX | 15 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 10 | EGO | 0 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 12 | COM | 1 | 11- | |
| 6 | PD | 2 | | Total: 6 PD (0 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 1 | | Total: 5 ED (0 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 15 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 0 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 67** | |

**Movement:** Running: 7"/14"

| Cost | Powers | | | | END |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Martial Arts: Weapons Combat* (Usable with Blades) | | | | |
| | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes | |
| 5 | All-Out | +1 | -2 | Weapon +6 DC Strike | |
| 4 | Attack | +0 | +2 | Weapon +4 DC Strike | |
| 4 | Charge | +0 | -2 | Weapon +4 DC Strike +v/5, FMove | |
| 4 | Defend | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort | |
| 5 | Probe | +1 | +3 | Weapon +2 DC Strike | |
| 8 | +2 Damage Classes (already added in) | | | | |
| 2 | *Fleet-Footed:* Running +1" (7" total) | | | | 1 |
| 2 | *Sharp-Eyed:* +2 PER with Normal Sight | | | | 0 |
| 15 | *Blessed By The Gods:* Luck 3d6 | | | | 0 |
| | **Skills** | | | | |
| 10 | +2 Hand-To-Hand | | | | |
| 2 | Animal Handler (Equines) 13- | | | | |
| 3 | Courtier 12- | | | | |
| 2 | KS: Heraldry 11- | | | | |
| 2 | KS: Military History 11- | | | | |
| 3 | Riding 13- | | | | |
| 3 | Stealth 13- | | | | |
| 3 | Tactics 11- | | | | |
| 1 | Trading 8- | | | | |
| 5 | WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Lances | | | | |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 83**
**Total Cost: 150**

**75+ Disadvantages**

15 DNPC: Princess Arellia (his true love, and the King's daughter) 14- (Normal, Useful Noncombat Position)
15 Hunted: Shattered Skull orc tribe 11- (Mo Pow, Limited Geographical Area, Kill)
10 Hunted: the King 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Psychological Limitation: Code Of Chivalry (Common, Total)
15 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Frequently, Major)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

**TYPICAL EQUIPMENT**

Broad Sword (HKA 1d6+1, STR Min 12)
Medium Lance (HKA 1½d6, STR Min 13)
Medium Longbow and 20 Arrows (HKA 1½d6, +1 RMod)
Dagger (HKA 1d6-1 STR Min 6)
Chain Mail (DEF 6)
Normal Shield (+2 DCV)
Medium Warhorse

Background/History: The fifth son of a noble of moderate power, Darien learned early in life that he stood to inherit little or nothing. Thus, the only roads to success, prosperity, and power for him were the priesthood or service in the King's Army. Lacking any religious vocation, he chose the latter course, and soon distinguished himself as a skilled warrior. Although he has not yet been knighted, he has proven himself in the King's service so many times that the King sends him whenever there's a "special mission" to be performed. In truth, the King does this not just because he knows of Darien's abilities as a warrior, but because he's aware of the love that has grown between his daughter, the Princess Arellia, and Darien, and seeks to put an end to it... one way or another.

Personality/Motivation: Darien's motivations are those of the code of chivalry: love of adventure; loyalty to his liege-lord; and living up to the adoration of a good woman. He asks for little more from life than the chance to live well, smite evil, and enjoy the company of boon companions.

Darien has always enjoyed a greater share of good fortune than most other men; his luck has kept him safe through more than one dangerous situation that left equally skilled warriors dead. As a result, Darien has come to believe the gods have blessed him and given him a great and noble purpose to fulfill, and this has made him bold, even overconfident. There may come a time when he relies on his luck once too often, and finds himself in greater danger than he can handle....

Quote: "Hold, dog! My lord commands that I bring you before him, and bring you I shall — be you in one piece, or cut in two by my blade."

Powers/Tactics: Darien is a skilled warrior, trained primarily in the use of the broadsword (his *Weapons Combat* Martial Art is usable with Blades), but quite able to use other weapons as well. When traveling, he carries two broadswords, a medium lance, a medium longbow, a dagger, and a shield, and wears well-polished chainmail. He prefers to fight from horseback when possible, but is no stranger to getting down on foot and slogging it out in the mud with his enemies.

Appearance: Darien the Bold is a tall, well-muscled warrior of 24 winters. His hair is black, and his eyes brown. His countenance is usually cheerful, but quickly turns stern, even frightening, when battle approaches or he enters a dangerous situation.






**BELAKAR**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | STR | 0 | 11- | Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1] |
| 14 | DEX | 12 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 13 | CON | 6 | 12- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 20 | INT | 10 | 13- | PER Roll 13- |
| 15 | EGO | 10 | 12- | ECV: 5 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 3 | PD | 1 | | Total: 6 PD (3 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 2 | | Total: 8 ED (3 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 6 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 5 | REC | 0 | | |
| 26 | END | 0 | | |
| 22 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 57** | |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| | **Spells** | |
| 3 | Levitation Spell | |
| 3 | Magesight | |
| 15 | Magic Bolt | |
| 6 | Spell Of Many Tongues | |
| 6 | Thendric's Spell Of Concealment | |
| 22 | Vandular's Chaotic Corruscations | |
| | **Talents** | |
| 6 | Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED) | |
| | **Skills** | |
| 3 | KS: Arcane And Occult Lore 13- | |
| 3 | KS: History 13- | |
| 3 | KS: Legends And Lore 13- | |
| 7 | Languages: 7 points' worth (player's choice) | |
| 1 | Literacy | |
| 15 | Magic 19- | |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 93**
**Total Cost: 150**

**75+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 | Distinctive Features: mystic aura (Not Concealable, Always Noticed, Detectable Only With Unusual Senses) |
| 10 | Hunted: Shattered Skull orc tribe 8- (Mo Pow, Limited Geographical Area, Kill) |
| 15 | Hunted: Gardak the Necromancer 8- (Mo Pow, Kill) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Honorable (Common, Strong) |
| 10 | Psychological Limitation: Fascinated By Magical Artifacts And Lore; Will Go Out Of His Way And Risk Danger To Obtain Them (Common, Moderate) |
| 5 | Rivalry: Professional (with another wizard of player's choice) |
| 10 | Social Limitation: Feared By The Common Folk (Frequently, Minor) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

**TYPICAL EQUIPMENT**

Staff (used as a club — 4d6 Normal Damage, STR Min 10)
Dagger (HKA 1d6-1 STR Min 6)
Cloth Armor (DEF 1)
Silver medallion (a gift from his first master)
Wineskin of fine wine

Background/History: Growing up as a limner's son, Belakar was apprenticed to a local wizard after he displayed an aptitude for the Arts Arcane. He studied under the wizard for several years, until his master died. He then apprenticed himself to another wizard, Gardak, later known as Gardak the Necromancer. After several months, when he finally perceived the evil nature Gardak hid beneath a facade of civility, Belakar fled, taking several of Gardak's most precious tomes with him. To this day, Gardak pursues him, hoping to recover the grimoires.

After several years of studying on his own, Belakar became an adventuring mage, using his powers to work with other like-minded people to destroy evil, perform heroic deeds, and perhaps recover a bit of treasure in the process. He continues down this path today, ever seeking to expand his knowledge, earn a reputation for his skills, and serve the good people of the world — even though most of them fear his sorcerous powers.

Personality/Motivation: Belakar has taken the path of the adventuring mage mainly because that's the best way for him to uncover ancient magical artifacts, old lorebooks and spellbooks, and like valuables. Such things fascinate him, and he'll go to extremes to recover them. But stronger still than that is his sense of honor and duty. If he gives his word, he keeps it, and he always conducts himself in an honest and forthright manner.

Quote: "Look at this! It's the work-book of a mage of the Crimson Shield Dynasty! Who knows what secrets it might contain?"

Powers/Tactics: Belakar is a mage who can cast several useful spells. His main weakness is that he has no defensive magics (yet). He has to take care, hide behind cover when he can, and dodge if he must. When possible, he uses Thendric's Spell of Concealment to shield himself from the eyes of potential attackers.

Appearance: Belakar is a man in his mid-30s, with dark skin and eyes. He's mostly bald, with just a few wisps of hair here and there on his head. He wears robes (similar to those of many wizards), carries a staff, and never seems to be without a book or two.



# MARTIAL ARTS: *NINJA HERO*



Masters of unarmed combat, able to take on armies of armed men and defeat them using just bare hands and feet. Feuds and rivalries between different schools of the fighting arts. Characters with such acrobatic prowess that they can literally run right up walls! This type of excitement and action, and more, characterizes the martial arts genre.

## Campaign Guidelines And Standards

In *HERO System* terms, most *Ninja Hero* campaigns are Heroic, with characters built on the Standard Heroic point totals of 75 Base Points + 75 Disadvantages. But some martial arts subgenres — wuxia and video-game, for example — require more points, so that players can create characters able to perform fantastic stunts and feats. Some even verge into the Superheroic. In Heroic *Ninja Hero* campaigns, characters typically obtain normal equipment with in-game money instead of Character Points, are subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima by default, and use the Hit Location rules and many other such options.

## Genre Conventions And Features

Regardless of the point totals or characters involved, the themes of martial arts adventures remain basically the same from subgenre to subgenre. Some of the more common "bits" include:

Amazing fighting prowess: Of course, every player character and important NPC in a *Ninja Hero* campaign has the *Martial Arts* Skill — indeed, many characters know every maneuver in their chosen style, and some have studied multiple styles. Competition between fighters to prove that "my kung fu is better than your kung fu!" occurs frequently. Combats in a martial arts campaign, if properly described and envisioned, can be spectacular!

To bolster their fighting skills, many *Ninja Hero* characters buy Combat Skill Levels (either 3-point Levels with a particular martial arts style, or 5-point Levels with Hand-To-Hand Combat). Other common Skills include Defense Maneuver, Fast Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Weapon Familiarity. Talents like Combat Luck, Combat Sense, Danger Sense, and Lightning Reflexes are also worth considering.

Masters and students: Most characters have to learn martial arts from someone — a master. In most *Ninja Hero* adventures, the PCs' master is old, wise, and skilled, but too feeble or slow to oppose the enemies of his school or style (thus, the job falls to the PCs). Masters of evil or rival schools are often more robust, since they represent a major opponent for the PCs to overcome. But first, of course, the enemy master makes the PCs fight his students and lieutenants, and observes them as they do so.

Within a given school, the PCs can also develop friendships and rivalries with fellow students. Sometimes the worst enemy they can face is not another master, but a former comrade who's turned against them out of greed, wickedness, or misunderstanding.

Ninja: These stealthy, supremely skilled spy-assassin-scouts appear in numerous martial arts stories. In some cases, they are utterly deadly — even one of them is enough to challenge an entire group of PCs. In other stories, they're like Nazis in *Pulp Hero* games — standard "cannon fodder" for the heroes to wade through on their way to the *really* dangerous opponents. Sometimes they even function as comic relief.

Personal honor and sacrifice: To a *Ninja Hero* character, his personal honor (however defined) is everything. It dictates how he lives his life, whom he serves, and the way he conducts himself in a fight or crisis. At times, the course of an adventure puts him in the untenable position of having to do something terrible to uphold his honor, or violate his honor to do the "right thing" (like keeping a promise to a dying friend). That, however, plays into a related element of the genre, the theme of personal sacrifice. *Ninja Hero* PCs often have to give something of themselves — up to and including their lives — to accomplish a noble goal. And that's fine; they usually don't even blink an eye at what's required. To refuse would, after all, be dishonorable.

In *HERO System* terms, many martial artists take Psychological Limitations such as *Code Of Honor* or *Honorable* to reflect this element of the genre.

Revenge: Many *Ninja Hero* plots are driven by a desire for revenge — whether it's the PCs or their enemies seeking it. An ancient defeat, a real (or supposed) insult, or any action that causes dishonor can lead to a quest for vengeance. Often revenge is a to-the-death affair; the story only ends when the target of the revenge is killed, or kills his antagonist.

Rivalries and feuds: Related to both the "master and student" and "revenge" elements is the theme of rivalries and feuds. Clans, martial arts schools, and specific characters often develop rivalries with



their peers, which sometimes develop into feuds lasting for generations. Dealing with these conflicts and their consequences can occupy a lot of the PCs' time and energy.

The supernatural: Ghosts, curses, prophecies, and strange Oriental magic abound in many *Ninja Hero* campaigns. Sometimes the PCs themselves can work magic, but more often magic is used against them as they oppose evil Chinese sorcerers, fearful undead minions, and the like.

## Character Archetypes

Since martial arts campaigns can vary wildly among different subgenres and time periods, it's sometimes difficult to pin down distinctive archetypes common to the genre. But certain character types, often defined more by personal philosophy, lifestyle, and fighting style than common powers or equipment, do exist. They include:

**The American From The Orient**

This character is a Westerner who's lived in the Orient so long, or spent so much time in Chinatown, that he's become an expert on the culture, and adopted Eastern philosophies and fighting styles. Even if he mixes in a few Americanisms, his behavior is more Asian than American.

To create a character like this, you need to mix a few distinctive Background Skills, Perks, and Disadvantages into the usual martial artist character sheet — things like City Knowledges of American cities, or Contacts in the American government or business community.

**The Honorable Ninja**

This character is a member of a ninja clan who, for reasons of his own, has turned his back on the wicked and/or mercenary ways of his brethren to walk a brighter path. He now uses his skills and abilities for noble and honorable causes, such has preventing evil landlords from throwing hapless widows and orphans out into the street.

**The Irritable Student**

An Irritable Student, unlike most of his fellows, is hot-tempered and easily frustrated. He's got a lot of talent and potential, but he chafes under the slow and philosophical pace of instruction set by his master. He wants to learn how to fight, not perform meaningless chores! In the best martial arts stories, the Irritable Student eventually comes to understand the value of his master's choices, but never wholly loses his slightly renegade approach to the martial arts.

In the *HERO System,* you can create the Irritable Student by giving your martial artist an appropriate Psychological Limitation, such as *Aggressively Impatient* (Common, Strong; 15 points). He should start the game with a minimal number of maneuvers and related Skills. As the game progresses, he quickly learns other maneuvers and abilities, thanks to his natural potential.

**The Kickboxing Cop**

A "kickboxing cop" is a law enforcement officer (or sometimes soldier) who uses his martial arts skills to keep himself safe on the streets and get his job done. Often considered something of a hothead or a renegade, he keeps his position because he consistently gets results when other cops are stymied.

In addition to buying an appropriate Martial Arts style (often Kung Fu or Karate), when building a Kickboxing Cop you need to select some cop Skills and abilities for him: Criminology, Deduction, Streetwise, various KSs, WF: Small Arms, Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers, and so forth.

**The Monk**

This character is a religious ascetic, often on a pilgrimage from one temple to another, or on a mission to seek alms or help for the poor. Modest, unassuming, and quiet, he looks like a helpless pushover to bandits and thugs — but in truth he's mastered the martial arts and can easily look out

for himself. After his attention is attracted to some injustice, he uses his skills to help right it and save innocent people from oppression and evil.

The best way to represent the monk in a *Ninja Hero* game (besides his fighting style) is with certain Disadvantages — Psychological Limitations for vows of poverty or a requirement to help those in need, Social Limitations reflecting his place in a rigidly hierarchical society, Destitute, and so forth. Certain Fringe Benefits (like *Right To Marry* or *Right To Shelter*) are also appropriate.

**The Naive Hero**

The naive hero (or heroine) possesses tremendous fighting skills — but little or no knowledge of the world outside the temple, monastery, or compound where he's been training most of his life. He's so sheltered that he's easily fooled by con artists and villains, which can lead to situations both comedic and tragic.

The naive hero should have a lot of points in Martial Arts and related Skills and abilities, plus appropriate Disadvantages such as Psychological Limitation: *Naive* (Common, Moderate; 10 points).

**The Samurai**

Most appropriate to games set in medieval Japan, the samurai is a warrior trained in the use of the katana (and other Japanese weapons), and who follows a special code of honor called *bushido.* Bushido mandates obedience to one's liege-lord, resolute acceptance of death and danger, and personal sacrifices when necessary to achieve one's goals. Masterless samurai, or *ronin,* also exist, and often become mercenaries or troublemakers.

Characters in other places and times often adopt the samurai mentality (and even training), and so qualify for this archetype. In some campaigns (such as *Star Hero* games), characters may encounter entire races or species that qualify as "samurai" for game purposes.

The samurai should have one or more appropriate Martial Arts styles (definitely Kenjutsu, possibly also Jujutsu), plus other warrior skills. *Code Of Bushido* is a Psychological Limitation (Common, Total; 20 points).

**The Unwilling Fighter**

This character, although possessed of tremendous fighting skills, is reluctant to use them. He's a pacifist, or for some other reason eschews violence. Unfortunately, the events of the story inevitably sweep him up and put him in a position where he has to fight — often to seek vengeance on evil men who have wronged him or his loved ones.

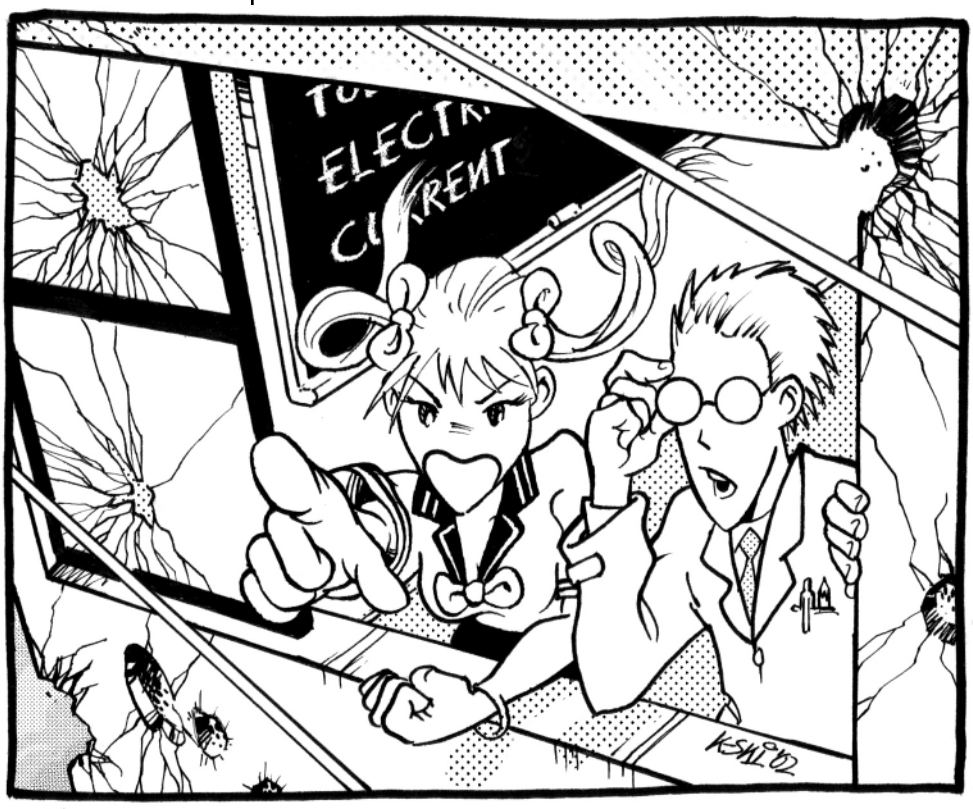
You can build an unwilling fighter similar to a naive hero — lots of points in Martial Arts and related abilities, plus a Psychological Limitation like *Pacifist* (Common, Total; 20 points).

## Subgenres

Although most types of *Ninja Hero* campaigns do share some story themes, features, and archetypes, they also have some significant differences. Some of the subgenres of this genre include:

**Realistic Martial Arts**

A realistic martial arts story or campaign involves plenty of fighting action, but attempts to model the "real world" fairly closely. The PCs cannot perform incredible stunts, there is no element of the supernatural, and so forth. The characters' enemies include rival martial artists, criminals, Chinese and Japanese organized crime, and so forth.




Realistic martial arts campaigns are Heroic, with characters typically built on 75 Base Points + 75 Disadvantages.

**Cinematic Martial Arts**

Cinematic martial arts are a sort of intermediary step between "realistic" and "wuxia" — the events, characters, and abilities portrayed veer away from absolute realism, but not into the completely outrageous. Many martial arts action movies fall into this category.

Cinematic martial arts campaigns are usually Heroic, but with higher point totals than realistic campaigns (Powerful or Very Powerful Heroes).

**Wuxia Martial Arts**

*Wuxia* ("woo-shee") ratchets the action and spectacular effects of a cinematic martial arts campaign up a notch. In a wuxia campaign, characters can run up walls, stand on thin branches or narrow poles to fight, leap tremendous distances,

and perform other impossible feats. Many have their own "secret" fighting techniques, honed by years of practice.

Wuxia PCs are usually Superheroic, either Low-Powered or Standard. This gives them enough points to buy all the amazing powers they have. They should normally pay points for weapons and equipment as well (especially since many of them use unique, or uniquely powerful, weapons).

**Video-Game Martial Arts**

This style of martial arts campaign simulates American and Japanese "fighting" video games. In some ways it mingles with *Champions,* in that the characters are often extremely unusual (aliens, lizardmen, cyborgs, and so forth) or possess blatant superpowers (like armored skin, fiery fists, or energy projection). The characters are built on a Standard Superheroic scale.

**Anime Martial Arts**

"Anime" martial arts campaigns derive from or imitate Japanese animated cartoons. These campaigns can take place in any time period or setting the GM desires; what sets them apart are the incredible powers displayed by the characters — powers even more amazing than those of video-game martial artists. They can project energy bolts powerful enough to affect entire buildings, punch someone a hundred times in the blink of an eye, run so fast others can only see their afterimages, transform their bodies into stone or metal, and so forth. They're built using Superheroic guidelines (the GM determines the exact level and amount of points, based on the setting for the game).



## Sample Character

Here's a sample cinematic martial arts character, Yeung Li, for you to use if you like. You can easily beef him up to wuxia or greater levels by changing the campaign parameters and giving him more points.

**YEUNG LI**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [2] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 12 | EGO | 4 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 8 | PD | 4 | | Total: 8 PD (0 rPD) |
| 6 | ED | 2 | | Total: 6 ED (0 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 0 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 29 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 77** | |

**Movement:** Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 9"/18"

| Cost | Powers | | | | END |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Martial Arts: Long Fist Kung Fu* | | | | |
| | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes | |
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort | |
| 4 | Dodge | +0 | +5 | Dodge all attacks, Abort | |
| 5 | Kick | -2 | +1 | 12d6 Strike | |
| 4 | Knife Hand | -2 | +0 | 1d6+1 HKA (2½d6 with STR) | |
| 4 | Punch | +0 | +2 | 10d6 Strike | |
| 3 | Throw | +0 | +1 | 8d6 +vel/5, Target Falls | |
| 4 | *Tien-hsueh* Strike | -1 | +1 | 4d6 NND (1) | |
| 16 | +4 Damage Classes (already added in) | | | | |
| 6 | *Swift:* Running +3" (9" total) | | | | 1 |
| 5 | *Leap Of The Grasshopper:* Leaping +5" (9" total) | | | | 1 |
| | **Skills** | | | | |
| 3 | +1 with Kung Fu | | | | |
| 3 | Acrobatics 13- | | | | |
| 3 | Breakfall 13- | | | | |
| 3 | Stealth 13- | | | | |
| 6 | WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons | | | | |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 73**
**Total Cost: 150**

**75+ Disadvantages**

5 Distinctive Features: Monk's Garb And Demeanor (Easily Concealed, Noticed And Recognizable)
20 Hunted: Shòu Min and her bandit gang 11- (Mo Pow, Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Honorable And Noblehearted; Must Help Those In Need And Fight Fairly (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Naive (Common, Moderate)
10 Reputation: dangerous fighter and troublemaker, 11-
15 Rivalry: Professional and Romantic (with head of monastery regarding fighting prowess and the affections of Ma Mei; Rival Seeks To Harm/Kill Yeung Li)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**




**TYPICAL EQUIPMENT**

Jien (Chinese broadsword; HKA 1d6, STR Min 10)
Chiang (Chinese spear; HKA 1d6+1 or HA +3d6, STR Min12)
Monk's clothes and accouterments

Background/History: Yeung Li was abandoned on the doorstep of a monastery by his mother, and grew up among the monks in their cloistered society. He spent all his time doing chores and practicing martial arts. Today, grown into a young man, he is strong and fit, and a skilled fighter.

Due to an unfortunate circumstance, Yeung Li was forced to leave the monastery to seek his fortune in the wide world. The head monk had a mistress, Ma Mei, who developed an affection for Li instead — an affection he returned. The head monk cast him out in disgrace, into a world he knew very little about. Still consumed by jealousy, the head monk often pursues Yeung Li, or has friends who owe him favors harass the young man. Thanks to their influence, Yeung Li is widely regarded as a hotheaded troublemaker, causing local officials to keep a careful eye on him (even though, in truth, he's unassuming and heroic).

Yeung Li ran into difficulties almost as soon as he left the monastery. While traveling to the nearest town, he encountered some bandits robbing a family. Without a thought for his own safety, he leapt into the fray and drove the robbers off with his fierce fighting. Unfortunately, the thugs were part of a large and influential gang led by Shòu Min, the notorious "Bandit Queen" of the central provinces. Furious that one man could thwart her desires so easily, Shòu has ordered her men to track him and kill him on sight.

Unaware of Shòu Min's enmity toward him, Yeung Li continues his journeys, never seeking adventure, but always seeming to find it somehow.

Personality/Motivation: Yeung Li is a classic naive hero. Though quite skilled at fighting, and possessed of a strong sense of honor and desire to right wrongs, he knows little of the world at large, or of the ways people interact with each other. He's constantly committing *faux pas* and having to apologize or otherwise make amends. Despite these difficulties, he remains intensely curious about the world around him. He's eager to meet new people, see new sites, and do new things.

Quote: "There is more to kung fu than knowing how to punch or kick. There is honor, there is understanding."

Powers/Tactics: Yeung Li is a gifted practitioner of the martial arts, who's been studying Long Fist Kung Fu for nearly all his life. He favors punches and throws in most situations. If necessary, he can use his *jien* (broadsword) or *chiang* (spear), but he usually prefers to rely on fists and feet rather than sharpened steel.

Appearance: Yeung Li is a young Chinese man of average appearance. He wears the typical robes of a monk (usually quite dusty from his travels, and perhaps a bit scuffed or torn after his fights), and carries himself with a monk's demeanor.

# MODERN-DAY ACTION: *DARK CHAMPIONS*



Well-armed costumed vigilantes, opposing killers and crime syndicates the police can't possibly hope to stop. Suave spies dressed to the nines but ready to spring into action at the drop of a poker chip. Criminals more evil, more cruel, than any four-color supervillain. Soldiers, mercenaries, assassins, and terrorists. All these people, and many more, inhabit the world of *Dark Champions* — a world of action, adventure, and often deadly excitement.

## Campaign Guidelines And Standards

In *HERO System* terms, *Dark Champions* campaigns are usually Heroic, typically with Powerful or Standard characters. Gamemasters sometimes expand the allowable points characters can acquire from any one category of Disadvantages to 30 or 40, since some Disadvantages (such as Hunted and Psychological Limitation) are more common and important in this genre than other Heroic genres. Characters typically obtain normal equipment with in-game money instead of Character Points, are subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima by default, and use the Hit Location rules and many other such options.

## Genre Conventions And Features

*Dark Champions* campaigns can vary pretty dramatically from one GM to another, but most share certain features or elements. These include:

Gritty, dramatic action: First and foremost, *Dark Champions* games are characterized by a sort of "gritty, dramatic realism" and action. They feature characters who are more or less "realistic" — ordinary humans, not superhumans, using training, equipment, and their wits to overcome obstacles and enemies. They take place more or less in the "real world," even if weird phenomena or paranormal abilities and beings exist in the shadows. They focus on the problems and perils of the real world — organized and disorganized crime, societal decay, terrorism, war — rather than on the fanciful plots of supervillains or dark overlords.

