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MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS

GREEN RONIN PUBLISHING

CORE BOOK

GRR2501

SECOND EDITION

NOW IS THE TIME
FOR HEROES!

MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS

A GREEN RONIN PRODUCTION

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SECOND EDITION

Special Thanks To all the fans of **Mutants & Masterminds** who made the game a success in the first place. We couldn't have done this without you!

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F O R E W A R D

When you read this book, you will believe that a game system can fly. It made me a believer, and I certainly had my share of doubts at first.

"Would you be interested in designing a d20-based superhero roleplaying game using the Open Game License material?"

That's basically what Green Ronin President Chris Pramas asked me a few years ago. I'd done a few freelance projects for Green Ronin's *Master Class* series, but that was all at the time. Chris knew of my love (one might say obsession) for superheroes and superhero RPGs. He also knew I'd created my own four-color superhero setting, but that I hadn't found a home for it with a publisher. Working with Green Ronin was a golden opportunity to get *Freedom City* (as it was eventually called) out in print, not to mention designing an entire game to go with it. Still....

"A d20-based superhero roleplaying game?" I asked. I had my doubts. The d20 System was certainly taking the RPG industry and hobby by storm, thanks to the Open Game License and d20 Trademark License, allowing third parties to publish support material and even new games compatible with the world's most popular RPG brand.

Now, that was all well and good for fantasy games with fighters and wizards and elves, but superheroes? The superhero comic books have spanned nearly every genre of fiction. They include elements of fantasy, science fiction, science fantasy, mythology, crime drama, psychic powers, and, well, pretty much everything. Comic book writers have over the years shown a willingness to borrow any idea that's not nailed down, or that they can manage to pry up and wedge into those four-color panels. Any kind of decent superhero RPG needed to address all of that and more.

"Let me think about it," I told Chris, and I thought about it, and thought about it. I made notes and went back and re-read the *d20* System Reference Documents. I took elements of the system apart and put them back together again to see how they worked. As I worked, two things became clear. First, the core elements of the system were surprisingly sound and worked for a lot of different things. After all, stuff like ability scores and skills, as well as the essentials of combat, were pretty much universal. The other thing was that I found myself questioning a number of the other elements of the system, like character classes, hit points, and damage rolls, and I was wondering just how "core" they were.

In the end, I came back to Green Ronin with a proposal: take the core die-rolling mechanic of *d20* and apply it to *everything* across the board, including things like damage, and replace the archetypal class system with a more flexible point-based character creation system needed to handle the breadth of superhero character concepts. Now, I suspect, it was time for Chris to have his doubts. However, after taking surprisingly little time to mull it over, he gave me the go-ahead, and *Mutants & Masterminds* began.

That was three years ago. Since then, *Mutants & Masterminds* has been Green Ronin's top selling core book, and one of its best selling products ever. The game has its own website, discussion forums, a number of sourcebooks, and the entire *M&M Superlink* license, modeled on the same d20 Trademark License that originally inspired *M&M.* Most of all, it has a veritable legion of enthusiastic and dedicated fans. Not bad for a project none of us were entirely certain about when we first came up with it.

However, when Green Ronin offered me the job of *Mutants & Masterminds* Line Developer in 2004, my first thought was: "We can do better." That declaration was followed by proposals, outlines, hours of design, writing, and revision, months of playtesting, and a tremendous amount of work by editors, artists, and Green Ronin Production Director Hal Mangold to produce the book you now hold in your hands.

I like to think of this as the "Silver Age" of *M&M:* we had our first (somewhat faltering) steps, surprised by our own success. Now we've taken that raw material and boldly redefined it for a wider audience, creating a product truly worthy of the moniker "World's Greatest Superhero RPG!" So, to borrow the immortal phrasings of comics mastermind Stan Lee: Wait no longer, true believer! Dive into the pages that follow and create your own world of heroes, villains, and adventures. It's your world to save from the forces of evil, so get out there, have fun, and *make mine Mutants & Masterminds!*

— Steve Kenson

INTRODUCTION

Who hasn't wanted to be a superhero at one time or another? Who hasn't wanted super-strength, invulnerability, or—most of all—the power to fly? Superheroes have been a major part of our culture for generations. They have become a kind of modern mythology, of heroes and villains with powers and abilities beyond those of ordinary mortals, locked in a never-ending battle of good versus evil.

Superheroes have been a part of the world of roleplaying for quite some time, too. It's been decades since the release of the first superhero roleplaying games, which allowed players to create their own heroes and tell stories of their battles against the forces of evil. *Mutants & Masterminds* joined their ranks with its first edition in 2002, expanding the frontiers of d20-based roleplaying.

Now this edition of *Mutants & Masterminds* takes the game a step further. Whether you're a long-time fan or this is your introduction to the world of *Mutants & Masterminds*, you hold in your hands the key to limitless worlds of superheroic adventure. All you need now are some dice, some friends, and your imagination in order to join the never-ending battle for justice!

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

A *roleplaying game*, or *RPG* for short, is a game of the imagination, where you and some friends get together and create fictional characters, then play out their adventures around a tabletop. One player takes the role of Gamemaster (or GM) and describes the setting and the challenges your characters encounter. The Gamemaster plays the supporting characters and villains in the story. The GM also acts as referee to adjudicate the rules of the game and make sure everything's handled fairly.

Your imagination is the only thing limiting the sorts of adventures you can have, since you and your friends create the world, the characters, and the adventures. It's like writing your own comic book, with *your* characters as the heroes! All of the action takes place in your imagination, and the story can go on for as long as you want, with one exciting adventure after another.

WHAT IS MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS?

In the *Mutants & Masterminds* RPG, you take on the role of a costumed superhero safeguarding the world from threats ranging from marauding super-criminals to alien invasions, hulking monsters, natural disasters, and would-be conquerors.

This book contains all the information you need to play the game. This Introduction provides a quick overview of how the game works. After you read it, flip through the rest of the book and see the various options for creating heroes. Then you can read through the following chapters thoroughly to see which options appeal to you the most.

UNDER THE HOOD

Throughout this book, you'll find various **Under the Hood** boxes (like this one). They take a look "behind the scenes" at the logic underlying some design decisions and rules, and offer advice on how to handle common problems or issues that might crop up. They give you an inside look at how the game works and how to ensure you and your group get the most out of it.

CHARACTERS

The characters you create to play *Mutants & Masterminds* are like the heroes of their own comic book series, television show, or movie. Your character might be...

- A patriot subjected to an experiment to create a government supersoldier.
- An alien from a distant world, unfamiliar with Earth and human customs, protecting the world from cosmic evil.
- A brilliant inventor whose creations would have served the greed of less honorable men had he not taken them and turned them into weapons in the fight for justice.
- A teenager coping with sudden strange powers in addition to all the other difficulties of adolescence.
- An immortal champion of the gods who has fought the forces of darkness throughout history.
- The daughter of a legendary hero, trained to follow in her father's footsteps, but longing for a normal life.
- A master of the arcane arts protecting humanity from forces beyond its ken.
- An android with abilities beyond those of humans, searching for the meaning of concepts such as "goodness" and "humanity."
- A hell-spawned avenger sent to Earth to visit retribution upon the wicked.
- Or anything else that you can imagine!

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

Here's what you need to start playing the *Mutants & Masterminds* Superhero Roleplaying Game:

- This book, which contains all the rules to create a hero and play the game.
- A copy of the character sheet (found at the back of this book).
- A pencil and some scratch paper.
- At least one twenty-sided die (d20). You may want to have one die for each player, or you can share dice.

DICE

Mutants & Masterminds uses a twenty-sided die—available at game and hobby stores—to resolve actions during the game. References to "a die" or "the die" refer to a twenty-sided die unless stated otherwise. The die is often abbreviated "d20" (for twenty-sided die) or "1d20" (for one twenty-sided die). So a rule asking you to "roll d20" means, "roll a twenty-sided die."

MODIFIERS

Sometimes modifiers to the die roll are specified like this: "d20+2," meaning "roll the twenty-sided die and add two to the number rolled." An

abbreviation of "d20–4" means, "roll the die and subtract four from the result."

USING THIS BOOK

The best way to read this book depends on whether you plan to be a player or Gamemaster in your *Mutants & Masterminds* game. The Gamemaster creates the world in which the heroes live and controls all non-player characters (NPCs) such as thugs, cops, and supervillains, as well as the supporting cast. Each player controls a superhero of his or her creation, interacting with other player characters as well as with the world and stories created by the Gamemaster.

GAMEMASTERS

If you plan to be a *Mutants & Masterminds* Gamemaster, you should familiarize yourself with the whole book. Start by looking over the character creation (**Chapter 1** through **Chapter 7**) and the Gamemaster chapter (**Chapter 9**). Then read through **Chapter 8: Combat**, and familiarize yourself with those rules. You may want to run a few sample combats using the character archetypes in the book, just to get a feel for things. Then you can decide what sort of game you want to run by reading **Chapter 10** and try running the introductory adventures at the end of the book.

PLAYERS

If you're creating a hero for a *Mutants & Masterminds* game, take a look through **Chapter 1: Hero Creation** for a basic overview. **Chapter 2** through **Chapter 7** contain all the information you need to create your own hero. You may want to consult with your Gamemaster before creating a hero to find out what sort of series your GM is interested in running.

THE BASICS

Mutants & Masterminds provides a framework for your imagination. It has rules to help you decide what happens in your stories and to resolve conflicts between characters and the challenges they face. With it, you can experience adventure as a hero fighting against the forces of evil. Any adventure you can imagine is possible.

RULE NUMBER ONE

The first, and most important, rule of *Mutants & Masterminds* is: **Do whatever is the most fun for your game!** While we've made every effort to ensure *M&M* is as complete a game system as possible, no system can cover every situation an imaginative group of players may encounter. From time to time, the rules may give you strange or undesirable results. Ignore them! Modify the outcome of die rolls and other events in the game as you see fit to make it fun and enjoyable for everyone. It's *your* game, so run and play it the way you want!

THE CORE MECHANIC

Mutants & Masterminds uses a standard, or core, mechanic to resolve actions. Whenever a character attempts an action with a chance of failure, do the following:

- Roll a twenty-sided die (or d20)
- Add any relevant modifiers (skills, abilities, powers, or conditions)
- Compare the total to a number called a *Difficulty Class*.

UNDER THE HOOD: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

Experienced gamers will notice differences between *Mutants & Masterminds* and other popular d20-based RPGs using the Open Game License. These changes adapt the world's most popular roleplaying system to the fast-paced world of superheroics. The most important differences are outlined here, but players should read the rules in this book carefully, as they may differ slightly in other ways from what they're used to. Other differences include:

- **No classes:** Characters are not defined by classes or set "packages" of traits in *Mutants & Masterminds*. Characters can have any combination of abilities and powers, within the limits set by the campaign's power level and the available power points.
- **No other dice:** The *Mutants & Masterminds* system uses only a single twenty-sided die (d20) to resolve all actions and checks. No other dice are required.
- **No attacks of opportunity:** The combat system in *Mutants & Masterminds* is simplified for the kind of fast-paced action seen in the comic books, so there are no attacks of opportunity. Instead, heroes are encouraged to try maneuvers that would normally be quite dangerous (such as an unarmed hero taking on a number of armed opponents, for example).
- **No tactical combat:** Combat in *Mutants & Masterminds* is meant to be fast-paced, like the action in the comics, so the game doesn't use systems of tactical movement. Given how fast some characters can move, that would be difficult, at best.
- **No hit points:** Characters in *Mutants & Masterminds* do not have "hit points" and damage is not rolled using other dice.
- **Hero points:** Characters have a resource called *hero points*, allowing them to temporarily increase their abilities and influence the outcome of die rolls.

WHAT'S NEW?

Players familiar with the first edition of *Mutants & Masterminds* will notice some differences in this edition of the game. Among the most important are:

- **Ability Scores:** Ability scores now scale up from 1 to as high as the GM and the character's power level allow, without a split between abilities and super-abilities.
- **Attack and Defense:** Attack and Defense bonus are independent of ability scores and purchased separately.
- **Skill Cost:** Skill ranks now cost 1 power point per 4 skill ranks (rather than 1 power point per skill rank).
- **Feat Cost:** Feats cost 1 power point per feat (rather than 2).
- **Powers:** Powers have generally been tuned-up, expanded, and refined.
- **Weaknesses:** Weaknesses are replaced with *drawbacks* of variable intensity and value, allowing for more detail and fine-tuning, and *complications*, ways of earning hero points in play.
- **Hero Points:** Hero points have been refined and the method by which heroes acquire them is different, focusing on the development of the adventure.
- **And More!** This new edition offers more feats, more powers, more equipment, campaign advice, and other material to make the game more enjoyable to play and run.

Players familiar with the first edition of *M&M* will want to read through this book carefully and become familiar with its rules. Some of them differ from the systems you know, while others will be quite familiar.

If the result equals or exceeds the Difficulty Class (set by the GM based on the circumstances), your character succeeds. If the result is lower than the Difficulty Class, your character fails. This simple mechanic is used for nearly everything in *Mutants & Masterminds*, with variations based on what modifiers are made to the roll, what determines the Difficulty Class, and the exact effects of success and failure.

THE GAMEMASTER

One of the players in a *Mutants & Masterminds* game takes the role of *Gamemaster* or *GM*. The Gamemaster is responsible for running the game, a combination of writer, director, and referee. The Gamemaster creates the adventures for the heroes, portrays the villains and supporting characters, describes the world to the players, and decides the outcome of the heroes' actions based on the guidelines given in the rules. It's a big job, but also a rewarding one, since the Gamemaster gets to create the whole world and all the characters in it, as well as inventing fun and exciting stories. If you're going to be the Gamemaster, you should read through this whole book carefully, particularly Chapters 9 and 10, which talk about how to run *Mutants & Masterminds* games and how to create your own game settings for adventures. You should also have a firm grasp of the rules, since you're expected to interpret them for the players to decide what happens in the game.

THE HEROES

The other players in a *Mutants & Masterminds* game create heroes, the main characters of their own adventures, like an ongoing comic book or animated series. As a player, you create your hero following the guidelines in this book with the guidance of your Gamemaster. There are several components to creating a hero, described in detail in Chapters 1 through 6, and outlined here.

ABILITIES

All characters have certain basic *abilities*. These are Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. They each have a numeric *ability score* averaging 10 or 11 for a normally capable human being. Higher ability scores grant *bonuses* while lower ability scores impose *penalties*. As part of creating your hero, you decide how strong, smart, and tough your hero is by choosing the appropriate ability scores.

SKILLS

Skills represent training in a particular sort of task, everything from complex acrobatics to defusing bombs, programming computers, or piloting a plane. A skill acts as a bonus for actions involving those tasks. Someone trained in climbing can climb faster and with more confidence than someone who isn't trained, for example. Skills are measured in *ranks*, reflecting how much training a character has in the skill. You choose the skills your hero knows and how well trained the hero is in them.

FEATS

Feats are special abilities—talents or knacks. A feat allows your hero to do something other characters can't normally do, or makes your hero better at doing certain things. They give the hero an advantage over others. You select your hero's feats based on what you want your hero to be able to do.

POWERS

Powers are special abilities beyond those of ordinary human beings. They're like feats, only more so. Whereas a feat might give your hero a minor special ability, powers grant truly superhuman abilities. You choose the powers you want your hero to have. **Chapter 5** presents a wide range of powers, along with *power modifiers* and *power feats*, allowing you to mix and match to create nearly any super-power you desire.

DRAWBACKS

Finally, heroes often have challenges to overcome. They have *drawbacks*. Overcoming these drawbacks is part of what makes a real hero. Drawbacks range from physical disabilities to unusual weaknesses or vulnerabilities. You choose your hero's drawbacks, allowing you to define the sorts of challenges your hero must overcome in the game.

GAME PLAY

A session of *Mutants & Masterminds* resembles an issue of a comic book or an episode of an animated series. The Gamemaster and the players get together and tell a story by playing the game. The length of the game session can vary, from just a couple hours to several hours or more. Some adventures may be completed in a single session while others may take multiple sessions, just as some comic book stories are told in one issue, while others span multiple issues. The episodic nature of the game allows you to choose when to stop playing and allows you to start up again at any time at which you and your friends agree.

Just like a comic book, a *Mutants & Masterminds* adventure consists of a series of interrelated scenes or encounters. Some scenes are fairly straightforward, with the heroes interacting with each other and the supporting cast. In these cases the GM generally just asks the players to describe what their heroes are doing and in turn describes how the other characters react and what they do. When the action starts happening, such as when the heroes are staving off a disaster or fighting villains, time becomes more crucial and is broken down into *rounds*, each six seconds long, and the players generally have to make die rolls to see how their heroes do.

DIE ROLLS

There are a number of different die rolls in *Mutants & Masterminds*, although they all follow the core mechanic of a 20-sided die + modifiers vs. a Difficulty Class. The three main die rolls in *M&M* are checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

CHECKS

To make a *check*, roll d20 and add any modifiers for traits (abilities, skills, or powers) relevant to the check. The higher the total, the better the outcome.

Check = d20 + modifiers vs. Difficulty Class

DIFFICULTY CLASS

Some checks are made against a *Difficulty Class* (DC). The DC is a number set by the GM which your check must meet or exceed in order for you to succeed. So for a task with a DC of 15 you must roll a check total of 15 or better to succeed. In some cases, the results of a check vary based on how much higher or lower the result is than the DC.

DIFFICULTY CLASSES

Difficulty (DC)	Example (Skill Used)
Very easy (0)	Notice something in plain sight (Notice)
Easy (5)	Climb a knotted rope (Climb)
Average (10)	Hear an approaching security guard (Notice)
Tough (15)	Disarm an explosive (Disable Device)
Challenging (20)	Swim against a strong current (Swim)
Formidable (25)	Break into a secure computer system (Computers)
Heroic (30)	Climb a slippery overhang (Climb); overcome a sophisticated security system (Disable Device)
Superheroic (35)	Convince the guards to let you into the building, even though you're not wearing an ID badge and aren't on their list (Bluff)
Nearly impossible (40)	Track a trained commando through the jungle on a moonless night after 12 days of rainfall (Survival)

OPPOSED CHECKS

Some checks are *opposed*. They are made against a randomized number, usually another character's check result. Whoever gets the higher result wins. An example is trying to bluff someone. You roll a Bluff check, while the GM rolls a Sense Motive check for your target. If you beat the target's Sense Motive check result, you succeed.

For ties on opposed checks, the character with the higher bonus wins. If the bonuses are the same, roll d20. On a 1–10 one character wins and on 11–20 victory goes to the other character; decide which character is "high" and which is "low" before rolling. Alternately, you can just flip a coin to see who wins.

OPPOSED CHECK EXAMPLES

Task	Opposing Skill	Skill
Sneak up on someone	Stealth	Notice
Con someone	Bluff	Sense Motive
Hide from someone	Stealth	Notice
Win a car race	Drive	Drive
Pretend to be someone else	Disguise	Notice
Steal a key chain	Sleight of Hand	Notice
Break computer security	Computers	Computers

UNDER THE HOOD: USING OPPOSED CHECKS

Opposed checks offer the Gamemaster a useful tool for comparing the efforts of two characters quickly and easily. This applies not only to skills, but also powers and, in some cases, ability scores. If two or more characters compete at a particular task, you can resolve it with an opposed check. The character with the highest check result wins. Of course, you can play things out if you want, but sometimes it's good to be able to resolve things with a quick opposed check and move on.

As Gamemaster, if you find yourself without a particular rule to resolve a conflict or contest between characters, the opposed check is your friend. Pick the appropriate skill, power, or ability, make checks for the characters and compare the results to see how they did.

TRYING AGAIN

In general, you can try a check again if you fail, and keep trying indefinitely. Some tasks, however, have consequences for failure. For example, failing a Climb check may mean the character falls, which makes it difficult to try again. Some tasks can't be attempted again once a check has failed. For most tasks, when you have succeeded once, additional successes are meaningless. (Once you've discovered a room's only secret door using the Search skill, for instance, there's no further benefit to be gained from additional Search checks.)

If a task carries no penalty for failure, you can take 20 and assume the character goes at it long enough to succeed, or at least determines the task is impossible at the character's level of ability (see **Checks Without Rolls**, page 11).

CONDITION MODIFIERS

Some situations make a check easier or harder, resulting in a bonus or penalty to the modifier for the check or the check's Difficulty Class. The GM can change the odds of success in four ways:

1. Grant a +2 bonus to represent conditions improving performance.
2. Impose a –2 penalty to represent conditions hampering performance.
3. Reduce the DC by 2 to represent circumstances making the task easier.
4. Increase the DC by 2 to represent circumstances making the task harder.

Bonuses to the check and reduction in the check's DC have the same result: they create a better chance of success. But they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

TOOLS

Some tasks require tools. If tools are needed, the specific items are mentioned in the description of the task or skill. If you don't have the appropriate tools, you can still attempt the task, but at a –4 penalty on your check.

A character may be able to put together impromptu tools to make the check. If the GM allows this, reduce the penalty to –2 (instead of –4). It usually takes some time (several minutes to an hour or more) to collect or create a set of impromptu tools, and it may require an additional check as well. Characters with the Improvised Tools feat (see page 62) suffer no penalty for not having the proper tools to perform a task. They can make do with whatever is at hand.

CHECKS WITHOUT ROLLS

A check represents performing a task under a certain amount of pressure. When the situation is less demanding, you can achieve more reliable results. Applying these rules can speed up checks under routine circumstances, cutting down the number of rolls players need to make.

TAKING 1

If your total bonus on a check is equal to or greater than the DC minus 1, you will succeed regardless of what you roll on the die, even under pressure. In this case, the GM might not require you to roll and just assume you succeed, since the task is a trivial effort for someone of your skill. If the check has varying levels of success, you're assumed to achieve the minimum possible (as if you'd rolled a 1). You can choose to make a roll to achieve a greater level of success, or the GM may assume a greater level of success, depending on the circumstances.

TAKING 10

When you are not under any pressure to perform a task, you may choose to take 10. Instead of rolling the check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 10. For average (DC 10) tasks, taking 10 allows you to succeed automatically with a modifier of +0 or greater. You cannot take 10 if distracted or under pressure (such as in a combat situation). The GM decides when this is the case. Characters with Skill Mastery (see page 64) can take 10 with some skills even while under pressure.

TAKING 20

When you have plenty of time and the task carries no penalty for failure, you can take 20. Instead of rolling the check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 20. Taking 20 means you keep trying until you get it right. Taking 20 takes twenty times longer than a single check, or about 2 minutes for a task requiring a round or less. If there are penalties or consequences for failing the check, such as setting off an alarm or slipping and falling, you cannot take 20 on that check.

COMPARISON CHECKS

In cases where a check is a simple test of one character's ability against another, with no luck involved, the character with the higher score wins automatically. Just as you wouldn't make a "height check" to see who's taller, you don't need to make a Strength check to see who's stronger. When two characters arm wrestle, for example, the stronger character wins. If two flying characters race, the faster character wins, and so forth. Note this does not include the use of extra effort (see page 120) to temporarily increase a character's score, which can affect the outcome of a comparison check.

In the case of identical bonuses or scores, each character has an equal chance of winning. Roll a die: on a 1–10, the first character wins, on an 11–20, the second character does.

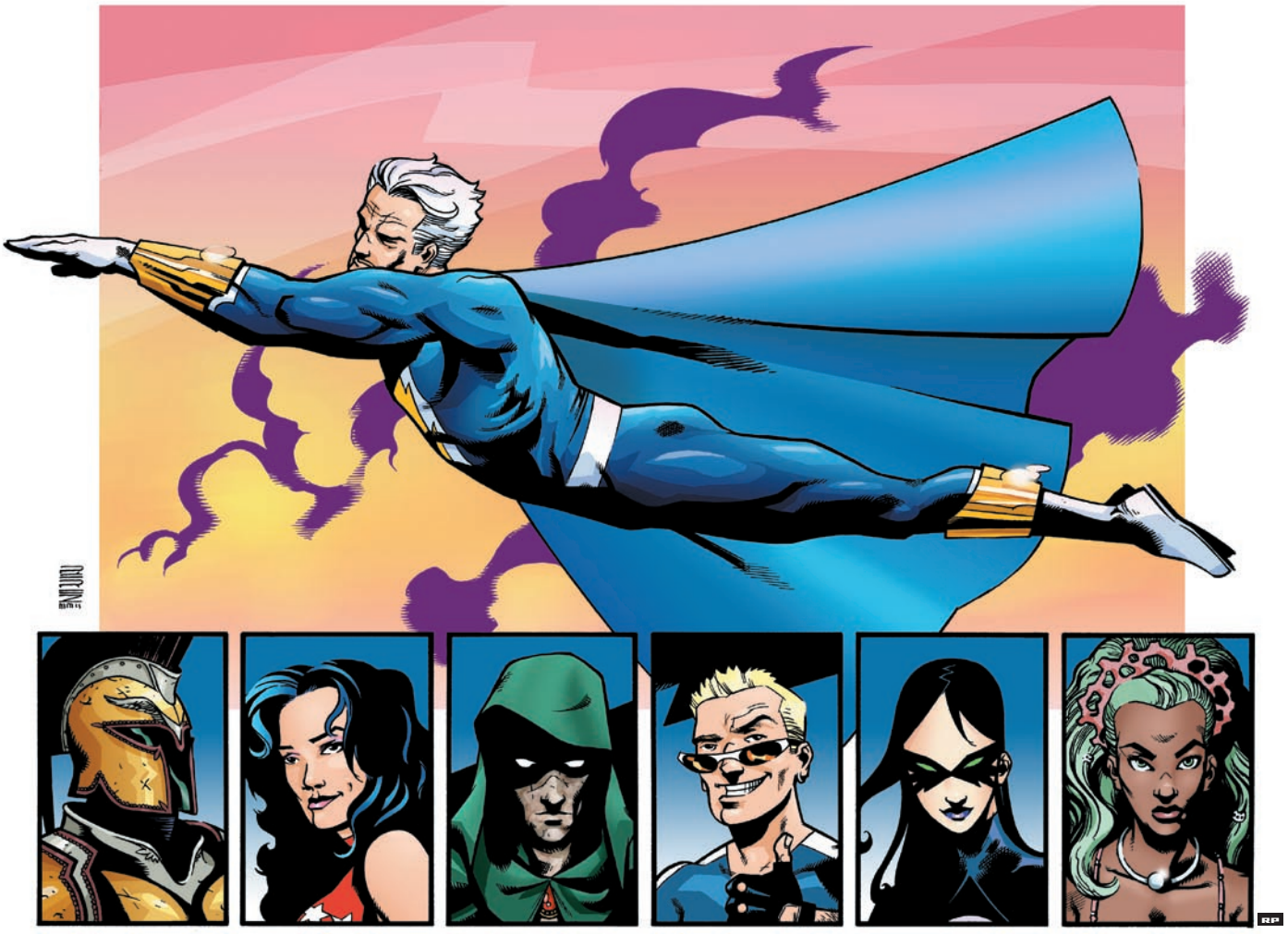
AIDING ANOTHER

Sometimes characters work together and help each other out. In this case, one character (usually the one with the highest bonus) is considered the leader of the effort and makes the check normally, while each helper makes the same check against DC 10 (and can't take 10 on this check). Success grants the leader a +2 bonus for favorable conditions. For every 10 full points the helper's check exceeds the DC, increase the bonus by +1, so a result of 20–29 grants a +3 bonus, 30–39 a +4, and so forth. In many cases, outside help isn't beneficial, or only a limited number of helpers can aid someone at once. The GM limits aid as he sees fit for the task and conditions.

TYPES OF CHECKS

You use three main traits for checks: skills, abilities, and powers:

- **Skill Checks:** A skill check determines what you can accomplish with a particular skill. It is a roll of d20 + your rank in the skill and



the key ability score of the skill against a Difficulty Class. Skill checks sometimes have gradations of success and failure based on how much your total roll is above or below the DC. For example, if you fail a Climb check, you don't make any progress. If you fail by 5 or more, you fall.

- **Ability Checks** An ability check is like a skill check, but measures raw ability, without any skill, like strength, endurance, or intellect. It is a roll of d20 + your ability modifier against a Difficulty Class. Ability checks tend to be all or nothing (you can either accomplish the task or you can't) although there are sometimes gradations like skill checks. Attempting a skill without training (in other words, without ranks in the skill) is an ability check.

EXAMPLE ABILITY CHECKS

Task	Key Ability
Breaking a board	Strength
Tying a rope	Dexterity
Holding your breath	Constitution
Navigating a maze	Intelligence
Recognizing someone you've seen before	Wisdom
Getting noticed in a crowd	Charisma

- **Power Checks:** A power check uses one of your hero's powers as its modifier. It is a measure of what the hero can accomplish with that power. It is a roll of d20 + the power's rank, which measures how strong the power is, against a Difficulty Class. Some powers do not require power checks; they just work automatically, while other powers have some automatic aspects and others require checks.

ATTACK ROLLS

An *attack roll* determines whether or not you hit an opponent in combat. It is a d20 roll + your attack bonus. The Difficulty Class is your target's Defense, which measures their ability to avoid attacks. If you equal or exceed your target's Defense, your attack hits. Otherwise, you miss.

A natural 20 on an attack roll (where the die comes up 20) always hits and may be a *critical hit* (see page 152). A natural 1 on an attack roll (where the die comes up 1) always misses.

SAVING THROWS

Saving throws are efforts to avoid different forms of danger, ranging from damage and injury to traps, poisons, and various powers. A saving throw is:

1d20 + the appropriate ability modifier + your base save bonus+ any bonuses for powers

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Constitution is the ability modifier for Toughness and Fortitude saves, Dexterity is the ability modifier for Reflex saves, and Wisdom is the ability modifier for Will saves. The Difficulty Class is based on the strength of the hazard, such as the power of an attack or the strength of a disease or poison. Like skill checks, there are sometimes gradations to a saving throw. For example, a Toughness save against damage results in no damage at all if you beat the DC, but could result in a glancing blow, a stunning blow, or an immediate knockout if you fail, depending on how much the save result misses the DC.

THE COMBAT ROUND

When things really start happening in a *Mutants & Masterminds* game, time is broken down into six-second segments called *rounds*. A round isn't very much time. Think of it like a panel in a comic book, just long enough for a hero to do something. The types of actions your hero can perform during a round are standard actions, move actions, full actions, free actions, and reactions. During a round you can:

- Take a standard action and a move action.
- Take a move action and then another move action (in place of your standard action).
- Take a full action.

You can perform as many free actions and reactions in a round as you wish, although the GM may choose to limit them to a reasonable number to keep the game moving.

STANDARD ACTIONS

A *standard action* generally involves acting upon something, whether it's an attack or using a power to affect something. You're limited to one standard action a round.

MOVE ACTIONS

A *move action* usually involves moving. You can take a move action before or after your standard action, so you can attack then move, or move then attack. You cannot normally split your move action before and after your standard action, however. Move actions also include things like drawing weapons, standing up from being prone, and picking up objects.

FULL ACTIONS

A *full action*, or full-round action, occupies all your attention for the round, meaning you can't do anything else. Full actions include a full-speed charge at an opponent which ends in an attack, or spending the whole round moving as quickly as you can. Certain powers or maneuvers require a full action to perform, as do some skills.

FREE ACTIONS

A *free action* is something so comparatively minor it doesn't take a significant amount of time. You can perform as many free actions in a round as the GM considers reasonable. Free actions include things like talking (heroes and villains always find time to say a lot during a fight), dropping something, ending the use of a power, activating some powers, and so forth.

REACTIONS

A *reaction* is something you do in response to something else. A reaction doesn't take any time, like a free action. The difference is you might react when it's not even your turn, in response to something else happening during the round.

HERO POINTS

Heroes in *Mutants & Masterminds* have *hero points* players can spend to improve the heroes abilities in various ways. You can spend a hero point to improve a die roll, push an ability or power beyond its normal capabilities, bounce back from being hurt, and achieve various other effects (see **Hero Points**, page 121).

IMPORTANT TERMS

ability score: The numerical rating of an ability.

ability: One of the six basic character traits: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha).

accurate sense: A sense you can use to pinpoint something's location accurately enough to target in combat. Vision is an accurate sense for normal humans. Other accurate senses are available from the Super-Senses power.

accurately perceive (also accurately sense): To notice something with an accurate sense.

action: A character activity. There are standard actions, move actions, full actions, free actions, and reactions.

acute sense: You can sense fine details about anything you can detect with a particular sense. Visual and auditory senses are acute for humans.

adventure: A story for players to experience, like a single issue of a comic book.

alternate power: One power that may be substituted for another, but not usable at the same time, giving a power different options or "settings."

array: A collection of alternate powers.

attack bonus: A modifier used to measure a character's combat skill.

attack roll: A roll to determine if an attack hits. To make an attack roll, roll d20 and add the appropriate modifiers for the attack type. An attack hits if the result is equal to or greater than the target's Defense. An attack die roll of 20 always hits, while a die roll of 1 always misses.

attack: Any of numerous actions intended to harm, disable, or neutralize an opponent. An attack is usually a standard action.

bonus: A positive modifier to a die roll.

campaign (also series): A series of linked adventures, forming the backdrop against which the characters interact and participate in the setting. Think of a campaign as an ongoing comic book series.

character: A fictional individual in the game. The players control *player characters,* while the Gamemaster controls all *non-player characters*.

check: A method of deciding the outcome of an action (other than attacking or making a saving throw). Checks are based on a relevant character ability, skill, power, or other trait. To make a check, roll d20 and add any relevant modifiers. If the check result equals or exceeds the Difficulty Class (DC) of a task or the result of an opponent's check, it succeeds.

condition: A character's overall health and state of being (see page 170 for details).

critical hit (crit): An attack inflicting additional damage. To score a critical hit, an attacker must first score a threat (usually a natural 20 on an attack roll, depending on the attack being used) and the attack total must exceed the target's Defense. A critical hit does +5 damage.

damage bonus: A modifier used to determine the damage of an attack.

damage: Harm caused to a character by injury, illness, or some other source.

DC: Difficulty Class.
deal damage (also inflict damage): Cause damage to a target.
defense bonus: Modifier used to determine how difficult a character is to hit in combat.
Defense: A measure of how difficult a character is to hit in combat. Defense equals 10 + defense bonus.
descriptor: A term describing the nature of a power. A descriptor may define how certain effects appear or function.
Difficulty Class (DC): The number a player must meet or beat for a check or saving throw to succeed.
dodge bonus: Half the defense bonus (rounded up). Characters lose their dodge bonus when they are flat-footed, stunned, or otherwise incapable of reacting to an attack.
dying: Near death and unconscious. A dying character can take no actions.
effect: An aspect of a power with a particular game effect.
encounter (also scene): A portion of an adventure, like a chapter of a story.
extra: A power modifier that enhances a power, increasing its cost.
fail: Achieve an unsuccessful result for a check, saving throw, or other die roll.
flat-footed: Especially vulnerable to attacks at the beginning of a fight. Characters are flat-footed until their first turn in the initiative cycle. Flat-footed characters lose their dodge bonus to Defense.
flaw: A power modifier that limits a power, reducing its cost.
free action: A minor activity, requiring very little time and effort.
full action (also full-round action): An action requiring all your effort in a round. Some skills, feats, and powers require a full action (or longer) to use.
Gamemaster (GM): The player who portrays characters not controlled by the other players, makes up the story setting for the game, and serves as the referee.
hero (also superhero or player character): A character controlled by a player, one of the main protagonists of an adventure or series.
hero points: Points players can spend to gain bonuses with particular actions.
lasting: An effect requiring additional saving throws to overcome.
lethal: Damage that can disable or kill a target.
melee attack: An attack used in close combat.
melee weapon: A handheld weapon designed for close combat.
modifier: Any bonus or penalty applied to a die roll.
move action: An action intended to move a distance or to manipulate or move an object. You can take up to two move actions per round.
natural: A natural result on a roll is the actual number appearing on the die, not the modified result obtained by adding bonuses or subtracting penalties.
nonlethal: Damage that stuns or knocks out a target, but does no permanent harm. Unless specified otherwise, damage in *Mutants & Masterminds* is nonlethal.
non-player character (NPC): A character controlled by the Gamemaster (as opposed to a character controlled by a player).
penalty: A negative modifier to a die roll.
player character (PC, also hero): A character controlled by a player, one of the main protagonists of an adventure or campaign.
power feat: An enhancement or alternate use of a power.
power level (also level): A limit on overall power and ability in a campaign, also sometimes used to describe the overall power of a character.
power modifier: An increase or decrease in a power's capabilities, also increasing or decreasing its cost.
power points: Points allocated to a character's different traits during character creation, also awarded for advancement after each adventure.
power stunt: A power feat acquired temporarily through extra effort (see page 120).
power: A superhuman trait, like the ability to fly or shoot blasts of energy.

M&M SUPERLINK

Mutants & Masterminds uses the Open Game License (OGL), allowing it to incorporate game rules and terms familiar to many players of roleplaying games. The OGL also allows other publishers to "borrow" material from *M&M* and lets fans create their own *M&M*-compatible support material, such as websites or online games. Green Ronin Publishing provides a free license called *M&M Superlink* for publishers interested in producing *Mutants & Masterminds* compatible materials. For more information, visit *www.mutantsandmasterminds.com/superlink*.

While *Mutants & Masterminds* has similarities to other OGL games, it is not necessarily 100% compatible with them. It is designed as a complete stand-alone game system. For more information on the Open Game License, consult the copy of the license in the back of this book or visit *www.opengamingfoundation.org*.

range increment: Each full range increment of distance between an attacker and a target gives the attacker a cumulative –2 penalty to the ranged attack roll. Normal ranged attacks have a maximum range of ten range increments. Thrown weapons have a maximum range of five range increments.
ranged attack: Any attack made at a distance.
ranged weapon: An energy, projectile, or thrown weapon designed for attacking from a distance.
rank: A measure of a character's level of mastery with a skill or power.
reaction: An action that takes place in response to some circumstance. Reactions take no time or effort on the character's part, occurring automatically.
round: A six-second unit of game time used to manage combat. Every character in combat may take at least one action every round.
saving throw (save): A roll made to avoid or reduce harm. The four types of saving throws are Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will.
stack: Combine for a cumulative effect. If modifiers do not stack, it is specified in the rules. In most cases, modifiers to a given check or roll stack. If the modifiers of a particular roll do not stack, only the best bonus or worst penalty applies. Sometimes there is a limit to how high a stacked bonus or penalty can be, based on power level.
staggered: Badly beaten and barely holding on to consciousness. Staggered characters can take a standard or move action each round, but not both.
standard action: An action intended to do something within about 3 seconds. You can perform a single standard action per round.
target (also subject): The intended recipient of an attack, action, or power.
threat range: All natural die roll results constituting a threat when rolled for an attack. For most attacks, the threat range is a roll of 20. Some attacks have greater threat ranges.
threat: A possible critical hit.
trained: Having at least 1 rank in a skill.
trait: Any of a character's game-defined qualities: abilities, bonuses, skills, feats, and powers are all traits.
unarmed attack: A melee attack made with no weapon in hand.
untrained: Having no ranks in a skill. Some skills cannot be used untrained.
villain (also supervillain): An adversary controlled by the Gamemaster.

CHAPTER 1: HERO CREATION

The *Mutants & Masterminds* game system allows you to create any sort of hero you want by choosing your character's abilities, skills, powers, and other qualities. You have a starting "budget" of power points with which to build your hero. There are also certain limits and guidelines imposed by your character's power level, but within those limits you can build whatever type of character you want. The following section covers all the details of how to do it.

HERO CREATION SUMMARY

Creating a hero in *Mutants & Masterminds* follows a series of simple steps, using the information presented in the other chapters of this book. You'll need a copy of the character sheet and some scratch paper to create your character.

1. HERO CONCEPT

Before you get started, consider what sort of hero you want to create. What are the hero's basic abilities? What are the hero's powers? What's the hero's origin? You may want to take a look at the hero archetypes on pages 17-23 for some idea of the different types of heroes you can create. You also can draw inspiration from your favorite characters from comic books, television, or the movies. Take a look through **Chapter 5** and see if any of the powers there inspire a character idea. You may want to jot down a few notes about the sort of hero you'd prefer to play, which will help guide you through the rest of the character creation process.

2. CHECK WITH YOUR GAMEMASTER

Your GM may have particular house rules or restrictions on characters in the game, not allowing certain powers or concepts. If there are no aliens in the setting, for example, then you can't play an alien hero. Likewise, if your Gamemaster bans mental powers from the campaign, then a psychic isn't appropriate. Run your hero concept by your Gamemaster before you start working on it. You might also want to consult with your fellow players so you can create your characters together and ensure they'll make a good team.

3. POWER LEVEL

Your GM sets the starting power level for the series. Generally this is 10th level, but it may range anywhere from around 5th level to 20th level or more. All characters begin play at the same power level, which determines their starting power points and where you can spend them. See **Power Level** later in this chapter for details.

4. BASIC ABILITIES

Choose the ability scores you want your character to have and pay 1 power point for each ability score point over 10. Choose the attack bonus and defense bonus for your character, paying 2 power points per +1 to attack or defense bonus. Choose the saving throw bonuses for your character, paying 1 power point per +1 save bonus. Keep in mind these bonuses are limited by power level. See **Chapter 2: Basic Abilities**, for details on these abilities and **Power Level** later in this chapter for more on power level limits.

5. SKILLS

Choose the skill ranks you want your character to have and pay 1 power point per 4 skill ranks. Keep in mind your character can't have a rank in any skill greater than the campaign's power level +5. See **Chapter 3: Skills**, for details.

6. FEATS

Choose the feats you want your character to have and pay 1 power point per feat or rank in a feat. See **Chapter 4: Feats**, for details.

7. POWERS

Choose the powers you want your character to have and pay the power's base cost, multiplied by the number of ranks. Power modifiers increase or reduce a power's capabilities and cost. See **Chapter 5: Powers**, for details.

8. COMPLICATIONS & DRAWBACKS

Choose the complications you want your character to have. Choose the drawbacks you want your character to have (if any) and add their value to the power points you have to spend. Keep in mind you're generally limited to no more points in drawbacks than the campaign's power level. See **Chapter 6**, for more detail on complications, drawbacks and their effects.

9. CHECK YOUR MATH

Go back through and add up the cost of your hero's ability scores, attack bonus, defense bonus, saving throw bonuses, skills, feats, and powers, and subtract the value of your hero's drawbacks. You should end up with a figure equal to the starting power points shown on the **Starting Power Points Table** on page 24. If not, double-check your math and either remove or add traits to your character to reach the starting power point total.