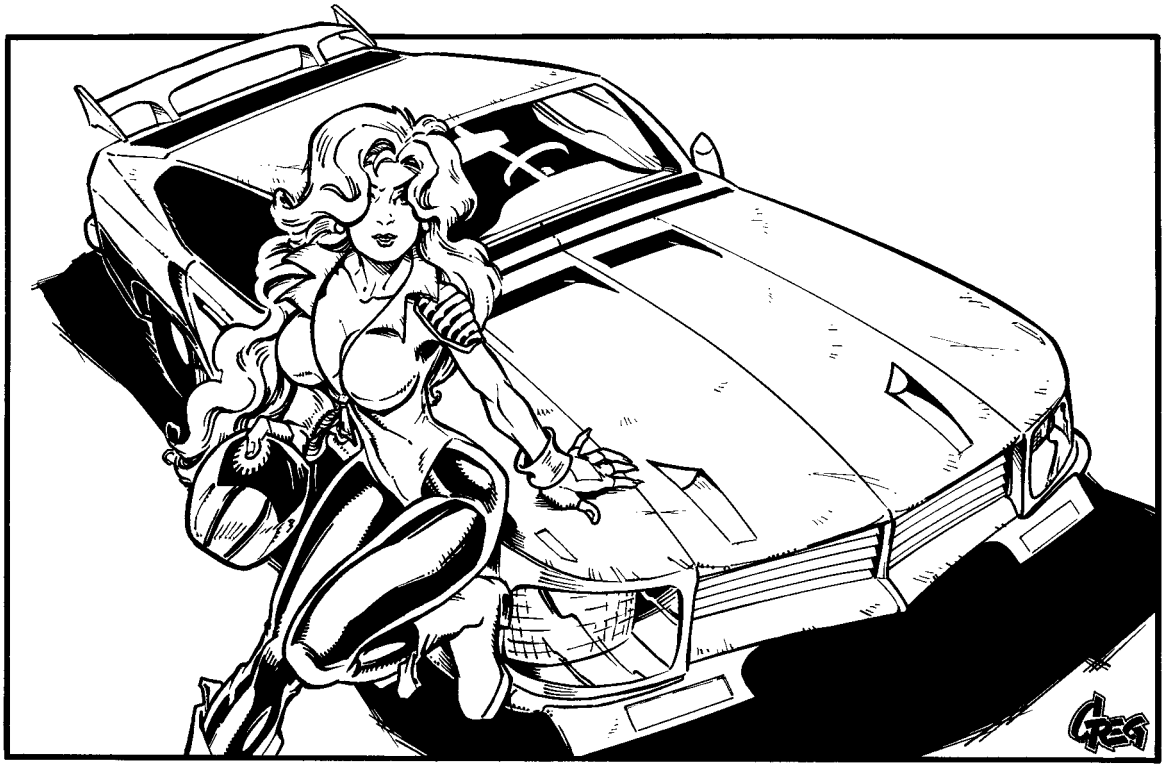
Conspiracy: In many modern-day action stories, conspiracy plays a significant part. The characters often find themselves opposing, or even manipulated by, shadowy cabals of power-brokers who are trying to conceal something from the rest of the world (either because doing so benefits them, or to protect humanity from the implications of the secret facts). The characters often find themselves in situations where things aren't as they seem, or where they don't have all the facts — thus forcing them to take extra steps to outwit their enemies and learn the truth.

Espionage: Espionage — ranging from the relative realism of John Le Carré novels to the over-the-top "spywork" of James Bond movies — factors into many *Dark Champions* campaigns. The characters (one, some, or all of them) may be spies, or have received training from an intelligence agency (either a real one, like the CIA, or a fictitious one created by the GM). Or they may find themselves entangled in espionage matters during the course of their adventures.

Guns and violence: *Dark Champions* is all about action, and that action often involves violence — be it a car chase, a brawl, or, most likely of all, a gunfight. Most *Dark Champions* characters go around heavily armed, ready at all times to defend themselves from their enemies or put a stop to crime.

Hot cars and cool gear: In addition to guns, *Dark Champions* characters use all sorts of gear and technological resources. From expensive sportscars (often tricked out with hidden weapons and gadgets), to high-tech lockpicks and security scramblers, to the latest laptops specially prepared for hacking and data theft, they've got all sorts of gear to help them get the job done.

Military and government: *Dark Champions* characters are as likely to find themselves involved in military or governmental matters as espionage. Many of them have military training in their backgrounds, and depending on the nature of the campaign they may still be in the military (and thus have the Social Limitation *Subject To Orders*). Military-oriented adventures may include rescuing a lost or trapped group of soldiers, preventing the theft of nuclear or biological weapons (or recovering them after they've been stolen), or conducting special forces-style raids or assaults against targets designated by the characters' superiors.



## Character Archetypes

In the *Dark Champions* genre, character archetypes are typically defined by the Skills they commonly possess and most frequently use during adventures, though a few (such as Vigilante) are more defined by their attitude and activities. In many campaigns, each archetype essentially has a specific "job" within the team, based on his abilities (though a good team has enough overlap between characters' abilities to keep it from becoming too dependent on any one member).

**The Hacker**

The hacker is a technology expert. As the name indicates, he's usually got a high *Computer Programming* Skill, but most hackers go beyond that, learning Electronics, Security Systems, and/or Systems Operation in addition to whatever other abilities they might possess. If the team needs to retrieve some data from an encrypted hard drive, or plant a virus in an enemy's system, the hacker's the man for the job.

**The Security Specialist**

Often similar to the hacker in many ways, the security specialist is an expert at infiltration and retrieval — breaking and entering, theft, and similar tasks. His Skills usually include Concealment, Electronics, Lockpicking, Security Systems, and Stealth, among others.

**The Soldier**

The soldier is a combat expert. Most *Dark Champions* characters have at least some combat abilities — a WF or two, if nothing else — but the soldier has special combat training. Often a veteran of a special force or elite unit, he not only has plenty of WFs, but often Autofire Skills, Demolitions, Martial Arts, Stealth, Tactics, TFs, and Weaponsmith. He usually carries the heaviest weapons in the group.

**The Spy**

Trained in the arts of espionage, spycraft, and intelligence-gathering. a spy has an eclectic blend of skills covering many subjects: guile and trickery (Acting, Disguise, Mimicry, Seduction); covert information-gathering (Bugging, Computer Programming, Conversation, Shadowing); and combat (Demolitions, Martial Arts, WFs). Many spy characters have to pick one area to "specialize" in, then gradually expand the scope of their abilities as the campaign progresses. In keeping with the James Bond tradition, many have high COMs, and Skills like Gambling or High Society.

**The Vigilante**

The vigilante is a character who, disgusted with the rampant crime in modern society, has taken it upon himself to put an end to it — whether by beating up criminals and leaving them for the police, or more extreme methods. Often defined by their Disadvantages (particularly Psychological Limitations like *Obsessed With Crimefighting* or *Devoted To Justice*) as much as by their abilities, they can be complex and intriguing characters to play. They usually have a generous helping of combat Skills, plus Skills like Computer Programming, Stealth, and Streetwise.

**The Wheelman**

A wheelman is a specialist in driving and/or piloting. He's the team's getaway man, the guy who provides cover support, and the person everyone relies on when the bad guys try to get away by starting a car chase. Combat Driving and/or Combat Piloting are musts for this character, along with Mechanics and a generous helping of Transport Familiarities. Beyond that, the wheelman often has support Skills that allow him to back up other members of his team.

## Subgenres

Although they have a lot of overlap in most cases, there are several distinct subgenres in *Dark Champions.* They include:

**Vigilante Crimefighting**

In its purest form, *Dark Champions* is about what its title refers to: vigilante crimefighting in a comic book style. It features characters who, though often dressed in costumes of some sort, lack true superpowers. Instead, they get by with Skills, training, gadgets, and weapons (often special ones of their own devising). Depending on the GM's preferences, the game can become extremely grim and gritty, or remain closer to its roots in four-color comics.

**Dark Champions: The Animated Series**

If a *Dark Champions* game gets *too* close to its four-color roots, what emerges is a sort of hybrid subgenre called *Dark Champions: The Animated Series.* DC:TAS campaigns typically feature characters who have the Psychological Limitation *Code Versus Killing* (a rarity in this genre), and also more than a few other bits and pieces from the superhero genre: weird costumed villains, impossible technology, and the like. "Theme" villains, each patterning his costume, abilities, and crimes around a favored, but bizarre, concept (like puzzles, an animal type, or dark comedy), appear frequently.

**Espionage**

Espionage campaigns (sometimes known as *Danger International* games) focus on the "great game" of intelligence-gathering and political intrigue. Typically they occur in the modern era or during the Cold War period, but sometimes GMs create fun variants, such as espionage-Fantasy or espionage-Science Fiction. The characters' opponents include enemy spies, enemy soldiers, terrorists, assassins, double agents, and large-scale criminal organizations (often fictitious ones, such as James Bond's long-time adversary SPECTRE).

**Law Enforcement**

Some *Dark Champions* campaigns cast the characters in the role of law enforcement officers — anything from beat cops, to FBI agents, to members of a department's special crimes unit. The emphasis is usually on action and excitement, with gamers taking their cues from police movies like *Lethal Weapon,* rather than on true police procedure (which is often dull).

Characters in a law enforcement campaign usually have a Package Deal to provide them with the mandatory Skills and abilities they need to function as cops. These include Streetwise, WF: Small Arms, and Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers, among others.

**Military Action/Special Ops**

In a military game, the characters are all soldiers of some kind — typically special forces operatives, or some sort of elite unit. Alternately, they may be mercenaries of some kind. In either case, the characters are called on or hired to do what they do best: fight, capture, destroy, and emerge victorious. They may have to pin down an enemy regiment so it can't get to a battle elsewhere, sneak into a heavily-guarded installation to rescue hostages or steal valuable technology, or lead the invasion of an enemy nation. Compared to other *Dark Champions* characters, military PCs usually have access to much more firepower and force, and have a much greater chance of effecting lasting change in the world around them.

**Weird Conspiracy**

Popularized by television shows such as *The X-Files,* this subgenre introduces an element of the weird and the occult into *Dark Champions.* The premise of the campaign is that there's more out there than humanity knows about (or can comfortably acknowledge), and the PCs have to both investigate this concept and deal with its ramifications. In a weird conspiracy game, things like aliens and UFOs, Bigfoot, cults with magic (albeit low-powered magic) that actually works, bizarre genetic throwbacks of men and animals, and much, much more actually exist. The genre also often features conspiratorial groups trying to hide or exploit these phenomena for vague and shadowy reasons the player characters can never quite pin down. Investigation, mystery, and an eerie feel are the hallmarks of this subgenre, not gunfights and car chases.



# Sample Characters

To get you started in this genre, here are two sample characters: the Verdict, a *Dark Champions* vigilante; and Alena Drake, a spy working for the CIA.

## THE VERDICT

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 14 | BODY | 8 | 12- | |
| 18 | INT | 8 | 13- | PER Roll 13- |
| 12 | EGO | 4 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 6 | PD | 3 | | Total: 9 PD (3 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 0 | | Total: 7 ED (3 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 7 | REC | 0 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 31 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 90** | |

**Movement:** Running: 7"/14"

| Cost | Powers | | | | END |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Martial Arts: Commando Training* | | | | |
| | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes | |
| 3 | Aikido Throw | +0 | +1 | 3d6 + vel/5, Target Falls | |
| 4 | Boxing Cross | +0 | +2 | 5d6 | |
| 4 | Choke | -2 | +0 | Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2) | |
| 4 | Karate "Chop" | -2 | +0 | ½d6 HKA (1d6+1 with STR) | |
| 4 | Kung Fu Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort | |
| 2 | *Swift:* Running +1" (7" total) | | | | 1 |

**Perks**

1 Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Law

**Talents**

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

**Skills**

16 +2 with All Combat
5 +1 with Ranged Combat

3 Acting 13-
3 Bugging 13-
3 Bureaucratics 13-
3 Combat Driving 13-
3 Computer Programming 13-
3 Concealment 13-
3 Criminology 13-
3 Deduction 13-
3 Disguise 13-
1 Electronics 8-
3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
3 KS: Criminal Law 13-
3 KS: (Campaign City) Underworld 13-
3 Lockpicking 13-
3 PS: Attorney 13-
3 Security Systems 13-
3 Shadowing 13-
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 13-
3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 110**
**Total Cost: 200**

**100+ Disadvantages**

20 Hunted: Cabrona Mafia Family 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
20 Hunted: Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Devoted To Justice (Very Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Uncommon, Strong)
15 Reputation: murderous, out-of-control vigilante, 11- (Extreme)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Robert Markham) (Frequently, Major)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 200**

**TYPICAL EQUIPMENT**

.44 Automag (RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, 7 shots, two extra clips)
Another .44 Automag
Walther PPK-S (RKA 1d6, +1 OCV, -1 RMod, 7 shots)
Silencer for Walther
Taser (Energy Blast 6d6, NND [defense is insulated rED]; No Range, 6 Charges)
Knives (2) (HKA 1d6-1, STR Min 4)
Customized Body Armor (6 PD/6 ED)

Background/History: After completing a tour of duty in the U.S. Army, Robert Markham returned home, attended law school, and after graduation got a job with the local public defender's office. He worked there for nearly a decade, becoming progressively more and more disgusted with "the system." Every day it was his job to try to free people so socially maladjusted, so dangerous, that they ought to be locked up forever, not given a slap on the wrist. The final straw was when a client he had successfully defended robbed him, beating him half to death in the process.

After he healed, Robert quit the PD's office. He knew now that it wasn't the place for him. He should be *opposing* the criminals, not helping them. And not by joining the prosecutor's office, either; it was time for... more *direct* action.

After withdrawing his life savings from the bank, Robert vanished. He spent over a year intensively training and studying, building himself into a warrior capable of taking on the scum of the underworld on their own turf and beating them. He acquired weapons, and even designed a distinctive suit of form-fitting body armor to protect himself from bullets and knives.

Since appearing on the streets last year, the vigilante who's identified himself only as "the Verdict" has been responsible for over 20 killings and many more brutal assaults. While the criminal element (except for the Cabrona mob, whom he's badly damaged with several raids) doesn't take the threat he poses seriously — yet — the police certainly do. A botched attack on a crackhouse several weeks ago, which was captured on film by a nearby TV camera crew, has brought him firmly into the public eye. He now finds himself completely isolated, pursued by both the law and the underworld, without anyone to turn to for help.

At least he knows who his enemies are.




Personality/Motivation: The Verdict's war on crime is motivated by two feelings. The first, and most important, is his devotion to the concept of right and wrong. He has a strong sense of justice, and it dismays him when those who deserve punishment somehow escape it. His most common targets are criminals who've escaped the law due to "loopholes," or who have so far eluded capture.

The Verdict's other motivation, one he'd never admit to, is vengeance. Robert Markham has a vengeful streak to him, which is one reason why it took an attack on him personally to finally turn him into a vigilante. Anyone who defeats or humiliates him becomes the complete focus of his attention until he gets even with them. It remains to be seen whether his desire for justice will ultimately diminish his vengeful nature, or his vengefulness will overwhelm him and his crusade.

Quote: "I'm not the judge or the jury, just the verdict. And the Verdict... is death!"

Powers/Tactics: Since he fights crime by himself, the Verdict is cautious. He prefers to investigate a target thoroughly before attacking, using Skills like Bugging, Bureaucratics, Computer Programming, Criminology, Disguise, Lockpicking, and Shadowing to get the information he needs. Then he strikes at the most opportune moment — when his target is most vulnerable.

The Verdict prefers to use two customized .44 Automags. As a backup, he has a Walther PPK-S, with a silencer he can attach to it for times when stealth is necessary. He also carries two knives (one on the back of his belt, and another concealed in a boot) and a taser (for targets he needs to capture alive).

Appearance: The Verdict wears a suit of custom-designed body armor, complete with helmet. The armor is black, with dark red highlights; numerous straps and buckles reveal how it's fastened to his body. Robert Markham is a man in his early 30s, obviously fit and muscular, with piercing grey eyes, black hair, and a short black moustache and beard.

## ALENA DRAKE

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | STR | 0 | 11- | Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 14 | CON | 8 | 12- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 20 | INT | 10 | 13- | PER Roll 13- |
| 14 | EGO | 8 | 12- | ECV: 5 |
| 18 | PRE | 8 | 13- | PRE Attack: 3½d6 |
| 16 | COM | 3 | 12- | |
| 4 | PD | 2 | | Total: 7 PD (3 rPD) |
| 3 | ED | 0 | | Total: 6 ED (3 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 5 | REC | 0 | | |
| 28 | END | 0 | | |
| 25 | STUN | 3 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 78** | |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"

| Cost | Powers | | | | END |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Martial Arts: Aikido* | | | | |
| | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes | |
| 4 | Dodge | — | +5 | Dodge all attacks, Abort | |
| 4 | Escape | +0 | +0 | 35 STR versus Grabs | |
| 3 | Hold | -1 | -1 | Grab Two Limbs, 30 STR for holding on | |
| 4 | Joint Lock/ Throw | +1 | +0 | Grab One Limb; 2d6 NND(1); Target Falls | |
| 5 | Redirect | +1 | +3 | Block, Abort | |
| 3 | Throw | +0 | +1 | 4d6 + v/5; Target Falls | |
| 8 | +2 Damage Classes (already added in) | | | | |

**Perks**

| | |
|---|---|
| 6 | Contacts (defined by player or GM) |
| 3 | Fringe Benefit: Membership (CIA) |
| 6 | Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance (U.S. Government) |

**Talents**

| | |
|---|---|
| 6 | Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED) |

**Skills**

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 | +1 Overall |
| 3 | Acting 13- |
| 3 | Combat Driving 13- |
| 1 | Computer Programming 8- |
| 3 | Concealment 13- |
| 3 | Conversation 13- |
| 3 | Cryptography 13- |
| 3 | Disguise 13- |
| 1 | Electronics 8- |
| 1 | Gambling (Card Games) 8- |
| 3 | High Society 13- |
| 3 | One or more CKs (defined by GM or player) |
| 3 | KS: The Espionage World 13- |
| 1 | Language: Spanish (basic conversation; English is native) |
| 1 | Language: Russian (basic conversation) |
| 3 | Lockpicking 13- |
| 3 | Persuasion 13- |
| 3 | PS: Spy 13- |
| 3 | Security Systems 13- |
| 3 | Seduction 13- |
| 3 | Shadowing 13- |
| 3 | Stealth 13- |
| 5 | TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles |
| 2 | WF: Small Arms |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 122**
**Total Cost: 200**

**100+ Disadvantages**

| | |
|---|---|
| 20 | Hunted: Russian Mafia group 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill) |
| 20 | Hunted: enemy intelligence agency (defined by GM) 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Claustrophobia (Uncommon, Total) |
| 10 | Psychological Limitation: Curiosity (Common, Moderate) |
| 15 | Social Limitation: Secret Identity (normally lives under the identity of Monica Rossington, wealthy dilettante) (Frequently, Major) |
| 20 | Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major) |

**Total Disadvantage Points: 200**

**TYPICAL EQUIPMENT**

Holdout Pistol (RKA 1d6+1, 4 shots)
Lipstick Pistol (RKA 1d6, 1 shot, built into a functioning tube of lipstick)
Jewelry Communicator (HRRP, disguised as a necklace, watch, or other piece of jewelry)
Mission-specific covert equipment

Background/History: The daughter of a career diplomat and a political science professor, Alena Drake had an interest in government from an early age. Her excellent college grades, and equally good performance on federal service exams, earned her a job in the State Department. That, in turn, brought her to the attention of certain officials in the CIA who, recognizing her potential for intelligence work, arranged to have her transferred to the Agency.

After an extensive and grueling period of training, Drake began her career as a field agent. Since then she's performed admirably on several assignments. But she's not been without her share of mishaps and disasters; one mission resulted in a short but extremely unpleasant period of confinement that's left her claustrophobic, and another revealed her activities to a Russian Mafia organization that's been trying to eliminate her ever since. But whatever challenges lie ahead, she's confident she can handle them.

Personality/Motivation: Alena Drake is capable, self-assured, cool-headed in times of crisis, and quick-thinking. In short, she has attributes that make her well-suited to field work as an espionage agent. The only thing that tends to impair her efficiency is her curiosity; she's all too often tempted to stick

her neck out just a little too far to learn about something that seems important or interesting. (That's how the Russians found out about her, for example.)

Quote: "Please, General, tell me more. Your work is so fascinating to someone like me who knows nothing of military matters!"

Powers/Tactics: Alena Drake typically works "undercover," using a cover identity (Monica Rossington, wealthy dilettante) established for her by the CIA. This allows her to mingle with the rich and powerful without seeming threatening. Her supposed riches and obvious good looks gain her entrance to many places a male agent could never go.

Drake typically carries few (if any) weapons, preferring to rely on her wits as much as possible. For times when danger threatens, she keeps her Holdout Pistol (a small firearm specially designed for her by the Agency) hidden on her person, as well as other weapons and gear disguised as ordinary items. If she can't get to a weapon, she'll use her Aikido.

Appearance: Tall and slender, with an attractive figure, Alena Drake tends to grab attention wherever she goes. Short auburn hair frames her pretty face, with its green eyes. As Monica Rossington, she usually affects a slightly bored and distracted air; but when on the job in her true identity, she's focused, attentive, and wary.



# THE PULP ERA: *PULP HERO*



Strong-jawed, two-fisted heroes. Femme fatales as deadly as they are beautiful. Ancient artifacts, lands of mystery, and lost civilizations. Explorers and great white hunters. The looming Nazi menace. Masked mystery men fighting the Mob with wit, skill, and thundering automatics. Weird science. Put them all together, and they mean one thing — pulp-era adventure!

The "pulp era" refers to the 1920s and '30s, a time when the adventures of characters like the Shadow, Doc Savage, and Indiana Jones took place. Much of the world remains largely unexplored and strange, full of potential for exotic and dangerous adventures. With World War I past, and World War II growing ever closer, it's a time of both great opportunities and great danger — in short, the perfect time for heroes!

## Campaign Guidelines And Standards

In *HERO System* terms, *Pulp Hero* campaigns are usually Standard Heroic games, with characters built on 75 Base Points + 75 Disadvantages, but some feature Powerful (100 + 100) characters instead. Characters typically obtain normal equipment with in-game money instead of Character Points, are subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima by default, and use the Hit Location rules and many other such options.

## Genre Conventions And Features

Although pulp has a number of distinctive elements, such as the ones discussed below, the most important thing to preserve, but the hardest to grasp and use effectively, is the pulp "feel." Pulp-era adventures have a distinctive taste to them, unlike any other action-adventure genre. The heroes are larger than life: strong-jawed, two-fisted, better, brighter — more grand and glorious, somehow, than heroes in other genres. Although they may appear hard-bitten and world-weary, they're not — they are noblehearted and true, without the bitterness and cynicism that marks so many modern-day heroes. They know a heroic attitude, a sharp mind, and a good right cross are enough to solve any problems they might encounter.

Conspiracy: Conspiracy abounds in many pulp adventures, particularly those of the crimefighting and mystery variety. Villains (and many heroes, for that matter) have networks of agents and contacts they use to accomplish their goals. Shadowy cabals of nefarious men plot the downfall of entire nations. Player characters may find tackling these organizations difficult!

Exotic settings: Pulp adventures often take place in strange, mysterious, and exotic locations. Characters chase thugs down the darkened alleys of Shanghai, explore previously undiscovered lands in Africa, and duel villains to the death beside some enormous South American waterfall — they don't just hang around the corner bar. Even in the crimefighting and mystery pulp stories, which often take place in a single city, characters often find hidden "grottoes" within the otherwise familiar cityscape.

Lands of mystery and lost worlds: Similarly, many pulp adventures focus on lands of mystery, lost worlds, and hidden civilizations. Characters might discover a second "world" inside the hollow earth which they can enter through a hole in Antarctica, a South American plateau where dinosaurs still live, a long-forgotten valley in Africa where classical Greek civilization lives on, or the like. Such places are always full of excitement, intrigue, and danger.

Masterminds and mad scientists: Pulp heroes' deadliest enemies are often masterminds who seek to use their power to rule the world, or mad scientists who have perverted their knowledge and training for selfish gain. The villains, like the heroes themselves, have a larger-than-life quality that makes them lovably easy to hate — and extremely enjoyable to defeat!

Nazis: Another common enemy in many pulp campaigns is Nazis. With the Nazi party controlling Germany by 1933, the Nazis afflict almost half of the pulp era with their twisted ideals and schemes of conquest. Given Hitler's supposed interest in archaeology and the occult, GMs can even bring Nazis into games involving mysticism and weirdness. Like orcs in *Fantasy Hero* games, Nazis are the foe every pulp hero can shoot without feeling guilty about it — though for best effect, the GM should occasionally introduce a Nazi villain who has a few noble or honorable qualities.

Science!: The pace of scientific and technological development was strong and steady during the first forty years of the twentieth century, and pulp adventure stories take advantage of that fact. In addition to regular science and gadgetry, "weird science" — in the form of primitive jetpacks, devices able to pull meteors down from the skies to devastate entire cities, and more — also appears from time to time. Used properly, weird science can



add a lot to pulp adventures; just be careful not to overdo it.

You can create weird science gadgets using Powers (and sometimes Talents or Skills). Most have Limitations like *Activation Roll, Concentration, Extra Time,* or *Requires A Skill Roll* to reflect their primitive nature, tendency to breakdown, and the like.

Sidekicks: Pulp heroes often have sidekicks, agents, friends, and/or servants to help them. The Shadow's corps of agents, Doc Savage's five friends, and the Spider's faithful manservant Ram Singh all participate in their adventures to some degree (even if only to get captured, thus providing the hero with plenty of motivation to defeat the villain). In some *Pulp Hero* campaigns, the player characters may actually *be* agents or "followers," with their master a shadowy figure who occasionally gives them instructions.

## Character Archetypes

The list of pulp archetypes is just about endless, given the many "stock" characters that showed up in pulp stories. Some of the more common, and appealing to RPG players, include:

**The Aviator**

In the 1920s and '30s, air travel is still a new, exciting, and often dangerous undertaking. "Barnstormers" and pilots are daring men, given to thrill-seeking and adventure, and thus make perfect pulp heroes. An aviator character needs Combat Piloting, Mechanics, Navigation (Air), and all appropriate TFs, plus a few other Skills to give him things to do when his plane is on the ground.

**The Explorer**

The explorer archetype includes any character driven to investigate and learn about the strange and mysterious places of the world — archaeologists, great white hunters, and true explorers who can't wait to learn what lies over the next horizon. Explorers usually have a lot of AKs and CKs, a good Survival roll, Stealth, and other Skills appropriate to their chosen profession(s) (like SS: Archaeology for a seeker of ancient artifacts). Doc Savage and Indiana Jones both largely fall into this archetype (though Doc can do so many things it's difficult to fit him into any one category).

**The Heroine**

In pulp adventure stories, women are often every bit as competent as men. Some are of the "Oh, I've twisted my ankle!" variety, but they're mostly NPCs. Female PCs, often women who've chosen not to accept the demure roll society tries to impose on them, can do anything men can do (but never seem to get too dirty or disheveled).

**The Mystery Man**

A staple of the crimefighting pulp stories, the mystery man is a precursor to the superheroes of *Champions.* Dressed in clothing that conceals his identity — often not just a mask, but a cape or cloak of some kind — he uses his skills and training (usually including matchless aim with handguns) to seek out and defeat ordinary criminals, mastermind villains, and anyone else who threatens his fair city. The Shadow and the Spider, two of the best-known pulp heroes, provide perfect examples of this archetype.

Mystery men typically have Deduction, Stealth, Streetwise, and several WFs including Small Arms. Many other Skills and weird abilities (whether bought as Talents or Limited Powers) are also possible.

**The Scientist**

Some pulp heroes are masters of the technologies and sciences of the era. They can construct all sorts of interesting gadgets and gizmos to help themselves, and their friends, through dangerous situations. Doc Savage falls into this archetype to some degree.

A scientist needs Skills like Electronics, Inventor, Mechanics, Science Skill (several), and Systems

### EXAMPLE WEIRD SCIENCE GADGETS

Jetpack: Flight 10" (20 Active Points); OIF (-½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (1 Hour; -0), Requires A PS: Operate Jetpack Roll (-¼). Total cost: 11 points.

Wrist Communicator: HRRP (12 Active Points); Activation Roll 13- (-¾), OIF (-½). Total cost: 5 points.

Stun Dart Gun: Drain STUN 4d6, Ranged (+½) (60 Active Points); Activation Roll 14- (-½), OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-½). Total cost: 20 points.

Nightgoggles: Nightvision (5 Active Points); Activation Roll 14- (-½), OIF (-½). Total cost: 2 points.



Operation. Scientist characters often have a unique gadget or two, built with the *Focus* and *Independent* Limitations, to help them during adventures.

**The Strong-Jawed Hero**

Perhaps the most stereotypical pulp hero is the "strong-jawed" or "two-fisted" variety — a man possessed of nothing but heroic determination and the fighting skills of an honest American (*i.e.,* the Martial Arts style Fisticuffs). With his cleft chin, dashing good looks, strong muscles, friendly manner, implacable opposition to evil and injustice, and perhaps some experience or abilities learned during the Great War, he's perfect for any type of pulp adventure.

## Subgenres

Pulp doesn't have subgenres so much as it simply applies its aesthetics and "feel" to stories of many different types. Thus, you can have pulp stories involving action/adventure, crimefighting, detectives and mysteries, espionage, exploration and discovery, horror and the occult, Science Fiction, suspense/thriller, Westerns, or the like. All the GM has to do is construct the campaign and its elements to ensure the pulp "feel." For example, in a pulp Science Fiction story, characters often wear garish uniforms with fins on their helmets and ray-guns, explore weird alien planets that look as much like bad movie sets or magazine cover paintings as actual new worlds, and encounter a lot of aliens that somehow speak English. Such campaigns often blend the *Pulp Hero* elements with elements from the other genre they belong to (*Star Hero,* in this case), but the exact mix depends on the GM, the players, and the course of the campaign.