10. ADD UP SAVING THROWS

Calculate your character's total saving throw bonuses by adding together your base save bonus and ability modifier for each (Constitution for Toughness and Fortitude saves, Dexterity for Reflex saves, and Wisdom for Will saves).

11. FINISHING DETAILS

Look through **Chapter 6: Characteristics** and figure out details like your hero's name, appearance, origin, background, and motivation. Choose your hero's allegiances (if any). If you can, consider creating a sketch or detailed description of your hero's costume.

12. GAMEMASTER APPROVAL

Show your new hero to the Gamemaster for approval. The GM should check to make sure your power points are spent and added up correctly, the hero follows the power level guidelines, and is generally complete and suited to the campaign. Once your GM has approved, your new hero is ready for play!

CRIME WAVE

UNDER THE HOOD: CUSTOMIZING ARCHETYPES

The hero archetypes in this chapter are intended to give you ready-made characters you can put into play right away. However, more experienced M&M players may want to modify or customize an archetype to suit their particular concept of a character. By all means, do so! Customizing is a good halfway point between using an archetype as-is and having to create a new hero completely from scratch. Make sure to clear any changes to the archetype with your Gamemaster.

Each archetype has its power point totals listed so you can modify them as you wish. Ways to customize an archetype include different descriptors for the archetype's powers, trade-offs between attack and damage or defense and toughness, giving the character different skills or feats, or shifting around some of the archetype's ability score points. Be aware that some changes (such as to ability scores) can affect the archetype's other traits, and adjust them accordingly.

HERO ARCHETYPES

The fastest and easiest way to create a *Mutants & Masterminds* hero is to select one of the *hero archetypes* in the following section. A hero archetype offers a ready-made character, complete with statistics, skills, feats, and powers. Give the hero a name, a costume, and an origin story, and you're ready to take on whatever supervillains the Gamemaster has to throw at you!

The hero archetypes are also useful for Gamemasters looking for some quick villains or NPC heroes. Take a few archetypes, give them catchy names and descriptions, and you're ready to go! (Villains are covered in more detail in **Chapter 11** as well).

Skills are listed with the number of ranks after the skill name and the total skill bonus listed in parentheses. For example: Bluff 5 (+8), means the character has 5 ranks of Bluff and a total bonus of +8 when making Bluff checks.

All of the archetypes are for a power level 10 game, the default starting power level for *Mutants & Masterminds*. Several of the archetypes use the Attack/Defense trade-off rule (page 24) to adjust their maximum attack, defense, damage, and Toughness save bonuses, as determined by their power level.

If you really want to see the nuts and bolts of how the archetypes are built, check out the **Doing the Math** table below. It contains all the details of their construction.

THE BATTLESUIT

The Battlesuit relies on a Device, namely a suit of powered armor, to provide powers including Protection, Super-Strength, and Flight. This version of the Battlesuit is likely either the inventor of the armor, or at least someone technically capable enough to maintain and repair it, and perhaps even improve upon it (as the player spends earned power points). The Normal Identity Drawback represents the time it takes to get in or out of the armor.

COSTUMED ADVENTURER

The costumed adventurer relies on a combination of superhuman training and an array of devices to fight crime and injustice. Although lacking some of the more spectacular powers of other heroes, the adventurer can handle a wide range of challenges.

ENERGY CONTROLLER

The Energy Controller wields the power of a particular form of energy (such as cold, light, or electricity) or a particular element (air, earth, fire, or water). See the various energy control powers from **Chapter 5** for details.

GADGETEER

The Gadgeteer specializes in creating and using technological devices. In addition to the Gadgeteer's various standard devices, see the

DOING THE MATH

Archetype	The Math
Battlesuit	Abilities 18 + Skills 10 (40 ranks) + Feats 5 + Powers 76 + Combat 32 + Saves 13 – Drawbacks 4 = 150
Costumed Adventurer	Abilities 42 + Skills 30 (120 ranks) + Feats 15 + Combat 48 + Saves 15 = 150
Energy Controller	Abilities 22 + Skills 10 (40 ranks) + Feats 6 + Powers 64 + Combat 32 + Saves 16 = 150
Gadgeteer	Abilities 33 + Skills 21 (84 ranks) + Feats 7 + Powers 45 + Combat 32 + Saves 12 = 150
Martial Artist	Abilities 30 + Skills 17 (68 ranks) + Feats 28 + Combat 58 + Saves 17 = 150
Mimic	Abilities 14 + Skills 8 (32 ranks) + Feats 6 + Powers 72 + Combat 32 + Saves 18 = 150
Mystic	Abilities 26 + Skills 9 (36 ranks) + Feats 4 + Powers 65 + Combat 32 + Saves 17 – Drawbacks 3 = 150
Paragon	Abilities 15 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 86 + Combat 32 + Saves 12 = 150
Powerhouse	Abilities 20 + Skills 8 (32 ranks) + Feats 2 + Powers 83 + Combat 28 + Saves 9 = 150
Psychic	Abilities 27 + Skills 8 (32 ranks) + Feats 2 + Powers 70 + Combat 26 + Saves 17 = 150
Shapeshifter	Abilities 18 + Skills 11 (44 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 64 + Combat 40 + Saves 14 = 150
Speedster	Abilities 20 + Skills 10 (40 ranks) + Feats 4 + Powers 53 + Combat 46 + Saves 17 = 150
Weapon Master	Abilities 26 + Skills 19 (76 ranks) + Feats 29 + Powers 14+ Combat 44 + Saves 18 = 150

inventing rules on page 131 and the rules for extra effort and hero points in **Chapter 6** for ideas of what a gadgeteer can accomplish with a little time and effort.

MARTIAL ARTIST

The Martial Artist is a master of unarmed combat (as opposed to the Weapon-Master on page 23). Although lacking powers, the Martial Artist makes up for it with a wide range of feats and peerless combat abilities. Against lesser foes, the Martial Artist often uses the Power Attack feat, lowering attack bonus to +11 and boosting unarmed damage up to +9!

MIMIC

The Mimic duplicates the traits of others. With a touch, the Mimic can become virtually anyone, and gain their abilities, skills, feats, and powers, limited only by power rank. See the description of the Mimic power on page 92 for details.

MYSTIC

The Mystic is a wielder of the magical arts: a magician, sorcerer, or witch. Mystics tend to be mysterious and often speak in cryptic riddles and rhyming spells. A Mystic is capable of both advanced magical rituals and spur-of-the-moment spells. See the magical ritual rules on page 131 and the rules for extra effort and hero points in **Chapter 6**.

PARAGON

Stronger, faster, tougher, the Paragon is all these things and more. The Paragon is what many people think of when they think "super-hero": super-strong, nigh invulnerable, immune to mundane concerns, and able to fly through the air at great speed.

POWERHOUSE

Strength is the Powerhouse's specialty, strength enough to lift train cars and take tank fire. While some may underestimate a Powerhouse based on this specialty, they usually end up regretting it.

PSIONIC

A Psionic wields mental powers of telepathy and telekinesis, providing both strength in combat and a measure of stealth and surveillance.

SHAPESHIFTER

The shapeshifter can assume various animal forms, gaining all of the animal's physical traits, none of which can be greater than the character's Shapeshift power rank. See **Animals** on page 229 for information on the traits of different animals.

SPEEDSTER

The Speedster is *fast!* Speedsters specialize in the Super-Speed power, moving in the blink of an eye, able to accomplish many tasks in the same amount of time. Players should read the description of the Super-Speed power on page 104 for details.

WEAPON-MASTER

The Weapon-Master is devoted to expertise in a particular type of weapon. It can be an archaic weapon like a sword or bow, modern firearms, or even futuristic energy weapons. Even archaic weapons are often enhanced with modern technology or magic, giving them special capabilities.

BATTLESUIT — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+12	+1	+1	+5	+2	+0
34*	12	12	20	14	10

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+12/+1**	+4	+6	+7

*STR without armor, Bonus +0, **out of armor

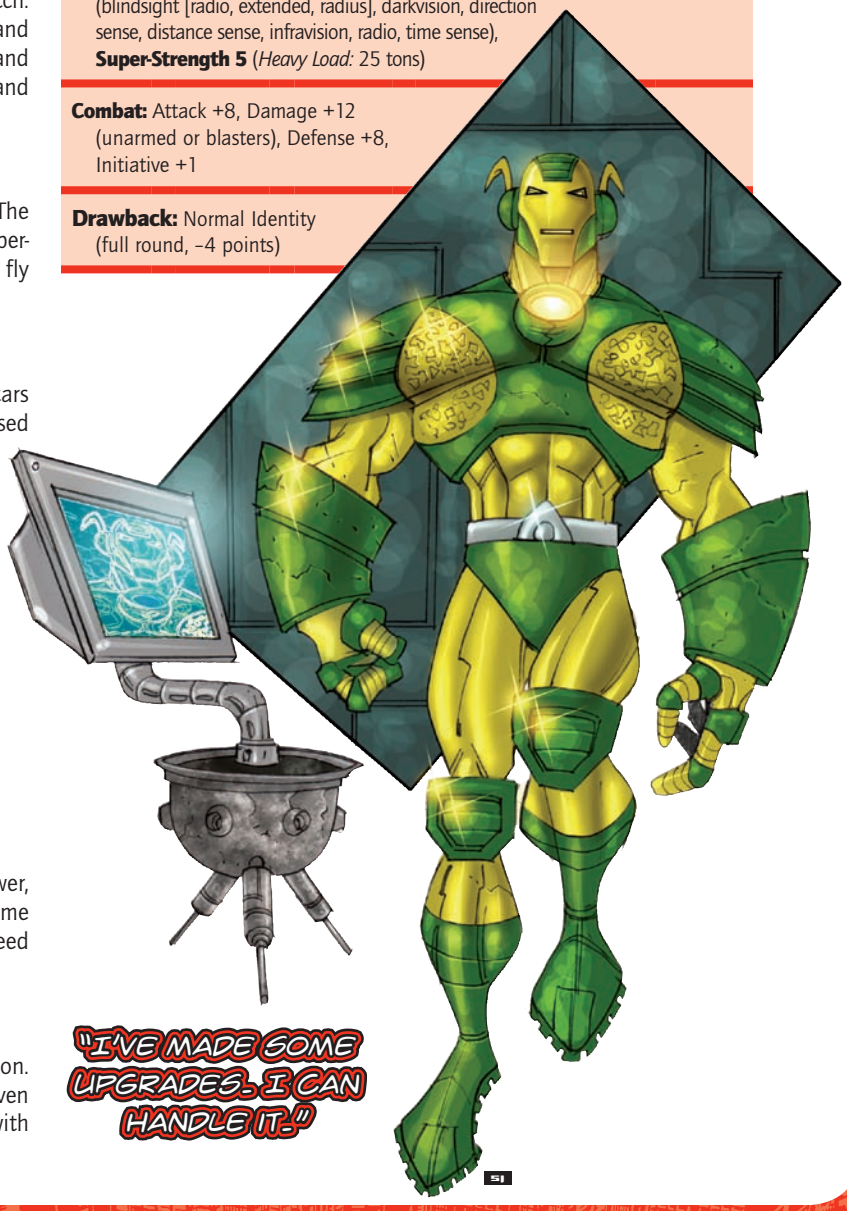
Skills: Computers 7 (+12), Craft (electronic) 7 (+12), Craft (mechanical) 7 (+12), Disable Device 7 (+12), Knowledge (technology) 7 (+12), Notice 5 (+7)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Improvised Tools, Inventor, Power Attack, Second Chance (Disable Device checks)

Powers: Device 19 (battlesuit)
Battlesuit: **Blast 12** (force beams; *Power Feats:* Alternate Power – **Enhanced Strength 24**), **Communication 4** (radio, 1 mile), **Flight 6** (500 MPH), **Immunity 9** (life support), **Protection 11** (Impervious), **Super-Senses 13** (blindsight [radio, extended, radius], darkvision, direction sense, distance sense, infravision, radio, time sense), **Super-Strength 5** (*Heavy Load:* 25 tons)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +12 (unarmed or blasters), Defense +8, Initiative +1

Drawback: Normal Identity (full round, –4 points)



COSTUMED ADVENTURER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	+4	+3	+3	+4	+4
16	18	16	16	18	18

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+8/+5*/+3°	+6	+10	+10

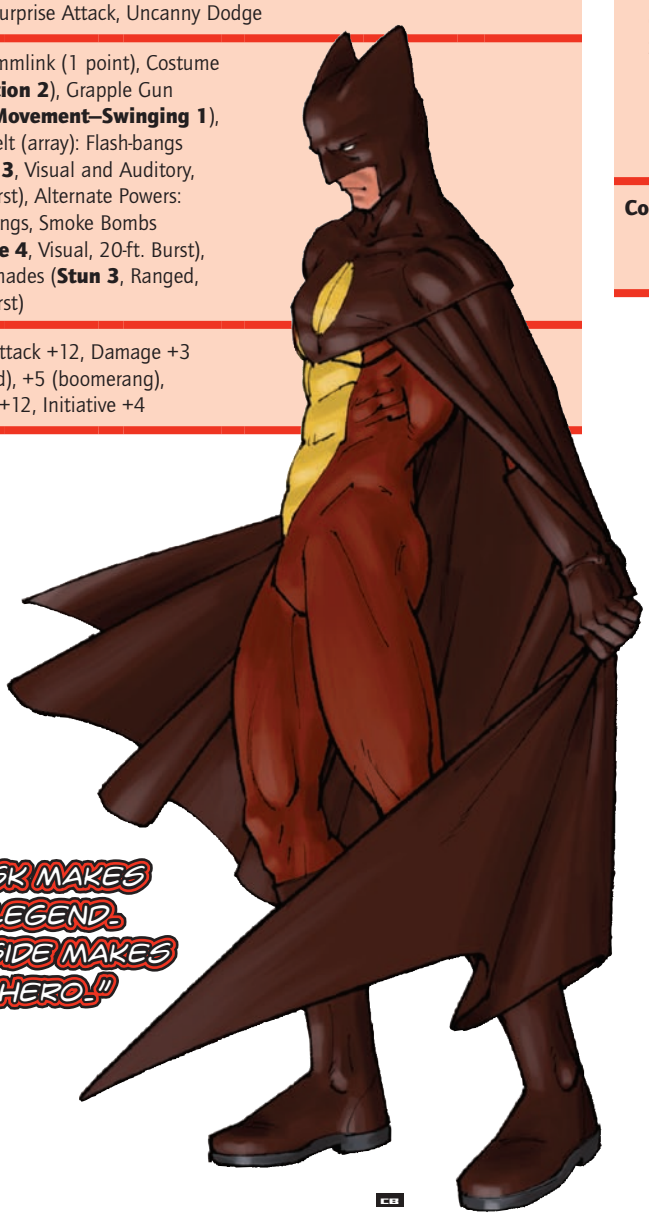
*flat-footed °without costume

Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+12), Bluff 8 (+12), Climb 7 (+10), Computers 5 (+8), Disable Device 8 (+11), Drive 6 (+10), Escape Artist 6 (+10), Gather Information 6 (+10), Intimidate 8 (+12), Investigate 8 (+11), Knowledge (streetwise) 7 (+10), Notice 8 (+12), Search 9 (+12), Sense Motive 8 (+12), Sleight of Hand 8 (+12), Stealth 10 (+14)

Feats: Defensive Roll 3, Equipment 4, Evasion 2, Jack-of-All-Trades, Power Attack, Skill Mastery (Acrobatics, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Stealth), Startle, Surprise Attack, Uncanny Dodge

Power: Commlink (1 point), Costume (**Protection 2**), Grapple Gun (**Super-Movement–Swinging 1**), Utility Belt (array): Flash-bangs (**Dazzle 3**, Visual and Auditory, 15-ft. Burst), Alternate Powers: Boomerangs, Smoke Bombs (**Obscure 4**, Visual, 20-ft. Burst), Stun grenades (**Stun 3**, Ranged, 15-ft. Burst)

Combat: Attack +12, Damage +3 (unarmed), +5 (boomerang), Defense +12, Initiative +4



ENERGY CONTROLLER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+4	+2	+0	+1	+3
12	18	14	10	12	16

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+12/+2*	+7	+8	+8

*without Force Field

Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+12), Bluff 10 (+13), Concentration 11 (+12), Notice 7 (+8), Profession 4 (+5)

Feats: Accurate Attack, All-Out Attack, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Quick Change, Taunt

Power: Energy Control 12 (choose one of the following powers from **Chapter 5**: Cold Control, Cosmic Energy Control, Darkness Control, Electrical Control, Element Control, Gravity Control, Hellfire Control, Kinetic Control, Light Control, Magnetic Control, Plasma Control, Radiation Control, Sonic Control, Vibration Control, plus three power feats), **Flight 6** (500 MPH, alternately choose Burrowing 12 or Swimming 12), **Force Field 10** (*Extras:* Impervious), **Immunity 5** (chosen energy type)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +12 (energy blast), Defense +8, Initiative +4

GADGETEER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+1	+0	+10	+5	+0
10	13	10	30	20	10

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+12/+0*	+4	+6	+8

*without Force Field

Skills: Computers 8 (+18), Craft (chemical) 8 (+18), Craft (electronics) 8 (+18), Craft (mechanical) 8 (+18), Disable Device 8 (+18), Investigate 4 (+14), Knowledge (earth sciences) 5 (+15), Knowledge (life sciences) 6 (+16), Knowledge (physical sciences) 6 (+16), Knowledge (technology) 10 (+20), Notice 5 (+10), Sense Motive 8 (+13)

Feats: Beginner's Luck, Eidetic Memory, Improvised Tools, Inventor, Luck, Master Plan, Skill Mastery (Computers, Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), Disable Device)

Powers: **Device 5** (blaster): **Blast 12** (easy to lose; *Power Feats:* Alternate Power – **Dazzle (visual) 12**), **Device 5** (force shield belt): **Force Field 12** (hard to lose; *Extras:* Impervious; *Power Feats:* Selective), **Device 2** (jet-pack): Flight 5 (100 MPH; hard to lose), **Quickness 4** (x25; *Flaws:* Limited to mental tasks)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +0 (unarmed), +12 (blaster), Defense +8, Initiative +1

MARTIAL ARTIST — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+5	+3	+0	+2	+0
18	20	16	10	15	11

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+7/+3*	+8	+13	+6

*flatfooted

Skills: Acrobatics 11 (+16), Concentration 10 (+12), Escape Artist 10 (+15), Intimidate 10 (+10), Notice 8 (+10), Sense Motive 8 (+10), Stealth 11 (+16)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Acrobatic Bluff, Assessment, Blind-Fight, Chokehold, Critical Strike, Defensive Attack, Defensive Roll 4, Elusive Target, Grappling Finesse, Improved Defense, Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Throw, Improved Trip, Instant Up, Luck 2, Move-by Action, Power Attack, Redirect, Stunning Attack, Takedown Attack, Uncanny Dodge

Combat: Attack +16, Damage +4 (unarmed), Defense +13, Initiative +9

MIMIC — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+2
12	12	12	12	12	14

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+1	+7	+7	+7

Skills: Bluff 8 (+10), Knowledge (current events) 4 (+5), Notice 8 (+9), Profession (choose one) 4 (+5), Sense Motive 8 (+9)

Feats: Assessment, Beginner's Luck, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Luck, Teamwork

Powers: Mimic 12 (all traits at once, plus choose one of the following extras: Continuous, Extra Subject, Ranged, or Stacking. See Mimic, page 92, for more information.)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +8, Initiative +5

MYSTIC — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+1	+0	+3	+5	+4
10	12	10	16	20	18

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+12/+0	+5	+6	+12

Skills: Concentration 10 (+15), Knowledge (arcane lore) 8 (+11), Notice 5 (+10), Search 5 (+8), Sleight of Hand 8 (+9)

Feats: Fearless, Ritualist, Quick Change, Trance

Powers: Astral Form 6 (*Power Feats:* Alternate Power — **Flight 3** and **Force Field 12** [*Extras:* Impervious]), **Magic 12** (choose six power feats), **Super-Senses 4** (Magical Awareness, Acute, Extended, Radius)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +0 (unarmed), +12 (magic), Defense +8, Initiative +1

Drawbacks: Power Loss (Flight, Force Field, and Magic; when unable to speak and gesture to cast spells, –3 points)

PARAGON — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+12	+1	+12	+0	+1	+1
34/14	12	34/14	10	12	13

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+12	+12	+6	+8

Skills: Notice 8 (+9), Profession (choose one) 4 (+5), Search 8 (+8)

Powers: Enhanced Constitution 20, **Enhanced Strength 20**, **Flight 5** (250 MPH), **Immunity 9** (life support), **Impervious Toughness 12**, **Quickness 3**, **Super-Strength 6** (*Heavy Load:* 100 tons)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +12 (unarmed), Defense +8, Initiative +1

POWERHOUSE — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+12	+0	+14	+0	+1	+1
34/18	10	38/18	10	12	12

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+14	+14	+4	+6

Skills: Intimidate 7 (+8), Notice 7 (+8), Profession (choose one) 6 (+7), Search 6 (+6), Sense Motive 6 (+7)