## Sample Character

For a sample character for this genre, see Randall Irons, page 342.

# SCIENCE FICTION: *STAR HERO*



Hotshot space pilots, daring to attempt maneuvers that scare everyone else. Enormous starships able to move faster than the speed of light. Strange new planets, filled with alien flora and fauna. And aliens themselves — sentient races with a thousand different forms from a thousand different worlds. Characters who can use eerie powers of the mind to help, or harm. All this, and more, awaits you in the many worlds of Science Fiction... the province of *Star Hero.*

## Campaign Guidelines And Standards

In *HERO System* terms, *Star Hero* campaigns are usually Standard Heroic games, with characters built on 75 Base Points + 75 Disadvantages. (Some campaigns, particularly those with a heavy emphasis on psionic powers, use higher point totals.) Characters typically obtain normal equipment with in-game money instead of Character Points, are subject to Normal Characteristic Maxima by default, and use the Hit Location rules and many other such options.

## Genre Conventions And Features

Science Fiction, like Fantasy, is a broad and far-reaching genre. It encompasses everything from *The War Of The Worlds* and *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea* to *Star Trek, Star Wars,* and *Dune.* Despite this breadth (and depth), a few elements are common to most Science Fiction. These include:

Technology: First and foremost, nearly all Science Fiction has the element of technology in common. Science Fiction is, largely, about the relationship of man and technology — what technology enables men to do, the opportunities it offers, the perils it presents, the limitations it imposes (or abolishes). From blaster rifles, to teleportation devices, to time machines, to bio-engineering, advanced technology factors into almost every *Star Hero* story to some degree.

For the GM, the trick with technology is not to let it overwhelm the game. A *Star Hero* campaign should be about the PCs and their abilities and accomplishments — not what they own. The PCs definitely need access to high-tech gear (it wouldn't really feel like *Star Hero* without it!), but too much access may cause problems if they come to rely on their equipment instead of on themselves.

In *HERO System* terms, technology is typically built with Powers (though sometimes Talents or Skills factor in as well). See Chapters One and Four for plenty of ideas and examples.

Aliens: Most Science Fiction also deals, at least to some extent, with Humanity's interaction with other sentient species — be they Klingons, Mon Calamari, Minbari, plasma-beings from another dimension, or something even stranger.

To represent alien beings, particularly alien species players can use for their PCs, most GMs create Racial Package Deals (page 30). In addition to any abilities native to the species (*e.g.,* higher than Human-normal STR for a silicon-based species, or Life Support (Expanded Breathing: Breathe Water) for a fish-based species), the GM should include in the Package any Skills and Talents common to the species that aren't represented by Everyman Skills.

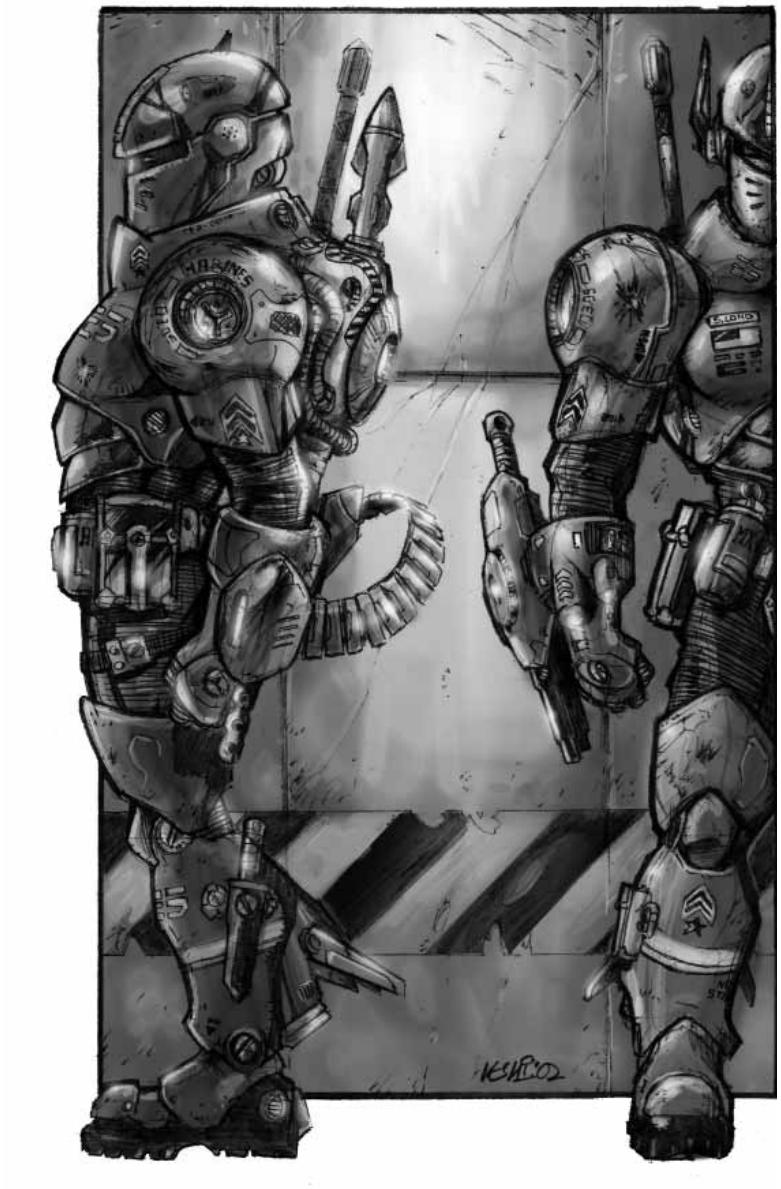
Computers: One of the most common forms of technology to appear in Science Fiction is computers. They aren't absolutely necessary — one of the greatest Science Fiction epics ever written, *Dune,* doesn't really feature them at all — but they usually show up (especially these days, when computers have become so important a part of modern-day life that they can't help but intrude into the artistic consciousness). Many are artificially intelligent, which raises all sorts of interesting story possibilities (remember HAL from *2001: A Space Odyssey?*).

To create a computer in *HERO System* terms, see page 459.

Exploration: Many Science Fiction stories are premised on the theme of "What's out there?" Space is enormous — more vast than the Human mind can comfortably handle, in some ways — so there's always a frontier to explore. The new planets, races, and astronomical phenomena characters encounter during their journeys of discovery are ripe with adventure possibilities. Many of the best *Star Trek* stories, for example, involve exploration.

Mecha: In some Science Fiction stories, mecha or battlemechs — giant anthropomorphic vehicles armed with all sorts of weaponry — play a prominent part. To create a mecha in *HERO System* terms, use the Vehicle design rules, and give it Extra Limbs so that its Ground Movement simulates "running" rather than wheels, tracks, or hover technology.

Psionics: In many Science Fiction settings, some or all sentient species have the capacity for mental powers — telepathy, telekinesis, and the like. These are collectively referred to as "psionics" in most



roleplaying game campaigns. Whether psionics exist in your *Star Hero* campaign, what type of psionic abilities characters can have, and how strong those abilities can be depends on the GM.

To create psionic abilities for *HERO System* characters, use Mental Powers (page 116). In campaigns with a heavy emphasis on psionics, the GM may wish to allow players more Character Points to create characters with, since Mental Powers can get expensive.

Robots: Some Science Fiction settings, including *Star Wars* and Isaac Asimov's *Robot* series, feature robots and androids — mechanical men, to use a crude and sometimes inaccurate term — as a common element. They can range from humanoid-shaped constructs able to do just about any job (and sometimes even to pass themselves off as true humans), to odd-shaped devices designed to perform one or two specific functions. In some settings, robots are governed by specially-programmed "laws" and ethical guidelines that prevent them from harming Humans (though the villains always seem to find a way to circumvent these "laws" at some point during the story).

To create a robot with the *HERO System,* you typically use the rules for Automatons (page 457). Extremely sophisticated robots and androids might be built using the normal character creation rules instead, with appropriate adjustments in the special effects involved. For example, when a sophisticated robot is Stunned by an attack, it's not really "Stunned" like an organic being would be, it's simply had its systems knocked offline for a second or two — but the game effect is the same.

Space marines: "Space marines" is a generic term referring to Science Fiction soldiers, though the name is most appropriate for the kind of warrior appearing in books like Robert Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* — heavily armored, carrying weapons of mass destruction and other devices designed solely to cause havoc and death. In a lower-tech *Star Hero* campaign, a space marine might be an ordinary soldier with advanced body armor and ballistic weapons.

Starships: It's hard to explore space, wage war against hostile aliens, or engage in interstellar trade if you don't have a way to journey between the stars. So, starships — spacegoing vessels — appear in most Science Fiction stories. Some SF takes place entirely, or almost entirely, aboard a starship (much of *Star Trek* provides a good example of this). Most starships have FTL (faster-than-light) travel capability, defensive "shields" or "screens" of energy, and weapons such as energy beams or anti-matter missiles. Many other features or systems are of course possible.

To create a starship in the *HERO System,* use the Vehicle rules (page 462). For FTL flight capability, use the *FTL Travel* Power or MegaScaled Movement Powers.

Time travel: Common in some SF settings (or even the basis for them, as with *Doctor Who*), but rare or absent in others, time travel presents all sorts of intriguing adventure possibilities. If the PCs are time travelers themselves, they can mix and mingle with history's most famous personalities, helping to ensure that historical events take the proper course. If they simply encounter other time travelers, they may find themselves dealing with events they don't fully understand, with potentially catastrophic consequences if they make the least slip.

To create time travel devices in the *HERO System,* use the Power *Extra-Dimensional Movement.*

## Character Archetypes

Since Science Fiction settings can vary wildly from one to another, not all archetypes are common across the entire genre. But some character types do tend to crop up frequently, including:

**The Explorer**

Many character types — prospectors, scouts, some types of scientists, personnel belonging to organizations like *Star Trek*'s Starfleet — are defined primarily by their desire to see what lies beyond the next solar system. Their skills and abilities are eclectic, reflecting the need to live on a starship (Combat Piloting, Navigation (Space), Systems

Operation, appropriate TFs), conduct scientific surveys (Science Skills), and survive in potentially hostile environments (Martial Arts, Survival, WFs).

**The Pilot**

Just like in *Pulp Hero,* in *Star Hero* pilot characters are usually cocky daredevils, willing to take all sorts of crazy risks for the thrill involved and the pride of the accomplishment. The difference is they fly fighters armed to the teeth with weapons capable of destroying asteroids, vast starships able to reduce entire planets to rubble, modified smuggler ships fast enough to outrun patrol vessels, and the like.

*Star Hero* pilots need Combat Piloting, Navigation (Space), Systems Operation, some appropriate TFs, and perhaps a few technical Skills (Computer Programming, Electronics, Mechanics) to make running the ship easier.

**The Psionic**

In many Science Fiction stories and *Star Hero* campaigns, there's just one character in the group with psionic powers. That's his (or often, her) role to fill — he's "the guy with mental powers," instead of the sneaky guy or the guy with big guns. With the right selection of psionic abilities, a psionic can be a fun and effective character to play in a wide variety of scenarios.

In roleplaying campaigns where multiple (or all) characters have psionic powers, a character who wants to stand out for his use of psionics should either have more psionic abilities than average (*i.e.,* spend more Character Points on them than the other characters do), or should "specialize" in a particular type of psionic power (such as telekinetic abilities).

**The Rogue**

Gamblers, pirates, con men, smugglers, assassins, thieves, bounty hunters — all are types of rogues who ply the spacelanes, seeking to make a dishonest credit. Some (particularly those who are PCs) really have "hearts of gold" and act heroically when they need to, but most are outright scoundrels who wouldn't hesitate to sell their own grandmothers on the Denebian Slave Exchange if it was worth their while. And that just makes them all the more fun to defeat.

Most rogue characters have Skills like Computer Programming, Concealment, Conversation, Forgery, Gambling, Lockpicking, Security Systems, Seduction, Sleight Of Hand, Stealth, and Streetwise. It all depends on what sort of crimes the rogue prefers. A rogue who makes his money cheating in the star-casinos has a far different set of Skills than a cat burglar or space pirate.

**The Scientist/Technician**

With all the technology featured in *Star Hero,* and all the scientific puzzles characters are likely to encounter, it's not surprising that scientists (and their counterparts, technicians and engineers) crop up frequently as PCs. Armed with a wealth of technology- and science-oriented Skills (Computer Programming, Electronics, Inventor, Science Skills, Systems Operation, and more), they're valuable allies in a setting where keeping the ship's support systems functioning can mean the difference between life and death!

**The Soldier**

Particularly common to the Military SF subgenre (of course), but also frequently appearing in other types of SF, the soldier (be he an actual ground-pounder, a starship naval officer, a fighter pilot, or what have you) can play many roles. As a PC, he usually fights the good fight, protects innocents from aggressive aliens, and helps to guard trade convoys and passenger ships traveling through dangerous areas. As an NPC, he may be an honorable enemy, an amoral mercenary, or simply an opponent the PCs must kill, or be killed by.

Soldier characters usually have lots of WFs, Martial Arts, Stealth, Systems Operation, Tactics, and other Skills useful in military situations.

**The Trader**

Many *Star Hero* characters focus, in whole or in part, on interstellar economics. Usually traveling in small ships they pilot themselves, these traders and merchants seek to buy low, sell high, and beat their rivals to the new markets. Acquiring, securing, and transporting cargo may sound dull, but when the PCs have cutthroat competitors to contend with, it can become a real adventure. And what happens when the valuable cargo itself proves dangerous...?

## Subgenres

Science Fiction has several gaming-friendly subgenres, including:

**Hard SF**

So-called "hard" Science Fiction is SF that pays close attention to "hard" scientific facts, deviating from them as little as possible. Complete scientific accuracy is rarely possible, but the creators of the story do their best to remain as accurate as they can. The resolution of the dilemma or conflict in the story often revolves around solving some scientific mystery.

Hard SF is difficult to pull off in a *Star Hero* campaign, unless the players and the GM alike are all interested in it and all highly scientifically literate. Even then, there's the danger of the game devolving into arguments about scientific "facts" instead of focusing on the creation of a fun story. The GM has to pay close attention, and work hard, to keep the game flowing smoothly.

**Low SF**

Often mingled with Hard SF, Low SF involves the lowest level of technology a story can feature and still qualify as "Science Fiction." There are no blasters; characters fight with advanced ballistic rifles. There's no FTL travel; characters have to cope with vectored thrust drives, sleeper ships, and the like. Humanity may not have even left its own solar system yet. But don't let a lack of advanced technology fool you into thinking the game can't have a grand, epic scope. After all, even though Frank

Herbert's *Dune* features very little high technology, it's a fantastic Science Fiction story.

**Military SF**

Military SF, obviously, focuses on the intersection of military stories and Science Fiction. A Military SF campaign may involve a vast interstellar war in which the PCs play a key role (as in the "Dominion War" story arc on *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*), a group of PCs who are a "special force" of space marines sent out to deal with crises (as with the characters in *Aliens*), a futuristic tank crew (as in David Drake's novel *Hammer's Slammers*), or the like. Military SF stories are often also Hard and/or Low SF stories.

**Space Opera**

The opposite of Low SF, Space Opera features incredibly advanced technology — often tech so marvelous that it embodies Clarke's Law ("Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic"). Disintegration weapons, artificially intelligent computers, FTL travel, teleportation, and more are casual, everyday matters. *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* both represent, to varying degrees, this type of Science Fiction. As a *Star Hero* campaign, Space Opera presents the GM with the problem of finding challenges for the characters which they can't quickly and easily solve with gadgetry.

**Time Travel**

As described above, time travel stories usually involve protagonists who are time travelers themselves, or who encounter a time traveler and have to deal with the ramifications of his actions or the information he brings them. In a roleplaying game context, time travel works best if the PCs themselves are the time travelers (usually with an enemy group of time travelers they have to contend against). Before the game begins, the GM should develop a coherent theory of how Time and time travel function in his campaign, so he can deal with the players' questions and in-game conduct without too many difficulties.

# Sample Characters

To give you an idea of what *Star Hero* characters are like, here are two examples: Hur'shaas, a reptilian space pilot; and Jessica Fivedawns, a Human explorer.

**HUR'SHAAS**

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 15 | CON | 10 | 12- | |
| 13 | BODY | 6 | 12- | |
| 15 | INT | 5 | 12- | PER Roll 12- |
| 10 | EGO | 0 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 13 | PRE | 3 | 12- | PRE Attack: 2½d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 6 | PD | 3 | | Total: 8 PD (2 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 1 | | Total: 6 ED (2 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 30 | END | 0 | | |
| 29 | STUN | 0 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 68** | |

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"
Swimming: 4"/8"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | *Claws:* HKA 1 point (½d6 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 1 |
| 5 | *Sharp Teeth:* HKA 1 point (½d6 with STR) | 1 |
| 6 | *Scaly Skin:* Armor (2 PD/2 ED) | 0 |
| 2 | *Reptilian Form:* Swimming +2" (4" total) | 1 |
| 6 | *Griinoq Senses:* +2 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | *Tail:* Extra Limb, Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼) | 0 |
| | **Perks** | |
| 3 | Fringe Benefit: Galactic Computernet Access Code | |
| | **Talents** | |
| 9 | *Griinoq Dexterousness:* Ambidexterity (no penalties with either hand) | |
| | **Skills** | |
| 6 | +2 with Ship's Weapons | |
| 3 | Computer Programming 13- | |
| 7 | Combat Piloting 15- | |
| 3 | Electronics 12- | |
| 2 | Gambling (Card Games) 12- | |
| 3 | Mechanics 12- | |
| 4 | Navigation (Space) 13- | |
| 3 | Paramedics 12- | |
| 7 | Systems Operation 14- | |
| 2 | TF: Science Fiction & Space Vehicles | |
| 2 | WF: Small Arms | |

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 82**
**Total Cost: 150**

**75+ Disadvantages**

10 Dependence: must keep body at least partly immersed in warm water or suffers Weakness after 20 minutes of dehydration (Very Common)
10 Hunted: enemy pilots 8- (As Pow, Capture/Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Thrillseeker (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Hunts Enemy Pilots (Common, Moderate)
10 Rivalry: Professional And Romantic (with another pilot)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

**TYPICAL EQUIPMENT**

Blaster Pistol (Energy Blast 9d6, 32 shots)
Griinoq starsuit (DEF 4, helps keep body hydrated)

Background/History: Hur'shaas is a Griinoq, a reptilian species from a swampy world in the Perseid arm. Like all Griinoq, he must keep his body moist and hydrated, or he begins to suffer painful (and possibly fatal) dehydration. On the other hand, he's stronger than the average Human, comes equipped with nasty fangs and claws, and has a handy tail and tough skin.

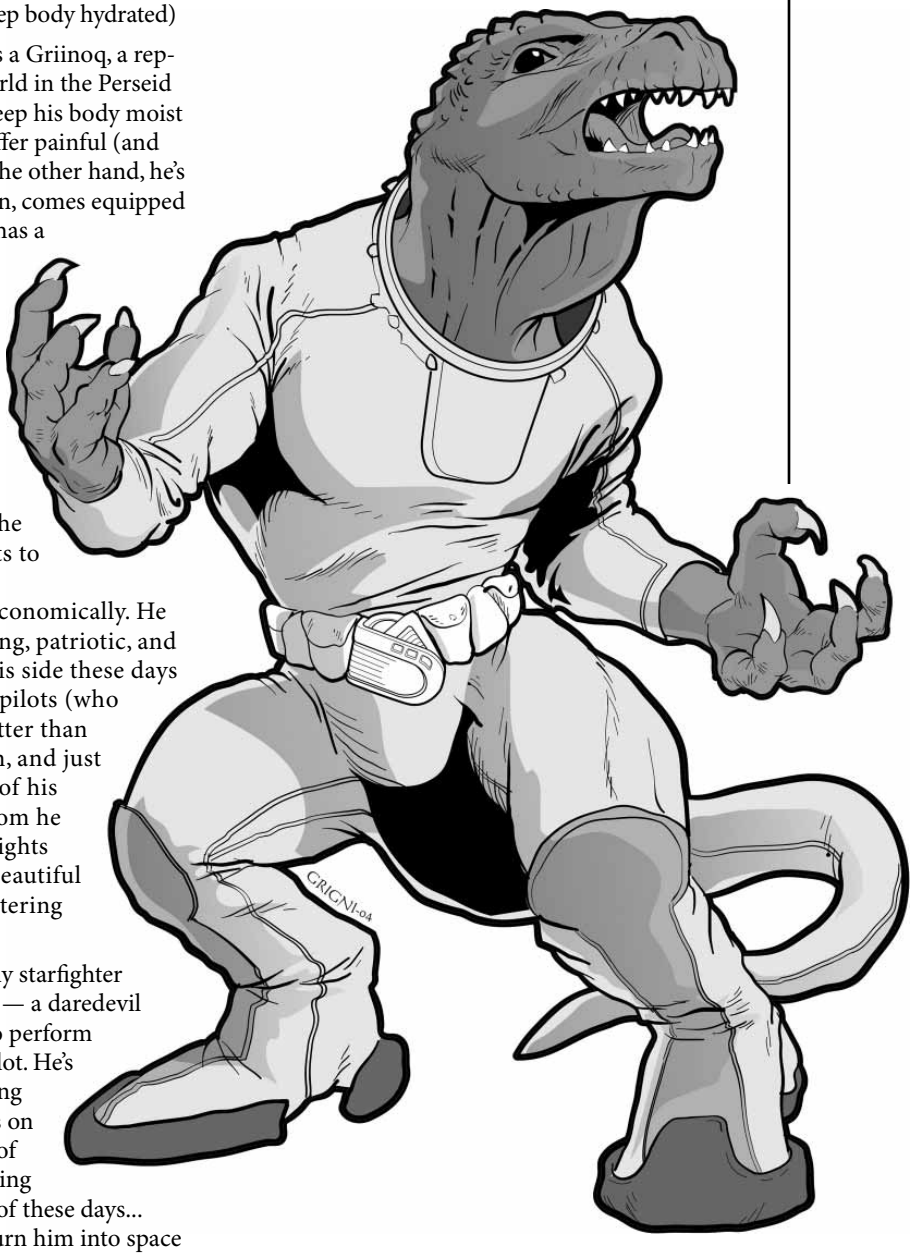
After aptitude tests revealed his qualifications for the Imperial Stellar Navy, Hur'shaas enrolled in the Piloting Academy, where he quickly distinguished himself. Since graduation, he's helped the Stellar Navy prosecute its long war against the forces of the Interstellar League, which wants to cut off the Empire's trading routes and strangle it economically. He enjoys his job a lot — it's exciting, patriotic, and romantic. The only thorns in his side these days are those pesky League fighter pilots (who don't seem to learn that he's better than they are, keep trying to kill him, and just get killed themselves) and one of his fellow Imperial pilots, with whom he competes over number of dogfights won and the affections of the beautiful bartender at the spaceport's watering hole.

Personality/Motivation: Like many starfighter pilots, Hur'shaas is a thrillseeker — a daredevil who'll risk his ship and his life to perform some stunt or out-do another pilot. He's earned a bit of a reputation among his squadron for his daring raids on the League's capital ships. Some of his friends are concerned he's going to stick his neck out too far one of these days... and then the League's going to turn him into space debris.

Quote: "Hsss, four fighterss coming in high and back on you, Commander! I'll get 'em!"

Powers/Tactics: Hur'shaas has received extensive starfighter pilot training at the Imperial Piloting Academy. He's qualified to fly any type of starship used in Imperial space, but most of his training specifically involves starfighters. If he's forced down, his priorities are to (a) preserve the integrity of his starsuit (so he doesn't dehydrate), and (b) use his blaster to defend himself until his distress beacon summons help. If the blaster runs out of energy-charge, he can resort to his claws and fangs if he must, though he finds this somewhat distasteful.

Appearance: Hur'shaas is a tall, slender reptilian humanoid, with a lizard-like face, long, flexible tail, and scaly skin with a pattern of dull green and dull orange. His hands have short claws, and his teeth are sharp.





## JESSICA FIVEDAWNS

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | STR | 0 | 11- | Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1] |
| 15 | DEX | 15 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 16 | CON | 12 | 12- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 18 | INT | 8 | 13- | PER Roll 13- |
| 12 | EGO | 4 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 12 | COM | 1 | 11- | |
| 5 | PD | 3 | | Total: 8 PD (3 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 2 | | Total: 8 ED (3 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 5 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 5 | REC | 0 | | |
| 32 | END | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 5 | **Total Characteristics Cost: 64** | |

**Movement:** Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 3"/6"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | *Weak Psychokinesis:* Telekinesis (4 STR) | 1 |

*Martial Arts: Commando Training*

| | Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Aikido Throw | +0 | +1 | 2d6 + vel/5, Target Falls |
| 4 | Boxing Cross | +0 | +2 | 4d6 |
| 4 | Choke | -2 | +0 | Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2) |
| 4 | Escape | +0 | +0 | 25 STR vs. Grabs |
| 4 | Judo Disarm | -1 | +1 | Disarm, 20 STR |
| 4 | Karate "Chop" | -2 | +0 | ½d6 HKA (1d6+1 with STR) |
| 4 | Kung Fu Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | *Swift:* Running +1" (7" total) | 1 |
| 1 | *Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +1" (3" total) | 1 |

**Perks**

2 Contact: Wulfram McGee 11- (a free trader)
3 Fringe Benefit: Galactic Computernet Access Code

**Talents**

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
3 Lightsleep

**Skills**

3 Bureaucratics 12-
3 Combat Piloting 12-
3 Computer Programming 13-
3 Electronics 12-
3 Navigation (Land, Space) 13-
2 SS: Biology 11-
2 SS: Geology 11-
3 Stealth 12-
6 Survival (Mountains, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 13-
3 Systems Operation 13-
2 TF: Science Fiction & Space Vehicles
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 86**
**Total Cost: 150**

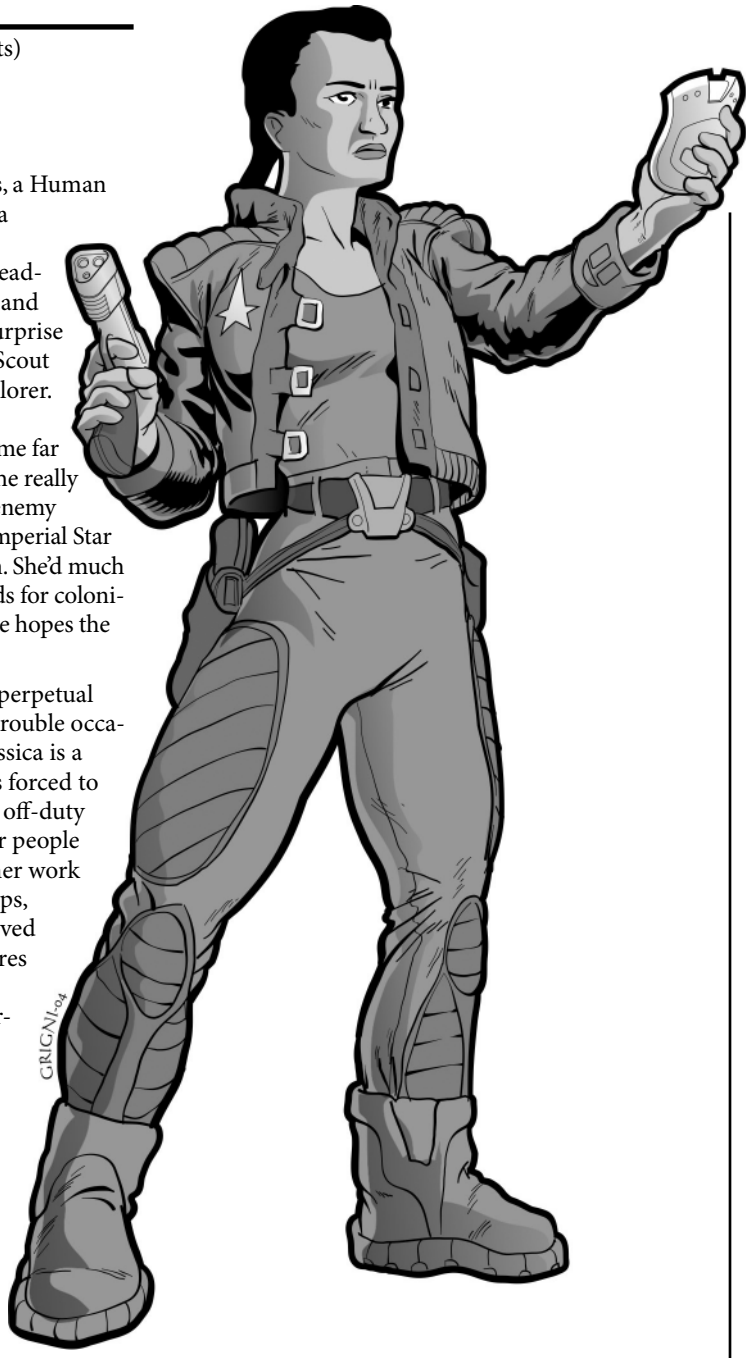
**75+ Disadvantages**

15 Hunted: enemy scouts 11- (As Pow, Capture/Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Wanderlust; Wants To Know What's Over The Next Horizon (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Hunts Enemy Scouts (Common, Moderate)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with another explorer), Rival is More Powerful
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
5 Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (her psychokinetic power) (Occasionally, Minor)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

**TYPICAL EQUIPMENT**

Blaster Pistol (Energy Blast 9d6, 32 shots)
Scout armor (DEF 2)
Machete (HKA 1d6)
Field Sensor Unit




Background/History: Jessica Fivedawns, a Human of Cheyenne ancestry, has always had a nomadic soul. Even as a child, she was constantly wandering off to explore meadows and forests, instead of staying put and playing in her family's yard. It didn't surprise anyone when she joined the Imperial Scout Service and became a professional explorer.