Feats: Improved Pin, Power Attack

Powers: Enhanced Constitution 20, **Enhanced Strength 16**, **Immunity 12** (cold and heat damage, fatigue, pressure), **Impervious Toughness 10**, **Leaping 9** (x1,000 distance), **Super-Strength 7** (*Heavy Load:* 200 tons; *Power Feats:* Groundstrike, Thunderclap)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +12 (unarmed), Defense +6, Initiative +0

PSIONIC — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+1	+1	+2	+6	+3
10	12	12	15	22	16

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+12/+1*	+5	+6	+14

*without Force Field

Skills: Concentration 8 (+14), Diplomacy 8 (+11), Notice 4 (+10), Profession (choose one) 4 (+10), Sense Motive 8 (+14)

Feats: Ultimate Save (Will), Uncanny Dodge

Powers: Flight 6 (500 MPH), **Force Field 11**, **Super-Senses 2** (Danger Sense, Mental Awareness), **Telekinesis 11**, **Telepathy 10** (*Power Feats:* Alternate Powers — **Illusion 6** [all senses; *Power Feats:* Selective; *Flaws:* Phantasms], **Mental Blast 5**, **Mind Control 10**)

Combat: Attack +5, Damage +5 (mental blast), Defense +8, Initiative +1

SHAPESHIFTER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+2	+2	+1	+0	+3
12	14	14	12	10	16

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+2	+5	+8	+5

Skills: Bluff 5 (+8), Knowledge (life sciences) 4 (+5), Notice 10 (+10), Search 7 (+8), Sleight of Hand 4 (+6), Stealth 6 (+8), Survival 8 (+8)

Feats: Elusive Target, Move-by Action, Taunt

Powers: Shapeshift 8 (*Extras:* Free Action; *Flaws:* Limited to animal forms)

Combat: Attack +10, Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +10, Initiative +2

SPEEDSTER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+4	+2	+0	+1	+1
14	18	14	10	12	12

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+2	+5	+14	+5

Skills: Acrobatics 4 (+8), Bluff 8 (+9), Disable Device 10 (+10), Notice 7 (+8), Profession 4 (+5), Search 7 (+7)

Feats: Evasion, Fast Overrun, Instant Up, Move-by Action

Powers: Super-Speed 10 (choose four power feats)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +2 (unarmed), Defense +15, Initiative +44

WEAPON-MASTER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	+5	+2	+0	+1	+2
16	20	14	10	12	14

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+6/+2*	+8	+10	+8

*Flat-footed

Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+13), Bluff 8 (+10), Climb 8 (+11), Concentration 4 (+5), Intimidate 8 (+10), Knowledge (streetwise) 8 (+8), Notice 8 (+9), Profession 4 (+5), Sense Motive 8 (+9), Sleight of Hand 4 (+9), Stealth 8 (+13)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Acrobatic Bluff, Assessment, Attack Focus (melee or ranged) 4, Blind-Fight, Critical Strike, Defensive Attack, Defensive Roll 4, Elusive Target, Evasion 2, Improved Critical (weapon), Improved Defense, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Improved Trip, Luck, Power Attack, Ranged Pin, Takedown Attack, Taunt, Uncanny Dodge

Powers: Device 4 (weapon), **Super-Movement 1** (Swinging)
Weapon: Choose Blast or Strike: [Blast 8 (choose four power feats) Strike 5 (*Extras:* Penetrating on Strike and Strength; *Power Feats:* Mighty, Thrown; choose five more power feats)]

Combat: Attack +8 (+12 melee or ranged), Damage +3 (unarmed), +8 (weapon), Defense +14, Initiative +9

POWER POINTS

You create your *Mutants & Masterminds* hero by spending *power points* on different traits. Each ability, skill, feat, power, and other trait has a power point cost, while drawbacks give you additional power points to spend.

STARTING POWER POINTS

The campaign's power level provides a guideline for how many power points you get to create your character (15 points per power level), as shown on the **Starting Power Points** table. The Gamemaster can vary the starting power points as desired to suit the campaign. You can find more on this in **Chapter 9: Gamemastering**.

BASIC TRAIT COSTS

Trait	Cost in Power Points
Ability Score	1 per ability score point above 10
Attack Bonus	2 per +1 bonus
Defense Bonus	2 per +1 bonus
Save Bonus	1 per +1 bonus
Skills	1 per 4 skill ranks
Feats	1 per feat or feat rank
Powers	base cost × rank (see **Chapter 5**)
Drawbacks	–1 or more points (see **Chapter 6**)

STARTING POWER POINTS

Power Level	Starting Power Points
1	15
2	30
3	45
4	60
5	75
6	90
7	105
8	120
9	135
10	150
11	165
12	180
13	195
14	210
15	225
16	240
17	255
18	270
19	285
20	300

SPENDING POWER POINTS

Each trait costs a certain number of power points. You "spend" or allocate your power points to give your character different traits. Once spent, power points cannot be re-allocated without the use of a particular power or the Gamemaster's permission. The basic costs of various traits are given on the **Basic Trait Costs** table, with specific costs for powers given in **Chapter 5**, and specific values for drawbacks given in **Chapter 6**.

POWER LEVEL

Power level is an overall measure of effectiveness and power, primarily combat ability, but also generally what sort of tasks a character can be expected to accomplish on a regular basis, assuming the ability to take 10 and take 20 (see **Checks Without Rolls**, page 11).

Power level is a value set by the Gamemaster for the campaign. It places certain limits on where and how players can spend points when creating heroes. Power level affects the following things:

- **Attack:** Your hero's total attack bonus cannot exceed the campaign's power level.
- **Defense:** Your hero's total defense bonus cannot exceed the campaign's power level.
- **Save Difficulty:** The saving throw modifier for your hero's attacks and powers cannot exceed the campaign's power level. So at PL 8, for example, your hero cannot have a save modifier greater than +8 (a +8 damage attack, or a power with a save DC of 18, for example).
- **Toughness Save:** Your hero's total Toughness saving throw modifier cannot exceed the campaign's power level.
- **Fortitude, Reflex, and Will Saves:** Your hero's total Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save modifiers cannot exceed the campaign's power level +5.
- **Skill Rank:** A character cannot have more ranks in a skill than the campaign's power level +5. So in a PL10 campaign, a player character cannot have more than 15 ranks in any one skill (10 + 5).
- **Ability Scores:** Ability scores are limited to a bonus no greater than the campaign's power level +5. Strength is restricted by the Save Difficulty limit to a bonus no higher than the campaign's power level, as is Constitution by the maximum Toughness limit. This means a limit of (10 + twice power level) for Strength and Constitution and (20 + twice power level) for other ability scores. The Strength and Constitution limits may be raised with an attack/defense trade off (see the following section).

ATTACK/DEFENSE TRADE-OFFS

Although the campaign's power level defines certain limits, there is some flexibility to them. Players can choose to lower one power level limit on a hero to raise another related limit. You can adjust power level limits in the following ways:

- **Attack & Save Difficulty:** You can trade-off attack bonus for the saving throw Difficulty Class modifier with an attack on a one-to-one basis. So a PL 10 hero could have a +8 attack bonus in order to have a +12 save DC modifier, for example, or a hero that has chosen to have a +15 attack bonus is limited to a +5 save DC modifier. This modification does not apply to powers that do not require attack rolls; they remain limited by the campaign's normal PL limit on save DC modifiers. Strength is considered an "attack" for purposes of this trade-off, so lowering your attack bonus limit increases your Strength bonus limit.
- **Defense & Toughness:** You can trade-off defense bonus for Toughness saving throw bonus on a one-to-one basis. So a PL 10 hero

POWER LEVEL

Power Level	Max. Atk./Def.	Max. Save DC Modifier	Max. Toughness	Max. Save/Ability Bonus	Max. Ability Score	Max. Skill Rank
1	1	+1	+1	+6	22	6
2	2	+2	+2	+7	24	7
3	3	+3	+3	+8	26	8
4	4	+4	+4	+9	28	9
5	5	+5	+5	+10	30	10
6	6	+6	+6	+11	32	11
7	7	+7	+7	+12	34	12
8	8	+8	+8	+13	36	13
9	9	+9	+9	+14	38	14
10	10	+10	+10	+15	40	15
11	11	+11	+11	+16	42	16
12	12	+12	+12	+17	44	17
13	13	+13	+13	+18	46	18
14	14	+14	+14	+19	48	19
15	15	+15	+15	+20	50	20
16	16	+16	+16	+21	52	21
17	17	+17	+17	+22	54	22
18	18	+18	+18	+23	56	23
19	19	+19	+19	+24	58	24
20	20	+20	+20	+25	60	25

with a +7 defense bonus could have a +13 Toughness save bonus. Conversely a hero in the same campaign who has a +15 defense bonus is limited to a +5 Toughness save bonus.

No limit can be reduced to less than 0 in this way and the GM must approve all such trade-offs. Attack/defense trade-offs allow for some variety in combat-related bonuses while maintaining power level balance among the heroes overall.

POWER LEVEL & NPCS

While the GM should keep the power level guidelines and suggested starting power points of the campaign in mind while creating villains and members of the supporting cast, such non-player characters are *not* restricted by the campaign's power level and may have as many power points as the GM wants to give them.

Instead, determine an NPC's power level based on the character's highest appropriate trait(s). This power level is simply an approximation to show what level of challenge that NPC offers, and is not necessarily related to the NPC's power point total, which may be greater than or less than the recommended starting power points for that power level. NPCs are often designed to fill a particular niche in the campaign and do not need to be as well rounded or balanced as heroes.

> ***Example:*** *The Gamemaster is creating a villain for a power level 10 campaign. The bad guy has a +8 attack bonus and a primary attack with a +16 damage bonus. Averaging these together gives the GM a power level of (16 + 8)/2 which equals 12. So long as none of the villain's other traits exceed this limit, the GM notes the villain's power level as 12, a reasonable challenge for a group of PL 10 heroes.*

Likewise, NPCs may have whatever traits the GM wishes to assign them. In fact, some non-player characters are better treated as plot devices (see page 211); giving them game stats may limit them too much! For example, an omnipotent cosmic entity doesn't need a comprehensive list of traits; neither does a mysterious alien artifact with vast and unknown powers. They serve whatever dramatic needs the Gamemaster wishes. You can find more about creating non-player characters and plot devices in **Chapter 9: Gamemastering**.

RE-ALLOCATING POWER POINTS

Normally a hero's traits are relatively fixed. Once power points are spent on traits, they remain there. In some cases, however, the Gamemaster may allow players to re-allocate their characters' points, changing their traits within the limits of the campaign's power level, perhaps even losing some traits and gaining entirely new ones. This change may come about as the result of events in the series, such as a hero encountering something that alters her powers (intense radiation, mutagenic chemicals, cosmic power sources, and so forth). It's up to the GM when these character-altering events occur, but they should be fairly rare unless their effects are intended to be strictly temporary complications (lasting only for one adventure, see **Complications**, page 122). Very few players enjoy changes to their characters made without their consent, so GMs should be very careful when implementing this type of change.

POWER LEVEL AND CHARACTER GROWTH

As the heroes earn additional power points through adventuring, the GM may wish to increase the campaign's power level, allowing players to spend some of their earned power points to improve traits already at the campaign's limit. Not raising the power level forces player characters to diversify, improving their less powerful or effective traits, and acquiring new ones,

but it can make the players feel constrained and the heroes to start looking the same if it isn't raised occasionally. Increasing power level by one for every 15 earned power points is a good rule of thumb, depending on how quickly the GM wants the player characters to improve in overall power. (See **Increasing Power Level**, page 178, for more information.)

HERO CREATION EXAMPLES

For examples of how to create your own hero, let's look at how a couple of the hero archetypes on pages 17-23 were created.

THE COSTUMED ADVENTURER

Mark wants to create a hero who's a dark avenger type, someone with no super-powers, but great training and skill, along with various crime-fighting gadgets. The hero is intended for a power level 10 game, with 150 starting power points.

Mark starts out with the ability scores. He wants his hero to be capable both physically and mentally. So he assigns 18s to Dexterity, Wisdom, and Charisma, to make his hero quick, agile, perceptive, and imposing, with a forceful will. He puts 16s in Strength, Constitution, and Intelligence, making his hero well above average in those abilities, but not quite as much as the others. Each ability point above 10 costs 1 power point, so Mark has spent 42 of his 150 points.

Next, he looks at skills. He wants his adventurer to be quite skilled and makes a wish list of all the skills he wants. He starts out assigning 8 ranks to each skill—knowing skills cost 1 power point per 4 ranks—but then shifts a few of those ranks around, decreasing some less important skills and increasing others. When he's done, Mark has assigned 120 ranks in skills, quite a respectable amount, and spent another 30 points (120 ranks, divided by 4). That leaves 78, or a little more than half, of his 150 power points remaining.

Since Mark wants his adventurer to be a capable fighter, he looks next at attack and defense bonus. Since he doesn't envision his hero either doing a lot of damage or being especially tough, he asks for, and receives, permission from the GM to lower his hero's damage and Toughness save limits by 2, raising his attack and defense limits by the same amount. Mark then buys his hero's attack and defense bonus right up to the limit of +12 each (10 for the game's power level, +2 more for the trade-off). This costs 2 points per +1 to attack and 2 per +1 defense, or a grand total of 48 points. That leaves Mark with only 30 points, and he still has to buy his adventurer's feats, powers, and saving throws.

Fortunately, Mark has decided his hero doesn't really have any powers, relying on skills, feats, and equipment (from the Equipment feat). So he first looks at his character's saves. He buys up his Reflex save from +4 (for his 18 Dexterity) to +10 for 6 points and his Will save from +4 (for his 18 Wisdom) to +10 for another 6 points. He could increase them as high as +15, but that wouldn't leave him many points for anything else, so he decides +10 is enough. He increases his hero's Fortitude save from +3 (the basic bonus from his 16 Constitution) to +6, not quite as high, since he decides his hero relies more on reflexes and strength of will. Mark has spent a total of (6 + 6 + 3) or 15 points on saves, half of what he has left.

Now he looks at his hero's Toughness save. Mark can't increase that directly by spending power points; you can only improve Toughness using feats and powers. His hero has a +3 bonus from his Constitution score and his Toughness save can be up to +8 (it would normally be +10, but Mark lowered his Toughness save limit to raise his defense bonus limit). Since Mark doesn't want his hero to have any powers, he decides it's time to look at feats.

The Defensive Roll feat (see page 60) catches Mark's attention: it grants an improved Toughness save by using agility to "roll" with attacks, perfect for Mark's hero! He could take up to 5 ranks in it, for a +5 bonus to Toughness, but Mark is a bit concerned with both spending a third of his remaining points on one feat and with the fact that his hero loses the Defensive Roll bonus whenever he loses his dodge bonus. So he looks over **Chapter 7** and decides to split the difference. He takes 3 ranks of Defensive Roll (for a +3 Toughness save bonus) and he'll give his hero some armor built into his costume.

That brings Mark to equipment. He picks out the equipment he wants for his hero, using the information in **Chapter 7**. It adds up to 20 points worth of equipment altogether. That requires 4 ranks in the Equipment feat, so Mark assigns 4 more points to that. He's now spent 7 points on feats, leaving him with 8 more. He makes a list of other feats he wants and whittles it down to a total of 8 ranks, dropping a second rank in Improved Initiative to get Surprise Strike instead, which he feels best suits his character.

Mark looks over the list of Drawbacks in **Chapter 6** but he doesn't think any of them suit his hero, so he doesn't take any. He does, however, note some Complications he thinks might apply, getting some ideas he can give the GM so he can earn some extra hero points during the game. He also decides his hero has an Allegiance to Justice over all else, which may provide some story hooks, and even some conflict with his fellow heroes in the future.

Mark goes back and adds up his costumed adventurer's points, coming up with the starting total of 150, so he presents his new hero, "the Sentinel," to the Gamemaster for approval and he's ready to play!

THE ENERGY CONTROLLER

Kelly wants to create an energy-controlling heroine for a power level 10 campaign. Looking through the powers in **Chapter 5**, she picks Light Control and starts building a character around that concept.

Since Kelly wants her heroine to have fairly powerful offensive and defensive powers, she asks for and gets permission to lower her heroine's attack and defense limits to raise her damage and Toughness save limits. Based on that, she assigns a rank of 12 to her Light Control, for a cost of 24 power points.

Light Control grants the ability to shed light over an area, but Kelly also wants her heroine to have some offensive capabilities. So she chooses some Alternate Powers as power feats for her Light Control; first, the Blast power for a "photon blast." Since it has the same cost (2 points per rank), it has the same rank as Light Control (12). She also picks Dazzle (visual) 12, and Dazzle (visual) 8 with the Area extra (costing 3 points per rank). The three power feats cost 1 point each, for a total of 3 power points.

Kelly wants to give her character a defensive power as well. Since she needs to be able to use her defenses and attack at the same time, she doesn't want to make it an Alternate Power of her Light Control. She picks a Force Field, a glowing protective aura of light, and assigns it a rank of 12, since she chose to lower her character's defense bonus a bit. She also applies the Impervious modifier, so the power costs 2 points per rank rather than 1, or a total of 24. Kelly has now spent 51 of her 150 power points.

To finish things off, she gives her character the power to fly, paying 12 points for Flight at rank 6, and gives her Immunity to light-based attacks and powers, requiring 5 ranks of the Immunity power, and costing 5 points. That brings her total power cost to 68, leaving 82 power points remaining.

Next, based on her heroine's power ranks, Kelly assigns a +8 bonus each to attack and defense, lowering their maximum value by 2 since she raised the limit on damage and Toughness by 2. That costs 2 points per +1 or a total of 32 points (16 for attack, 16 for defense). She has 50 power points left to spend on abilities, skills, feats, and saving throws.

Kelly goes back and looks at ability scores now. She decides her character has excellent Dexterity, being quite nimble and agile, and assigns it a score of 18. She also assigns a Charisma of 16, since she wants her heroine to be both a forceful and engaging personality. She puts a couple points each into Strength and Wisdom, putting them at 12, above average, but not extraordinary, and decides her character is of average Intelligence, leaving it at 10.

When she gets to Constitution, Kelly wants to make it better than average, since she sees her character as somewhat tough. The problem is an increase in Constitution will also increase her Toughness saving throw, which is already at it maximum bonus. So Kelly decides to lower her Force Field rank to 10, leaving room for a +2 Constitution bonus (a score of 14-15). She puts the 4 power points she gets back from lowering the Force Field's rank into Constitution, raising it to 14 (and bringing her Toughness save back up to +12, although now only 10 points of it is Impervious).

With 32 power points left, she looks at saving throws. Toughness is already maxed out. She raises Fortitude to +5 (3 points), Reflex and Will to +8 (4 points and 7 points, respectively) for a total of 14 power points.

Picking out the skills she wants for her character, she assigns them ranks and adds them up. They come to only 38 ranks, so she assigns two more ranks to bring them up to an even 40, costing 10 power points. She picks out six feats to round out her character's capabilities: Accurate Attack, All-Out Attack, and Power Attack provide plenty of options in combat. Precise Shot allows her to fire blasts into melee easily. Quick Change lets her get into costume (and into action) fast, while Taunt allows for some fun roleplaying as well as giving her an extra edge in a fight.

Adding things up, Kelly finds she has spent only 148 power points. Looking things over, she decides to bump her character's Fortitude save up by +2, costing 2 more points and bringing the total to 150, the starting total.

Kelly looks at the Drawbacks but decides none of them suit her character. She picks Good as her heroine's primary allegiance, seeing her as someone who always tries to do the right thing, and considers some suitable Complications for her. She gives her character the name "Lux, Lady of Light," and shows the character sheet and her sketch of Lux's costume to the Gamemaster for approval.

CHAPTER 2: ABILITIES

Everyone has certain basic *abilities*: how strong, fast, smart, and clever they are. These ability scores influence most things your character does. Stronger characters can lift greater weights, more dexterous characters have better balance, tougher characters can soak up more damage, and so forth.

Characters have six abilities: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha). Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution are called *physical abilities*, whereas Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are *mental abilities*. Each above-average ability score provides a bonus on certain die rolls, while below average abilities apply a penalty to some die rolls.

GENERATING ABILITY SCORES

Ability scores start out at 10, average for an adult human being. They can go as low as 1 (truly terrible) and as high as the power level allows.

BUYING ABILITY SCORES

You choose your hero's ability scores by spending power points on them. One power point increases an ability score by 1, so putting one power point into Strength, for example, raises it from 10 to 11. Remember a score of 10 is average, 13-14 is a fair amount of talent or natural ability, 15-17 is exceptional, 18-19 is extraordinary, and so forth. (See the **Ability Benchmarks** table on page 30 for guidelines.)

REDUCING ABILITIES

You can also lower one or more of your character's ability scores from the starting value of 10. Each point you lower a score gives you an additional power point to spend elsewhere. You cannot lower an ability score below 0.

If you reduce an ability score to 0 (for –10 points), you *lack* that ability entirely (see **Nonexistent Ability Scores**, page 32).

Ability Cost = Base score of 10.
1 power point per +1 to an ability score.
Gain 1 bonus power point per –1 to an ability score.

ABILITY MODIFIERS

Each ability score has a *modifier* associated with it, based on how above or below average it is. An average ability score (10-11) has a modifier of +0. Ability scores below 10 have negative modifiers (penalties) while abilities above 11 have positive modifiers (bonuses). An ability score's modifier is calculated by subtracting 10 from the score, dividing by 2, and rounding down any fractions. Modifiers are shown on the **Ability Modifiers** table.

The modifier is added to, or subtracted from, die rolls when your character does something related to that ability. For example, your Strength modifier affects the amount of melee damage you do. Your Intelligence modifiercomes into play when you roll skills based on Intelligence, and so forth. Sometimes your modifier is used to calculate another value, such as when you use your Dexterity modifier to help determine how good you are at avoiding harm with your reflexes (your Reflex saving throw).

The maximum modifier you can have with an ability is equal to the campaign's power level +5. So the maximum score you can have in any ability is therefore equal to twice power level, plus 20. A power level 10 hero, for example, cannot have an ability score greater than 40 (a +15 modifier). Strength is affected by the power level limits on damage (see page 24).

THE ABILITIES

Here are descriptions of the six abilities and how they affect your character.

STRENGTH (STR)

Strength measures sheer muscle power and the ability to apply it. Your Strength modifier applies to:

- Damage dealt by your melee or thrown weapon attacks.
- Climb and Swim checks.
- How far you can jump and throw things.
- The amount of weight you can lift, carry, and throw.

DEXTERITY (DEX)

Dexterity is a measure of coordination, agility, speed, manual dexterity, and balance. It's particularly useful for heroes relying more on speed and agility than sheer strength and toughness. Your Dexterity modifier applies to:

- Reflex saving throws, for avoiding danger based on coordination and reaction time.
- Initiative checks.
- Acrobatics, Stealth, Sleight of Hand, and other skill checks based on Dexterity.
- Dexterity checks for feats of agility and coordination when a specific skill doesn't apply.

CONSTITUTION (CON)

Constitution is endurance, health, and overall physical resilience. Constitution is important because it affects a character's ability to resist most forms of damage. Your Constitution modifier applies to:

- Toughness saving throws for resisting damage.
- Fortitude saving throws, for resisting disease and poison, fatigue, and effects involving the character's health.
- Constitution checks to recover from damage and injury.

INTELLIGENCE (INT)

Intelligence covers reasoning ability and learning. Intelligence is important for characters with a lot of skills like Craft and Knowledge. Your Intelligence modifier applies to:

- Craft, Knowledge, Search, and other skill checks based on Intelligence.
- Intelligence checks to solve problems using sheer brainpower when a specific skill doesn't apply.

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UNDER THE HOOD: MODIFIERS AND ODD ABILITY SCORES

Since an ability score's modifier is based on subtracting 10 from the score, dividing by 2 and rounding down, there seems to be little reason to have anything other than an even score in an ability, saving as many power points as possible for other things. However, there are a few reasons why players may want to consider having an odd score in an ability.

First, odd ability scores are excellent tiebreakers, particularly for comparison checks (see page 10). Strength 17 is stronger than Strength 16, pure and simple, even though they have the same modifier. Odd ability scores provide a bit of a cushion against effects like Drain and Transfer (see **Chapter 5**); one power point lost from Str 17 (reducing it to Str 16) leaves the modifier unchanged. In situations where the actual ability score is used rather than the modifier, the character with the odd score has an edge.

Odd ability scores also advance a bit faster, since they're halfway to the next higher modifier. It only takes 1 power point to improve an odd ability score to a higher modifier, rather than 2. Some characters may have odd ability scores while "in transition" to a higher score.

WISDOM (WIS)

While Intelligence covers reasoning, Wisdom describes awareness, common sense, intuition, and strength of will. A character with a high Intelligence and a low Wisdom may be an "absent-minded professor" type, smart but not always aware of what's going on. On the other hand, a not so bright (low Intelligence) character may have great common sense (high Wisdom). Your Wisdom modifier applies to:

- Will saving throws, for resisting attempts to influence your mind.
- Notice, Sense Motive, and other skill checks based on Wisdom.
- Wisdom checks to resolve matters of intuition when a specific skill doesn't apply.

ABILITY MODIFIERS

Score	Modifier
1	–5
2-3	–4
4-5	–3
6-7	–2
8-9	–1
10-11	+0
12-13	+1
14-15	+2
16-17	+3
18-19	+4
20-21	+5
22-23	+6
24-25	+7
26-27	+8
28-29	+9
30-31	+10
32-33	+11
34-35	+12
36-37	+13
38-39	+14
40-41	+15
42-43	+16
44-45	+17
46-47	+18
48-49	+19
50-51	+20
+2	+1

CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma is force of personality, persuasiveness, leadership ability and (to a lesser degree) physical attractiveness. Charisma is useful for heroes who intend to be leaders as well as those who strike fear into the hearts of criminals with their presence. Your Charisma modifier applies to:

- Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidation, and other skill checks based on Charisma.
- Charisma checks to influence others through force of personality when a specific skill doesn't apply.

ABILITY BENCHMARKS

The **Ability Benchmarks** table provides some guidelines on where a particular ability score falls in comparison to the general population.

ABILITY BENCHMARKS

Ability Score	Modifier	Description
1	–5	Completely inept or disabled
2-3	–4	Weak; infant
4-5	–3	Younger child
6-7	–2	Child, elderly, impaired
8-9	–1	Below average; teenager
10-11	+0	Average adult
12-13	+1	Above average
14-15	+2	Well above average
16-17	+3	Gifted
18-19	+4	Highly gifted
20-21	+5	Best in a nation
22-23	+6	Best in the world
24-25	+7	Best ever; peak of human achievement
26-27	+8	Low superhuman
28-29	+9	Moderate superhuman
30	+10	High superhuman
40	+15	Very high superhuman
50	+20	Cosmic

ENHANCED ABILITIES

Some ability scores may be acquired as *Enhanced Abilities*, as described in **Chapter 5**. Enhanced Abilities are powers rather than entirely natural. The key differences between Enhanced Abilities and normal ability scores are Enhanced Abilities can be nullified (normal abilities cannot, see **Nullify**, page 94) and Enhanced Abilities can have power feats and be used for power stunts with extra effort (normal abilities cannot, see **Extra Effort**, page 120).

Enhanced Abilities and normal abilities have the same cost (1 power point per ability score point). The player decides if a character's ability score is normal or enhanced and, if it is enhanced, how *much* of it is enhanced. Enhanced Abilities are noted with the normal ability score in parentheses after them, such as 50 (16), indicating if the character's Enhanced Ability is nullified, the character still has a score of 16 in that ability.

ALTERING ABILITY SCORES

Over the course of play, your hero's ability scores may change for the following reasons:

- Some super-powers temporarily raise or lower ability scores (see **Chapter 5**).
- You can improve your ability scores permanently by spending earned power points on them, but you cannot increase an ability score above the limits set by the campaign's power level (see **Power Level**, page 24).

Whenever an ability score changes, all traits associated with the ability change as well. So if you increase your character's Dexterity and gain a higher bonus, his Dexterity-based skills and Reflex saving throw bonus also increase. Likewise, if the hero's Dexterity bonus decreases, his Dexterity-based skills and Reflex saving throws suffer.

DEBILITATED ABILITY SCORES

If one of your hero's ability scores drops to 0 for any reason, that score is said to be *debilitated* and the character suffers more serious effects. Debilitated Strength means the hero collapses, helpless and unable to move. Debilitated Dexterity means the hero is paralyzed and helpless. Debilitated Constitution means the hero is dying and cannot stabilize (and suffers a –5 modifier on Constitution checks to avoid death due to the low score). Debilitated Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma means the hero is unconscious and incapable of waking until the score is restored to at least 1.

UNDER THE HOOD: ABILITY SCORES

Mutants & Masterminds makes some changes to ability scores compared to other d20-based games, described below.

CHANGES TO ABILITIES

- **Strength and Dexterity:** Strength and Dexterity in *Mutants & Masterminds* do not directly influence a character's chances to hit in combat, and Dexterity doesn't improve a character's Defense score. These capabilities are purchased separately with attack and defense bonus. This brings the value of Strength and Dexterity in line with the other abilities and allows players to fine-tune their characters' combat abilities (so not all strong heroes are good melee combatants, for example). If you want a character whose great Strength or Dexterity provides combat ability, simply buy the character's attack and defense bonus in proportion to those ability scores. On the other hand, you can also have a strong or dexterous character who's not especially good in a fight, if you prefer.
- **Intelligence:** Unlike other d20-based games, your *Mutants & Masterminds* character's Intelligence modifier does not alter the number of skill points your hero gets. In *Mutants & Masterminds*, skill ranks are purchased with power points, just like everything else.

MENTAL ABILITIES

Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma can be more difficult to quantify than the physical abilities of Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. They also can have a more dramatic affect on your character's personality and behavior.

- **Intelligence:** A character with a high Intelligence score tends to be knowledgeable, well educated, and prone to using big words. A character with a high Intelligence but a low Wisdom may be smart but absent-minded or easily distracted. A character with a high Intelligence and low Charisma may be knowledgeable but something of a know-it-all or lacking in social skills. Characters with high Intelligence and low Wisdom and Charisma tend to be social misfits. A character with a low Intelligence may be slow, poorly educated, or just not very cerebral.
- **Wisdom:** High Wisdom characters are aware, clever, and confident in themselves and their abilities. High Wisdom, low Intelligence characters are simple-minded but capable of surprising insights. High Wisdom, low Charisma characters are quietly confident and tend to work behind the scenes. Low Wisdom characters are indecisive, absent-minded, unaware, impulsive, or just plain clueless.
- **Charisma:** Characters with high Charisma are outgoing, likeable, forceful, and often attractive. High Charisma, low Intelligence characters either manage to seem to know what they're talking about, or they attract people who find them endearing and want to help them. Characters with high Charisma and low Wisdom aren't very good at choosing their friends wisely. Low Charisma characters may be cold, aloof, rude, awkward, or simply plain and nondescript.

BEYOND HUMAN

Although 25 is defined as "the peak of human achievement" in an ability score on the **Ability Benchmarks Table**, a character with an ability score greater than 25 isn't "non-human," merely superhuman in comparison to *ordinary* people. Many "normal human" characters in the comics have truly superhuman ability scores, particularly Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. A character can have a superhuman ability score without necessarily being anything other than an amazingly talented, well-trained human being. The limits of what "normal" characters can accomplish is up to the Gamemaster and depends very much on the style of the setting.

Debilitated ability scores usually result from a power affecting your character. An ability score lowered to 0 during character creation is actually nonexistent; characters only suffer the effects of debilitated abilities if an ability score is lowered to 0 during play.

Abilities scores cannot be lowered below 0. Traits based on ability modifiers, such as saving throws and skill bonuses, can be lowered to –5 (the "modifier" of a 0 ability score), but no lower.

NONEXISTENT ABILITY SCORES

Rather than having a score of 0 in a given ability, some things or creatures in *Mutants & Masterminds* actually *lack* an ability score. The effect of lacking an ability score is as follows:

- **Strength:** Any creature capable of physically manipulating other objects has at least 1 point of Strength. A creature with no Strength score is incapable of exerting any physical force, either because it has no physical form (like an incorporeal ghost) or simply can't move (like a tree). The creature automatically fails Strength checks.
- **Dexterity:** Any creature capable of movement has at least 1 point of Dexterity. A creature with no Dexterity cannot move (like most plants) and hence cannot make physical attacks. It automatically fails Dexterity checks and Reflex saves.
- **Constitution:** Any living creature has at least 1 point of Constitution. A creature with no Constitution has no physical body (like a ghost) or is not alive (like a robot or other construct). The creature always fails Constitution checks. This includes checks to avoid dying and to recover from injury, so creatures with no Constitution do not recover from damage naturally. They must be repaired in some fashion. The same is true of objects. Creatures with no Constitution suffer all damage as lethal (like objects do) and do not suffer nonlethal damage conditions. Creatures with no Constitution are immune to fatigue (see **Fatigue**, page 167) but cannot exert extra effort (see **Extra Effort**, page 120). Creatures with no Constitution are often—but not necessarily—immune to many of the things affecting living beings (see **Immunity**, page 89).
- **Intelligence:** Any creature that can think, learn, or remember has at least 1 point of Intelligence. A creature with no Intelligence is an automaton, lacking free will and operating on simple instinct or programmed instructions. Anything with no Intelligence is immune to mental effects, interaction skills, and automatically fails Intelligence checks.
- **Wisdom:** Any creature aware of its environment has at least 1 point of Wisdom. Anything with no Wisdom also has no Charisma. It is an inanimate object, not a creature. Objects are immune to mental effects, interaction skills, and automatically fail Wisdom checks.
- **Charisma:** Any creature capable of interacting with other creatures has at least 1 point of Charisma. Creatures without Charisma are immune to interaction checks and automatically fail Charisma checks.

Inanimate objects have no scores other than their Toughness (see **Damaging Objects**, page 166). Animate, but nonliving, beings such as robots or zombies have Strength and Dexterity, and may have Wisdom and Charisma (if aware of their environment and capable of interaction). They may have Intelligence (if capable of thought), but have no Constitution (since they are not living things). See **Constructs** in **Chapter 7** for more information.

ATTACK BONUS

Your *attack bonus* represents overall combat ability. You add your attack bonus to your attack rolls to determine if you hit a target in combat. (For more on attack rolls and combat in general, see **Chapter 8: Combat**).

Your attack bonus starts at +0. You spend power points to increase it, 2 points per +1 bonus. Power level limits your maximum attack bonus (see **Power Level**, page 24).

DEFENSE BONUS

Your *defense bonus* represents your ability to avoid attacks. Your defense bonus adds to the difficulty to hit you in combat.

Your defense bonus starts at +0. You spend power points to increase it, 2 points per +1 bonus. Power level limits your maximum defense bonus (see **Power Level**, page 24).

DODGE BONUS

Half your defense bonus (rounded down) is a *dodge* bonus, which is lost under certain circumstances, such as when you are stunned, flat-footed, surprise-attacked, or otherwise unable to defend yourself normally. Other circumstances—such as when you are helpless—cause you to lose your *entire* defense bonus, and may apply additional penalties to your defense. Specific circumstances are discussed in **Chapter 8: Combat**.

SAVING THROWS

Generally, when subject to an attack or hazard, you get a *saving throw* to avoid or reduce its effects. The types of saving throws are Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will. For more on saving throws in general and how you make them, see **Chapter 8**.

- **Toughness saves** reflect resistance to damage or harm. They incorporate toughness, will to live, and overall durability. They are based on your Constitution modifier.

UNDER THE HOOD: MILES PER HOUR VS. FEET PER ROUND

Normal human-scale movement is given in feet per six-second round, but heroes and vehicles can often move *much* faster, measured in miles per hour. If you need to convert between the two, you can use the following guidelines:

- **Approximate:** An easy approximation is: *miles per hour = feet per round/10.* So 120 feet per round is about 12 miles per hour, and 60 miles per hour is about 600 feet per round. This is a rough approximation, but it's sufficient for a ballpark figure if you just want a general idea how fast something is moving.
- **Precise:** A more precise calculation is: *(feet per round × 600)/5,280,* that's the number of feet in six seconds, times 600 to get the number of feet in an hour, divided by the number of feet in a mile for miles per hour. With this formula, 120 feet per round equals (120 × 600) or 72,000, divided by 5,280, or 13.6 miles per hour. Likewise, 60 MPH equals (60 × 5,280 feet) or 316,800 feet per hour, divided by 600, or 528 feet per round.

- **Fortitude saves** reflect health and resistance to threats like poison or disease. They incorporate stamina, ruggedness, metabolism, and immunity. They are based on your Constitution modifier.
- **Reflex saves** reflect reflexes and reaction time. They test your ability to dodge massive attacks or hazards, such as an explosion or a deadfall trap. They incorporate quickness, nimbleness, overall coordination, speed, and reaction time. They are based on your Dexterity modifier.
- **Will saves** reflect inner strength. They measure resistance to mental influence and domination. They incorporate willpower, mental stability, level-headedness, determination, self-confidence, self-awareness, and resistance to temptation. They are based on your Wisdom modifier.

You can increase your Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws above the modifiers granted by your ability scores by spending power points. One power point grants you a +1 saving throw bonus. Your maximum bonus with these saves (including your ability modifiers) is the campaign's power level +5.

Fortitude, Reflex, and Will Saving Throw
Cost = 1 power point per +1 save bonus

You can only increase Toughness saving throw bonus above your base Constitution bonus with feats and powers. Your maximum Toughness bonus is equal to the campaign's power level. (See **Power Level**, page 24.)

CAPABILITIES

While abilities define the majority of a hero's capabilities, there are a few others important to game play: movement speed, size, and carrying capacity (how much your character can lift).

MOVEMENT

Heroes in the comics move around a lot. The GM moderates the pace of a game session, and determines when movement is important enough to be worth measuring. During casual scenes, you usually won't have to worry about movement rates. If a hero arrives somewhere and takes a stroll around to get a feel for the place, or is flying around town on patrol, there's no need to know exactly how fast the character goes, it just happens.

MOVEMENT PACE

Characters generally move at a normal, accelerated, or all out pace. A normal person's base movement speed is 30 feet, meaning a character can walk 30 feet as a move action. The following movement paces modify your base speed:

- *Normal:* A normal pace represents unhurried but purposeful movement at your speed, 30 feet per round for a normal unencumbered human.
- *Accelerated:* An accelerated pace is twice your speed, 60 feet per round for a normal unencumbered human. Taking two move actions in a round is accelerated movement.
- *All Out:* Moving four times your speed is an all out pace, the equivalent of running or sprinting, 120 feet per round for a normal unencumbered human. All out movement is a full action, and you lose your dodge bonus, since you can't easily avoid attacks. However, if you're using a movement power (see **Chapter 5**) you gain a +2 bonus to Defense per rank in that power; so a hero with Flight 5 moving all out gets a +10 Defense bonus for his speed (it's harder to hit a fast-moving target).

You can move all out for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score. After that you must succeed at a Constitution check (DC 10) to continue moving all out. You must check again each round, and the DC increases by +1 for each check. When you fail a check, you become fatigued and must drop to an accelerated or normal pace (see **Fatigue**, page 167).

Characters with movement powers have a normal speed granted by their rank. Accelerated movement doubles that speed. All out movement quadruples it.

HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Obstructions, bad surface conditions, and poor visibility hamper movement. The GM determines the category into which a specific condition falls (see the **Hampered Movement Table**). When movement is hampered, multiply movement speed by the penalty (a fraction). For example, a character that normally could cover 60 feet with an accelerated move can cover only 30 feet while moving through thick undergrowth.

If more than one condition applies, multiply speed by all appropriate movement penalty fractions. For instance, a character that normally could cover 60 feet with an accelerated move covers only 15 feet moving through thick undergrowth in heavy fog (one-half times one-half, or one-quarter his accelerated move speed).

HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Condition	Examples	Movement Penalty
Obstruction: Moderate	Undergrowth	x¾
Obstruction: Heavy	Thick undergrowth	x½
Surface: Bad	Steep slope or mud	x½
Surface: Very bad	Deep snow	x¼
Poor visibility	Darkness or fog	x½

JUMPING

Jumping is a special type of movement, based on your Strength. A jump is a move action. Distance moved by jumping counts as part of your normal movement in a round.

You can make a running long jump of (Str modifier + 10) feet, a standing long jump of half that distance, and a high (vertical) jump of a quarter that distance. Round all distances down to the nearest foot. So a Strength 10 (+0 modifier) character can make a running long jump of 10 feet, a standing long jump of 5 feet and a high jump of 2 feet (2.5, rounded down to 2). Increases to your Strength, including extra effort (see page 120), increase your jumping distances as well. Super-Strength (see page 104) does not increase jumping distances. Extra effort doubles your jumping distance for one jump. The Leaping power (see page 90) greatly increases the distance you can jump.

If you make a long jump and fail to clear the distance by your height or less, you can make a Reflex save (DC 15) to grab the far edge of a gap. You end your movement grasping the far edge. If this leaves you dangling over a chasm or gap, getting up requires a move action and a Climb check (DC 15).

SIZE

While heroes come in all sizes and shapes, most are generally within the human norms of size, ranging between four and eight feet tall or so (Medium-sized). Some heroes have the ability to alter their size using the Growth and Shrinking powers (see **Chapter 5**). Others are normally a different size, either larger or smaller. These characters have ranks of either Growth or Shrinking with a Permanent duration.

A character's size affects certain qualities. Modifications for size are shown on the **Size Table**. Permanent size modifiers count toward campaign power level limits.

ATTACK/DEFENSE MODIFIER

Larger characters are easier to notice and hit relative to smaller characters, while smaller characters are harder to notice and hit. These modifiers cancel out for characters of the same size, who attack and defend normally against each other.

GRAPPLE MODIFIER

Larger characters have an advantage in trying to grapple smaller opponents. In addition to the modifier to grapple checks, a larger character can grapple more opponents of a smaller size: double the number of opponents the character can grapple at once per size category the attacker is larger than the defenders. So a Medium attacker can grapple one Medium opponent, two Small opponents (one under each arm, for example), four Tiny opponents, and so forth.

STEALTH MODIFIER

Larger characters have a harder time sneaking around, while smaller characters have an easier time remaining unseen and unheard. Apply this modifier to Stealth checks made at this size.

INTIMIDATION MODIFIER

Larger characters are more imposing, while smaller characters are less. Apply this modifier to Intimidation checks made at this size. Like Attack and Defense modifiers, they cancel out against opponents of the same size.