Since the war with the Interstellar League broke out, Jessica's job has become far more militarized than she'd like. Now she really has to act like a scout — she monitors enemy movements, finds new worlds for the Imperial Star Navy to use as forward bases, and so on. She'd much rather go back to looking for new worlds for colonization or scientific examination, and she hopes the war ends soon.

Personality/Motivation: Except for her perpetual wanderlust, which tends to get her in trouble occasionally (especially in time of war!), Jessica is a fairly ordinary person. As a scout, she's forced to be a loner by profession, so when she's off-duty she enjoys spending time around other people in space stations and starports. Since her work doesn't allow for long-term relationships, she's developed a habit of getting involved in short-term romantic flings; she figures when she finds a man who makes her want to stay home instead of go exploring, that will be the time to quit the Scout Service.

Quote: "Hmmm, that's an interesting reading. Looks like a potentially breathable atmosphere. C'mon, Ship, let's go take a look!"

Powers/Tactics: Aside from standard scout training, which includes basic weapons use and hand-to-hand combat skills, Jessica doesn't have any combat abilities. But she does have one unique power that often makes her job easier — low-strength psychokinesis. She's had it since she was 18 years old, when it suddenly manifested for no reason she could discern. Since she doesn't want to run the risk of being involuntarily inducted into the Imperial Psionic Institute (even though that would mean more pay and privileges), she keeps this power secret.

Appearance: Jessica Fivedawns is a 5'6" tall woman with long, straight black hair often tied back in a braid. When not in her scout armor, she typically wears pilot jumpsuits and other such unisex clothing.

# OTHER GENRES

Although the seven genres described above are certainly the most common ones found in roleplaying games, they're not the only ones — and since the *HERO System* can simulate any genre, gamers often use it to create unusual campaigns taking place in strange setting and eras. Some other genres you can play with the *HERO System* include:

## Horror

A *Horror Hero* game involves suspense, paranoia, and of course fear. Characters are typically Standard Heroic PCs (at best) — if they're much more powerful than that, it becomes hard to frighten them. Typically they hunt monsters, investigate occult conspiracies, and cope with similar threats to life, mind, and soul. Given the *HERO System*'s flexibility, GMs can use it to tailor monsters and other threats to suit the campaign and give the players the maximum scare.

To represent the long-term problems caused by stress and sustained fear, many *Horror Hero* GMs come up with a new Figured Characteristic to represent a character's capacity to withstand the effects of horror. For example, you might create a *Sanity* (SAN) Figured Characteristic, derived from EGO + (PRE/2) + (CON/2). Characters lose Sanity like they lose STUN, but only from effects that are particularly terrifying, gruesome, or disturbing — the GM assigns a "Sanity Damage" rating (in d6) to each such phenomena. If a character drops to 0 SAN, he snaps and becomes completely insane (and an NPC under the GM's control) until he recovers his wits. Characters may regain lost SAN with REC, just like STUN, but do not get Post-Segment 12 Recoveries and can only make SAN Recoveries when they are in calming, non-stressful, non-frightening situations (*i.e.,* rarely in the middle of a scenario, but only between adventures). Many other versions of SAN (or the like) are possible; each GM sets it up to represent the feelings of horror he most wants to simulate.

## Post-Apocalyptic

After society collapses — typically due to nuclear war, biological warfare, or some other holocaust that leaves the world in ruins — scattered tribes of people trying to eke out a living, scavengers, radiation-altered mutants, and the like are all that remains on Earth. This is the world of *Post-Apocalypse Hero,* the sort of setting depicted in Paul Williams's *Pelbar Cycle* novels, the *Thundarr The Barbarian* cartoon, and the movie *The Road Warrior.*




Post-apocalypse games (actually a variant of Science Fiction) are usually Standard Heroic campaigns, though the GM may allow more points if he wants all (or most) of the characters to have beneficial mutations or other strange powers. To set the campaign up, the GM needs to decide on several things, including: what caused society to collapse; how advanced was society when the collapse occurred; how much time has passed since the collapse; what is society (or various societies) like now? He may need to institute special rules for mutations (for example, maybe anyone with a mutation must also take a Dependence, Susceptibility, or other specified Disadvantage), technology (the knowledge of which may largely have been lost), and if he wants it to exist, magic.

## Swashbuckling

Bold musketeers swinging from chandeliers and dueling each other with rapiers. The pirates of the Spanish Main. Court intrigue in the time of Richelieu. Such is the stuff of swashbuckling adventure!

Both *Swashbuckling Hero,* which focuses on adventures in Europe (particularly France) in the early 1600s, and *Pirate Hero,* which focuses on the golden age of piracy in the Caribbean and the Atlantic, cover this genre/time period. Both use Standard Heroic characters, with few or no "weird" elements (unless the GM wants to introduce voodoo- or alchemy-like magic just to liven things up a bit). Most characters have Fencing (or similar styles) as a Martial Art, but social skills are every bit as important as martial ones (at least in Europe). Adventures feature court intrigue, ship-to-ship combat, war in Europe, and exploration of the New World.

## Victorian

The Victorian era — typically meaning, for adventure gaming purposes, the latter half of the 1800s (particularly 1880-1900) — is similar to the pulp era in many respects. The world is opening up, but by no means fully open; there are lots of strange, unexplored places for adventurers to visit, and mysteries for them to plumb. Technology is advancing, and many wondrous devices are possible, but technology is nowhere near as prevalent or powerful as it is in the modern day. This is the world depicted in the writings of Verne, Wells, Haggard, Stevenson, and Doyle.

*Victorian Hero* campaigns are typically Standard Heroic campaigns. Most start in, or are based in, London, the greatest city in the world during this era — though travel is as common, and as interesting, as in pulp times. Magic and other "weird" phenomena rarely make an appearance, though "steampunk" science sometimes does (GMs may need to come up with special rules for technology, to simulate the right "feel" and prevent characters from trying to do things like design lasers or the Internet a century early).

## Western

Who can resist the allure of the Wild West, with its gun-toting cowboys, wild Indians, gold fever, vast unexplored lands, range wars, gambling, and vicious desperadoes in need of a good bullet-knockin'? In a *Western Hero* campaign, you can relive this amazing era and its adventures. *Western Hero* games usually have Standard Heroic characters (unless the GM introduces weird elements, like steampunk technology or magic, in which case he may want characters to have more points to work with).



# RECOMMENDED CAMPAIGN STANDARDS

| Genre | Type | Base Points | Disadvantage Points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ccomic book superheroes (Champions) | | | |
| Golden Age Champions | Superheroic | 150 | 100 |
| Silver Age Champions | Superheroic | 150 | 100 |
| Bronze Age Champions | Superheroic | 200 | 150 |
| Iron Age Champions | Superheroic | 200 | 150 |
| Galactic Champions | Superheroic | 400 | 200 |
| Teen Champions | Superheroic | 100 | 100 |
| Cyberpunk Science Fiction (Cyber Hero) | Heroic | 75-100 | 75-100 |
| Fantasy (Fantasy Hero) | | | |
| Crossworlds Fantasy | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Epic Fantasy | Heroic | 75-100 | 75-100 |
| High Fantasy | Heroic | 75-100 | 75-100 |
| Low Fantasy | Heroic | 50-75 | 50-75 |
| Swords And Sorcery | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Urban Fantasy | Heroic | 25-75 | 25-75 |
| Martial Arts (Ninja Hero) | | | |
| Realistic Martial Arts | Heroic | 50-75 | 50-75 |
| Cinematic Martial Arts | Heroic | 100-125 | 100-125 |
| Wuxia Martial Arts | Superheroic | 150-200 | 100-150 |
| Video Game Martial Arts | Superheroic | 200 | 150 |
| Anime Martial Arts | Superheroic | 150-300 | 100-150 |
| Modern-Day Action-Adventure (Dark Champions) | | | |
| Vigilante Crimefighting | Heroic | 100 | 100 |
| Dark Champions: The Animated Series | Superheroic | 150 | 100 |
| Espionage | Heroic | 75-100 | 75-100 |
| Law Enforcement | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Military Action/Special Ops | Heroic | 100 | 100 |
| Weird Conspiracy | Heroic | 50-75 | 50-75 |
| Pulp (Pulp Hero) | | | |
| Crimebusting | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Globetrotting Exploration | Heroic | 100 | 100 |
| Masked Mystery Men | Heroic | 100 | 100 |
| Science Fiction (Star Hero) | | | |
| Hard Science Fiction | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Low Science Fiction | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Military Science Fiction | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Space Opera | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Time Travel | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Miscellaneous Genres | | | |
| Horror | Heroic | 25-75 | 25-75 |
| Post-Apocalyptic | Heroic | 50-75 | 50-75 |
| Swashbuckling | Heroic | 75 | 75 |
| Victorian | Heroic | 75-100 | 75-100 |
| Western | Heroic | 50-75 | 50-75 |

chapter six:



# GAMEMASTERING

# GAMEMASTERING HERO



This chapter discusses the skills of gamemastering (GMing) the *HERO System.* Of course, GMing is an art, not a science, so not every piece of advice or suggestion in this chapter may be of help to you. Read it, decide which suggestions you like, or sound like they're worth a try, or that will or won't work in your game, and accept or reject them accordingly. After all, it's your campaign, so you only have to use the rules and ideas you want to use to establish the "flavor" you're seeking.

## CREATING THE CAMPAIGN

Before you begin to run a gaming campaign using the *HERO System* rules, you need a campaign world/setting in which to run it. Creating a fun, exciting, and challenging campaign is one of the most fun aspects of GMing.

### Campaign Ground Rules

Before you put pen to paper and start creating antagonists, organizations, locations, and NPCs, take a few minutes to think about what you *want* in this campaign. First and most importantly, determine the "ground rules" you want or need to establish to make the campaign run the way you want it to. Many of these will apply to character creation — such as Active Point limits on powers — and are discussed below. But you need to address many other questions before you begin creating your world, because the answers will influence how you go about the process of creation.

For example, do you want the player characters (PCs) to work together as a group? Do you want them to be able to work well with the authorities (be they the King and his guards, the police, or the Galactic Patrol)? If you answer both of these questions "Yes," not only do you need to let the players know — to prevent them from designing "loner" characters on the run from the law — but you need to craft a world and a campaign in which the ground rules support what you want the PCs to be and do. If you want a bright, shiny, well-respected team of PCs who work closely with the Powers That Be, you need to provide for a justification for them to, for example, have the respect of said Powers. Just telling them, "You're a team, here's your base, and you all have to buy these "Police Powers" Perks," is a quick and dirty way around the problem, but it bypasses a lot of opportunities for creating interesting background details and encouraging roleplaying.

Another important issue is whether the PCs should all have some sort of common background. For example, maybe you want to run a game in which all of the PCs are mutants, or wizards, or members of the Galactic Patrol, or who got their powers in a common accident or event. If so, this affects your world design and the players' design process for their characters, so you need to know in advance.

Other questions you should address include:

—What level of lethal force does the campaign involve? Should the players not design characters who are capable of or willing to kill their enemies — is the use of lethal force Absolutely Forbidden? Or is lack of a Killing Attack and a willingness to use it going to brand the character as a weakling and a wimp?

—What preconceptions do you have about the world or the genre? It's extremely important to make sure the players know about these. For example, are all ninjas or ogres incredibly powerful antagonists who should be taken very seriously, or are they comic relief? Does having mental powers or knowing how to cast spells almost always mean having psychological problems as well? Is a particular type of character (such as mutants or half-orcs) especially hated or beloved? If you're basing your campaign in "the real world," or a published game setting, have any important landmarks or historical events changed?

Once you've established what the ground rules are, *write them down and distribute them to your players.* Ground rules and guidelines known only to the GM, or invoked only after a player has put considerable effort into creating a character who violates the ground rules, aren't very useful — in fact, they're often counterproductive. Letting the players know about the ground rules in advance will save work and hard feelings later.

### Choosing And Creating The Setting

Once you've established the ground rules, you can move on to the creation of the campaign world or setting itself. This discussion assumes you're not going to use a published setting. There are a lot of benefits to using a pregenerated world — most of the work has been done for you, for one — but not every GM likes to use them.

As a first step, decide just what type of setting/campaign you want to run. Often the GM decides this as soon as he decides he wants to run a campaign. If you plan to run a *Champions* campaign, is it going to be the Golden Age? A '70s-era setting? '90s-era? A "graphic novel"? A "teen heroes" campaign? Each of these places its own demands on the PCs and the world. Will the game take place in one city, or will the PCs fight crime all over the world, or even all over the galaxy? Obviously the latter two choices require the GM to define a much larger chunk of creation than does the first.

Another important consideration is to find out what the *players* want. After all, they're going to be the other major participants in the gaming process, and they're going to contribute to the creation of the world. If none of the players want to play in your sweeping epic Fantasy campaign, then don't run one, as much as you'd like to. If they insist on a serious tone, give them one, even if you hoped for comedy. Of course, the GM's desires are equally important — running a game you don't enjoy is pointless — but since one of the main goals is to entertain the players, give them what they want.

## CAMPAIGN TONE

Once you've settled on the type of campaign/setting, you should determine what sort of tone you want the campaign to have. This includes campaign morality, realism, outlook, and seriousness.

### Morality

Although frequently overlooked, morality is an important campaign element. It offers copious opportunities for roleplaying, character development, and story creation. It can turn what would otherwise be nothing more than a series of encounters where the PCs use flashy attacks on The Bad Guys without much appreciation for the deeper context and meaning of their actions into an intriguing examination of why they do what they do, and how they justify it.

Is the morality in your campaign going to be black and white — characters are either Evil or Good, and moral choices are always easy? Or are there shades of grey to the game, giving rise to doubt and conflict? Obviously the former choice is easier for GMs and players to deal with — sometimes players don't want to be confronted with moral choices. They're difficult, after all, and some players would rather not be forced to make those decisions.

Black and white morality works very well for many types of campaigns, such as Golden Age *Champions* campaigns or some types of epic Fantasy, where events and characters are "larger than life." However, black and white morality isn't very realistic, and it may seem "two-dimensional" to players — if the only choice are A or B, there often isn't much depth to the situation, or much of a challenge, either. It also deprives the players of the opportunity to design characters with a little "grey" in them.

## EIGHT PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING AND APPLYING THE *HERO SYSTEM* RULES

Like fans of any roleplaying game system, *HERO System* gamers often find themselves trying to interpret a rule they don't understand, or an interaction between two rules which this rulebook doesn't specifically discuss. Here are some guidelines for rules interpretation:

1. The rules are designed to help you have fun: If a particular rule makes the game less fun for you, that rule isn't working well for you. Change it. Similarly, ignore "letter of the rules" arguments in favor of interpretations that make the game more enjoyable.

2. Any and all rules are subject to change: The GM can change any rule to improve the game. The written rules are just guidelines and suggestions; change them to suit yourself, to make your games more exciting, dramatic, and fun.

3. Just because something isn't explicitly forbidden doesn't mean it's allowed: No game designer could think of every possible permutation, combination, interpretation, or use of the *HERO System* rules, so situations may arise in your game that the creators of these rules didn't foresee. While it's *usually* safe to assume that something which isn't forbidden is allowed, the final decision is *always* up to the GM. If he doesn't want to interpret or use the rules the way you want to, his decision governs.

4. Just because something is explicitly forbidden doesn't mean you can't do it (with the GM's permission): Conversely, even though the rules say you can't do something, the GM can relax that restriction if he feels it would be justified to do so. For example, the rules say you can't apply the *No Normal Defense* Advantage to the *Entangle* Power. But if a player came up with an idea for an NND Entangle the GM felt was a good one that didn't unbalance the game, he could allow the player to buy that power for his character.

5. Consider the special effects involved: One of the bedrock principles of the *HERO System* is that the special effects of a Power or action are crucial when determining how to build an ability and how that ability works. They influence the Powers and Power Modifiers used to create weapons, superpowers, spells, high technology, and the like, and the effects those abilities and equipment have in the game. Rather than looking just to the letter of the rules to determine how a Power works, or how two Powers interact, examine the special effects as well. In most situations you shouldn't allow special effects to provide as many benefits or restrictions as full-fledged Advantages and Limitations, but they should have some effect on the situation.

6. Don't waste time worrying about the "exact right way" to build an ability: Rather than fretting over whether you've built a particular ability, spell, power, or the like "correctly," do your best job to figure out how to build what you want with the *HERO System* rules (or, if necessary, have the GM build it for you). Then let it work the way you want it to; don't worry about whether you're "right." It's your game, so however you want to do it is "right."

7. Use your dramatic sense: Don't let the rules get in the way of creating a fun, exciting story. If the rules as written diminish the drama of the game, ignore or change them (either permanently, or on a case-by-case basis). For example, if it would be more dramatic for Professor Barnes to wake up right before the burglars escape with his new invention, let him — even if the rules say he wouldn't get to take any Recoveries yet.

8. Use your common sense: Above all else, when you interpret the *HERO System* rules, use your common sense. Nothing ruins a game faster than applying the rules "by the book" regardless of what common sense says. If your common sense tells you that a character can commit suicide by shooting himself in the head with a small pistol, then let him, even if the rules say he can't possibly do enough damage that way to kill himself with a single shot.

Grey morality works better for many '90s-era or "graphic novel" *Champions* campaigns, *Cyber Hero, Dark Champions, Danger International,* and Fantasy campaigns involving lots of political machinations and Byzantine intrigue — campaigns where the PCs themselves may not be very distinguishable from their antagonists. In this sort of setting, the PCs may have trouble telling friend from foe. In the hands of a good GM and players, "greyness" creates numerous opportunities for roleplaying and storytelling. Exploring ethical and moral issues in this sort of campaign can lead to some fascinating games, and allows the players to create characters with moral dilemmas in their backgrounds and actions.



**Realism**

"Realism" signifies the level of drama and "romance" your game has. This means how likely it is that characters can attempt outrageous, improbable, and downright dangerous actions and succeed, because they are dramatic and exciting — even though in a highly "realistic" game these actions would probably fail. In a "romantic" game, characters can swing from chandeliers, recover from deadly wounds, and achieve the impossible — because the campaign allows for it. The drawback is that it can be difficult to instill fear in the characters, or challenge them, since they know they can do almost anything.

Characters in games with a greater slant towards "realism" won't have this advantage — they'll have to be very cautious about taking risks or attempting outrageous stunts, since they're not likely to work. Some modern comic books, which attempt to portray the "actual" effects of superpowers (*i.e.,* people being mutilated, killed and warped by superpowered attacks), show this sort of high level of "realism." *Dark Champions* campaigns often thrive on it. This approach may appeal to GMs and players who like to emphasize the tactical elements of game combat, or who enjoy stories dealing with the ramifications of their characters' actions.

**Outlook And Seriousness**

Outlook refers to the level of optimism inherent in the campaign. Can the characters make a difference in the world? Is there hope for victory, for a better tomorrow, for success against overwhelming odds? If so, the campaign has a positive outlook. On the other hand, the game might be set in a world that's turned into a sewer — everything is rotten and corrupt, life stinks, and the characters aren't really going to be able to make any lasting changes. What victories they do achieve will be Pyrrhic, meaningless, or temporary. This sort of campaign has a very negative outlook, and unless that's what the players want, you run the risk of driving them away.

Seriousness refers to the level of comedy in the campaign. Virtually every gaming campaign involves some joking around — after all, the people involved in the game are friends, so kidding around is natural. But some campaigns actively seek to promote lightheartedness, or even goofiness. Such campaigns are highly romantic, and the characters are usually caricatures designed solely for getting a laugh. Conversely, some campaigns try to maintain a high level of seriousness. This can be difficult, because of the natural tendency for gamers to joke around, but it is possible. As with negative outlook and grey morality, not all players want to be confronted with "serious" gaming, so the GM should make sure that the players like such a tone before using it in the game.

Of course, you can vary the level of seriousness in a game sometimes. The occasional "comic relief" scenario can spice up an otherwise grim-and-gritty campaign nicely. Life isn't all bad, you know.

**Creating Details; The Importance Of The Player Characters**

There are some facets of the campaign world that are going to be important to almost *every* player, and to you. These are the sorts of things that you need to spend some time creating. Examples usually include government and law enforcement organizations, media organizations, weapons technology, key NPCs, especially picturesque or interesting locations (just right for dramatic fight scenes!), the existence (and nature) of magic, and so on. Putting in a little work before the campaign begins to flesh out these aspects of the game world will be rewarded threefold later on when you can bring a previously-created detail into play without having to stop in mid-game to figure out what the Chief of Police's name is or whether the Fomalhauti have FTL drives.

One particularly crucial issue for any campaign is: *how important are the PCs?* While the PCs are clearly the focus of the *campaign,* are they the focus of the *campaign world?* This relates in part to how common characters with their level of power and ability are. For example, in a *Champions* campaign, if superhumans are common, it lessens the PCs' impact; if they're rare, their impact on the world is disproportionate to their numbers or their level of power. Also, if the PCs are powerful, they're likely to have a greater impact on the world as a

whole — if they're just 200-point supers fighting street crime in East Chicago, the United Nations isn't likely to pay much attention to them. If they're 600-point heroes capable of saving the world five times before lunch, people and governments will sit up and take notice of them. However, low-power heroes with local concerns may very well end up with the key to saving the world, so watch out....

Only in campaigns where the heroes are all-important — typically games in which they're the only superheroes (or are clearly the most powerful wizards, warriors, space explorers, or whatever) — will the rest of the campaign world hang on their every word and deed. Governments will take their advice and turn to them for help. Their every action will have consequences, and they'll experience media and government scrutiny at every turn.

In games where the PCs are important, but not all-important, they can sometimes affect the world, and sometimes have the ear of governments and other Important Persons, but they're not the be-all-and-end-all of the world. Crucial things happen that they're not involved with, and there may be other groups of characters as powerful or more powerful than they are (which is important if they ever need any help — all-important heroes don't have that luxury). The PCs may be able to affect change, but such changes are more likely to be regional or local than world-wide. This level of importance offers you the best of both worlds — the PCs have some of the importance and renown that they crave, but are unable to wreak complete havoc with your carefully designed world.

In some games, the PCs are completely unimportant. They may be low-powered, or they may be members of an enormous community of like individuals, or they may be outlaws who cannot affect the world. In short, the PCs' actions are not likely to have much lasting effect on the game world. Most players don't like this particular situation, so few game campaigns use it. However, it can be a worthwhile approach for GMs and players who are more interested in character development, interaction, and storytelling than accomplishing world-altering deeds.

# THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

Once your world is ready to go, it's time to let the players start designing their characters.

## Participating In The Character Creation Process

For the most part, you can leave character creation to the players. However, leaving it *entirely* up to the players often invites disaster. Unless the players are all highly mature, skilled, knowledgeable, and creative gamers, it's important for you to involve yourself in the character creation process to ensure that the characters are acceptable.

### LIMITING AND DISTINGUISHING THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

First and foremost, you as GM need to decide what limits, if any, you want to place on character design. At the most basic level, you must determine how many points the players have to build their characters on, how many Disadvantages they can take, and so forth. But there's more to it than that.

#### Restrictions On Player Characters

Sometimes you'll want to place more restrictions on the PCs than just the number of points they're built on. Without restrictions, many players will pump most of their points into godawful powerful attacks and defenses, rather than designing well-rounded and intriguing characters with interesting abilities.

Many GMs limit the number of Active Points that a character can have in any one attack or power. Sixty points is a common limit, though some GMs use 40 points, 75 points, or even 100 points. It depends in large part on the type of campaign you're running and the power level you want the characters to have. However, it should also depend on the level of creativity you want the characters to display. In the *HERO System,* coming up with clever and creative powers often requires the application of Advantages that drive the cost of a power far beyond 60 points, even though its effectiveness is not correspondingly as high (on the average). If you establish a points cap, display a little leeway on it if a player has a good idea that won't unbalance the campaign.

Other things you might want to limit include: amount of defense; amount of Resistant Defense; sensory powers; Skill Levels (particularly Overall Levels or specialized Levels, such as DCV Levels, Range Skill Levels, or Levels with especially effective maneuvers); Movement Powers; Skill Rolls; Combat Values; Damage Classes; DEX; INT; and SPD. The table on page 28 provides suggested guidelines for many of these.

However, there are perils to imposing limits on the characters. Suppose you decree that no one can have more than 60 Active Points in attacks. Suddenly, all the characters become boringly alike in terms of their attacks — everyone is rolling 12d6. Yawn. Even worse, when one of the play-

ers wants to create a character who has a special attack — for example, a wizard with a limited-use spell which is much more effective than his standard enchantments — he can't do it, because there's a cap on damage.

You should also make sure that each character has his own "schtick" and that no character steps on another character's toes too much. If there's already one flame-based energy projector in the game, don't allow another player to create a flame-based character, unless both players agree that it's all right. If one character is the stealth expert or computer wizard, don't allow another character to equal his skills in his chosen area of expertise. Every player likes to feel that his character is special in some way.

**Building Balanced Characters**

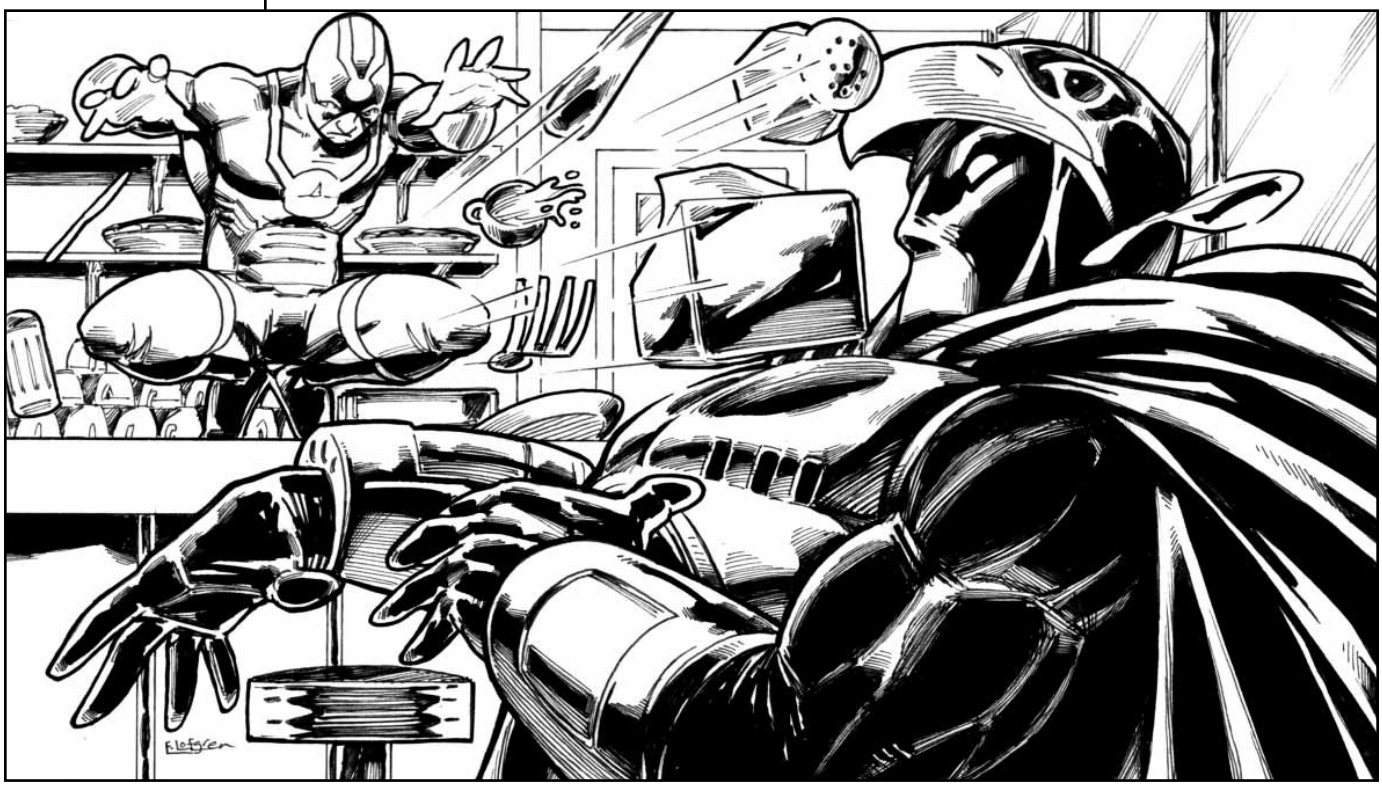
The concept of "balanced" characters was mentioned above. One of the most important reasons for you to be involved in the player character creation process is to ensure that all of the characters are "balanced" — in other words, to make sure that (a) no character is more effective, on the average, than any other character, and (b) that no character possesses a power or powers that lets him wreak havoc on the game.