SIZE

Size	Atk/Def Modifier	Grapple Modifier	Stealth Modifier	Intimidation Modifier	Height	Weight	Space	Reach	Carrying Capacity	Point Cost
Awesome	–12	+20	–20	+10	128 ft. or more	2 mil lbs. +	40 ft.	20 ft.	+25 Str	60
Colossal	–8	+16	–16	+8	64-128 ft.	250K- 2 mil. lbs	30 ft.	15 ft.	+20 Str	48
Gargantuan	–4	+12	–12	+6	32-64 ft.	32K –250K lbs.	20 ft.	15 ft.	+15 Str	36
Huge	–2	+8	–8	+4	16-32 ft.	4K –32K lbs.	15 ft.	10 ft.	+10 Str	24
Large	–1	+4	–4	+2	8-16 ft.	500-4,000 lbs.	10 ft.	10 ft.	+5 Str	12
Medium	+0	+0	+0	+0	4-8 ft.	60-500 lbs.	5 ft.	5 ft.	x1	0
Small	+1	–4	+4	–2	2 ft.-4 ft.	8-60 lbs.	5 ft.	5 ft.	x¾	4
Tiny	+2	–8	+8	–4	1-2 ft.	1-8 lbs.	2.5 ft.	0 ft.	x½	8
Diminutive	+4	–12	+12	–6	6 in.-1 ft.	0.25-1 lb.	1 ft.	0 ft.	x¼	12
Fine	+8	–16	+16	–8	3 in.-6 in.	0.9-0.1 lb.	6 in.	0 ft.	x1/8	16
Miniscule	+12	–20	+20	–10	3 in. or less	1 oz. or less	3 in.	0 ft.	x1/16	20

REACH

A normal (Medium-sized) character has a 5 ft. reach, which means the character can make a melee attack at any target up to 5 ft. away. Larger and smaller characters have a longer or shorter reach, as shown on the **Size Table**.

SPACE

A normal (Medium-sized) character is assumed to occupy a roughly 5-ft.-by-5-ft. space. Larger and smaller characters occupy more or less space, as shown on the **Size Table**.

CARRYING CAPACITY

Larger characters can lift and carry more, while smaller characters can lift and carry less. Larger characters gain an increase in effective Strength for carrying capacity: +5 points (a doubling in capacity) per size category. Smaller characters' carrying capacities are multiplied by the value in this column. So a Tiny character with Str 10 has a heavy load of (100 × ½) or 50 lbs.

ATTACK AREA

If you are three size categories or more larger than your opponent, you have a chance to hit an opponent even if you miss your attack roll! If your attack roll misses due to your size modifier, your attack is considered an area attack filling the fighting space of an opponent three size categories smaller than you. So a Gargantuan attacker has a 5-ft area attack against Medium or smaller opponents. A Medium attacker has a 1-ft. "area" attack against Diminutive or smaller opponents, and so forth.

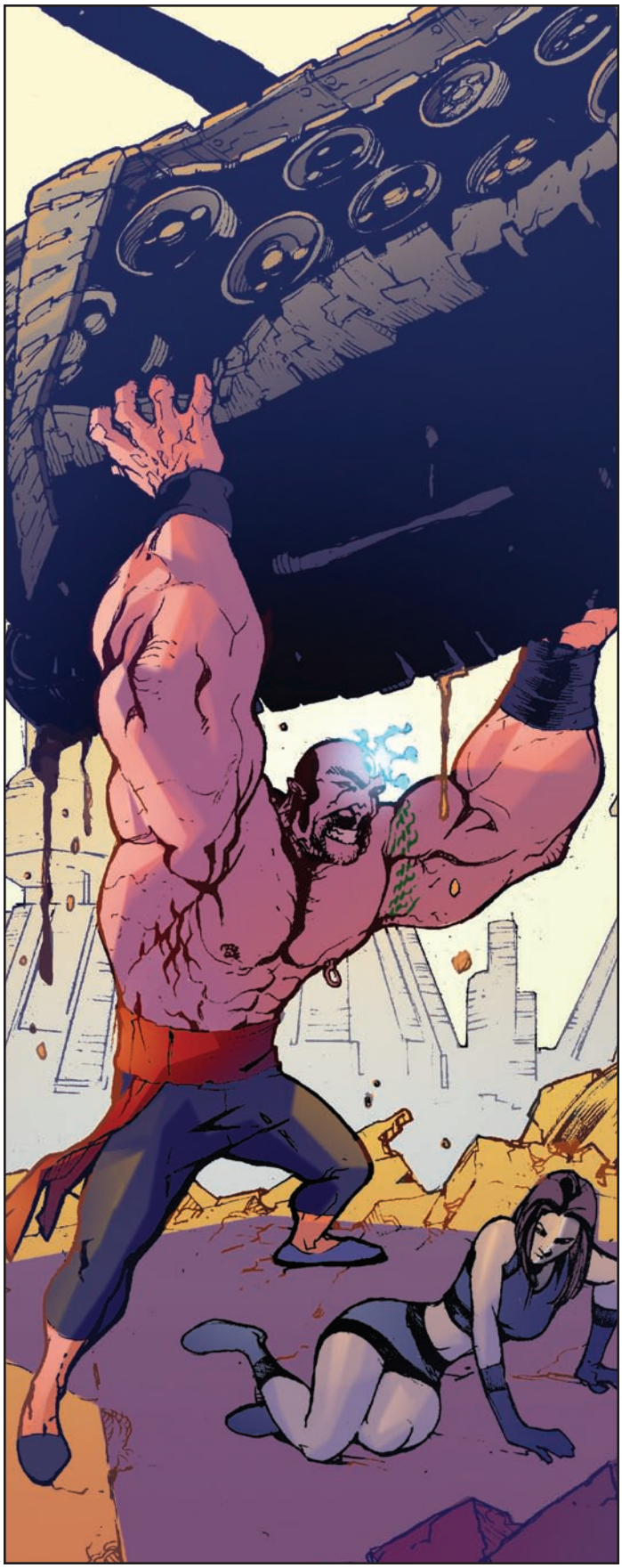
If you roll a successful attack, it has the normal effect. If you miss, but would have hit if not for your size modifier, then the attack *still* hits, but the target gets to make a Reflex save for half effect (or none, if the target has Evasion). Other targets in the area of your attack are also hit by a normal area effect. See page 159 for details on area attacks.

> ***Example:*** *A Gargantuan robot tries to stomp on the Bowman, who's a normal (Medium-sized) target. The robot has a –4 to hit because of its size. If it succeeds, it hits Bowman square on. If it misses, but by 4 or less (the amount of its size modifier), then the stomp of its massive foot still has a chance of hitting Bowman. He gets a Reflex save to halve the damage and, since he has the Evasion feat, if he makes his save, he suffers no damage, leaping and rolling out of the way at the last second. If the robot's attack roll misses by more than 4, it misses Bowman completely.*

CARRYING CAPACITY

Carrying capacity determines how much weight characters can lift and how much additional weight slows them down. See the **Carrying Capacity** table for how much a character can lift based on Strength score. Characters with Super-Strength add +5 per rank to their Strength score when figuring carrying capacity (see **Chapter 5**).

- Characters can lift and carry up to a light load without any penalties or difficulties.
- Characters carrying a medium load have a maximum dodge bonus of +3 and a –3 penalty on all actions. They move at 2/3 normal speed.



CARRYING LOADS

Load	Max Dodge	Check Penalty	Speed	All Out Move
Light	None	0	Normal	Normal
Medium	+3	–3	2/3	Normal
Heavy	+1	–6	2/3	½
Maximum	+0	—	5 ft. step	—
Push/drag	+0	—	½	—

CARRYING CAPACITY

Effective Strength	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load	Maximum Load	Push/ Drag
1	3 lb.	6 lb.	10 lb.	20 lb.	50 lb.
2	6 lb.	13 lb.	20 lb.	40 lb.	100 lb.
3	10 lb.	20 lb.	30 lb.	60 lb.	150 lb.
4	13 lb.	26 lb.	40 lb.	80 lb.	200 lb.
5	16 lb.	33 lb.	50 lb.	100 lb.	250 lb.
6	20 lb.	40 lb.	60 lb.	120 lb.	300 lb.
7	23 lb.	46 lb.	70 lb.	140 lb.	350 lb.
8	26 lb.	53 lb.	80 lb.	160 lb.	400 lb.
9	30 lb.	60 lb.	90 lb.	180 lb.	450 lb.
10	33 lb.	66 lb.	100 lb.	200 lb.	500 lb.
11	38 lb.	76 lb.	115 lb.	230 lb.	575 lb.
12	43 lb.	86 lb.	130 lb.	260 lb.	650 lb.
13	50 lb.	100 lb.	150 lb.	300 lb.	750 lb.
14	58 lb.	116 lb.	175 lb.	350 lb.	875 lb.
15	66 lb.	133 lb.	200 lb.	400 lb.	1,000 lb.
16	76 lb.	153 lb.	230 lb.	460 lb.	1,150 lb.
17	86 lb.	173 lb.	260 lb.	520 lb.	1,300 lb.
18	100 lb.	200 lb.	300 lb.	600 lb.	1,500 lb.
19	116 lb.	233 lb.	350 lb.	700 lb.	1,750 lb.
20	133 lb.	266 lb.	400 lb.	800 lb.	2,000 lb.
21	153 lb.	306 lb.	460 lb.	920 lb.	2,300 lb.
22	173 lb.	346 lb.	520 lb.	1,040 lb.	2,600 lb.
23	200 lb.	400 lb.	600 lb.	1,200 lb.	3,000 lb.
24	233 lb.	466 lb.	700 lb.	1,400 lb.	3,500 lb.
25	266 lb.	533 lb.	800 lb.	1,600 lb.	4,000 lb.
26	306 lb.	613 lb.	920 lb.	1,840 lb.	4,600 lb.
27	346 lb.	693 lb.	1,040 lb.	2,080 lb.	5,200 lb.
28	400 lb.	800 lb.	1,200 lb.	2,400 lb.	6,000 lb.
29	466 lb.	933 lb.	1,400 lb.	2,800 lb.	7,000 lb.
30	532 lb.	1,064 lb.	1,600 lb.	3,200 lb.	8,000 lb.
+10	x4	x4	x4	x4	x4

FUN STRENGTH FACTS

The effective Strength required to move a mountain is around 225. Moving the Moon requires Str 360. Moving the Earth requires Str 390. Both of the latter two are considered "pushing" or "dragging" and require some means of propulsion (Flight or Space Travel, for example) and possibly Immunity (life support) to survive in outer space. Heroes with perception range Telekinesis have an even easier time!

- Characters can lift up to a heavy load overhead. While doing so they have a maximum dodge bonus of +1 and a –6 penalty on all actions. They move at 2/3 normal speed.
- Characters can lift up to the maximum load off the ground, but can only stagger around with it. While overloaded in this way, characters lose any dodge bonus to Defense and can move only 5 feet per round as a full action.
- Characters can push or drag up to five times their heavy load weight, moving at ½ normal speed. Favorable conditions (smooth ground, dragging a slick object) double these numbers, and bad circumstances (broken ground, pushing an object that snags) can reduce them to one-half or less.
- Characters can use extra effort to double their carrying capacity in all categories for one round (see **Extra Effort**, page 120).

LARGER AND SMALLER CREATURES

The figures on the **Carrying Capacity** table are for Medium-size creatures. Larger and smaller creatures can carry more or less depending on size category as shown on the **Size** table.

Larger and smaller creatures, as well as characters with powers such as Density (see page 81), may also weigh more or less than usual. A character's weight is *not* a factor in carrying capacity, only effective Strength. Carrying capacity is the lifting and carrying ability beyond that necessary to comfortably support and carry one's own weight.

THROWING

Characters can throw any object they can lift, up to a heavy load. (You cannot throw your maximum load, only drop it adjacent to you.) Picking up an object is a move action, while throwing it is a standard action, so it's possible to pick up and throw an object in one round.

The distance you can throw an object is based on its weight and your Strength. You can throw your heavy load 5 feet. For every 5 points of Strength you have over the minimum required to lift an object as a heavy load, move the distance you can throw it one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (see page 70). So, a Strength 40 character has 30 points more Strength than needed to lift 100 lbs. as a heavy load. That means (30 divided by 5) 6 steps up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. So a Strength 40 character can throw a 100-lb. object up to 500 feet!

When dealing with objects weighing less than 10 lbs., move throwing distance one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** every time you halve weight. So a character can throw a 5-lb. object twice as far as a 10-lb. one, a 2-lb. object five times as far, and a 1-lb. object ten times further. Weights below 1-lb. can be treated as 1-lb. for simplicity. So the aforementioned Str 40 hero can throw a baseball (weighing less than a pound) over 25,000 feet (nearly 5 miles)!

For throwing objects as weapons in combat, see **Chapter 8**.

EXTENDED CARRYING CAPACITY

Effective Strength	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load	Maximum Load	Push/Drag	Heavy Load Examples
35	1,064 lb.	1 ton.	1.5 tons.	3 tons	7.5 tons	luxury car, van
40	1 ton.	2 tons	3 tons	6 tons	15 tons	truck
45	2 tons	4 tons	6 tons	12 tons	30 tons	Lear jet, subway car
50	4 tons	8 tons	12 tons	24 tons	60 tons	fighter jet, semi, streetcar
55	8 tons	16 tons	24 tons	48 tons	125 tons	APC, humpback whale
60	16 tons	32 tons	50 tons	100 tons	250 tons	tank, locomotive
65	32 tons	64 tons	100 tons	200 tons	500 tons	767, cargo jet
70	64 tons	125 tons	200 tons	400 tons	1,000 tons	747, fishing trawler
75	125 tons	250 tons	400 tons	800 tons	2,000 tons	drilling rig
80	250 tons	500 tons	800 tons	1,600 tons	4,000 tons	small bridge
85	500 tons	1,000 tons	1,600 tons	3,200 tons	8,000 tons	destroyer
90	1,000 tons	2,000 tons	3,200 tons	6,400 tons	16K tons	freight train, nuclear sub
95	2,000 tons	4,000 tons	6,400 tons	12.5K tons	32K tons	cargo freighter (empty)
100	4,000 tons	8,000 tons	12.5K tons	25K tons	64K tons	cruiser, loaded freighter
105	8,000 tons	16K tons	25K tons	50K tons	125K tons	ocean liner, large bridge
110	16K tons	32K tons	50Ktons	100K tons	250K tons	battleship, Gateway Arch
115	32Ktons	64K tons	100Ktons	200K tons	500K tons	aircraft carrier
120	64K tons	128K tons	200K tons	400K tons	1M tons	
125	128K tons	256K tons	400K tons	800K tons	2M tons	Empire State Building
130	256K tons	512K tons	800K tons	1.6M tons	4M tons	Golden Gate Bridge
135	512K tons	1.24M tons	1.6M tons	3.2M tons	8M tons	
140	1.24M tons	2.5M tons	3.2M tons	6.4M tons	16M tons	
145	2.5M tons	5M tons	6.4M tons	12.8M tons	32M tons	Great Pyramid of Giza
150	5M tons	10M tons	12.8M tons	25M tons	64M tons	small asteroid

K = thousand, M = million

CHAPTER 3: SKILLS

Heroes can sneak into the well-guarded lairs of criminal masterminds, infiltrate alien computer systems, and create devices beyond the understanding of modern science. They can piece together clues to a villain's latest plot, run along tightropes, and pilot vehicles through obstacle courses. They do so through the use of various *skills*, described in this chapter.

SKILL BASICS

Skills are learned abilities acquired through a combination of training (the skill) and natural talent (an ability score). Each skill has a *rank*, used as a bonus to the die roll when using the skill. To use a skill roll:

d20 + skill rank + ability modifier + miscellaneous modifiers

The higher the roll, the better the result. You're usually looking for a total that equals or exceeds a particular Difficulty Class (DC) or another character's check total.

- **Skill Rank:** Your rank in a skill is based on the number of points you have invested in skills. If you have ranks in a skill you're considered *trained* in that skill. You can use some skills even if you don't have any ranks in them, known as using a skill *untrained*.
- **Ability Modifier:** Each skill has a *key ability,* the ability modifier applied to the skill's checks. Each skill's key ability is noted in its description and on the **Skills** table (see page 41).
- **Miscellaneous Modifiers:** Miscellaneous modifiers to skill checks include situational modifiers for favorable or unfavorable conditions, bonuses from feats or powers, or penalties for not having proper tools, among others.

ACQUIRING SKILLS

Characters gain skill ranks by spending power points: 4 skill ranks per power point. Skill ranks do not all need to be assigned to the same skill. Characters can perform some tasks without any training, using only raw talent (as defined by their ability scores), but skilled characters are better at such things. Characters with the right skills and feats (see **Chapter 4**) can even hold their own against super-powered opponents.

Skill Cost = 1 power point per 4 skill ranks.

HOW SKILLS WORK

When you use a skill, make a skill check to see how you do. Based on the circumstances, your result must match or beat a particular number to use the skill successfully. The harder the task, the higher the number you need to roll. (See **Checks**, page 9, for more information.)

UNTRAINED SKILL CHECKS

Generally, if you attempt a task requiring a skill you don't have, you make a skill check as normal. Your skill modifier doesn't have a skill rank added in because you don't have any ranks in the skill. You do get other modifiers, though, such as the ability modifier for the skill's key ability.

Many skills can only be used if you are trained in the skill. Skills that cannot be used untrained are marked with a "No" in the "Untrained" column on the **Skills** table and listed as "Trained Only" in their descriptions. Attempts to use these skills untrained automatically fail.

INTERACTION SKILLS

Certain skills, called *interaction skills*, are aimed at dealing with others through social interaction. Interaction skills allow you to influence the attitudes of others and get them to cooperate with you in one way or another. Since interaction skills are intended for dealing with others socially, they have certain requirements.

First, you must be able to interact with the subjects of the skill. The subjects must be aware of you and able to understand you. If you don't speak the same language, or they can't hear you for some reason, that's the same as working without the proper tools, a –4 on your skill check.

Interaction skills work best on intelligent subjects, ones with an Int score of 3 or better. You can use them on creatures with Int 1-2, but with a –8 penalty; they're just too dumb to get the subtleties of your point. You can't use interaction skills at all on subjects lacking one or more mental ability scores. (Try convincing a rock to be your friend—or to be afraid of you—sometime.) The Immunity power (see page 89) can also render some characters immune to interaction skills.

You can use interaction skills on groups of subjects at once, but only to achieve the same result for all. So you can attempt to use Bluff or Diplomacy to convince a group of something, or Intimidate to cow a crowd, for example, but you can't try to convince some individuals of one thing and the rest of another, or to intimidate some people and not others. The GM decides if a particular use of an interaction skill is effective against a group, and may apply modifiers depending on the situation. The general rules for interaction still apply: everyone in the group must be able to hear and understand you, for example, or you suffer a –4 on your skill check against them. Mindless subjects are unaffected.

SKILL BENCHMARKS

As a general guideline, 1-4 ranks in a skill is a basic level of training, familiarity with the basics of the skill. A character with 5-8 ranks has a professional level of training, sufficient for someone using the skill in their primary profession. Someone with 9-12 ranks is an expert; the character is recognized and likely known as an expert in the skill, while 13-15 ranks represent virtual mastery of the skill. More than 15 ranks is such an amazing level of skill that the character is recognized as being among the best-trained people in the world!

These guidelines apply to attack and defense bonus as well if you substitute skill level for "combat skill level." So a hero with attack +7 has a "professional" level of training, while someone with a +15 bonus is a true master of combat skills.

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MANIPULATION SKILLS

Some skills, called *manipulation skills*, require a degree of fine physical manipulation. You need prehensile limbs and a Strength score or some suitable substitute (such as Precise Telekinesis) to use manipulation skills effectively. Characters lacking the ability to use manipulation skills can still have ranks in them and use them to oversee the work of others (granting an aid bonus, for example, see **Aid**, page 154).

SPECIALTY SKILLS

Some skills cover a wide range of knowledge or techniques. These skills are actually groups of similar skills, called *specialty skills*. When putting ranks into one of these skills, you must choose a specialty, a particular aspect of the skill your character knows. For example, you might choose the physical sciences specialty of Knowledge or the mechanical specialty of Craft. Skill ranks in one specialty of a skill do not imply training in the skill's other specialties.

UNDER THE HOOD: CHOOSING SKILLS

There are a number of factors to consider when choosing skills for your character.

TRAINING VS. TALENT

In game terms there's no difference between a character who has ranks in a skill because of extensive training and another whose skill ranks represent a natural "knack" or aptitude for the skill. Both are considered "trained" in the skill. For example, one character might have a high Diplomacy skill based on the character's extensive training in negotiation, debate, and management. Another character's Diplomacy skill may stem more from personal attractiveness or a talent for getting others to cooperate, while a third character may have a combination of the two. Feel free to decide for yourself what mix of training and talent your character's skill ranks represent.

LIFE SKILLS

When allocating skill ranks for your character consider not just the character's role as a hero but also the various other skills the character may have picked up in day-to-day life. For example, most adults have some sort of Craft or Profession skill as their occupation with at least 3 to 5 ranks (more if they're especially good at their job). Some people pick up ranks in Notice, although most get by using the skill untrained. Characters working with technology may have the Computers or Craft skills even if they don't apply to their powers. A particularly well-educated person may have various Knowledge skills. These additional skills help round out a character and provide some background color and—who knows?—they may turn out to be useful in an adventure at some point.