Theoretically, in a properly constructed points-based gaming system, any X points spent on one power or ability should be equally as effective as X points spent on any other power or ability, in the long run. Obviously in certain situations, particular characters or abilities are especially useful or powerful, but on the average, all abilities of equal point cost should have equal effectiveness. Unfortunately, practical experience shows that this is not always the case. Certain abilities — high STR, high SPD, high defenses, or Mental Powers, for example — prove disproportionately effective in many campaigns. If you've found this to be the case, you need to limit those powers in some way to make sure they don't affect the balance of the campaign.

Some GMs take the heavy-handed tactic of simply forbidding the PCs to buy certain powers. Resist the temptation to do this; it restricts player creativity, and the scope of creativity offered to players and GMs is the *HERO System*'s greatest asset. Similarly, don't restrict certain powers to "villains and NPCs only"; that's extremely unfair to the players. Instead, limit Active Points by character type or power, as discussed above, or impose restrictions on the use of powers that are subject to abuse. For example, if high SPDs are giving you grief, require characters with high SPDs to have an END cost on all their powers. Make it clear to the players in advance which powers you consider potentially abusive, and how you've solved the problem — and if your solution doesn't work, you reserve the right to require them to make retroactive changes to their characters.

Another aspect of character balance concerns where characters spend their points. If a character spends all of his points on attacks, defenses, and similar combat abilities, not only will he be unbalancingly powerful in combat situations, he'll become bored when there isn't a fight going on, because he won't be able to do anything. Make sure characters aren't "one-dimensional" — that they can do things in many different situations. Few campaigns involve nothing but combat, or nothing but sneaking around, or nothing but NPC interaction and romantic intrigue. A good campaign involves elements of *all* of these things, and more, and a well-developed character can fight on all of these battlefields.

On a related point, don't overlook the importance of Skills. Skills help round out a character



— make him a real person with a job, hobbies, and interests — instead of just a cardboard combat machine. In some situations, like sneaking into an enemy's castle, Skills are as useful as, or more useful than, any Power... and they're a lot more fun to role-play besides. Knowledge is power, and in the *HERO System,* Skills show what a character knows. As a good rule of thumb, players should spend at least 10% of a character's points on Skills. Some of those Skills should be "useless" Skills — Skills that only help to define the character and which rarely have a game effect. Examples typically include PS: Play Chess, KS: World Literature, TF: Skiing, and the like. A good GM rewards players who develop their characters this way by occasionally giving them the chance to use their "useless" Skills in the game.

**Fleshing Out The Characters**

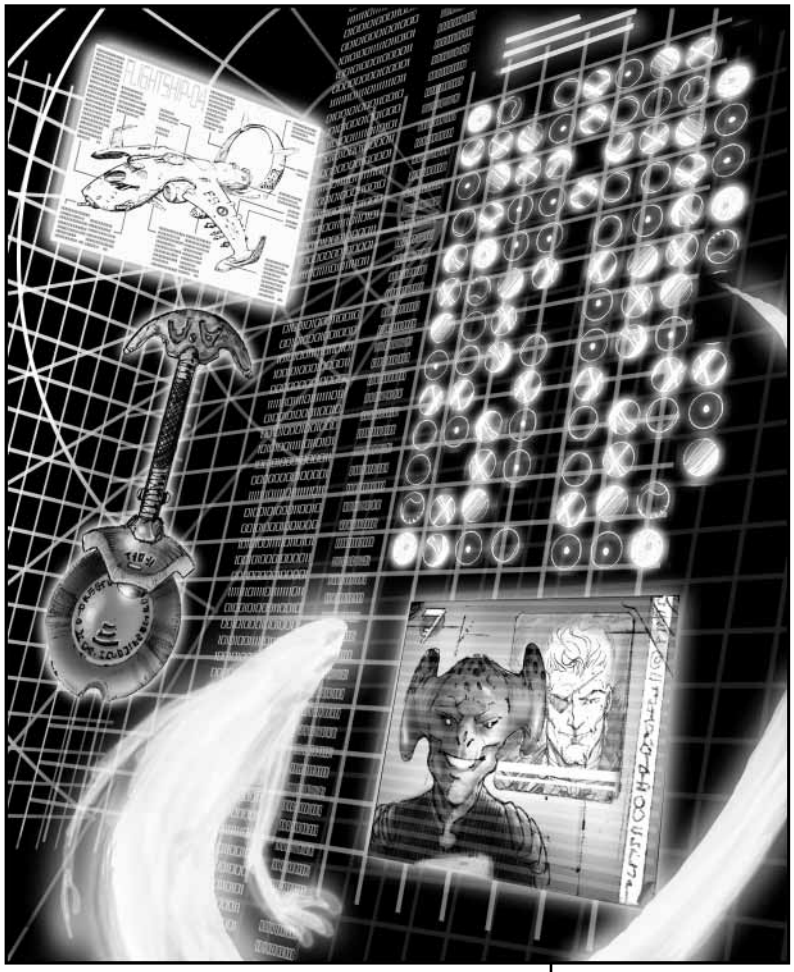
Once all the players have their characters' numbers down on paper, it's time to look behind the numbers. Each player should provide you with a background for his character, information on his motivations and psychology, descriptions of how his abilities or powers work (if necessary), and a description of the character (or better yet, a picture of him, if there's an artist in your group). If a player can't come up with an interesting "background story" about his character that intrigues you, you're losing scenario fodder. The PCs should be one of your most fertile sources of story ideas, but every GM has difficulty telling stories about characters he doesn't like. A character background that doesn't give you some "hooks" to tie the character into the game and build stories around is a character background that's worthless in game terms (however interesting a story it might be).

**Character Motivation And Campaign Compatibility**

One of the worst things you can confront as GM is a character who has no motivation to be a hero. Characters who aren't willing to act heroically or who only use their abilities in mercenary ways spoil your game if it's about Being A Hero and Fighting Evil. Unless the tone of the game suits such characters, you'll just become frustrated and aggravated trying to get them to participate and be part of the campaign.

Make sure all the players know what you have in mind regarding heroic motivations — are they necessary or not? They can range from *noblesse oblige,* to a simplistic Desire To Do Good, to being fated by the gods to save the world, to an effort to take revenge on the underworld because criminals inflicted some tragedy on the character, to any of a dozen others. As long as it gives you a hook to draw the character into the story on a regular basis, it works.

Similarly, make sure characters are compatible with the other goals and themes of the campaign. If the ultimate goal of the campaign is to overthrow the evil Star Empire, and one of the characters has some innate interest in seeing the Empire upheld (perhaps he's the child of a powerful noble and likes the wealth and privileges), then that character probably isn't going to fit into the campaign. There are exceptions — perhaps the player wants to develop a story around the character in which he learns there's more to life than wealth and privilege — but examine any character whose motivations conflict with the themes of the campaign very carefully.



## Controlling Character Power And Growth

It's difficult to try to make sure that each PC is balanced — powerful enough for the player to have fun and emulate the source material (comics, novels, and movies) which inspires him, yet not so powerful that he makes the game less fun for the other players. This problem starts as soon as players begin designing characters. Providing guidelines for character creation, as discussed above, and making sure the players follow them strictly, is usually a good step toward having a balanced campaign. An experienced GM will have an instinctive "feel" for what is balanced and what is unbalancingly powerful; a novice GM has to develop this capacity through experience.

It's more difficult to maintain character balance over time, as the characters gain Experience Points and begin to grow in power. If you run your game on any kind of a regular basis, it won't be long before the players are chafing at the bit to increase their characters' power (which usually means the number of dice of damage they roll and how much defense they have). They'll start pestering you to increase the limits you placed on the campaign, to

## MAINTAINING THE MYSTERY

One of the drawbacks to roleplaying games is that each player knows exactly what his character is capable of: how strong he is, how much damage he can do, his odds of performing a feat of agility, and so forth. The *HERO System,* which tries to quantify nearly everything about a character, suffers from this problem in particular. But in fiction and movies, characters *don't* know exactly what they can do. They have a pretty good guess most of the time, but they never know for certain that "I've got a 15- chance to succeed!".

If you want, you can try to inject this element of uncertainty into your games. You can't be absolute about it — players are always going to have to know what their characters' Characteristics, Skills, and abilities are, because they created their characters — but you can "maintain the mystery" a little.

The best way to do this is to keep damage rolls secret from the players. Instead of them realizing that they just did 57 STUN and 14 BODY to the dragon, you describe what happens: "The dragon roars in pain as your sword scores a deep gash down his flank." The players can *guess,* from your description, how badly they hurt the enemy, but they won't know for certain.

To keep damage rolls secret, you have to do one of two things. One, you can roll damage for the players. Many players object strenuously to this, though. Two, have each player make 30 or 40 Attack Rolls and damage rolls with his primary attacks in advance, and write them down. Then take the list of rolls away from them. During the game, cross the rolls off one at a time in some pre-defined order and apply the results.

The same applies to Skill Rolls, rolls to use Missile Deflection, and the like. By keeping the exact, quantified results concealed from the players, you can assert more control over the narrative elements of the scenario, and thus improve the roleplaying/storytelling experience for everyone.

allow them to buy powers you disallowed during the character creation process, and to buy powers and abilities that don't really fit their character.

Resist the temptation to give in to the players' demands. True, you want them to have fun — but how long will the game remain fun if it turns into an "arms race," with each PC scrambling to earn the Experience Points to buy +2d6 for their Energy Blast because Captain Courage just did the same thing? The emphasis of such a game often moves quickly away from roleplaying and storytelling into materialistic attempts to earn copious Experience Points. (Of course, if you like this, let it happen — there's not a thing in the world wrong with it, and you should do what you want in your own game.)

But sooner or later you'll have to allow some growth. If you never increase the campaign limits on CVs, DCs, SPD, defenses, and the like, after a year or two of campaigning all the characters will meet the limits in all categories and know every Skill in the book.

The best way to control character growth it to let it proceed slowly while you monitor it carefully. When you feel the time is right, start increasing the campaign limits — but with little nudges, not wholescale raises. Make sure all players get your approval for new abilities or Skills. Think very carefully about the impact the purchase will have on the campaign. An extra point of SPD doesn't sound like much, for example — but as any experienced *HERO System* gamer will tell you, one little itty-bitty point of SPD can make all the difference in the world in many games.

You, and your players, need to be ready to make retroactive changes in characters if necessary. Sometimes an ability doesn't seem unbalancing or overly effective at first blush, but the rigors of play reveal that it's not something you want in your game. If so, tell the player (in a nonconfrontational way) that the ability simply isn't working out and that he'll have to change it. Stress the need to keep the game as a whole fun for everyone — good, mature gamers will accept this explanation (or at least accede to your request gracefully). For the sake of fairness, make sure the players know in advance that you reserve the right to do this.

## Incorporating Disadvantages Into The Story

Disadvantages are *storytelling tools* — nothing more, and nothing less, than handles built onto a character to help the GM work him into the story he wants to tell. Stories revolve around conflict, whether it's the naked conflict of enemy duking it out with enemy, or the more subtle conflicts of Man versus Conscience, Love versus Duty, or Conformity versus Independence. Disadvantages are built-in conflicts for the GM to use to craft his story. The conflicts in some (Hunteds, Psychological Limitations) are obvious; in others (DNPCs, Physical Limitations) they're less so, but just think about them for a while and you'll see them there.

One of the skills you'll learn as a GM is how to integrate Disadvantages into the story in elegant ways. Anyone can integrate them crudely — "Arkelos is Hunted by the Circle of Dark Mages, right, Bob?" "Right." "Okay, then, the Circle's just summoned a demon and threatens to unleash it on the city of Arkenford unless you come fight him." "Ulp." See? That's not hard at all. But it's not a very good story, either. Rather than having the Dark Mages make a blatant, outright attack on Arkelos, the GM should strive to use Arkelos's Hunted to create an intriguing story that entertains everyone — and that gives him a chance to showcase the Circle's fiendish evil. For example, the GM can create several scenarios in which the Mages uses their power and influence to bedevil Arkelos from behind the scenes. Magically controlled servants sent to test his power, mercenary groups aided by the Circle to strike at and weaken Arkelos and his friends, a series of crimes through which the Mages acquire the items they need to enchant a weapon to exploit Arkelos's Vulnerability — all of these offer more story potential than a simple attack. It's only after going through a long series of indirect mini-struggles against the Circle that Arkelos and his

teammates finally get a crack at the evil cabal itself. Now *that's* a story. It's not Shakespeare, but it's much better gaming entertainment than a one-shot slugfest.

You can treat other Disadvantages similarly. For example, rather than using Psychological Limitations as a means for gauging the effectiveness of Mind Control or determining a character's reactions in a limited set of circumstances, craft a story arc whose themes and moods revolve around that aspect of the character's psyche — what will it take to make him seriously consider violating his Code Against Killing? How much does he *really* Love The Princess? Is he really Amoral, or is it just a bitter facade hiding someone whose life experiences have made him afraid to trust and care anymore?

# RUNNING THE CAMPAIGN

Okay, so you've got your world all set up, and the player have created acceptable (and even intriguing) characters. What next?

## Episodic Versus Serial Campaigns

First, consider a basic question — will your campaign be Episodic, Serial, or something in between? *Episodic* campaigns have no continuity from story to story. The characters are the same, the settings are sometimes the same, but what happens in Game #1 has little or no effect on Game #2. *Serial* campaigns, by contrast, have very tight continuity and deeply interwoven plots. The events of one game hold great importance for the events of the next, since the games relate to one another and advance a greater story in tiny steps. If a player misses a game, or heaven forbid two, he'll have difficulty picking back up again because he missed important chunks of the story. At the very least, he'll need a lengthy explanation from you and his fellow players about what went on.

Most gaming campaigns fall somewhere in between these two extremes. They have some continuity, but not so much that missing a couple of games puts a player hopelessly out of the loop. Some campaigns mix periods of Serial gaming — often referred to as "story arcs" — with more Episodic games, which serve as a "breather" from the more in-depth Serial games.

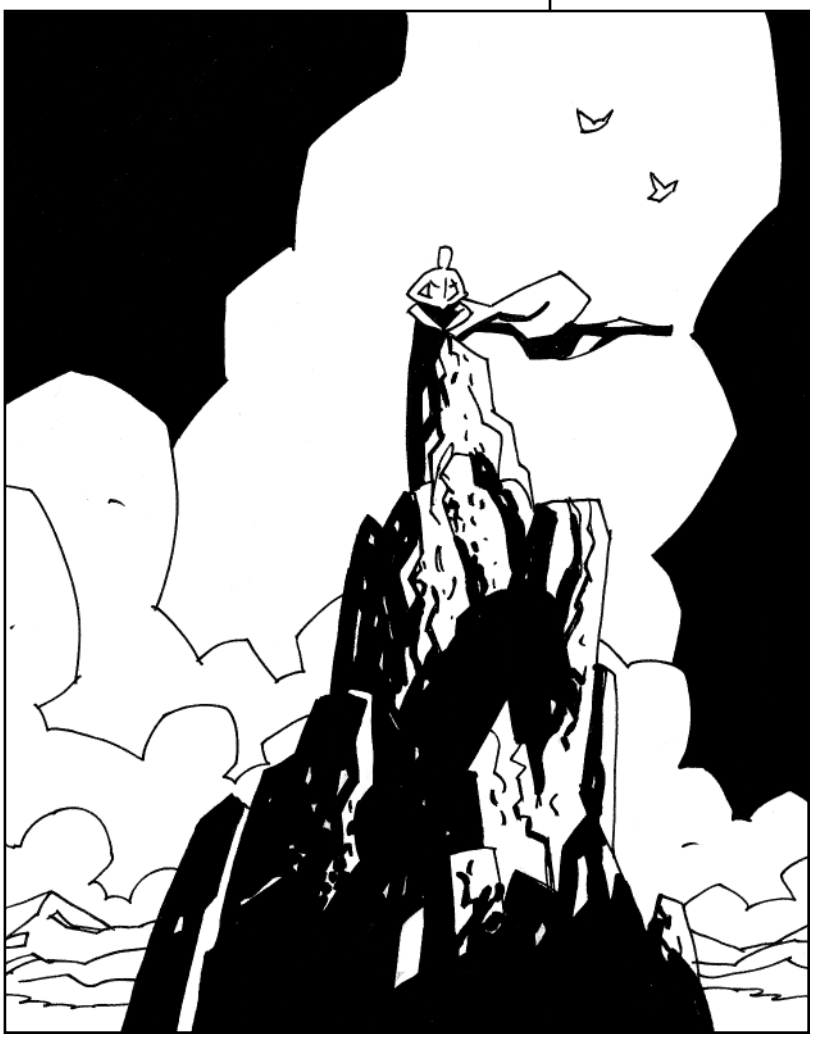
Obviously, a Serial campaign requires a lot more forethought on your part, which is why you need to decide what kind of game you're going to run before starting the campaign. A Serial campaign works best if you do a lot of planning in advance. If you know what's coming up two scenarios down the line, you can begin planting clues and introducing the first tentative stirrings of the upcoming story now, instead of springing it full-blown on the players in a couple of weeks. Of course, if you plan games in advance this way, you need to leave yourself a little leeway to pursue the new stories the PCs create during their adventures, and to counteract any PC activity that deviates too far from the planned storyline (a little deviation usually helps the campaign, too much ruins it). Never expect the players to follow your storylines exactly; they'll surprise you at every turn if you do.

## Storytelling

Roleplaying games are at least partly about *interactive storytelling:* the GM and the players work together to create their own story, rather than reading or watching one created by someone else. Therefore a good GM learns about the literary devices that make stories work, and uses them.

### THEME

The most important aspect to many stories is *theme.* Roughly speaking, theme refers to the special or distinctive concern of the campaign, or, to put it another way, the underlying subject of the campaign. Unlike plot — the main story being told in a particular scenario, series of scenarios, or campaign — theme is not usually obvious or straightforward; it stays in the background, occasionally coming to the foreground for brief discussion or attention by the players and their characters. "Stop the Circle of Dark Mages from taking over the world" is a plot; "what are the characters willing to sacrifice to stop the Circle?" is a theme. In a sense,





you could think of theme as the "big questions" behind the various plots the characters become involved in.

All good campaigns have a theme or themes, though these may change over time. A campaign may start with a particular theme, only to have that theme change or mutate as the characters grow and some of the "big questions" are answered (if this is possible) or thoroughly explored. Some themes commonly seen in gaming campaigns include:

—Heroism: what does it mean to be a "hero"? What does it take to become one? Why is one character considered a hero, and another not?

—Sacrifice: what are the characters willing to give up or forego in order to achieve the goals of the campaign, and the goals they have set for themselves? If it's a choice between "doing the right thing" and giving up something the character really treasures, which will he choose?

—Justice, Law, and "The System": what is the meaning of justice, and how does it differ from the law? Is it right for the characters to "take the law into their own hands," or to decide what justice should be meted out to a villain? Is it worthwhile to work within "the System"? Does might make right?

—Preserving the status quo: In many Fantasy games, as well as other types of campaigns, one underlying premise is that the current state of affairs is good and worth preserving. The antagonists — the Circle of Dark Mages, the Shadow Lord, or the like — wants to change the status quo, typically by placing themselves in positions of power, and the characters have to stop them.

## MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE

Mood and atmosphere represent what the characters (and players) feel and think about the events of the scenario. If the players can "see" and "feel" what their characters see and feel, you're doing a good job of creating a mood and drawing the players into it. Creating mood and atmosphere is often difficult — after all, you're in a well-lit room, surrounded by your friends, with food and drink at hand. You're comfortable. Jerking the players' minds out of their surroundings so that they can feel the mood and place themselves within the story is tough. Therefore, a good GM often uses props and other "tricks" to help create mood. Some examples include:

—Handouts describing the world around the characters. This helps foster a sense of verisimilitude and makes the world come to life for the players. Handouts can include everything from "campaign newspapers" detailing what's going on in the fictional world, to scenario-specific clues (*e.g.,* fabricated newspaper arti-

cles or maps containing information helpful to the PCs), to background information about subjects of special interest to the players.

—Music. Good music does more to create a mood than just about anything else. Shop around for music that conveys certain feelings to you, then play it softly in the background during the game (instrumental soundtracks are often the best sources for this sort of music).

—Lighting. Vary the lighting as appropriate to the scenario. If the characters are in a dim room, shut off all the lights but one or two. If the PCs are invading a wizard's sanctum or chasing down some mystic horror, light the room with candles.

—Acting. Use accents, changes of tone, changes of posture, and other "hooks" to help yourself get in character, and thus to portray that character well to your players.

—Narration. Describe scenes in detail, covering all five senses. Use analogies to bring home the impact of what the characters are seeing. Don't assume the players visualize what you are visualizing; make sure you're all on the same page by telling them exactly where they are, what it's like, and what they can perceive.

It almost goes without saying that a well-detailed world does a lot to create mood and atmosphere, particularly if the world is unusual or strange (like many Fantasy worlds or alternate dimensions). The more information the players have about the world, the more unique little details they know about it, the better they can "sense" it and get in synch with its ambience.

Don't forget that players and their characters have five senses (at least!). Rather than limiting yourself to describing what they see, mention what they can hear, smell, feel, and possibly even taste. Sometimes a smell or slight noise can go much further towards conveying mood than a visual can.

### NARRATION AND DESCRIPTIVE GAMEMASTERING

Not all aspects of the game have to involve dice-rolling — not even combat, necessarily. Instead, you can simply narrate or describe what happens. This has several advantages: it speeds up play, it usually helps emphasize mood and roleplaying, and it gives you greater control over the events of the game. However, it also has some drawbacks: it deprives the participants of the objectivity of the rules, it robs the players/PCs of the feeling of accomplishment they get by doing something "on their own" with dice, and it gives you greater control over the events of the game.

The key to using narration is to use it at the proper moments with the proper players. Narration almost always works well when describing what the characters perceive (such as when they're surveilling a possible villain base or tossing an NPC's room for clues), but less well in combat situations. Most players aren't willing to participate in narrated combat for fear of you taking advantage of the situation. However, if you can entice one or two to try it, and you do it fairly, they'll learn how much fun it can be — and they'll tell the others.

## Use And Abuse Of The Rules

No one should try to GM any game without having a thorough understanding of the rules. Trying to play the game without knowing the rules is like trying to fly a plane without being able to read the instruments. As the creator of the world and arbiter of all that goes on within it, you must be well-versed in the rules governing play in that world, or the whole experience will frustrate everyone. No one will enjoy your game if you spend half the time flipping through the rulebook looking for a particular rule. Furthermore, a GM who doesn't know the rules well is leaving himself open to manipulation by players who do.

However, there is an extremely important *caveat* to this — ***DON'T LET THE RULES GET IN THE WAY OF HAVING FUN.*** If a particular rule spoils your fun, ignore it, discard it, or change it. One of the greatest things about roleplaying games is that they allow you and your players to change the game to make it better for you — take advantage of it!

Don't let "rules lawyers" among your players ruin everyone else's fun. There have to be *some* rules, to make things fair and consistent for everyone; in most situations you should follow the rules. But if Player A consistently comes up with clever maneuvers or fun ideas that don't strictly follow the rules, and Player B constantly points out that rules are being violated and tries to stop what Player A's doing, ignore Player B and let Player A charge ahead. Player B isn't trying to do anything other than use his knowledge of the rules to exert power and authority over the other players and you — and the only person who enjoys that is Player B. If he's not willing to "go with the flow" and let you loosen the rules in the name of drama and storytelling, then he's more of a hindrance to the game than a help.

Similarly, don't get hung up trying to figure out the "exact right way" to build something using the *HERO System* rules, or trying to determine the precise rules effect of a particular power construction. The *HERO System* is detailed and flexible, and there are often many different ways to create a particular power, item, or effect — and in many cases two or more of them are equally valid. Once you have a reasonable construction that you think does what you want it to do, let the ability or item work that way — don't worry about whether it would or would not work that way according to a strict interpretation of the rules. *The rules are there to help you, not hinder you.*

On a related note, don't argue with players about the rules in mid-game. That only disrupts the

story and slows the game down. Use your control and authority as GM to declare what the rule will be for now, and tell the players that if they want to discuss it or offer other options, to talk to you about it after the game.

## Playing To The Player Characters

As a GM, you'll find it all too easy to get caught up in *your* story, the great tale you've got planned out, and to make sure you tell that story — no matter how many improbable plot twists you have to throw in or player actions you have to ignore to make sure your story takes place. But *the player characters are the focus of your story,* and therefore they and their players are the most important elements in your story. You should slant the story to suit them, not the other way around. Learning how to do this, and do it well, is one of the hardest things about good GMing.

The first and most important thing to do is to plan stories that your players and PCs *want* to participate in without having to drag them along by rings through their noses. There are plenty of ways to do this. First, work the PCs' Disadvantages into the story, as discussed above — if it's someone's archenemy, girlfriend, or Vulnerability that's involved, the PCs have an incentive to get in on the action. Second, make sure each PC has his moment in the sun — a scenario featuring *him* as the main character. One of the standard ways of doing this is to bring something from that character's past back to haunt him — an old enemy he thought was dead, a long-lost love, anything like that. If the player has developed a "background story" for his character, then incorporate part of it into a scenario, allowing the PC to learn more about himself.

Second, learn to adapt your stories to the players' cool and interesting ideas. Many a GM rejects ideas that the players come up with in the middle of a story, simply because the players' idea is different from what he has in mind. It doesn't matter if the players' solution to the mystery or combat situation is as good as, or better than, his own; he's determined to follow through with *his* story, and damn the consequences. This is wrong. Remember, your story focuses on the players and their characters. If they come up with an idea that's as good as (or better than) what you had planned or thought they would do, and you can adapt the story to conform to their ideas without ruining other parts of it or making major changes in the campaign world, do it. The players will gain a great sense of accomplishment and heap praise upon you for your excellent GMing — and you didn't have to do a thing but listen to them and react accordingly.

Similarly, when a player asks, "Is there a so-and-so nearby?", he usually has some neat idea in mind for using it, something you'll likely enjoy. Unless it's just impossible for that object to be in that area, tell him yes. He'll feel like he's contributing to the story and the world, and you get to have fun seeing just what he has in mind.

However, don't think you *always* have to change to suit the players — if it would be too much trouble, or would cause major changes in the world or the NPCs, don't do it. Sometimes the players' ideas are based on misconceptions about the world and its characters, or they're acting on less than all of the relevant information, or they just plain make mistakes. In those situations, stick to your guns and follow through with the story as planned.

Third, include opportunities for both roleplaying and combat in your games. Few players or PCs want exclusively one or the other in their games. Think about your favorite stories, the ones you really like — how many of them are just combat, or just roleplaying? Probably none; a good story or movie mixes in both elements. Your games should, too.

One good way to foster roleplaying is to use *bluebooking.* Bluebooking is nothing more than writing out roleplaying and conversations between characters, rather than acting them out (usually this takes place between game sessions). Sometimes players feel uncomfortable acting out some scenes (such as love scenes), or want to keep some scenes private. This presents a perfect opportunity to use bluebooking. Bluebooking also has the advantage of permanence; you keep the written records of what went on, and can use them to create future scenarios.

## Deadly Don'ts: How To Ruin Your Campaign With Things Players Hate

Most of this chapter is devoted to "Dos." This section discusses half a dozen "Don'ts" — things you should try to avoid as a GM.

The main way to figure out what the "Don'ts" are for your group is simple — get to know your players. At a basic level, find out how much gaming experience they have, how much experience they have with the *HERO System* rules, what they generally like and dislike in a game, and their level of maturity. The latter is particularly important; don't run complex dramas requiring rational, mature responses and interaction from a group that mainly wants to beat up bad guys and considers "Beavis and Butthead" high culture.

With this in mind, here's a short list of "Don'ts" for *HERO System* games:

1) Don't take the PCs prisoner any more than necessary: It's almost impossible to express just how much players *hate* to have their characters taken prisoner. They absolutely can't stand it. You'll find this attitude even in mature players who ought to be more willing to go along with the story — players sufficiently familiar with the genre to know that getting taken prisoner happens frequently to heroes in the source material and is one of the primary ways to find out what the master villain is planning. Being taken prisoner represents losing, even if it's only temporary, and players hate that. So, don't take them prisoner any more than you have to. Sometimes it's necessary, and sometimes you can't help it, but don't plan to do it very often.

2) Don't let the PCs play "second fiddle" to NPCs: Second only to having their characters taken prisoner, players hate having their characters play "second fiddle" to NPCs — or, even worse, having NPCs rescue them when they're in trouble. The PCs are the focus of the story and the campaign; they shouldn't be directly overshadowed by NPCs. This is not to say that the PCs have to be the most powerful characters in the world. You can have NPCs more powerful than the PCs in the game, even *much* more powerful. Such NPCs can act as sources of information for the PCs, or as inspiration to show them what they're capable of becoming. Just don't rub the PCs' noses in their inferiority or have the NPCs outdo them at every turn. Keep the use of NPCs who are more powerful than the PCs to a minimum.

3) Don't mutilate their DNPCs: Being a hero's DNPC is dangerous — DNPCs get attacked, injured, kidnapped, mind-controlled by aliens, used as a spell component by evil magicians, and otherwise abused. But DNPCs are usually something of a constant in a hero's life, and players like it this way. So, don't severely injure DNPCs or make major changes to them without the player's approval. A DNPC who spends most of the game in the hospital isn't any good to the player or to you.

4) Don't treat the dice as God: Sometimes dice are a necessary element of gaming — but they're not the be-all-and-end-all of it. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that what the dice say, must be so. If the result dictated by the dice isn't dramatic, or would substantially interfere with your story, ignore it.

5) Don't be unfair, biased, obsessed with perfection, or show favoritism: This should go without saying, but unfortunately it doesn't. Too many GMs are all too liable to be biased towards, or show favoritism to, certain PCs. Maybe he likes a particular PC better, or maybe it's his girlfriend's PC, or maybe that PC just gives him more ideas for stories. Regardless, keep your approach to all of the PCs even and fair. Bend over backwards to make sure you treat all the PCs the same.

On a related note, when you're GMing, don't think that you have to be perfect or that you can't admit that you were wrong. If the players catch you in a mistake, admit you made it and do what you can to correct it. Blatant ass-covering just makes the players think that no matter what they do, you're going to keep them from accomplishing things.

6) Don't prevent the players from doing what they want to do: A good GM always requests feedback from his players, so that he can find out what they like and dislike about his game, what they want to do in the game, and what sort of scenarios they enjoy. Then he takes those requests and nuggets of constructive criticism into account when designing stories and scenarios. A bad GM does what he wants regardless of what the players like.





## The Limits Of Genre Simulation

Every GM is inspired by certain genres. A *Champions* GM draws inspiration from classic elements of comic books; a Fantasy GM may look to *The Lord Of The Rings* or other Fantasy novels to inspire him; a Science Fiction campaign GM may want to emulate *Star Trek, Babylon 5,* or the *Star Wars* movies. But at the same time, remember that important differences exist between the source material and your game that will keep you from simulating the genre perfectly.

The biggest difference between the source material and gaming is that in the source material, the writer controls *all* of the characters. They zig when they're supposed to zig, and zag when that's what he wants. But in gaming, the writer — you, the GM — only controls *some* of the characters. The most important characters, the PCs, are beyond your direct control. They aren't necessarily going to react as they would if you were in charge. Therefore, planning scenarios that require the PCs to take certain actions at certain times can lead to disaster, since the players may not do what the GM wants them to.

The need for game balance also limits your ability to simulate some genres or character types. For example, you can't use some comic book characters in your *Champions* game, particularly as PCs, because they're too powerful or there's some other aspect to them which doesn't fit in a game. For example, it would be extremely unbalancing to allow a PC to be invulnerable or unhittable, even though some comic book characters have those powers.

In short, don't use "genre simulation" as your yardstick in measuring the quality of your scenarios. The differences between the source material and roleplaying games make that an apples and oranges comparison.

# EXPERIENCE POINTS



As characters play in a campaign, they learn from things they do and people they encounter. They learn even if they make mistakes during the course of their adventures; indeed, sometimes a mistake is a lot more educational than success. To reflect this process of learning and development, you should give each character *Experience Points*.

You must carefully consider how many Experience Points to give out after each adventure. If you give out too few points, the characters and the campaign become stagnant. If you give out too many points, the PCs may become unrecognizable and too powerful in a very short amount of time.

The accompanying table should help you decide how many Experience Points to give out to the characters. This table is a set of guidelines; don't take it as an absolute. A very large adventure may be worth as much as many small adventures which were resolved swiftly. Also, while the numbers in the table are generally based on completing an adventure successfully, remember that sometimes a character can learn as much from failure as from victory.

Usually, a one-session adventure is worth about 2 Experience Points. If an adventure takes more than one session, add a minimum of +1 Experience Point for each session beyond the first (a three session adventure would be worth at least 4 Experience Points).

Each character is given Experience Points on his own merits. Therefore, the amount of Experience given to each character can vary. A player who roleplays well, contributes a lot to the adventure (and thus to everyone's fun), and makes a clever deduction or two can walk away from a scenario with quite a few Experience Points for his character, whereas a player who just sits there and rolls dice when told to will be lucky to get even one.

The GM may never take Experience Points away. Player characters should almost always get a minimum of 1 Experience Point if they play a scenario.

## Spending Experience Points

Experience Points work like Character Points in all ways, they're just obtained in a different way. Characters can spend Experience Points to improve Characteristics, improve known Skills or learn new ones, buy new Advantages for powers (or buy off Limitations), buy new abilities, buy off Disadvantages, and so forth. This reflects not only things the character learns from his experiences, but time he spends practicing and studying and other such efforts at self-improvement.

When spent, Experience Points function just like Character Points. If a character spends Experience Points on Primary Characteristics, the related Figured Characteristics improve accordingly. If he wants to buy a new slot for his Multipower, it costs the same as it would if he bought it during character creation.

Characters usually spend Experience Points between adventures. However, the GM may allow a character to spend them during an adventure to learn a new Skill or do something similar. For example, Randall Irons could "just figure out" how to fly a DC 3 as it's spiraling downward into the ocean. Some Skills may require a fair amount of time in the campaign to learn; for others, a character may need training under an instructor. A character may have to go off the beaten path to find someone who can teach him some of the more esoteric Skills or Talents.

## Assigned Experience Points

The GM can also give out Experience Points for specific Skills or Characteristics the characters used or learned during the adventure. Each player may state at the end of the adventure one Skill (new or old) he believes his character used a great deal during that particular adventure (alternately, you can require the player to designate at the *beginning* of the adventure a Skill or Characteristic he's working hard to develop, and then justify that statement by using the Skill or Characteristic frequently during the adventure). If you wish, you can give the character an Experience Point to be used only for that specific Skill. Assigned Experience Points are

### EXPERIENCE POINTS

| Situation | Experience |
|---|---|
| Base experience points for being in a scenario | 1 point |
| Characters were on a very long, involved adventure | 2 points |
| Adventure ran more than one session | +1 point/session |
| The adventure was difficult | +1 point |
| Characters heavily outnumbered | +1 point |
| **Optional Guidelines** | |
| Characters were clever, inventive, subtle, or roleplayed well | +1 point |
| Characters solved a mystery | +1 point |
| The adventure was a resounding success | +1 point |
| Characters roleplayed very poorly | -1 point |
| The adventure was a terrible failure | -1 point |



usually a bonus, over and above the Experience Points given out for the adventure, but you may substitute them for regular Experience Points if you prefer.

Assigned Experience Points are usually given to Background Skills and Perks. You could also give out Assigned Experience to help a character buy off a Disadvantage. Occasionally you may give a character 1 Experience Point toward a +1 with some Skill. You might even give out more than one or two Experience Points by assignment, thus helping the character grow in the direction indicated by his or her actions during the adventure. However, characters should always have some Experience Points they can spend on anything.

You can also choose to award specific Skills or Perks in lieu of Experience Points (assigned or otherwise). For example, if the PCs do a great favor for the king during the course of the adventure, each of them may receive a Contact with or Favor from him instead of raw Experience Points. Similarly, if the adventure involves an extended series of conflicts with VIPER, the PCs may acquire KS: VIPER.

## Experience In Superheroic Campaigns

In a Superheroic campaign, you should take special care to manage how the characters spend their Experience Points. Each Experience Point is identical to a Character Point, so you should examine any new Powers or Talents bought with Experience Points as carefully as you would for a starting character. Also, a character should usually have a good rationale for spending his Experience Points, particularly when buying off Power Limitations or Disadvantages. For example, a PC with a 14- Activation Roll could justify buying off the Limitation by saying that he gained more control over his power (and thus no longer had an Activation Roll). However, a character with a Focus couldn't put the item in a milkshake and drink it — there would have to be a better explanation for losing the *Focus* Limitation. Wherever possible, you should try to structure adventures so that characters can buy off Limitations and Disadvantages.

And never forget, villains get Experience Points too....

chapter seven:



# CHANGING THE SYSTEM

# CHANGING THE *HERO SYSTEM*



One of the attributes of many *HERO System* gamers is that they like to put their own touch on the system. They like to change things around a bit to suit their own particular tastes in gaming, the nature of their campaign, or their players' desires. It's that adaptability that makes the *HERO System* so attractive to them. This section of the Fifth Edition discusses some of the design considerations and metarules of the *HERO System*, and how you can change the system or create new rules for it if you want to.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The main object of the *HERO System,* just like any other roleplaying game, is for the players and the GM to have fun. The *HERO System* is a "Gamer's Toolkit" that each player and GM can use to create his own unique characters, equipment, and campaign worlds. Your creation might derive from a favorite novel or movie (or a combination of several sources), or it could be a completely original vision. In any case, the *HERO System* lets you create it just the way you want to.

Designing a set of roleplaying rules is a process of making numerous decisions. How is combat going to be represented and simulated? What numbers should be used to determine a character's chance to hit? How does wearing armor affect combat, and what rules should be used to simulate that?

In constructing these rules, a relatively simple set of guidelines were used. The goal was to keep the mechanics reasonably simple, encourage roleplaying, and create a flavor similar to that in books, movies, and comics. Most important was giving the game the "feel" of a good action novel or a movie. When realism conflicted with that goal, realism took second place — gaming is about adventure and excitement and larger-than-life deeds. Then the rules were made as simple as reasonably possible (without sacrificing game balance or the details necessary for play) so the game mechanics wouldn't get in the way of having fun. And, of course, many rules are crafted to encourage roleplaying and storytelling on the part of the players and the GM.

Above all, the *HERO System* is intended to be flexible and open-ended — capable of simulating any real or fictional situation. This flexibility means there's the potential for players to distort the rules and exploit loopholes that may exist. No game is "bulletproof"; any rules system can be misused and abused in different ways. A points-based rules set such as the *HERO System* is perhaps more subject to this problem, since flexibility inevitably means some gamers will "flex" the system until it breaks.

All game designers have to keep this problem in mind. The Hero Games philosophy on it is twofold. First, it's wrong to remove or change a worthwhile or fun rule just because some gamers can exploit or abuse it. That's a disservice to the good gamers who will use the rule as it's intended to be used and have a lot of fun doing so — it penalizes them because other gamers are going to act like jerks and misuse the rule. But it's equally wrong to make it easy for players to abuse rules — in short, to leave a lot of loopholes and poorly-written rules in the system. There's a fine line to tread between leaving good rules in and making rules as "bulletproof" as possible without leeching all the fun out of them, but we do our best.

We could have put a lot more "don'ts" in the rules, but that's not the way we wanted the *HERO System* to be. Because the system is so flexible, and is intended to simulate any genre, campaign type, or character, we'd rather let you make your own decisions about what is permissible. If you want to allow the characters to travel through time, it's silly for us to say you can't. After all, you've paid your money for the game, so why shouldn't you alter it any way you please? As a consequence, we've asked for a lot of decision-making from the GM, and a lot of enlightened self-interest from the players. It may be difficult for you, as GM, to tell your friends that no, they can't have a character with Extra-Dimensional Movement or Precognition. But they'll probably understand if you explain the reasons for your decision.

## META-RULES OF THE *HERO SYSTEM*

Here are some of the "meta-rules" — guidelines, themes, and assumptions — which underlie the main rules of the *HERO System*. When designing new rules for your game, creating characters, and playing the game, keep these meta-rules in mind.

1. Most Powers, particularly Attack Powers, are designed around the principle that 5 Character Points buys 1d6 (or 1 DC) of effect — or, in other words, that each d6/DC of Power should cost 5 Active Points before Advantages are applied. Powers that tend to be more restricted than the typical Attack Power (such as Dispel) cost a little less; Powers that tend to be a little more powerful than average (such as Ego Attack) cost more. But by and large, the 5 points per d6 principle should be followed.

2. Every Attack Power or Power that can be used offensively should have some defense or way to avoid its effects, and the defense should be considerably cheaper.

3. Whenever possible, Powers and other game constructions should be open-ended, rather than absolute or fixed. In other words, the more points you put into something, the better or more powerful it should get. Powers with fixed costs, like Desolidification, should be rare.

Similarly, there should be very few absolutes in the *HERO System*. Few Powers should have strictly predictable effects; there should usually be a chance for a spectacular success or a dismal failure. In particular, there should never be an irresistible attack or an unbreachable defense, even against a limited class of phenomena. There's no way to obtain absolute immunity to damage from fire in the *HERO System,* for example. A character can buy so much defense that it's extremely unlikely he'll ever be hurt by fire, but there's no such thing as 100% Damage Reduction for fire (or any other type of attack).

If you have a situation where a degree of predictability or uniformity of effect is desirable, apply the Standard Effect Rule.

4. The point cost of a Power should support game balance — the more useful or effective a Power is, the more it should cost. If the cost of an effective Power is set too low, everyone will want to have it; characters who don't have it will be handicapped. If necessary for purposes of game balance or genre simulation, the GM should adjust the cost of a Power to make it rarer (or more common) in the campaign.

5. One Power should not be used to do what another already does. For example, Images already creates light and images made out of light, so you shouldn't use Change Environment to create a similar effect. If a character wants to immobilize or paralyze other characters, he should buy an Entangle, not try to configure Mind Control or Drain to accomplish a similar effect.

However, there is a corollary to this rule — choose the Power and Modifiers which best represent the special effects of the ability the character has. For example, some types of paralysis-like abilities may be best simulated with a Drain, rather than Entangle.

6. If two Powers (or other game elements) are equally valid ways to create a particular ability, you must use the more expensive of the two.

7. As has been stressed elsewhere, the Powers and other game elements are "generic." Players have to decide for themselves what their characters' *special effects* are, and then properly simulate that special effect in game terms with the right combination of Powers, Power Modifiers, and other game elements.

8. There are few, if any, rules you can't change in the *HERO System.* This is a game, and the purpose of a game is to have fun. We think you'll have the most fun with the game the way we designed it, but you should play the game the way you want to. If you want to double the END cost for everything, do it. If you want to abolish the SPD Chart, do it. You're not required to obey any rule or guideline in this book if you don't want to. If necessary, change them to suit your ideas of how things should work or to arrange the game so you'll have the most fun with it.

# TOOLKITTING

In the introduction to this book, the *HERO System* was described as "the ultimate gamer's toolkit." That means the system offers gamers and GMs the ability to build whatever they can think of. From worlds, to characters, to spells, to weapons, to vehicles, to anything else you might want to have in a game, you can build it with the *HERO System.* And you can do it in such a way that it's easy to analyze your creation's effect on and effectiveness in the game. No other game system offers this sort of adaptability, flexibility, and precision.

We call this the "toolkitting" aspect of the system, since the *HERO System*'s components are essentially a vast collection of tools for GMs and players to use to create great characters and games. They form both the building blocks of a successful campaign and the means to shape those building blocks to make them fit together just the way you want. Thus, the *HERO System* allows gamers to do two things with unmatched quality: simulate genres; and create and analyze characters and their tools.

## Genre Simulation

Every genre is different. Usually those differences need to be reflected in the rules for a game simulating the genre. The way you construct a setting for a Fantasy campaign differs from the way you build a universe for a Science Fiction campaign or a city for a game of *Dark Champions.* Otherwise one genre seems just like another, which isn't the way things should be.

Furthermore, even within genres there are important differences. Space opera Science Fiction is different from cyberpunk Science Fiction; four-color superheroes is different from *Dark Champions* costumed vigilantes; high epic Fantasy is different from low Fantasy — and all of these differences affect how gamers conceive of and design campaigns and characters.

Most game rules don't provide much help for gamers who want to design campaign settings. The *HERO System* is different. Just like you can use the rules to create detailed and intriguing characters, you can use them to create rich settings in which the characters' ability to interact with each other and the world around them are governed by easy to use, balanced rules.

To do this properly, you, as GM, may have to do a few things. The first, of course, is to figure out what kind of game you want to run and what sort of world you want to set the game in. No game system can help you with that task, really; you have to exercise your own imagination. But the other two things you have to do are things the *HERO System* can definitely help you with.

# Adapting The Rules To Your Game

The next thing to do is figure out how the rules system needs to be adapted to give your world the proper "feel." If you want to emphasize or de-emphasize something (like psychic powers or combat skills), you can change the rules to reflect this desire. The *HERO System,* with its flexibility, is perfect for this sort of adaptation. With a tweak here and there you can remold it to fit whatever sort of "feel" you're striving for. This is one of the main strengths of a "generic" rules set like the *HERO System* — the ability to make it work for any genre with, at best, a few minor changes. That way players don't have to keep learning new rules to play in new genres.

This may sound difficult, especially to novice GMs, but it isn't really that hard. It's just a matter of figuring out what the main elements of the genre you want to simulate are, and then determining what changes, if any, you need to make to the *HERO System* rules to best simulate or reflect those elements.

Example: *Ed decides he wants to run a "cyberpunk" near-future science fiction campaign. To make sure the HERO System rules contribute to the "feel" he wants the campaign to have, he sits down and figures out what some of the important elements of the campaign are and how to simulate them with the rules.*

*First, he wants the characters to be larger than life, but still more or less "ordinary" people. Therefore he chooses to run a Heroic campaign, and picks the character creation guidelines for a Standard Heroic campaign from the Character Types Guidelines Table on page 28. However, to reflect the advanced technology of the setting, he notes in his campaign guidelines that characters can buy some Powers as cyberware or computer programs.*

*Second, he wants combat to be detailed, and often deadly. He decides his campaign will use all of the Optional Combat Maneuvers. To keep things from getting too out of hand, he limits Sweep and Rapid Fire to a maximum of three attacks per Phase. He also decides the campaign will use the optional rules for Hit Locations, Wounding, and Knockdown.*

*Third, he wants there to be a Japanese influence on the culture of his cyberpunk setting. Japanese culture is so prominent that all characters know a little something about it. To simulate this, he adds KS: Japanese Culture and 1 point worth of the Japanese language to the Everyman Skill list. This may even give some players ideas of other Skills their characters would have — Japanese martial arts styles, for example.*

### CREATING YOUR WORLD'S ELEMENTS

Similarly, you can use the *HERO System* rules to create all of the artifacts, technology, spells, and other elements which make a campaign setting distinctive.

Example: *Ed knows that in a cyberpunk setting, technology is an important element, so he needs to simulate certain types of technology in ways which help get the feeling of the genre across and which make it easy for characters to use them.*

*First, he has to create cyberspace — the "virtual world" of linked computer networks and data storage units. Many characters will enter this world by "jacking in," allowing a computer construct that represents them to interact with constructs representing other computer users, files of valuable data, and computer security programs. When a character is jacked in, he cannot interact with the real world at all (except to the extent he can remotely activate electronic devices). Ed decides cyberspace is, in essence, another dimension, so jacking in is just a form of Extra-Dimensional Movement. The equipment that allows characters to "enter" cyberspace is just Extra-Dimensional Movement bought with appropriate Limitations, such as Focus.*

*Second, characters in cyberspace need computer programs to use there. While the computer creation rules do discuss programs, in a cyberspace setting programs have their own constructs — a security program might resemble a guard dog, or an intrusion program a sword-wielding samurai. They interact by "fighting" each other. This sounds more like a form of combat than a simple 1-point computer program. Ed decides characters will buy programs as Powers with the Limitations* Only In Cyberspace *(-2) and* Focus. *For example, he might build a security program as a Force Wall, and an intrusion program as a Killing Attack or Drain Force Wall. Ed spends a few minutes creating about two dozen simple programs. That's enough for the players to choose from initially; Ed knows they'll come to him soon enough with ideas for programs they want to write up on their own.*

*Third, cyberpunk characters often have cyberware — electronic and mechanical augmentations built into their bodies. In fact, things like datajacks, enhanced musculature, computerized eye replacements, and fingertip "razor claws" are staples of the genre. At first Ed thinks characters can build cyberware as Foci, but he realizes that since surgery is needed to install or remove it, cyberware isn't really a Focus. Instead, he decides they can buy cyberware with the Limitation* Restrainable, *since there are many ways to disable cyberware (EMP guns, for example) which are generally well-known.*

These are fairly simple examples. The extent to which a GM can use the *HERO System* to help model his campaign setting depends entirely upon how much work he wants to do. A GM willing to construct lengthy lists of weapons, spells, equipment, and the like can do a lot to help define the feel and function of his world. But a GM who doesn't want to go to all that trouble can accomplish a lot with a few simple steps like those described above. Other books from Hero Games provide plenty of resources, including complete campaign settings, for GMs who want to adapt them for their own campaigns.

## Creating And Analyzing Characters

The other main way which you can put the *HERO System*'s toolkitting abilities to use is to create characters and their tools (weapons, spells, equipment, you name it) and analyze them for game balance. Even if you don't want to use the *HERO System* to play games on a regular basis, it can still work for you as a tool for comparing characters.

For example, suppose you want to create some spells for a Fantasy campaign you're running using another game system. That system does not have detailed rules for spell creation; it's mainly up to you to determine whether a proposed new spell fits in his world and how the character would create such a spell. You might accidentally let in an unbalancing spell, since you have no way (other than rough "guesstimation") to compare it to existing spells to see if it's too powerful.

The *HERO System* provides the desired means. All you have to do is create *HERO System* versions of a few appropriate spells from the other game and the new spell. You can compare the Damage Classes, Active Points, Real Points, Advantages, and other aspects of the spells to see if the new one falls into the range of the others. If it's far too powerful, or not powerful enough, you'll figure that out easily. No more guesswork.

This principle applies to technological items, weapons, even entire characters. If they're balanced in the *HERO System,* you can be reasonably sure they'll be balanced in other game systems, too.

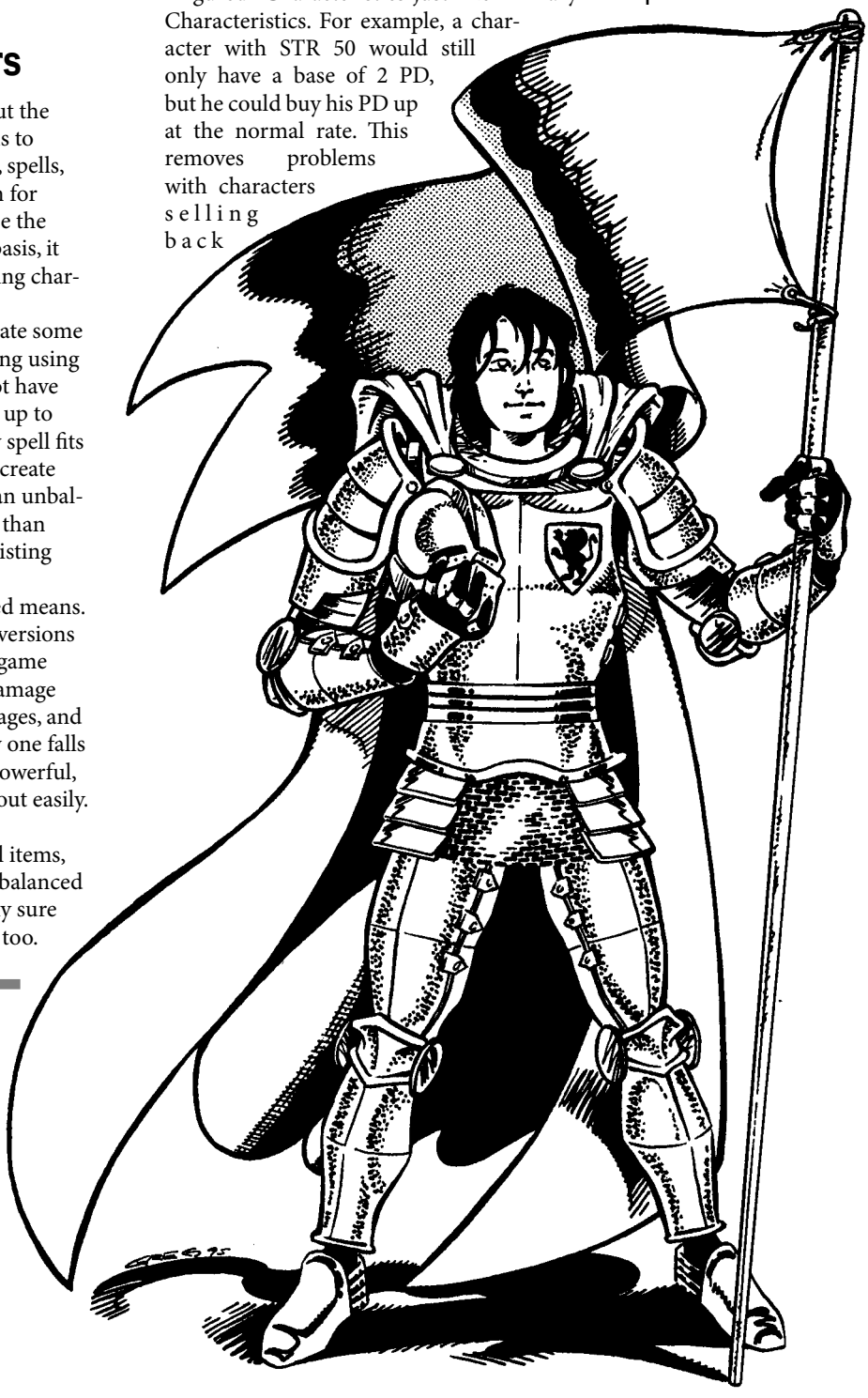
# CREATING NEW GAME ELEMENTS AND RULES

There are many ways you can modify the *HERO System* rules to produce a much different game, or to create new game elements for use in the campaign. Here are some guidelines for doing just that.

## Altering Characteristics

Some *HERO System* gamers like to alter the way Characteristics are bought or calculated. Some possibilities along these lines include:

—Eliminating Figured Characteristics, thus in effect making all Characteristics "Primary." Calculate the starting values for what are known as Figured Characteristics (PD, ED, and so forth) from a starting value of 10 in all Primary Characteristics, but thereafter they aren't affected by the value of the Primary Characteristics. Instead, characters must buy "Figured" Characteristics just like Primary Characteristics. For example, a character with STR 50 would still only have a base of 2 PD, but he could buy his PD up at the normal rate. This removes problems with characters selling back



Figured Characteristics and the need for the No Figured Characteristics Limitation.

—Increasing the cost of Characteristics that have proven to be inordinately useful in the campaign. The most common candidate for this treatment is STR (usually increased to a cost of 2 Character Points per point of STR). This makes "bricks" in Superheroic campaigns pay more for their main ability (so much more that they may violate campaign point ceilings for Powers) and prevents most other character types from casually buying a high STR. However, it also violates the "one DC per 5 Character Points" rule (STR's main function in the game is as an offensive ability) and may serve to make high-STR characters less attractive when compared to other archetypes.

—Subdividing Characteristics you consider too effective. For example, since many combat abilities are based on DEX, characters often have very high DEXs. Gamemasters who object to this could, for example, split DEX up into three "subcharacteristics": one provides OCV; one DCV; and one initiative in combat; each subcharacteristic costs 1 or 2 Character Points per point. Agility Skills would be assigned based on which subcharacteristic they most relate to; all three would be averaged and that average used to calculate SPD.

—Adding new Characteristics (usually Figured Characteristics). This is particularly useful for games in settings or genres which may have special ways for characters to affect (or be affected by) other characters and the environment. For example, a horror campaign might feature a SANITY (SAN) Figured Characteristic ((EGO/2) + (PRE/2)) which acts like STUN when a character encounters terrifying monsters — when he's lost all his SAN, he becomes (temporarily?) insane. A Fantasy campaign centering around epic warfare might use a LEADERSHIP Figured Characteristic ((PRE/2) + (INT/3)) to reflect a character's ability to lead and inspire groups of warriors.