ADVENTURING SKILLS

Also give some thought to the skills your character needs to be effective in game play. Some are obvious, especially if they're part of your character concept. A scientist is going to have Knowledge skills, and possibly Computers or Craft. A pilot should have Pilot, while a doctor should have Medicine and Profession (physician). Beyond the obvious and background skills of your character consider "utility skills" like Concentration, Notice, Search, Sense Motive, and Stealth, which many characters find useful. A few ranks in such skills may be a smart investment.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes the skills available to *Mutants & Masterminds* characters, including their common uses and modifiers. Characters may be able to use skills for tasks other than those given here. The GM sets the DC and decides the results in those cases.

The format for skill descriptions is given here. Items that do not apply are omitted from the skill's description.

NAME KEY ABILITY, INTERACTION, MANIPULATION, SPECIALTY, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

The skill name line contains the following information:

- **Skill Name:** What the skill is called. GMs may feel free to change the names of some skills to better suit the style of their game.
- **Key Ability:** The ability modifier applied to the skill check.
- **Interaction:** If "Interaction" is included next to the skill's name, it is an interaction skill.
- **Manipulation:** If "Manipulation" is included next to the skill's name, it is a manipulation skill.
- **Specialty:** If "Specialty" is included next to the skill's name, you must choose a specialty for the skill.
- **Trained Only:** If "Trained Only" is next to the skill's name, you must have at least 1 rank in the skill in order to use it. If "Trained Only" is absent, untrained characters (those with 0 ranks in the skill) may use it.
- **Requires Tools:** If "Requires Tools" is included next to the skill's name, you need to have the proper tools to use the skill. Not having the proper tools results in a –4 penalty to the skill check. See **Chapter 7** for more details on tools.

The skill name line is followed by a brief description of the skill and four other categories:

- **Check:** How to make a check for the skill, what the results are, and the basic Difficulty Class.
- **Try Again:** Conditions on retrying a check with the skill. If this section is omitted, the skill can be retried an unlimited number of times.
- **Action:** The type of action required to use the skill, how long it takes. As a general rule, if a skill takes a minute or longer to use, you can halve the time required by taking a –5 penalty on the check.
- **Special:** Any extra information about the skill or its use.

ACROBATICS DEX, TRAINED ONLY

You can flip, dive, roll, tumble, and perform other acrobatic maneuvers, and you're also adept at keeping your balance under difficult circumstances.

Check: Make an Acrobatics check (DC 25) to move through a space occupied by an opponent or obstacle (moving over, under, or around). A failed roll means you don't get past the obstacle.

- *Balancing:* You can walk on a precarious surface. A successful check lets you move at half your speed along the surface as a move action. A failure indicates you spend your move action just keeping your balance and do not move. A failure by 5 or more means you fall. The difficulty varies with the conditions of the surface.

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	Untrained?	Specialty?	Action	Take 10/20
Acrobatics	Dex	No	No	Free or move	10
Bluff	Cha	Yes	No	Attack or full	10
Climb	Str	Yes	No	Full or move	10
Computers	Int	No	No	–	20
Concentration	Wis	Yes	No	React	–
Craft	Int	No	Yes	–	10 (20 on repair)
Diplomacy	Cha	Yes	No	Full	10
Disable Device	Int	No	No	Full	20
Disguise	Cha	Yes	No	–	20
Drive	Dex	No	No	Move	10
Escape Artist	Dex	Yes	No	Full	20
Gather Information	Cha	Yes	No	–	10
Handle Animal	Cha	Yes	No	–	20
Intimidate	Cha	Yes	No	Full	10
Investigate	Int	No	No	Full	10
Knowledge	Int	No	Yes	Free or full	20
Language	–	No	Yes	–	–
Medicine	Wis	No	No	–	10
Notice	Wis	Yes	No	Free or full	20
Perform	Cha	No	Yes	–	10
Pilot	Dex	No	No	Move	10
Profession	Wis	No	Yes	–	20
Ride	Dex	No	No	Move	10
Search	Int	Yes	No	Full	20
Sense Motive	Wis	Yes	No	Reaction	10
Sleight of Hand	Dex	No	No	Attack	10
Stealth	Dex	Yes	No	Move	10
Survival	Wis	Yes	No	–	10
Swim	Str	Yes	No	Move or full	10

A "–" entry in the **Action** *column means the skill takes longer than a full round. See the skill description for details.*

Surface	DC
More than 12 in. wide	5
7-12 in. wide	10
2-6 in. wide	15
Less than 2 in. wide	20
Uneven or angled	+5
Slippery	+5

While balancing, you lose your dodge bonus to Defense unless you have 5 or more ranks in Acrobatics. If you take damage while balancing, make an immediate Acrobatics check to avoid falling.

- *Accelerated Movement:* You can try to move faster than normal while balancing. You can move your full speed, but take a –5 penalty on your Acrobatics check. Moving twice your speed requires two checks, one for each move action.
- *Jumping:* You can make an Acrobatics check to extend the distance you can jump (see **Jumping**, page 34) by 1 foot per point your check exceeds DC 15.
- *Falling:* You can make an Acrobatics check (DC 5) to lessen damage from a fall. Subtract the amount your roll exceeds the DC from the distance of a fall in feet before determining damage. So an Acrobatics check of 20 (15 more than the DC) reduces the effective distance of a fall by 15 feet. A fall reduced to 0 distance does no damage and you land on your feet. You can reduce knockback damage in the same way (see **Knockback**, page 165).
- *Avoiding Being Tripped:* You can make an Acrobatics check in place of the Strength or Dexterity check to avoid a trip attack (see **Trip**, page 159). You cannot use Acrobatics to make trip attacks, however.
- *Instant Up:* You can make an Acrobatics check (DC 20) to stand from a prone position as a free action rather than a move action.

- *Performance:* You can use Acrobatics as a Perform skill to impress an audience (see **Perform**, page 52).

Try Again: No.
Action: Free. If you actually move as part of your Acrobatics check, then it counts as part of your move action.
Special: The balancing aspects of Acrobatics can be used untrained.

BLUFF — CHA, INTERACTION

Bluff is the skill of making the outlandish seem credible. It covers acting, fast-talk, trickery, and subterfuge.

Check: A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Bluff or Sense Motive check when trying to con or mislead. Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can work against you: the bluff is hard to believe, or the action the bluff requires goes against the target's self-interest, nature, personality, orders, or allegiance.

If it's important, the GM can distinguish between a bluff that fails because the target doesn't believe it and one that fails because it asks too much. For instance, if the target gets a +10 bonus because the bluff demands something risky, and the Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target's Sense Motive check succeeds by 11 or more, he has seen through the bluff, and would have succeeded even if it had not placed unusual demand on him (that is, even without the +10 bonus).

A successful Bluff check indicates the target reacts as you want, at least for a short time (usually 1 round or less), or believes what you say.

Circumstances	Resistance Modifier
The target wants to believe you.	–5
The bluff is believable and doesn't affect the target much one way or the other.	+0
The bluff is a little hard to believe or puts the target at some kind of risk.	+5
The bluff is hard to believe or entails a large risk for the target.	+10
The bluff is way out there; it's almost too incredible to consider.	+20

- *Diversion:* You can use Bluff to help you hide. A successful Bluff check gives you the momentary diversion needed to attempt a Stealth check while people are aware of you (see **Stealth**, page 54).
- *Feint:* You can use Bluff to mislead an opponent in combat so he can't avoid your attacks as effectively. If your Bluff check succeeds, the next attack you make against the target is considered a surprise attack (see page 153).
- *Innuendo:* You can use Bluff to send secret messages while apparently talking about other things. The DC for a basic message is 10. Complex messages or messages trying to communicate new information have DCs of 15 or 20, respectively. The recipient of the message must make a Sense Motive check against the same DC to understand it.

  Anyone listening in on a secret message can also attempt a Sense Motive check. If successful, the eavesdropper realizes a secret message is contained in the communication. If the eavesdropper beats the DC by 5 or more, he understands the secret message. Whether trying to send or pick up a message, a failure by 5 or more means the receiver misinterprets the message in some fashion.
- *Trick:* You can use Bluff to mislead an opponent into taking a potentially unwise action, such as trying to hit you while you are standing in front of an electrical junction box or at the edge of a precipice. If your Bluff check succeeds, your opponent is heedless of the potential danger and may hit the junction box or lose his balance and fall, if his attack against you fails. (On the other hand, if the attack succeeds, it might slam *you* into the junction box or send you flying off the edge.)

Try Again: Generally, a failed Bluff check makes the target too suspicious for you to try again under the same circumstances. When feinting or tricking in combat, you can try again freely, but targets get a cumulative +1 bonus to resist each time you try to bluff them in combat after the first.
Action: A bluff normally takes at least a full round but can take longer if you try something elaborate. Using Bluff to feint or trick in combat is a standard action, as is using Bluff to create a diversion to hide. You can feint, trick, or create a diversion as a move action by taking a –5 penalty on your check.

CLIMB — STR

You're skilled in scaling angled and uneven surfaces.

Check: With each successful Climb check, you can move up, down, or across a slope, wall, or other steep incline (even a ceiling with handholds). A *slope* is any incline of less than 60 degrees; a *wall* is any incline of 60 degrees or steeper.

A failed Climb check indicates you make no progress, and failure by 5 or more means you fall from whatever height you already attained (unless you are secured with some kind of harness or other equipment). Make a Climb check to catch yourself (DC equal to wall's DC + 20). A slope is easier to catch on (DC equal to slope's DC + 10). It's somewhat easier to catch someone else who falls, assuming they are within arm's reach. Make a Climb check (DC equal to wall's DC +10) to do so. A slope is easier (DC equal to the slope's DC +5). If you fail the check, you do not catch the other person. If you fail by 5 or more, you fall as well.

The DC of the check depends on the conditions of the climb. If the climb is less than 10 feet, reduce the DC by 5.

DC	Example Wall or Surface or Task
0	A slope too steep to walk up. A ladder.
5	A knotted rope with a wall to brace against.
10	A rope with a wall to brace against. A knotted rope. A surface with sizable ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a rugged cliff-face.
15	Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a rough natural rock surface, a tree, or a chain-link fence. An unknotted rope. Pulling yourself up when dangling by your hands.
20	An uneven surface with just a few narrow handholds and footholds, such as a coarse masonry wall or a sheer cliff face with a few crevices and small toeholds.
25	A rough surface with no real handholds or footholds, such as a brick wall.
25	Overhang or ceiling with handholds but no footholds.
—	A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface can't be climbed without the Wall-Crawling effect (see page 102).
–10	Climbing inside an air duct, chimney, or other location where you can brace against two opposite walls (reduces normal DC by 10).
–5	Climbing a corner where you can brace against perpendicular walls (reduces normal DC by 5).
+5	Surface is slippery (increases normal DC by 5).

- *Fighting While Climbing:* Since you can't easily move to avoid an attack, you lose your dodge bonus while climbing.

  Any time you take damage while climbing, make an immediate Climb check against the DC of the slope or wall. Failure means you fall and sustain the appropriate falling damage.
- *Accelerated Movement:* You can try to climb faster than normal. You can move your full speed, but take a –5 penalty on your Climb check. Moving twice your speed requires two checks at –5, one for each move action.

Action: Climbing one-half your speed is a full-round action. Moving half that fast (one-fourth your speed) is a move action. Accelerated climbing, allowing you to climb at full speed, is a full-round action. You can move half that far (one-half your speed) as a move action.
Special: At the GM's discretion, certain kinds of climbing attempts might require tools like ropes, pitons, harness, and so forth. Attempting such a climb without tools incurs a –4 penalty.

COMPUTERS — INT, MANIPULATION, TRAINED ONLY

You're trained in the operation of computers and modifying or creating software.

Check: Most normal computer operations—using software, getting your e-mail—don't require a Computers check and can be done untrained. However, searching an unfamiliar network for a particular file, writing programs, altering existing programs to perform differently, and breaking computer security all require skill checks (and training).

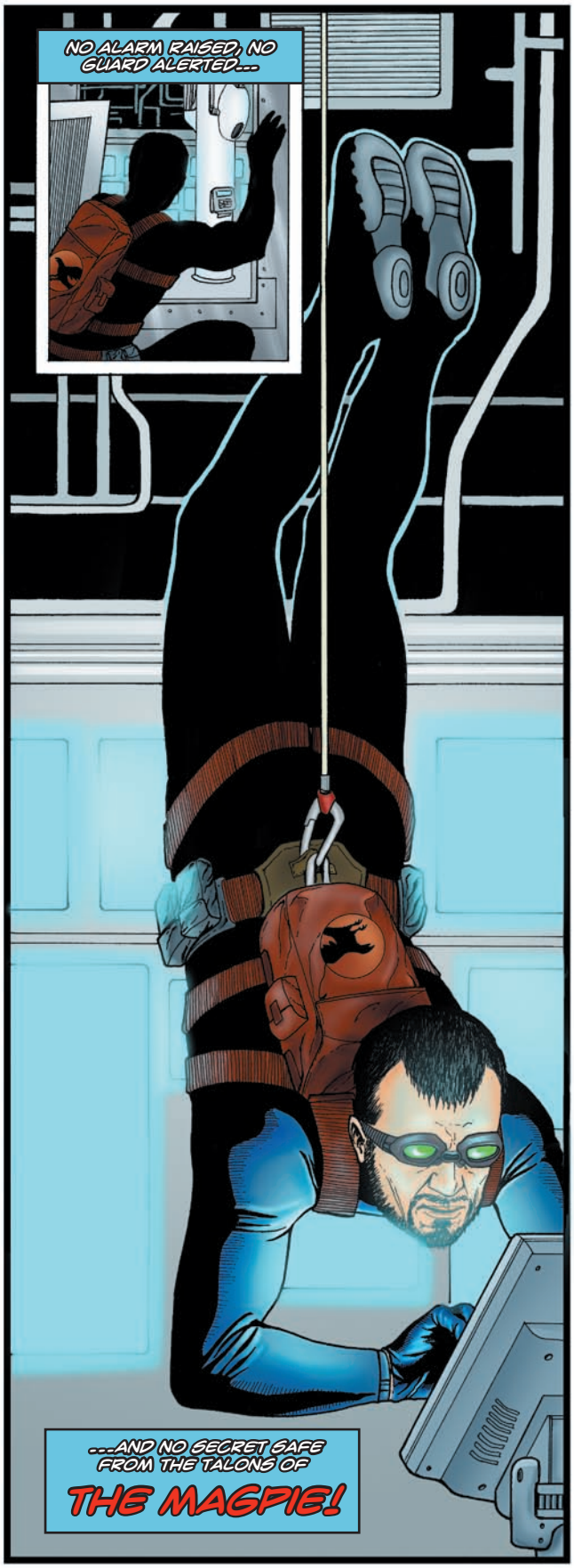
- *Find File:* The DC and the time required to locate a particular file on an unfamiliar computer system are determined by the size of the site. Finding public information on the Internet does not fall under this category; this only pertains to finding files on unfamiliar computer systems.

Size of Site	DC	Time
Personal computer	10	1 round
Small office network	15	2 rounds
Large office network	20	1 minute
Massive network	25	10 minutes

- *Defeat Computer Security:* The DC is determined by the quality of the security installed to defend the system. If the check fails by 5 or more, the system immediately alerts its administrator there has been an unauthorized entry. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify you or cut off access to the system.

  Sometimes, you have to defeat security at more than one stage of the operation. If you beat the DC by 10 or more when attempting to defeat computer security, you automatically succeed at all subsequent security checks at that site until the end of your session.

Level of Security	DC
Minimum	20
Average	25
Exceptional	35
Maximum	40



- *Defend Security:* If you are the system administrator for a site (which may be as simple as being the owner of a personal computer), you can defend it against intruders. If the site alerts you to an intruder, you can attempt to cut off the intruder's access or even to identify the intruder.

  To cut off access, make an opposed Computers check against the intruder. If the check succeeds, the intruder's session is ended. The intruder might be able to defeat your security and access your site again, but has to start over again. Attempting to cut off access takes a full round.

  One surefire way to prevent further access is to simply shut the site down. With a single computer, that's no big deal, but on a large site with many computers (or computers controlling functions that can't be interrupted) it may be time-consuming or even impossible to do so.

  To identify the intruder, make an opposed Computers check. If the check succeeds, you learn the site from which the intruder is operating (if it's a single computer, you learn the name of the computer's owner). Identifying the intruder requires 1 minute and is a separate check from cutting off access. This check can only be made if the intruder is accessing your site for the entire length of the check—if the intruder's session ends before you make the Computers check, your attempt fails.
- *Degrade Programming:* You can destroy or alter programs on a computer to make it harder or impossible to use. Crashing a computer simply shuts it down. Its user can restart it without a skill check (however, restarting takes at least 1 minute). Destroying programming makes the computer unusable until the programming is repaired. Damaging programming imposes a –4 penalty on all checks made with the computer (sometimes this is preferable to destroying the programming, since the user might not know anything is wrong, and won't simply decide to use a different computer).

  You can damage the programming of multiple computers at a single site; doing so adds +2 to the DC for each additional computer.

Scope of Alteration	DC	Time
Crash computer	10	1 minute
Destroy programming	15	10 minutes
Damage programming	20	10 minutes

  Fixing damaged programming requires an hour and a Computers check against a DC equal to the DC for damaging it + 5. Destroyed programming must be re-installed.
- *Write Program:* You can create a program to help with a specific task. Doing so grants a +2 bonus to the task. A specific task, in this case, is one type of operation with one target. The DC to write a program is 20; the time required is one hour.
- *Operate Remote Device:* Many devices are computer-operated. If you have access to the computer controlling them, you can shut them off or change their operating parameters. The DC depends on the nature of the operation. If you fail the check by 5 or more, the system alerts its administrator there has been an unauthorized use of the equipment. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify you or cut off your access to the system.

Type of Operation	DC	Time
Shut down passive remote (including cameras and door locks)	20	1 round per remote
Shut down active remote (including motion detectors and alarms)	25	1 round per remote
Reset parameters	30	1 minute per remote
Change passcodes	25	1 minute
Hide evidence of alteration	+10	1 minute
Minimum security	–5	—
Exceptional security	+10	—
Maximum security	+15	—

Action: Computers requires at least a full-round action. The GM may determine some tasks require several rounds, a few minutes, or longer, as described above.
Special: You can take 10 when using the Computers skill. You can take 20 in some cases, but not those involving a penalty for failure. (You cannot take 20 to defeat computer security or defend security, for example.)

CONCENTRATION WIS

You can focus your mind and concentrate despite difficult conditions, including taking damage.

Check: Make a Concentration check whenever you might be distracted (by taking damage, by harsh weather, and so on) while engaged in some action requiring your full attention, maintaining powers with a Concentration or Sustained duration (see page 70). If the check succeeds, you may continue with the action. If the check fails, the action fails. The DC depends on the nature of the distraction.

Distraction	DC
Damaged during the action	10 + damage bonus
Taking continuous damage during the action	10 + half of continuous damage bonus last dealt
Maintain a Concentration power as a move action	10 + power rank
Maintain a Sustained power as a reaction	10 + power rank
Vigorous motion (bouncy vehicle ride, small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, riding a horse)	10
Violent motion (very rough vehicle ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of storm-tossed ship, galloping horse)	15
Extraordinarily violent motion (earthquake)	20
Entangled (such as by a snare)	15
Bound, grappling, or pinned	20
Weather is a high wind carrying blinding rain or sleet	5
Weather is wind-driven hail, dust, or debris	10

Try Again: Yes, although a success doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure, such as the disruption of an action you were concentrating on.
Action: Making a Concentration check doesn't require an action; it is either a reaction (when attempted in response to a distraction) or a free action (when attempted actively).

CRAFT INT, MANIPULATION, SPECIALTY, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

Craft covers a number of skills for making things. The different Craft specialties are:

- **Artistic:** You can create works of visual art, such as drawings, paintings, sculptures, and so forth.
- **Chemical:** You can mix chemicals to create acids, drugs, explosives, poisons, and so forth.
- **Electronic:** You can build electronic items.
- **Mechanical:** You can build mechanical items.
- **Structural:** You can build wooden, concrete, or metal structures including buildings and furniture.

Check: Craft skills are specifically focused on making things. To use Craft effectively, you must have an appropriate set of tools.

- *Making Items:* The difficulty and time required to make a particular item depends on its complexity. If your campaign uses the optional rules for Wealth and Purchasing Equipment, you will have to make a Wealth Check with a Difficulty Class 10 less than the Craft DC to acquire the necessary materials (see **Wealth and Purchasing Equipment**, page 132). If your Craft check succeeds, you have made the item. If the Craft check fails, you did not produce a usable end result, and any materials are wasted.

Complexity	Craft DC	Time	Examples
Simple	15	1 hour	electronic timer or detonator, tripwire trap, bookcase
Moderate	20	12 hours	radio direction finder, lock, engine component, shed, furniture
Complex	25	24 hours	cell phone, combustion engine, bunker
Advanced	30	60 hours	computer, jet engine, building

- *Repairing Items:* You can use the electronic, mechanical, and structural Craft skills to repair damaged items of the appropriate type. Most repair checks are made to fix electronic or mechanical devices. The GM sets the DC. In general, simple repairs have a DC of 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes. More complex repair work has a DC of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more.

Repair Task (Example)	DC	Time
Simple (tool, simple weapon)	10	1 min.
Moderate (mechanical or electronic component)	15	10 min.
Complex (mechanical or electronic device)	20	1 hr.
Advanced (cutting-edge mechanical or electronic device)	25	10 hr.