## Creating New Skills

The Skill list was intended to simulate the Skills necessary to play in most standard genres. You can use Background Skills (such as KSs and PSs) to fill most gaps. But some genres or campaign settings are so unusual that some expansions to the Skill list may be necessary or worthwhile.

Designing new Skills involves two steps. First, decide whether the Skill is Characteristic-Based. Compare the proposed Skill to the ones on the list, and see if it could be an Agility, Intellect, or Interaction Skill. If it doesn't fit any of those categories precisely, it's probably a Background Skill. Except for Background Skills, most Skills should cost 3 Character Points for a Characteristic-Based roll, and +1 to the roll should cost +2 Character Points.

Second, decide exactly what the Skill does — what knowledge and abilities it grants the character. What happens if the character makes his Skill Roll exactly, makes it by a lot, or fails? Then think about what situations or circumstances would affect a character's ability to make a Skill Roll with this Skill; that will provide you with ideas for modifiers specific to the Skill. Modifiers also provide suggestions to players as to how to roleplay the Skill and improve their chances of performing it successfully.

Example: *Brad is going to run a Fantasy campaign that focuses on inter-kingdom politics and warfare. He's even created a "mass combat system" to simulate large battles between armies of knights and warriors. This system involves treating units of fighters as individual "characters"; each unit has its own SPD, BODY, Morale, and other Characteristics to indicate how effective it is in combat. Now Brad wants to create a Skill to simulate a character's ability to lead men in battle.*

*After thinking for a few moments, Brad realizes he should base this Skill on PRE, so it's an Interaction Skill. A character who makes his roll should be able to improve his men's Morale and perhaps even their fighting ability. If he fails his Skill Roll, he doesn't impress and inspire his men; if he fails badly, he reduces their Morale! Modifications to the Skill Roll include whether the side the unit of men is fighting on is winning or losing and the injuries suffered by the character making the roll. Here's the Skill Brad ends up with:*

**LEADERSHIP**

*This Interaction Skill allows a character to lead and inspire men in battle. Any character can try to provide leadership and inspiration, but one with this Skill is especially talented, skilled, and/or trained at it.*

*A character leading men in battle may make a Leadership roll once at the beginning of each Turn to try to inspire his men. For every 2 points by which he makes the roll, the unit receives +1 to its Morale for that Turn. If the character makes his roll by half or more, the unit also receives +1 to its OCV for that Turn.*

*A character can also use Leadership to prevent his unit from suffering Morale losses. Anytime the unit loses one or more points of Morale (whether due to casualties suffered, magic, or any other reason), the character may attempt to counteract the loss with a Leadership roll (this takes a Half Phase). Every two points by which he makes the roll reduces the loss of Morale by one point.*

*If the unit's side in the battle is losing (and the unit knows it), or the unit thinks its side is losing, the Leadership roll suffers a -1 to -5 penalty (depending upon how badly the*

*side is losing or is perceived to be losing). If the character is visibly wounded, he suffers a -1 to his Leadership roll for every 2 BODY taken. (In some situations this penalty may become a bonus; it can be inspirational to see a leader struggle on in the face of life-threatening injury.)*

## SKILL BREAKDOWNS

Many of the Skills in the list are deliberately designed to be broad so that they can apply to many genres, situations, and campaign settings. However, this can result in some Skills becoming *too* useful in some campaigns. For example, in a Science Fiction campaign involving the use of a lot of shipboard sensors and similar equipment, Systems Operation may be so useful that every character will buy it and the GM will have difficulty creating scenarios that involve malfunctioning or unusual equipment as a plot element.

Thus, the GM may want some Skills to have more detail. He can arrange this by reconfiguring the Skill to work like Transport Familiarity, Weapon Familiarity, or Survival. The GM splits the Skill up into two or more categories, each of which may have two or more subcategories. As a general rule, a character can buy the Skill to affect one category for 2 Character Points for an 11- roll (or Characteristic-Based roll). Each additional category costs 2 Character Points (perhaps more, for extremely useful Skills); subcategories, if they can be purchased individually, cost 1 Character Point each. A character can improve his Skill Roll with all categories for +2 Character Points for each +1 to the roll. The GM may adjust these costs up or down to reflect the relative usefulness of the Skill in the campaign.

### Systems Operation

Here's an example of how you might break down one Skill — Systems Operation — into categories. This example assumes Systems Operation is particularly useful in the campaign, so it costs 3 points for the first category and is based on an INT Roll. Additional categories cost 2 points each; individual subcategories are 1 point each.

## SKILL CATEGORIES AS SEPARATE SKILLS

Conversely, GMs for some campaigns may want to take one of the categories listed under Skills like Forgery, Gambling, Navigation, Survival, Transport Familiarity, Weapon Familiarity, or Weaponsmithing and make it a separate Skill. For example, for a game in a sort of late medieval or early Renaissance setting, the GM might want to take WF: Siege Engines and make it a separate Intellect Skill, *Siege Engines,* and convert Weaponsmithing (Firearms) to an Agility Skill, *Gunsmith.* That better simulates the genre and nature of the setting which the GM wants to simulate.

## SYSTEMS OPERATION

**Communications Systems** (may be purchased as a group)

- Telephone Communications (installing and using the phone system)
- Cellular & Digital Communications (cellular phones, pagers, and so forth)
- Radio (standard radio systems, CB radio, ham radio, military radios)
- Broadcast Communications (television or broadcast radio equipment)
- Satellite Communications (use of satellites and satellite networks to transmit signals, GPS systems)
- Communications Jamming Equipment (equipment specially designed to jam transmissions)
- FTL Communications

**Computer Systems** (may be purchased as a group) (Characters with the Computer Programming Skill automatically have knowledge of this group, but may purchase Systems Operation with it for use as a Complementary Skill.)

- Basic Computers (basic desktop and laptop systems, PCs, Macs)
- Networks
- Mainframes (UNIX- and VAX-based systems, large corporate networks/intranets)
- Cyberspace Systems (BBSes, the Internet, commercial online services, true cyberspace)
- Military Computers
- Starship Computers

**Sensor Systems** (must be purchased separately)

- Air Traffic Control Systems (other than radar and radio)
- Medical Sensors (x-ray equipment, MRI equipment, and so forth)
- Metal Detectors
- Radar
- Sonar (passive and active arrays, towed arrays)
- Sensor Jamming Equipment (equipment specifically designed to jam sensors)
- FTL Sensors

**Weapons Systems** (must be purchased separately):

- Advanced weapons such as missiles are launched with the Systems Operation Skill. Each type of advanced weapon has its own Weapon System subgroup — Patriot missiles, ICBMs, Mark 48 ADCAP torpedoes, and so forth.

## NEW LANGUAGE TABLES

The Language Table (page 63) is a marvelous tool for helping players build characters. Gamemasters who run campaigns set in other worlds (particularly Fantasy campaigns) may want to consider making their own Language Tables. Creating one is fairly simple; the main task involved is to figure out the relationships between the languages in the campaign; once you know that, representing the relationships graphically is easy.

Gamemasters who wish to be as linguistically accurate as possible can easily research how languages grow and evolve from one another before creating a Language Table. However, you can also deduce linguistic relationships from a world's history. For example, if two different races descended from the same tribe, their languages may have strong relationships. If a single god created all the world's languages, he may have built them from



the same root words (on the other hand, maybe he deliberately made them all completely unrelated). Inventive GMs may even want to use their Language Table as a way of brainstorming ideas about cultural relationships — if two languages are closely related, what does that say about the cultures that created them?

### NEW SKILL ENHANCERS

Skill Enhancers, such as Scientist or Scholar, are a great way for Skill-oriented characters to buy certain types of Skills. However, most of them are limited to a particular type of Skill. Gamemasters may wish to create new Skill Enhancers, based either on Skill type or on the subject the Skill is related to. The typical Skill Enhancer should cost 3 points; every Skill bought through the Enhancer costs -1 point (minimum cost is still 1 Character Point).

For example, in a Fantasy campaign, the GM might create a Skill Enhancer called *Mystic*. Any KS, PS, or Language relating to magic or wizardry could be bought through this Skill Enhancer. Thus, a wizard PC could buy KS: Arcane & Occult Lore, KS: Demons, PS: Wizard, or Language: Magetongue as part of his Mystic Skill Enhancer.

Characters generally should not be allowed to buy standard Skills (such as Deduction or Combat Driving) in Skill Enhancers.

## Creating New Perks

A Perk represents a benefit or resource a character has that most people do not. Most characters should have no trouble simulating such things with the list of Perks in Chapter One (see pages 78-85). If a player thinks up something that can't be represented by an existing Perk, the GM can easily make up a new one by comparing the proposed new Perk to the existing Perks. A new Perk should cost roughly the same as existing Perks that provide the same level of benefits; for example, a Perk that's about as useful as being wealthy or the leader of a nation would be worth 10 Character Points.

Creating new Fringe Benefits is a particularly good way to individualize a campaign. You can gauge the cost for new Fringe Benefits by comparing them to the costs of existing ones. For example, the GM for a Fantasy campaign might want an elaborate series of Fringe Benefits representing noble titles and privileges among the rulers of the setting's kingdoms. Since Lower Nobility costs 2 points, Aristocracy is 5 points, and Head Of State is 10 points, he knows roughly what his new Perks should cost. Being the ruler of a kingdom costs 10 points; if there are rulers who control several kingdoms (such as a High King or Emperor), that probably costs 15 or more points. Lower noble ranks cost 1-3 points; middle noble ranks 5-7 points; high noble ranks (dukes, princes) costs 8-9 points.

## Creating New Talents

Creating new Talents can be tricky. Since Talents are a sort of "middle ground" between Skills and Powers, coming up with new ones that are balanced is sometimes a difficult task. As with Perks, the key is to use existing Talents as guidelines; compare the abilities and usefulness of a proposed new Talent to one that's in the rules to determine a good rough cost, then modify that cost as necessary for the campaign.

### CONVERTING DETECTS INTO TALENTS

Some Talents, such as Absolute Range Sense, Absolute Time Sense, Bump Of Direction, Danger Sense, and Find Weakness, are derived from the Enhanced Sense *Detect.* Gamemasters can, if they wish, convert other Detects into Talents by following these guidelines.

First, build the Detect as you want it to work. Don't forget to include Sense Modifiers such as *Sense, Range,* and *Discriminatory* if they apply. Then compare the Talent you have in mind to the Detect. Is it, like Danger Sense, much more useful or potentially powerful than a standard Detect? If so, it should cost more than the Detect. Danger Sense is a good upper limit for such Talents; if you think the Detect ought to cost more than Danger Sense, it probably should be some sort of Power instead.

If the Talent would be less useful than the Detect, reduce the cost. You should also consider reducing the cost if the Talent is primarily needed to construct gadgets and/or is not particularly useful or unbalancing. For example, Absolute Range Sense, Absolute Time Sense, and Bump Of Direction all cost less than a comparative Detect, and rarely require a roll. However, without them, building rangefinders, clocks, and compasses would be impossible. No one would rely on a clock that fails its roll every couple of minutes or so and begins displaying the wrong time. Therefore the rolls for those Talents were eliminated in most situations and their costs reduced to 3 points to make them easier to buy and use. Since none of these Talents has much impact on the game, making them so cheap and easy to use doesn't affect game balance.

### CONVERTING POWERS INTO TALENTS

You can also convert Powers other than Detect into Talents, though this is rare. Typically this involves building a very restricted form of a Power which a normal person could learn or train himself to perform through diligent effort, access to Knowledge That Man Was Not Meant To Know, and so forth.

The best way to convert a Power into a Talent is to build the Power with all appropriate Advantages and Limitations (don't forget *Reduced Endurance;* Talents ordinarily shouldn't cost END). Then use the Real Cost of the Power as a basis for determining what the Talent should cost, rounding up or down as necessary to reflect the Talent's usefulness.

Hypnosis is a good example. It's a limited form of Mind Control that many physicians and other people know. A GM who wanted to create a *Hypnosis* Talent could do so by building a Limited form of Mind Control. Using the sidebar example of Basic Hypnosis on page 204, and adding *Reduced Endurance (0 END)* as an Advantage, he obtains a Real Cost of 9 points. He decides that Hypnosis will cost 10 Character Points for an INT Roll, +1 to the roll for +2 Character Points. If a game effect is needed, Hypnosis equals Mind Control 7d6, +1d6 for every two points by which the hypnotist makes his INT Roll.

## Creating New Powers

Creating new Powers should rarely be necessary; almost every conceivable effect can be simulated with the existing Powers and Power Modifiers. But that doesn't mean you can't or shouldn't come up with your own, especially if you think your Power will work better for your particular campaign than the ones presented. Another good reason to create your own Powers is when you think a "by the book" construction is too clunky or difficult to use and you want to "streamline" it.

Creating a new Power is not difficult. The best way to do it and still preserve game balance is to build the Power as you think it should be built using the existing rules. Then use that Power (both its costs and the rules applicable to it) as a basis for determining how much your new Power should cost and how it should work. Keep the system "meta-rules" described above in mind as you do this; be careful not to violate any of them, or you may build a Power that's highly unbalanced.

Example: *Tom wants to create a "Slipperiness" Power that makes it difficult for characters to remain standing, hold on to objects, and so forth. As long as characters are in an area affected by Slipperiness, they have to make DEX Rolls at -3 (or worse, at the GM's option) to remain standing or to hold on to anything. He can think of two ways to build this: as a form of Change Environment; and as a Drain DEX. Since the Power he has in mind affects an area and is Constant, he decides that Change Environment is the most applicable Power.*

*He builds Slipperiness "by the book" as follows: Change Environment (create slippery area) 1" radius, -3 to DEX Rolls to move or hold anything while in area (11 Active Points); Only Affects Characters Who Are Moving On The Ground (-¼) (9 Real Points).*

*With this construction in mind, Tom defines his new Power as follows:*

**SLIPPERINESS**

*A character with this Standard Power can create an area in which it's very difficult for characters to remain standing or hold on to objects. Examples of Slipperiness include a sheet of ice on the ground or an area in which all friction is negated. To create Slipperiness in a 1" radius area costs 10 Character Points; characters may double this radius for a +¼ Advantage (this Advantage can be purchased*

*multiple times). Slipperiness costs END to use, is Constant, and works at Range.*

*Every Phase in which a character is in an area affected by Slipperiness, he must make a DEX Roll at -3 or fall down and/or lose his grip on any object he is holding. At the GM's discretion, this penalty may increase (such as, for example, when a character runs into a Slippery area at high speed). A character must be touching the floor or objects to fall down or lose his grip; a character who is, for example, flying and not holding anything will suffer no ill effects from Slipperiness.*

*At the GM's option, characters can apply Slipperiness, with different special effects, to different Characteristics. For example, a "Confusion Field" could force characters inside it to make all INT Rolls at -3, or a "Weakness Field" could impose a -3 on all STR Rolls.*

Example: *Geoff doesn't like building poisons and venoms with the current rules; applying so many Power Modifiers takes a long time and seems "clunky" to him. He'd rather define "Venom" as its own separate Power. So, he builds a "typical" deadly poison for his campaign as a guideline: RKA 3d6, NND (defense is appropriate Immunity; +1), Does BODY (+1) (135 Active Points); OAF Fragile (easily-diluted liquid; -1¼), No Range (-¼), No KB (-¼), Gradual Effect (6 hours, or ½d6 damage per hour; -1½), 1 Charge (-2) (22 Real Points).*

*Geoff now builds his Venom Power. Since damage is going to occur in ½d6 increments over a long period of time, meaning the victim has a significant chance of saving himself from death, he decides that a cost of 10 Character Points per damage increment (approximately half the Real Point cost of the Power above) is fair.*

**VENOM**

*A character with this Standard Power can poison another character, causing him to die or suffer other ill effects. Examples of Venom include curare, cyanide, rattlesnake venom, and the like. Each ½d6 of Killing Damage caused by Venom costs 10 Character Points. Venom costs END to use, is Instant, and has No Range.*

*To use Venom, the character makes an Attack Roll. If he hits, the victim immediately takes ½d6 damage (the Extra Time Limitation may be used to delay the onset time). Resistant defenses apply against this damage. Thereafter the victim suffers another ½d6 of Venom damage every half hour until the dice are all used up or he dies, whichever comes first. The damage applies to the victim's defenses cumulatively — each die adds to the earlier dice, and once the victim's defenses are exceeded, he takes all further damage with no defense.*

*Characters can make Venom damage accrue more quickly than every half-hour with an Advantage. For every +¼ Advantage, the time increment is moved up one step on Time Chart. Thus, for a +¼ Advantage, damage accrues every 20 minutes; for +½, every 5 minutes, and so forth. For a +1¼ Advantage, the victim takes damage on each of his Phases.*

*At the GM's option, characters can create Venoms to affect Characteristics other than BODY and STUN. For example, some poisons might simply make the victim very sick (affecting his CON) or addle his mind (affecting his INT or EGO). The GM must approve all such Venoms.*

*Venom is typically bought through a Focus, but this is not required.*

**NO ENDURANCE**

To simplify Superheroic games, you may want to get rid of Power Limitations and Endurance costs. No Power will cost END to use, but you won't get any breaks on the cost. You can ignore END in Heroic games, though this means some combats may take a very long time.

## Creating New Power Advantages

New Power Advantages should be even rarer than new Powers. The Advantages listed in Chapter One should suffice for virtually any Power. Creating new Advantages is also risky, since Advantages are more likely to unbalance an ability than just about anything else. Players should only create a new Advantage if (a) there is no other way to simulate the effect they want, and (b) the Advantage won't unbalance the campaign.

Before creating a new Advantage, a player or GM should try to build the desired effect using existing Powers and Advantages. If he can build it, then a new Advantage generally shouldn't be substituted for it (even if the effect is very expensive). Only when there is no other alternative should you consider creating a new Advantage. In such a case, every effort should be made to ensure that the new Advantage won't unbalance the campaign. It should cost at least as much, if not more, as comparatively useful Advantages, or its cost should be proportionate to similar but more useful Advantages.

Example: *Michael would like a way to build attacks that are slightly better at penetrating defenses than regular attacks, but not as good at it as Armor Piercing attacks. He first tries to build this as a Drain PD 2d6 with the Standard Effect Rule (thus, the attack automatically Drains 3 points of PD). However, this doesn't do what he wants, since a Drain Linked to another attack always affects defenses after the attack. Michael also considers trying to apply the Armor Piercing Advantage and limit it in some way, but finds that awkward. He creates the following new Advantage:*

**SEMI-ARMOR PIERCING**
*Characters use this +¼ Advantage to create attacks that can penetrate armor more easily than regular attacks, but not as well as Armor Piercing attacks. Semi-Armor Piercing subtracts one-fourth of the target's defenses or 3 points of defense (whichever is less) before the damage is applied. Semi-Armor Piercing does not work against Hardened defenses; characters cannot buy it multiple times.*

*Michael's GM examines this new Advantage and decides to approve it. He agrees this is a smoother way of accomplishing what Michael wants than a Limited form of Armor Piercing. He does not consider it unbalanced, since it is similar to Armor Piercing, but has less effect and costs less.*

## Changing The Value Of Limitations

The values presented for Limitations reflect the standard value which applies to most, and often all, genres. However, based on the genre being simulated and the nature of the campaign, the GM may find it preferable to alter the value of some Limitations.

For example, the *STUN Only* (-0) Limitation described under *Energy Blast* (page 160) is most applicable to the typical comic book superhero campaign, where the Limitation's benefits and drawbacks more or less balance out. In a superhero campaign where the GM wants to emphasize the chaotic and destructive nature of superpowers by having innocent bystanders get injured in most superhuman battles, it might be a +¼ Advantage. In a campaign featuring a lot of robots, undead creatures, or other Automatons who cannot take STUN damage, it might be a -¼ (or greater) Limitation.

Altering a Limitation's value is also a good way to encourage characters to take it. For example, if a GM wants characters to have Mental Powers that affect their targets physically, he might increase the value of *Based On CON* to -1½ so more characters take it for their powers.

## Creating New Disadvantages

As with Advantages, new Disadvantages should be rare. The Disadvantages were intentionally designed to be very broad so that they could apply to a wide variety of situations. Only when the existing Disadvantages cannot be used at all to simulate what a player wants, or would require substantial modification, should the GM consider creating a new Disadvantage.

Example: *Andy is playing a character who has a severe allergic reaction to silver. He initially considers taking a Susceptibility to simulate this, but since the character isn't damaged by the presence of silver, he doesn't feel Susceptibility would apply as written. He would rather have the character lose STR, DEX, and CON when in the presence of silver. He discusses this with the GM. The GM offers to configure Susceptibility to represent an allergy, much in the same way Dependence can be configured to represent an addiction. The points for the commonality of the condition stay the same. Instead of taking damage, the character will lose 1, 2, or 3 point from each Characteristic every Phase instead of taking 1-3d6 of damage. The character only suffers the effect when near silver, so rather than defining a time increment, the GM simply agrees to give a +5 Character Point "Allergy" bonus to the character, with the proviso that loss of Characteristics doubles in any Phase in which he actually touches silver.*

# CHANGING THE RULES

We think the *HERO System* rules work well just as they are, and encourage you to use them that way. However, you may find that certain rules do not suit your style of play, or make it more difficult for you to do what you want to in the game. If that's the case, change the rules! The whole point of gaming is to have fun, so you shouldn't let the rules hold you back if they're getting in the way of that goal.

However, changing the rules can be dangerous. One of the key concepts underlying the *HERO System* is that of *game balance.* The *HERO System* has been designed so that the costs of things, and the rules applicable to them, are reasonably balanced. Any one game element is, in theory and on the average over the course of a campaign, as useful and worthwhile as any other game element with the same cost. One may be better than another in a given situation, but overall the usefulness should balance out.

Changes in the rules may have unintended effects on this rules structure, causing the system to become unbalanced. When something becomes unbalanced, it has a greater usefulness or effect than its point cost would seem to indicate (or, more rarely, has less effect than it should for its cost). A good rule of thumb is this: if all the players want their characters to have a particular Power or use a particular maneuver, the chances are good that it's unbalanced.

Changing rules is a good way to cause imbalance because it's often difficult to predict the exact effects a change will have. A change may seem clean and discrete, but as it's used more and more, other aspects of the system come into play and are affected by the change. This may lead to further changes, or having to change the rule back to what it was, or changes to other rules in an attempt to correct the problem. Pretty soon you've got a lot of pages of rules notes and a tangled mess on your hands.

So, in short, before you make any changes to the rules — particularly major changes, like to the costs of Characteristics or Powers — consider what you're going to do very carefully. Try to look at as



many aspects of the system as you can and figure out how the change might affect them. And, most important of all, inform the players that this change is a temporary one intended as a "test run" — if it doesn't work as well as you'd hoped, you'll change it back.

Example: *Transform seems too expensive to Tim — it costs too many Active Points to have any hope of affecting the average NPC with a single Transform attack. He considers changing the costs of Transform to 3 points per 1d6 of Cosmetic Transform, 5 points per 1d6 of Minor Transform, and 10 points per 1d6 of Major Transform. Before he institutes this as an official change for his campaign, he sits down and thinks about the consequences.*

*First, is this change balanced compared to other Powers? Working a Major Transform on another character is more or less as good as killing him, but Killing Attacks cost 15 points per 1d6. This change will make Major Transform a much more attractive option than Killing Attack or many other Attack Powers, so there's likely to be an upsurge of characters buying Transform.*

*Second, Minor Transform allows some significant changes to a character, including reducing OCV or DCV by up to -2. For only 5 points per 1d6, that's a pretty useful Power. On the other hand, creating a similar effect with Change Environment would cost 10 points in a 1" radius, and would do so without requiring an effect roll, so this may not be too much of a problem.*

*Third, the defense that protects against Transform — Power Defense — is already pretty rare in the campaign, so most characters cannot resist Transform. Thus, Transform is pretty effective despite its cost. If this change is instituted, Transforms will become much more common, and that in turn will probably lead to more characters buying Power Defense, even if it doesn't fit their character conception very well.*

*Fourth, Transform shouldn't necessarily affect a target with a single attack. Killing Attacks and other attacks often don't, and Transform should be no exception. While it's true that characters in literature and movies often have Transforms that work quickly and easily, that doesn't mean the game should work the same way — sometimes the game and the source material have to differ to maintain game balance. Besides, there are probably ways to use strategy and tactics to make it appear as if a character is Transforming his enemies in one fell swoop — for example, Holding an Action so the Transform can be used in two Segments in a row (making it look like one seamless attack) or applying Advantages such as Autofire or Continuous to a smaller number of Transform dice.*

*After considering all of these factors, Tim decides against changing the cost of Transform. Keeping Major Transform equal in cost to a Killing Attack is a better balance for his campaign. If a player comes up with a character idea that doesn't work well because of the cost of Transform, Tim will discuss the situation with him and see if they can come up with a way to make Transform more effective on a case-by-case basis.*

Example: *Gary decides he wants Mental Defense to be a Figured Characteristic in his campaign. He plans to use a lot of villains with Mental Powers during the course of several of his story arcs, and he figures the PCs ought to have some resistance to their Powers or the game won't be much fun for the players. He decides all characters have MD equal to their EGO/5, and can purchase additional MD for 1 Character Point per point.*

chapter eight:



# CONCLUDING NOTES

# CONCLUSION



In conclusion, here are a few notes from the designers.

## ORIGINS OF THE *HERO SYSTEM*

Roleplaying game systems don't arise in a vacuum. They're the result of a lot of effort, playtesting, and, most importantly, devotion to the goal of getting the system published. Even then, game designers have to evaluate and improve their systems constantly, as new ideas occur and play experience reveals areas which need improvement. Here's how the *HERO System* developed.

### BENEFITS OF A CLASSICAL EDUCATION

Long before there was a "*HERO System,*" there was only *Champions,* Hero Games's comic book superheroes roleplaying game. *Champions* was born during a college lecture. George MacDonald was bored by the lecture, so he started designing a superhero roleplaying game in his notebook. The final result of that effort is the game you're holding.

George had some good ideas for combat and characteristics, but the problem of assigning powers was a difficult one. Then George met Wayne Shaw at a convention and saw his point system for distributing superpowers. The current system looks almost nothing like Wayne's original work, but owes much in spirit to Wayne and his group's pioneering effort. Thanks, Wayne.

The original edition of the *Champions* rules took about two and a half years of playtesting and revision. It was a cooperative effort among numerous gamers, but essentially George was responsible for testing the rules, and Steve Peterson was responsible for translating the ideas to paper. Jim Landes, Ray Greer, Glenn Thain, and Tom Tumey were all instrumental in getting the rules published.

### THE SYSTEM IS PUBLISHED

*Champions* was first published in 1981 to rave reviews. The game proved to be so popular that it raced through its initial print runs. This gave George and Steve the opportunity to revise the rules twice: once in 1982 and again in 1984. Each new edition of *Champions* took advantage of additional playtesting and helped clean up the rules.

Meanwhile, the *HERO System* was branching out in new directions. In 1983, Hero Games published *Espionage,* the Secret Agent Roleplaying Game, followed in 1984 by *Justice Inc.*, the roleplaying game of the 1920s and 1930s. These were followed by *Danger International* (an *Espionage* revision), *Fantasy Hero, Robot Warriors,* and *Star Hero.*

The problem was that as the *HERO System* spread out over several genres, it became less unified. George and Steve never had a chance to sit down with all the rules at once and say "how do we want to handle mentalism?" or "how do we want to build gadgets?". As a result, each game was built on what came before it, but the basic system rules were changed to fit special circumstances. Hence *Fantasy Hero* Magic was different from *Champions* Powers or *Justice Inc.* Talents. Moreover, because there was no single set of rules, *HERO System* players ended up buying several different Hero games just to make sure they had all the rules.

### THE FOURTH EDITION

In the summer of 1987, Hero first started thinking about fixing all this. What finally convinced them to change things was a desire to clarify the original vision behind the *HERO System.* They had always envisioned the *HERO System* as a complete and unified set of rules for roleplaying in any background — George and Steve's initial goal was to create rules which could be used to duplicate any setting from any novel, comic book, movie, or television show. But the earlier, "piecemeal" publication of genre-oriented games had sidetracked that goal.

To return to and realize its original goals, Hero Games decided to unify all the rules, smooth out the discrepancies, and put them under one cover. This also gave them the opportunity to clean up the presentation, fix some loopholes, and act on all the feedback which had been received in the years since the first *HERO System* book had gone to print.

Of course, the situation in 1987 was somewhat different from that in 1981. *Champions* was no longer a small game run by a handful of people — it was an established, successful game system. Hero Games had even signed an agreement with Iron Crown Enterprises to help alleviate the day-to-day concerns of publishing roleplaying games.

In 1987, Iron Crown hired a talented writer/editor, Rob Bell, to help manage the Hero Games line. His main job was the revision and unification of the *HERO System.* The revisions — the creation of the Fourth Edition — took almost exactly two years. George, Steve, and Rob went over the rules one by one; they also solicited feedback from over a hundred players. They playtested and replaytested so the rules would be as good as possible. Finally the revisions were completed and the new edition published in 1989.

The Fourth Edition, like its predecessors, proved to be very successful — so successful, in fact, that it remained more or less unchanged for nearly ten years. During that time dozens of

supplements, many containing new or alternate rules, were published, and HeroMaker, a computer program for generating *HERO System* characters, was created. The rise of Internet communications and the World Wide Web provided new avenues through which Hero fans were able to exchange information and experiences regarding the *HERO System.* Hero Games even attempted to adapt the *HERO System* to a new, simplified roleplaying system, Fuzion.

## THE FIFTH EDITION

In 1995, Hero Games severed its relationship with Iron Crown, and shortly thereafter entered into a similar relationship with R. Talsorian Games. Hero also began granting licenses to other game companies, notably Gold Rush Games, to produce *HERO System* supplements. This gave the company the chance to expand its audience.

Around this time it was becoming apparent that the *HERO System* could once again use a few touch-ups. It didn't need broad revisions or changes, but there were a few things, such as the Powers *Aid* and *Hand-To-Hand Attack,* that obviously weren't working correctly. Even more importantly, since the publication of the Fourth Edition gamers had come up with hundreds, if not thousands, of questions concerning rules interpretation and interaction, and had made many suggestions for additions to the system. Finding a way to provide answers to the questions, plug the loopholes involved, and improve the *HERO System* became a company goal.

Furthermore, many of the Hero Games books published since the Fourth Edition, such as those in the *Dark Champions* line and the *Ultimate* series, contained new rules or rules variants which were deemed worthy of inclusion in the system's core rules. Because many of these books did not focus on *Champions* superhero characters, including rules from them coincided with another Hero Games goal — making the system more friendly for non-superhero characters. Despite the Fourth Edition revisions, a strong emphasis on superhero characters still existed in many parts of the system. Since the *HERO System* is intended to simulate *any* genre, eliminating this emphasis and making the system equally applicable to all genres became a second design goal.

In mid-1997, Hero Games finally decided to go ahead with the design and publication of a Fifth Edition of the *HERO System* rules. Experienced *HERO System* author and game designer Steven S. Long was recruited in December 1997 to undertake the task of rewriting the game's rules and text. Working from an outline of questions and discussion points prepared by Steve Long, he and Steve Peterson went over the rules one at a time and decided what changes and additions were needed. Additionally, a feedback form was provided for *HERO System* gamers, allowing them to indicate what changes they felt were needed, and what they'd like to see in a new edition.

Steve Long spent months working on the first draft, and turned it in to Hero Games in August, 1998. In February, 1999, he again met with Steve Peterson to review the suggested changes and revisions the company wanted. After several more months



of work, he turned in the completed manuscript in May, 1999.

Unfortunately, by this point Hero Games was suffering some difficulties. R. Talsorian Games had effectively gone out of business, leaving Hero to go its way alone. Without sufficient income to keep employees working on developing manuscripts, Hero was unable to publish the Fifth Edition.

In 2000, a potential solution presented itself when Hero was purchased by a company called Cybergames. Thanks to the resulting infusion of cash and enthusiasm, Hero had full-time employees for the first time in its existence. However, various logistical and financial hurdles again kept the Fifth Edition from seeing the light of day. Hero lapsed back into hibernation.

Reluctant to continue its efforts to publish paper games, in mid-2001 Cybergames began negotiating with a company called DOJ, Inc. to sell the assets of Hero Games. After several months of discussion, during which some investors bowed out of DOJ and others entered the picture, the company finally concluded an agreement to purchase the Hero assets — including, most prominently, the manuscript for this book. The new Hero Games immediately began preparing the Fifth Edition for printing.

### THE FIFTH EDITION, REVISED

Hero Games published the *Fifth Edition* in April, 2002 to strong sales and excellent reviews. Renewed interest in the *HERO System* attracted attention both from former players and from gamers who'd never tried the *HERO System* before. Over the next two years, Hero Games published over two dozen supplements, ranging from genre books, to *Ultimate* series books, to sourcebooks on a wide variety of subjects.




Inevitably, all this activity and interest led to new rules issues and questions. Furthermore, as the Hero Games staff became more and more experienced at publishing books, they developed more ideas about better ways to present the *HERO System* rules. After two years, it was time to revise the rulebook to include this new information and ideas.

You're holding the end result in your hands. At Hero Games, we like to think that each book we do is a little better than the last one, and we believe this is the best expression of the *HERO System* rules to date. It answers questions, smooths over rough areas, resolves problems, and in general makes the game better than ever, and thus more fun for everyone involved. We hope you'll agree.

## WHERE YOU CAN GO FROM HERE

In addition to this rulebook, there are plenty of *HERO System* resources available to you — and many more to come.

First, you can find Hero Games on the World Wide Web at http://www.herogames.com. The Hero website has news and other important information for Hero gamers, in addition to many other fun features. For one, there's the *Digital Hero* e-zine, which you can not only read but contribute articles to. For another, there's a large and active message board. If you have a question about the game, are looking for players in your area, want a clarification on a rules dispute, or just feel like talking with other Hero Games fans, this is the place to go.

The Hero Games website also has an electronic store, where you can order Hero's products. We hope you'll support your local game store by buying our products there, but if you don't have a place nearby where you can buy Hero Games books, you can always go to the Hero Games website. Additionally, the website is the only place where you can order our *Hero Plus* line of electronic books in PDF format. Hero Plus includes some old products that have gone out of print and aren't otherwise available, and a whole range of new products that we don't intend to print as paper books.

Second, there are other Hero Games products. Hero Games publishes a wide range of genre books, sourcebooks, and other supplements for its product lines. Additionally, there are older products published during the company's twenty-five-year history. The changes wrought by the Fifth Edition of the *HERO System* are not, for the most part, major ones. This was intentional; we didn't want, and did not see the need for, changes which would invalidate the vast majority of existing characters. We want Hero gamers to be able to continue using those products with the Fifth Edition, and they can.

So what are you waiting for? Go out and Be A Hero!

# APPENDIX

## LARGE AND SMALL CHARACTERS

As discussed in Chapter One, characters who can change their size at will use the Powers *Growth* and *Shrinking* to simulate that ability. But some characters are larger or smaller than the *HERO System*'s defined norm of 1" tall and 100 kilograms in weight. Examples include giants, pixies, and similar beings.

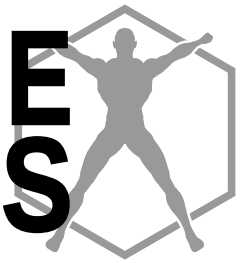
Being larger or smaller than human normal all the time gives a character certain abilities. For example, large characters are usually very strong, while small characters have an easier time hiding. On the other hand, being larger or smaller than normal also has its drawbacks — gigantic beings can't fit into small spaces or ride in cars, while small ones can't reach things easily and may not be able to run as fast.

The accompanying templates, ranging from one-sixty-fourth normal human size to 64 times human size, represent the standard abilities and Disadvantages representing various "size categories." The listed abilities are only *guidelines* — a character doesn't necessarily have to take every single "Enormous" ability if he's four times human size. It all depends on the form of his body, what it is that makes him big, and so forth. The GM should review and approve unusually large or small characters to make sure their abilities and Disadvantages properly simulate their size.





# SIZE TEMPLATES



### REACH FOR LARGE CHARACTERS

Large characters' extra reach is simulated with inches of Stretching, bought with these Power Modifiers: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), No Velocity Damage (-¼).

As with everything else in a Size package, reach is not required. Some characters, particularly humaniform ones, need it. Others can't reach significantly far away from their bodies, so they don't need reach.

### LARGE CHARACTERS AND DCV

As noted below, for every step *larger* than human size, a character suffers -2 DCV, and all PER Rolls to perceive him are at +2. The DCV penalty is included in the Physical Limitation for two reasons: first, it almost never varies from the standard (unlike the DCV bonus for being smaller than human size, which often varies); second, because the rules for negative DCV Levels (page 54) are optional. However, the value of the negative DCV Levels (using the standard cost of 5 Character Points per Level) exceeds the points the character gets from the Physical Limitation. If you prefer, you can adopt the negative DCV Levels rule, and then instead of including the reduced DCV as part of the Physical Limitation, subtract the negative Levels' cost from the cost of the Size Template.

## SIZE TEMPLATES

| Cost | **Size: Insectile (character is about one-sixty-fourth human size)** |
|---|---|
| 16 | Easily Hidden: +12 to Concealment (24 Active Points); Self Only (-½) |
| 60 | Hard To Hit: +12 DCV |
| 24 | Hard To Perceive: +12 to Stealth |
| -30 | Less Impressive: -30 PRE (minimum of 0; adjust cost accordingly) |
| -36 | Shorter Legs: Running -18" (minimum of 1"; may be changed to compensate for reduced movement due to negative STR) |
| -30 | Weaker: -30 STR (minimum of -30; adjust cost accordingly) |
| -20 | Physical Limitation: Insectile (All The Time, Greatly Impairing) |

**Total cost: -16 points.**

| Cost | **Size: Minute (character is about one-thirty-second human size)** |
|---|---|
| 13 | Easily Hidden: +10 to Concealment (20 Active Points); Self Only (-½) |
| 50 | Hard To Hit: +10 DCV |
| 20 | Hard To Perceive: +10 to Stealth |
| -25 | Less Impressive: -25 PRE (minimum of 0; adjust cost accordingly) |
| -30 | Shorter Legs: Running -15" (minimum of 1"; may be changed to compensate for reduced movement due to negative STR) |
| -25 | Weaker: -25 STR (minimum of -30; adjust cost accordingly) |
| -15 | Physical Limitation: Minute (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |

**Total cost: -12 points.**

| Cost | **Size: Minuscule (character is about one-sixteenth human size)** |
|---|---|
| 11 | Easily Hidden: +8 to Concealment (16 Active Points); Self Only (-½) |
| 40 | Hard To Hit: +8 DCV |
| 16 | Hard To Perceive: +8 to Stealth |
| -20 | Less Impressive: -20 PRE (minimum of 0; adjust cost accordingly) |
| -24 | Shorter Legs: Running -12" (minimum of 1"; may be changed to compensate for reduced movement due to negative STR) |
| -20 | Weaker: -20 STR (minimum of -30; adjust cost accordingly) |
| -15 | Physical Limitation: Minuscule (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |

**Total cost: -12 points.**

**Cost Size: Tiny (character is about one-eighth human size)**
8 Easily Hidden: +6 to Concealment (12 Active Points); Self Only (-½)
30 Hard To Hit: +6 DCV
12 Hard To Perceive: +6 to Stealth
-15 Less Impressive: -15 PRE (minimum of 0; adjust cost accordingly)
-18 Short Legs: Running -9" (minimum of 1"; may be changed to compensate for reduced movement due to negative STR)
-15 Weak: -15 STR (minimum of -30; adjust cost accordingly)
-10 Physical Limitation: Tiny (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
**Total cost: -8 points.**

**Cost Size: Diminutive (character is about one-quarter human size)**
5 Easily Hidden: +4 to Concealment (8 Active Points); Self Only (-½)
20 Hard To Hit: +4 DCV
8 Hard To Perceive: +4 to Stealth
-10 Less Impressive: -10 PRE (minimum of 0; adjust cost accordingly)
-12 Short Legs: Running -6" (minimum of 1"; may be changed to compensate for reduced movement due to negative STR)
-10 Weak: -10 STR (minimum of -30; adjust cost accordingly)
-10 Physical Limitation: Diminutive (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
**Total cost: -9 points.**

**Cost Size: Small (character is about half human size)**
3 Easily Hidden: +2 to Concealment (4 Active Points); Self Only (-½)
10 Hard To Hit: +2 DCV
4 Hard To Perceive: +2 to Stealth
-5 Less Impressive: -5 PRE (minimum of 0; adjust cost accordingly)
-6 Short Legs: Running -3" (minimum of 1"; may be changed to compensate for reduced movement due to negative STR)
-5 Weak: -5 STR (minimum of -30; adjust cost accordingly)
-5 Physical Limitation: Small, down to half human size and/or mass (1m, or ½") (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
**Total cost: -4 points.**

**Cost Size: Large (character is up to twice human size)**
15 Greater Strength: +15 STR
6 Greater Mass: +3 BODY
6 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -3"
5 More Impressive: +5 PRE
12 Long Legs: Running +6"
3 Tougher: +3 ED
4 Reach: Stretching 1"
-5 Physical Limitation: Large (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
**Total cost: 47 points.**

**Cost Size: Enormous (character is up to four times human size)**
30 Greater Strength: +30 STR
12 Greater Mass: +6 BODY
12 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -6"
10 More Impressive: +10 PRE
24 Long Legs: Running +12"
6 Tougher: +6 ED
9 Reach: Stretching 2"
-15 Physical Limitation: Enormous (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 88 points.**

**Cost Size: Huge (character is up to eight times human size)**
45 Greater Strength: +45 STR
18 Greater Mass: +9 BODY
18 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -9"
15 More Impressive: +15 PRE
36 Long Legs: Running +18"
9 Tougher: +9 ED
17 Reach: Stretching 4"
-15 Physical Limitation: Huge (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 143 points.**

**Cost Size: Gigantic (character is up to sixteen times human size)**
60 Greater Strength: +60 STR
24 Greater Mass: +12 BODY
24 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -12"
20 More Impressive: +20 PRE
48 Long Legs: Running +24"
12 Tougher: +12 ED
34 Reach: Stretching 8"
-15 Physical Limitation: Gigantic (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 207 points.**

**Cost Size: Gargantuan (character is up to thirty-two times human size)**
75 Greater Strength: +75 STR
30 Greater Mass: +15 BODY
30 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -15"
25 More Impressive: +25 PRE
60 Long Legs: Running +30"
15 Tougher: +15 ED
69 Reach: Stretching 16"
-15 Physical Limitation: Gargantuan (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 289 points.**

**Cost Size: Colossal (character is up to sixty-four times human size)**
90 Greater Strength: +90 STR
36 Greater Mass: +18 BODY
36 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -18"
30 More Impressive: +30 PRE
72 Long Legs: Running +36"
18 Tougher: +18 ED
137 Reach: Stretching 32"
-20 Physical Limitation: Colossal (All The Time, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 399 points.**

### THE DRAWBACKS OF SIZE

Larger and/or heavier characters have problems because they can't fit through doors easily, have trouble walking on upper stories because they break through the floor or ceiling, can't ride in normal vehicles, accidentally crush furniture and break things, and so forth. Smaller and/or lighter characters suffer fewer problems, but sometimes have trouble reaching things, making themselves noticed, and the like.

Some of these drawbacks are easily defined in game rules terms. For every step *larger* than normal human size, a character suffers -2 DCV, and all PER Rolls to perceive him are at +2. For example, a Gargantuan titan is at -10 DCV, and +10 PER to perceive. For every step *smaller* than normal human size, a character suffers +3" Knockback from attacks, though these extra inches only add to the distance traveled, not the damage taken from being Knocked Back. This assumes, of course, that the campaign uses the Knockback rules, but even if it doesn't normally, the GM may occasionally have attacks Knock Back smaller characters since they weigh less than the average PC.

The accompanying table provides suggested Physical Limitation values for characters of various sizes. These values are used in the Size Templates, and assume the character spends a significant amount of time (more than half of his in-game time) in settings suited for characters of "normal human" size and weight. If that's not the case, the GM should reduce the value of the Disadvantage appropriately.

Size doesn't necessarily indicate that a character is taller than a normal human; it may reflect length or girth instead. The Physical Limitation reflects overall size and bulk, not just height. The specified parameters are *guidelines;* GMs should give each character the Physical Limitation that fits him best, regardless of whether the character is exactly the listed size.

## SIZE/WEIGHT PHYSICAL LIMITATION

| Value | Physical Limitation |
|---|---|
| 20 | Insectile, down to 1/64 human size and/or mass (.032m, or .016") or smaller (+18" Knockback) (All The Time, Greatly Impairing) |
| 15 | Minute, down to 1/32 human size and/or mass (.064m, or .032") (+15" Knockback) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 15 | Minuscule, down to 1/16 human size and/or mass (.125m, or .064") (+12" Knockback) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 10 | Tiny, down to 1/8 human size and/or mass (.25m, or .125") (+9" Knockback) (Frequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 10 | Diminutive, down to one-quarter human size and/or mass (.5m, or ¼") (+6" Knockback) (Frequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 5 | Small, down to half human size and/or mass (1m, or ½") (+3" Knockback) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 0 | Human size and/or mass (no Disadvantage) |
| 5 | Large, up to twice human size and/or mass (4m, or 2") (-2 DCV and +2 to PER Rolls to perceive character) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 15 | Enormous, up to four times human size and/or mass (8m, or 2.1-4") (-4 DCV and +4 to PER Rolls to perceive character) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 15 | Huge, up to eight times human size and/or mass (16m, or 4.1-8") (-6 DCV and +6 to PER Rolls to perceive character) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 15 | Gigantic, up to 16 times human size and/or mass (32m, or 8.1-16") (-8 DCV and +8 to PER Rolls to perceive character) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 15 | Gargantuan, up to 32 times human size and/or mass (64m, or 16.1-32") (-10 DCV and +10 to PER Rolls to perceive character) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 20 | Colossal, up to 64 times human size and/or mass (128 m, or 32.1-64") or larger (-12 DCV and +12 to PER Rolls to perceive character) (All The Time, Greatly Impairing) |

## HEAVY CHARACTERS

Some characters are normal human size, but much heavier than normal. Examples include stone golems and superheroes made of "living iron." While characters who can alter their density at will buy the Power *Density Increase,* that's not appropriate for characters who are always heavy. Instead, they should buy a suite of powers and Disadvantages reflecting that state. The accompanying templates, ranging from two to 64 times human mass, list the standard abilities and Disadvantages representing various categories of heaviness.

As with the Size Templates, the listed abilities are only *guidelines* — a character doesn't necessarily have to take every single ability in a template. For example, a character whose extra mass results from being extremely overweight wouldn't necessarily have the extra STR, PD, or ED; he'd just buy some Knockback Resistance. The GM should review and approve unusually heavy characters to make sure their abilities and Disadvantages properly simulate their size.

### THE DRAWBACKS OF HEAVINESS

Part of each Mass template is a Physical Limitation representing the inconvenience of being so heavy all the time, which makes it difficult to ride in vehicles (or on mounts), to walk on the upper floors of buildings without falling through, to avoid leaving tracks almost everywhere he walks, and so forth. The listed Disadvantage values are only guidelines. The GM should feel free to change them to suit specific characters, the campaign setting, or other factors. For example, in a game where characters frequently spend time in skyscrapers or on fragile cloud-ships, being heavy might be worth more points.

# MASS TEMPLATES

**Cost Mass: Hefty (character weighs 2-3 times normal, or 200-399 kg)**
3 Greater Strength: +5 STR, No Figured Characteristics (-½)
1 Tougher: +1 PD
1 Tougher: +1 ED
2 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -1"
-5 Physical Limitation: Hefty (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
**Total cost: 2 points.**

**Cost Mass: Weighty (character weighs 4-7 times normal, or 400-799 kg)**
7 Greater Strength: +10 STR, No Figured Characteristics (-½)
2 Tougher: +2 PD
2 Tougher: +2 ED
4 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -2"
-15 Physical Limitation: Weighty (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 0 points.**

**Cost Mass: Heavy (character weighs 8-15 times normal, or 800-1,599 kg)**
10 Greater Strength: +15 STR, No Figured Characteristics (-½)
3 Tougher: +3 PD
3 Tougher: +3 ED
6 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -3"
-15 Physical Limitation: Heavy (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 7 points.**

**Cost Mass: Massive (character weighs 16-31 times normal, or 1,600-3,199 kg)**
13 Greater Strength: +20 STR, No Figured Characteristics (-½)
4 Tougher: +4 PD
4 Tougher: +4 ED
8 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -4"
-15 Physical Limitation: Massive (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 14 points.**

**Cost Mass: Extremely Massive (character weighs 32-63 times normal, or 3,200-6,399 kg)**
17 Greater Strength: +25 STR, No Figured Characteristics (-½)
5 Tougher: +5 PD
5 Tougher: +5 ED
10 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -5"
-15 Physical Limitation: Extremely Massive (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 22 points.**

**Cost Mass: Colossal Mass (character weighs 64 or more times normal, or 6,400+ kg)**
20 Greater Strength: +30 STR, No Figured Characteristics (-½)
6 Tougher: +6 PD
6 Tougher: +6 ED
12 Heavy: Knockback Resistance -6"
-20 Physical Limitation: Colossal Mass (All The Time, Greatly Impairing)
**Total cost: 24 points.**

# DOUBLING QUICK-REFERENCE TABLE

Many things in the *HERO System* increase geometrically based on how many Character Points a character spends on a particular ability, or the value of the Advantage he applies. For ease of reference, the accompanying table lists the standard *HERO System* doubling progression and point and Advantage values. However, you should adapt it to any specific rules listed in the book; it's just a tool, not a rule itself. For example, since all characters start with x2 Noncombat Movement in all their modes of movement, the table doesn't list the cost of Noncombat Movement precisely — you should move one step down the chart to get the proper value for the *Improved Noncombat Movement* Adder. Thus, 15 points buys a character a x16 Noncombat Multiplier, not x8, since he starts with a base of x2.

# DOUBLING QUICK-REFERENCE TABLE

| Value | Point Cost | Advantage |
|---|---|---|
| x2 | 5 | +¼ |
| x4 | 10 | +½ |
| x8 | 15 | +¾ |
| x16 | 20 | +1 |
| x32 | 25 | +1¼ |
| x64 | 30 | +1½ |
| x125 | 35 | +1¾ |
| x250 | 40 | +2 |
| x500 | 45 | +2¼ |
| x1,000 | 50 | +2½ |
| x2,000 | 55 | +2¾ |
| x4,000 | 60 | +3 |
| x16,000 | 65 | +3¼ |
| x32,000 | 70 | +3½ |
| x64,000 | 75 | +3¾ |
| x125,000 | 80 | +4 |
| x250,000 | 85 | +4¼ |
| x500,000 | 90 | +4½ |
| x1,000,000 | 95 | +4¾ |
| x2,000,000 | 100 | +5 |
| x4,000,000 | 105 | +5¼ |
| x8,000,000 | 110 | +5½ |
| x16,000,000 | 115 | +5¾ |
| x32,000,000 | 120 | +6 |
| x64,000,000 | 125 | +6¼ |
| x125,000,000 | 130 | +6½ |
| x250,000,000 | 135 | +6¾ |
| x500,000,000 | 140 | +7 |
| x1 billion | 145 | +7¼ |

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**Character Name:** _____

Alternate Identities: _____

Player Name: _____

## CHARACTERISTICS

| Val | Char | Base | Cost | Points | Roll | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ | STR | 10 | x1 | ___ | ___ | HTH damage ____d6 Lift _____ END (__) |
| ___ | DEX | 10 | x3 | ___ | ___ | OCV _____ DCV _____ |
| ___ | CON | 10 | x2 | ___ | ___ | |
| ___ | BODY | 10 | x2 | ___ | ___ | |
| ___ | INT | 10 | x1 | ___ | ___ | Perception Roll _____ |
| ___ | EGO | 10 | x2 | ___ | ___ | Base ECV _____ |
| ___ | PRE | 10 | x1 | ___ | ___ | Base Presence Attack _____d6 |
| ___ | COM | 10 | x1/2 | ___ | ___ | |
| ___ | PD | (STR/5) | x1 | ___ | | Resistant PD _____Total PD _____ |
| ___ | ED | (CON/5) | x1 | ___ | | Resistant ED _____Total ED _____ |
| ___ | SPD | 1+ (DEX/10) | x10 | ___ | | Phases: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 |
| ___ | REC | (STR/5)+(CON/5) | x2 | ___ | | |
| ___ | END | (CON x 2) | x1/2 | ___ | | |
| ___ | STUN | BODY+(STR/2)+(CON/2) | x1 | ___ | ___ | **Total Characteristics Points** |

## ATTACKS

Primary attack power _____ _____d6

Secondary attack power _____ _____d6

Tertiary attack power _____ _____d6

**Attack SFX** _____

**Other attack SFX** _____

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

**Total earned** _____

Spent _____

Unspent _____

Base points _____

Disad points _____

## DEFENSES

| | Amount | Defense SFX |
|---|---|---|
| Physical Defense | _____ | _____ |
| Resistant Physical Defense | _____ | _____ |
| Energy Defense | _____ | _____ |
| Resistant Energy Defense | _____ | _____ |
| Mental Defense | _____ | _____ |
| Flash Defense (_____) | _____ | _____ |
| Power Defense | _____ | _____ |
| Other: _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Other: _____ | _____ | _____ |

## MOVEMENT

| Type | Combat | NonCom |
|---|---|---|
| Run (6") | _____ | _____ |
| Swim (2") | _____ | _____ |
| H. Leap (___") | _____ | _____ |
| V. Leap (___") | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| **Movement SFX** _____ | | |
| **Movement SFX** _____ | | |

## DAMAGE AND CHARGE TRACKER

**STUN** ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
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**BODY** ❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑❑ **CHARGES** ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑

**CHARGES** ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ **CHARGES** ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑ ❑❑❑❑

## COMBAT INFORMATION

| Base OCV ___ | Base DCV ____ |
|---|---|
| Adjustments +/- | Adjustment +/- |
| _____ ___ | _____ ____ |
| _____ ___ | _____ ____ |
| **Total OCV** ___ | **Total DCV** ____ |

Combat Skill Levels _____

_____

_____

## COMBAT MANEUVERS

| Maneuver | Phase | OCV | DCV | Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Block | 1/2 | +0 | +0 | Block, abort |
| Brace | 0 | +2 | 1/2 | +2 vs. Range Mod. |
| Disarm | 1/2 | -2 | +0 | Can disarm |
| Dodge | 1/2 | — | +3 | Abort, vs. all attacks |
| Grab | 1/2 | -1 | -2 | Grab two limbs |
| Grab By | 1/2 | -3 | -4 | Move and Grab |
| Haymaker | 1/2* | +0 | -5 | +4 Damage Classes |
| Move By | 1/2 | -2 | -2 | STR/2 + v/5 |
| Move Through | 1/2 | -v/5 | -3 | STR + v/3 |
| Set | 1 | +1 | +0 | Ranged attacks only |
| Strike | 1/2 | +0 | +0 | STR or weapon |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | _____ |

## COMBAT MODIFIERS

| Range | 0-4 | 5-8 | 9-16 | 17-32 | 33-64 | 65-128 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| RMOD | 0 | -2 | -4 | -6 | -8 | -10 |

| Targeting Shot | OCV | Hit Location |
|---|---|---|
| Head shot (Head to Shoulders) | -4 | 1d6+3 |
| High shot (Head to Vitals) | -2 | 2d6+1 |
| Body shot (Hands to Legs) | -1 | 2d6+4 |
| Low shot (Shoulders to Feet) | -2 | 2d6+7 |
| Leg shot (Vitals to Feet) | -4 | 1d6+12 |

## HIT LOCATION CHART

| Roll | Location | STUN X | NOR STUN | BODY X | To Hit | Defense Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3-5 | Head | x5 | x2 | x2 | -8 | __ / __ |
| 6 | Hands | x1 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -6 | __ / __ |
| 7-8 | Arms | x2 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -5 | __ / __ |
| 9 | Shoulders | x3 | x1 | x1 | -5 | __ / __ |
| 10-11 | Chest | x3 | x1 | x1 | -3 | __ / __ |
| 12 | Stomach | x4 | x1.5 | x1 | -7 | __ / __ |
| 13 | Vitals | x4 | x1.5 | x2 | -8 | __ / __ |
| 14 | Thighs | x2 | x1 | x1 | -4 | __ / __ |
| 15-16 | Legs | x2 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -6 | __ / __ |
| 17-18 | Feet | x1 | x1/2 | x1/2 | -8 | __ / __ |

DCV Modifier _____ **Average Def** _____

**Total Weight** _____

## CHARACTER INFORMATION

**Character name** _____

Height _____ Weight _____

Hair color _____ Eye color _____




## CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

**Campaign name** _____

Genre _____

Gamemaster _____

## SKILLS, PERKS, AND TALENTS

| Cost | Name | Roll |
|---|---|---|
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
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| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | **Total Skills, Perks & Talents Cost** | |

## POWERS AND EQUIPMENT

| Cost | Name | Power/Equipment | END |
|---|---|---|---|
| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
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| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| ___ | **Total Powers/Equipment Cost** | | |

## DISADVANTAGES

| Cost | Disadvantage | Roll | Cost | Disadvantage | Roll |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | _____ | ____ |
| ___ | _____ | ____ | ___ | **Total Disadvantages Cost** | |

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