- *Jury-Rigging:* You can also attempt jury-rigged, or temporary, repairs. Doing this reduces the DC by 5 from that of a regular repair, and allows you to make the check as a full-round action. However, a jury-rigged repair can only fix a single problem, and the repair only lasts until the end of the current encounter. The jury-rigged item must be fully repaired thereafter, and cannot be jury-rigged again until it is fully repaired.

  You can also use jury-rigging to hot-wire a car or jump-start an engine or electronic device. The DC for this is at least 15, and can be higher depending on the presence of security devices.

- *Demolitions:* Characters can use Craft (chemical) to make explosives. Setting a simple explosive to blow up at a certain spot doesn't require a check, but connecting and setting a detonator does. Also, placing an explosive for maximum effect against a structure calls for a check, as does disarming an explosive device.

  Most explosives require a detonator to go off. Connecting a detonator to an explosive requires a Craft (mechanical) check (DC 10). Failure means the explosive fails to go off as planned. Failure by 10 or more means the explosive goes off as the detonator is being installed.

  You can make an explosive more difficult to disarm. To do so, choose the disarm DC before making your check to set the detonator (it must be higher than 10). Your DC to set the detonator is equal to the disarm DC.

  Disarming an explosive requires a Craft (mechanical) or Disable Device check. The DC is usually 10, unless the person who set the detonator chose a higher disarm DC. If you fail the check, you do not disarm the explosive. If you fail by 5 or more, the explosive goes off. Setting or disarming a detonator is a full-round action.

  Carefully placing an explosive against a fixed structure can maximize the damage by exploiting vulnerabilities in the construction. This requires at least a minute and a Craft (structural) check. The GM makes the check (so you don't know exactly how well you have done until the explosive goes off). On a result of 15 or higher, the explosive

deals +5 damage to the structure. On a result of 25 or higher, it deals +10 damage. In all cases, it deals normal damage to all other targets within its blast radius.

- *Forgery:* Characters can use Craft to produce forgeries of any item they can normally make. The result of the check becomes the DC for a Notice check to detect the forgery. The GM can modify either check based on the conditions and the characters' familiarity with the original subject.
- *Inventing:* If you have the Inventor feat (see page 62), you can use Craft to build inventions, temporary devices. See **Inventing**, page 131, for details.

Try Again: Yes, although in some cases the GM may decide a failed attempt to repair or jury-rig an item has a negative effect, preventing further attempts.
Action: The time to make something varies according on its complexity. The Gamemaster may increase or decrease the time for a particular Craft project as necessary. You can cut the time for making or repairing an item in half by taking a –5 penalty.
Special: You can take 10 when using a Craft skill, but can't take 20 since doing so represents multiple attempts, and you use up raw materials with each attempt. You can take 10 or 20 on repair checks.
If you don't have the proper tools, you take a –4 penalty on Craft checks.

DIPLOMACY — CHA, INTERACTION

You're skilled in dealing with people, from etiquette and social graces to a way with words and public speaking. Use this skill to make a good impression, negotiate, and win people over.

Check: You can change others' attitudes with a successful Diplomacy check. In negotiations, all participants roll Diplomacy checks to see who gains the advantage. Opposed checks also resolve cases where two advocates plead opposing cases before a third party.

INTERACTION

Attitude	Means	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to hurt or avoid you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't much care	Act as socially expected
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to help you	Protect, back up, heal, aid
Fanatic	Will do anything for you	Fight to the death under overwhelming odds

ATTITUDE

Initial Attitude	New Attitude					
	Hostile	Unfrien.	Indiff.	Friendly	Helpful	Fanatic
Hostile	19 or less	20	25	35	45	150
Unfriendly	4 or less	5	15	25	35	120
Indifferent	–	0 or less	1	15	25	90
Friendly	–	–	0 or less	1	15	60
Helpful	–	–	–	0 or less	1	50

Diplomacy can influence an NPC's attitude. The GM chooses the character's initial attitude based on circumstances. Most of the time, people are friendly or indifferent toward heroes, but a specific situation may call for a different initial attitude. The DCs given on the **Interaction** table show what it takes to change someone's attitude with a use of Diplomacy. You don't declare a specific outcome; instead, make the check and compare the result to the **Interaction** table to see what you've accomplished. A low roll may actually *worsen* the subject's attitude!

A fanatical NPC is willing to do anything the character wants. The fanatic state lasts for one day, plus a day per point of the character's Charisma bonus. Fanatics can't have their attitudes adjusted using interaction skills and have a +20 bonus to resist attempts to intimidate them.
Try Again: Generally, trying again doesn't work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be persuaded so far. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly committed to his position, and trying again is futile. At the GM's discretion, you can try again when the situation changes in some way: you find a new approach to your argument, new evidence appears, and so forth.
Action: Diplomacy is at least a full-round action. The GM may determine some negotiations require longer (perhaps much longer).

DISABLE DEVICE — INT, MANIPULATION, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

You can disarm or sabotage various devices, both mechanical and electronic.

Check: The GM makes Disable Device checks secretly so you don't necessarily know if you have succeeded.

- *Open Lock:* You can pick conventional locks, finesse combination locks, and bypass electronic locks. You must have a lockpick set (for a mechanical lock) or an electronic tool kit (for an electronic lock). The DC depends on the quality of the lock.

Lock Type (Example)	DC
Cheap (briefcase lock)	20
Average (home deadbolt)	25
High quality (business deadbolt)	30
High security (branch bank vault)	40
Ultra-high security (bank headquarters vault)	50

- *Disable Security Device:* You can disable a security device, such as an electric fence, motion sensor, or security camera. You must be able to reach the actual device. If the device is monitored, your attempt to disable it will probably be noticed.

  When disabling a monitored device, you can prevent your tampering from being noticed. Doing so requires 10 minutes and an electronics tool kit, and increases the DC by +10.

Device Type (Example)	DC
Cheap (home door alarm)	20
Average (store security camera)	25
High quality (art museum motion detector)	30
High security (bank vault alarm)	35
Ultra-high security (motion detector at Area 51)	40

- *Traps and Sabotage:* Disabling a simple mechanical device is DC 10. More intricate and complex devices have higher DCs. You can use Disable Device to defuse explosives like the Craft (mechanical) skill. If the check succeeds, you disable the device. If the check fails by 4 or less, you have failed but can try again. If you fail by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If it's a trap or explosive, you set it off. If it's some sort of sabotage, you think the device is disabled, but it still works normally.

  When you sabotage simple devices, you can rig them to work normally for a while and then fail some time later, if you choose.
- *Disable Technology:* At the GM's discretion, you can disable any technological device (see **Chapter 7**) with a DC 30 skill check. You can also disable technological *creatures*, like androids or robots, with the same check, but the subject must be helpless for you to make the check.

Try Again: Yes, though you must be aware you have failed in order to try again.
Action: Disabling a simple device is a full-round action. Intricate or complex devices require multiple rounds. Reducing a multi-round task to one round increases the DC by +20.
Special: You can take 10 when making a Disable Device check. You can take 20 to open a lock or disable a security device, unless you are trying to prevent your tampering from being noticed.

DISGUISE — CHA, MANIPULATION, REQUIRES TOOLS

You can use makeup, costumes, and other props to change your appearance.

Check: Your check result determines the effectiveness of the disguise. It is opposed by others' Notice check results. Make one Disguise check even if several people make Notice checks. The GM makes the Disguise check secretly so you are not sure how well your disguise will hold up under scrutiny.

If you don't draw any attention to yourself, others don't get to make Notice checks. If you come to the attention of people who are suspicious, they get to make a Notice check. (The GM can assume suspicious observers take 10 on their Notice checks if they have time to observe you.)
The effectiveness of your disguise depends in part on how much you attempt to change your appearance.

Disguise	Modifier
Minor details only	+5
Appropriate uniform or costume	+2
Disguised as different sex	–2
Disguised as a different race	–2
Disguised as different age category	–2

If you are impersonating a particular individual, those who know the subject automatically get to make Notice checks. Furthermore, they get a bonus on the check.

Familiarity	Bonus
Recognizes on sight	+4
Friend or associate	+6
Close friend	+8
Intimate	+10

Usually, an individual makes a Notice check to detect a disguise immediately upon meeting you and each hour thereafter. If you casually meet many different people, each for a short time, the GM checks once per day or hour, using an average Notice modifier for the group (assuming they take 10).

Successfully acting like who you appear to be may require a Bluff or Perform (acting) check with a DC equal to the observer's Sense Motive check, modified by familiarity if the observer knows the subject well.

Try Again: No, though you can assume the same disguise again at a later time. If others saw through the previous disguise, they are automatically treated as suspicious if you assume the same disguise again.

Action: A Disguise check requires at least 10 minutes of preparation. The GM makes Notice checks for those who encounter you immediately upon meeting you and again each hour or day thereafter, depending on circumstances.

Special: You can take 10 or take 20 when assuming a disguise.

If you don't have a disguise kit you take a –4 penalty on Disguise checks. You can help someone else create a disguise, treating it as an aid attempt (see page 154).

DRIVE — DEX, MANIPULATION, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to operate any ground or water vehicle.

Check: Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists or when driving in a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, for example, or trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). While driving, you can attempt maneuvers or stunts.

Maneuver	DC
Easy (low-speed turn)	5
Average (sudden reverse, dodging obstacles)	10
Difficult (tight turns)	15
Challenging (bootlegger reverse)	20
Formidable (high-speed maneuvers, jumping obstacles)	25

Try Again: Most Drive checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.

Action: A Drive check is a move action.

Special: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check and may be done untrained. At the Gamemaster's option, Drive may require specialization, such as ground vehicles or water vehicles.

ESCAPE ARTIST — DEX, MANIPULATION

You're trained in escaping bonds and other restraints.

Check: Make a check to escape from restraints or to squeeze through a tight space.

Restraint	DC
Ropes	Opponent's Dex bonus +20
Snare	Snare's rank +20 (see **Snare**, page 99)
Tight space	30
Grapple	Opponent's grapple check

- *Tight Spaces:* For a tight space, a check is only called for if your head fits but your shoulders don't. If the space is longer than your height, such as in an airshaft, the GM may call for multiple checks. You can't fit through a space your head doesn't fit through. You can also reach through a tight space your hand fits through but your arm normally does not by making an Escape Artist check.
- *Escaping Grapples:* You can make an Escape Artist check opposed by an opponent's grapple check to get out of a grapple or out of a pinned condition. Doing so is a standard action. If you escape being pinned, you are still being grappled. If you escape the grapple you can move in the same round.

Try Again: Yes.

Action: Making a check to escape from ropes or other restraints requires one minute. Escaping a grapple is a standard action. Escaping a snare is a full-round action. Squeezing or reaching through a tight space takes at least one minute, maybe longer, depending on the distance.

Special: You can take 10 on an Escape Artist check. You can take 20 if you are not actively opposed, such as when being grappled or pinned.

GATHER INFORMATION — CHA, INTERACTION

You know how to make contacts, collect gossip and rumors, question informants, and otherwise get information from people.

Check: By succeeding at a skill check (DC 10) you get a feel for the major news and rumors in an area. This assumes no obvious reasons exist why information would be withheld. The higher the check result, the more complete the information. Information ranges from general to protected, and the DC increases accordingly for the type of information, as given on the table.

Type of Information	DC
General	10
Specific	15
Restricted	20
Protected	25

General information concerns local happenings, rumors, gossip, and the like.

Specific information usually relates to a particular question.

Restricted information isn't generally known and requires you to locate someone with access to the information.

Protected information is even harder to come by and might involve some danger, either for the one asking the questions or the one providing the answers.

There's a chance someone takes note of anyone asking about restricted or protected information. The GM decides when this is the case. In some situations, opposed Gather Information checks are appropriate to see if someone else notices your inquiries (and you notice theirs). If you accept a –20 modifier on your check total, your inquiries avoid any notice.

- *Finding People:* You can use Gather Information to track down someone in a community. Make a Gather Information check to pick up your target's trail and another for each hour you search, or when the trail becomes difficult to follow, such as when it moves to a different area of town. The DC and number of Gather Information checks required to find your target depend on the size of the community, as given on the table. For every 5 points you exceed the DC, you reduce the required number of checks by one, to a minimum of one. So a Gather Information result of 35 allows you to locate anyone in a vast metropolis in an hour's time.

  The DCs on the table assume the subject isn't making any special effort to hide. People trying not to be found add their Knowledge

(streetwise) or Stealth bonus to the DC to find them so long as they keep a low profile.

Community Size	DC	Checks Required
Village	5	1
Town	10	2
City	15	3
Metropolis	20	4

Try Again: Yes, but it takes additional time for each check, and you may draw attention to yourself if you repeatedly pursue a certain type of information.
Action: A Gather Information check takes at least an hour, possibly several, at the GM's discretion. You can cut the time for a Gather Information check in half by taking a –5 penalty.
Special: You can take 10 when making a Gather Information check, but cannot take 20.

HANDLE ANIMAL — CHA, INTERACTION

You know how to handle, care for, and train various types of animals.

Check: The time required to get an effect and the DC depend on what you are trying to do.

Task	Time	DC
Handle an animal	Move action	10
Push an animal	Full-round action	25
Teach an animal a trick	1 week	See text
Train an animal for a purpose	4 weeks	See text

- *Handle an Animal:* This means commanding an animal to perform a trick it knows. If the animal's condition is something other than normal, the DC increases by +5. If the check is successful, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.
- *Push an Animal:* Pushing an animal means getting it to perform a trick it doesn't know, but is capable of doing. If the check is successful, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.
- *Teach an Animal a Trick:* You can teach an animal a specific trick, such as "attack" or "stay," with one week of work and a successful Handle Animal check (DC 15 for simple tricks, 20 or more for complex tricks). An animal with an Intelligence of 1 can learn a maximum of three tricks, while an animal with an Intelligence of 2 can learn a maximum of six tricks.
- *Train an Animal:* Rather than teaching an animal individual tricks, you can train an animal for a general purpose, like combat, guarding, riding, and so forth. This requires a DC 20 skill check. Essentially, an animal's purpose represents a set of tricks fitting a common scheme. An animal can be trained for one purpose only.

Action: See table.
Special: An untrained character uses Charisma checks to handle and push animals, but can't teach or train animals.

Characters with animal minions (see **Minions**, page 63) do not need to teach or train them, the animals automatically know the maximum number of tricks for their Intelligence. You still have to make Handle Animal checks to get animal minions to perform tricks unless they are completely obedient (in which case they automatically obey your commands and ignore those of others).

INTIMIDATE — CHA, INTERACTION

You know how to use threats (real or implied) to get others to cooperate.

Check: Make an Intimidate check, opposed by the target's Intimidate or Sense Motive check or Will saving throw (whichever has the highest bonus). If your check succeeds, you may treat the target as friendly, but only for actions taken in your presence. (That is, the target retains his normal attitude, but will talk, advise, offer limited help, or advocate on your behalf while intimidated.) The target cooperates, but won't necessarily obey your every command or do anything that would directly endanger him.

If you perform some action that makes you more imposing, you gain a +2 bonus on your Intimidate check. If your target clearly has a superior position, you suffer a –2 penalty on your Intimidate check. Fanatics get a +20 bonus on checks to resist being intimidated (see **Diplomacy**, page 46).

If your Intimidate check fails by 5 or more, the target may actually do the *opposite* of what you want.

- *Demoralizing in Combat*: You can use Intimidate in combat to demoralize an opponent, shaking their confidence. Make an Intimidate check as a standard action. If it succeeds, your target is shaken (–2 on all attack rolls and checks) for one round.
- *Interrogation:* You can use Intimidate to get people to tell you things. If your check succeeds, the target spills the information.
- *Intimidating Groups:* You can intimidate a group of people—who can all see and hear you—with a single check. If the group clearly has you at a disadvantage, you suffer the usual –2 penalty on your Intimidate check. Each member of the group rolls separately, although the GM may choose to roll once for groups of minions. Compare your check result against each check result from the group. You cannot demoralize a group.

Try Again: No. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be intimidated so much, and trying again doesn't help. If the initial check fails, the other character becomes more firmly resolved to resist, and trying again is futile. You can make Intimidate checks in combat freely until you fail, after which the target is no longer intimidated by you. Each time you demoralize an opponent in combat, he gains a +1 bonus to resist additional attempts in that encounter.
Action: An Intimidate check is a full-round action. Demoralizing in combat is a standard action. You can demoralize as a move action by taking a –5 on your check.
Special: You add a +2 bonus to your Intimidate check for every size category you are larger than your target. Conversely, you take a –2 penalty to your check for every size category you are smaller than your target (see **Size**, page 34).

INVESTIGATE — INT, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

You know how to prepare evidence for analysis and study clues.

Check: You generally use Search to find clues and Investigate to analyze them. If you have access to a crime lab, use the Investigate skill to collect and prepare samples for the lab.

- *Analyze Clue:* You can make an Investigate check to apply forensic knowledge to a clue. This function of the Investigate skill does not give you clues where none exist. It simply allows you to extract information from a clue you have found.

The base DC to analyze a clue is 15. It is modified by the time elapsed since the clue was left, and whether or not the scene was disturbed. Success gives you information based on the clue (as determined by the GM).

Circumstances	DC Modifier
Every day since event (max modifier +10)	+2
Scene is outdoors	+5
Scene slightly disturbed	+2
Scene moderately disturbed	+4
Scene extremely disturbed	+6

- *Collect Evidence:* You can collect and prepare evidence for a lab. This use of Investigate requires an evidence kit.

  To collect a piece of evidence, make an Investigate check (DC 15). If the check succeeds, the evidence is usable by a crime lab. If the check fails, a crime lab analysis can be done, but the lab takes a –5 penalty on any necessary check. If the check fails by 5 or more, the lab analysis simply cannot be done. On the other hand, if the check succeeds by 10 or more, the lab gains a +2 bonus on its checks to analyze the material.

  This function of Investigate does not provide you with evidence. It simply allows you to collect evidence you have already found in a manner that best aids in its analysis later.

Try Again: Generally, analyzing a clue again doesn't add new insight unless another clue is introduced. Evidence collected cannot be recollected, unless there is more of it to take.
Action: Analyzing a clue is a full-round action. Collecting evidence generally takes at least a minute.

KNOWLEDGE — INT, SPECIALTY, TRAINED ONLY

This skill encompasses several specialties, each treated as a separate skill. The Knowledge specialties, and the topics each one encompasses, are as follows:

- **Arcane Lore:** The occult, magic and the supernatural, astrology, numerology, and similar topics.
- **Art:** Fine arts and graphic arts, including art history and artistic techniques. Antiques, modern art, photography, and performance art forms such as music and dance, among others.
- **Behavioral Sciences:** Psychology, sociology, and criminology.
- **Business:** Business procedures, investment strategies, and corporate structures. Bureaucratic procedures and how to navigate them.
- **Civics:** Law, legislation, litigation, and legal rights and obligations. Political and governmental institutions and processes.

UNDER THE HOOD: PLAYER VS. CHARACTER KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge skills measure what your *character* knows about various things, whether you know anything about them or not. It's fairly easy to measure what a hero knows by making the appropriate Knowledge skill checks.

However, players may know things their characters do not, either because of the player's life experience or knowledge of the game and its rules (and source material). In this case the Gamemaster may prefer for players to limit themselves to only what their heroes know rather than what they may or may not know about a given situation. If there's a question as to how to handle an issue of player versus character knowledge in the game, consult your Gamemaster.

- **Current Events:** Recent happenings in the news, sports, politics, entertainment, and foreign affairs.
- **Earth Sciences:** Geology, geography, oceanography, and paleontology.
- **History:** Events, personalities, and cultures of the past. Archaeology and antiquities.
- **Life Sciences:** Biology, botany, genetics, medicine, and forensics.
- **Physical Sciences:** Astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics, and engineering.
- **Popular Culture:** Popular music and personalities, genre films and books, urban legends, comic books, science fiction, gaming, and trivia.
- **Streetwise:** Street and urban culture, local underworld personalities and events.
- **Tactics:** Techniques and strategies for disposing and maneuvering forces in combat.
- **Technology:** Current developments in cutting-edge devices, as well as the background necessary to identify various technological devices.
- **Theology and Philosophy:** Liberal arts, ethics, philosophical concepts, and the study of religious faith, practice, and experience.

Check: Make a Knowledge check to answer a question in your field. The DC is 10 for easy questions, 15 for basic questions, and 20 to 30 for difficult questions. You can make a Knowledge (technology) or Knowledge (arcane lore) check to identify devices associated with those areas of knowledge. The GM may make a Knowledge roll for you, so you don't know whether or not your information is accurate.
Try Again: No. The check represents what a character knows, and thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something you didn't know before. The GM may allow another Knowledge check if a character gets access to a better source of information. For example, a hero who doesn't know the answer to a particular question off-hand might get another check with access to a library or online database (and could take 10 or take 20 on that check, depending on the circumstances).
Action: A Knowledge check can be a reaction, but otherwise requires a full-round action. Taking 20 on a Knowledge check requires at least an hour, longer if the GM decides the information you're looking for is particularly obscure or otherwise restricted.
Special: An untrained Knowledge check is simply an Intelligence check. Without actual training, a character can only answer easy or basic questions about a topic.

You can take 10 when making a Knowledge check. You can take 20 only if you have access to research materials (such as a library or online database) that allow you to keep looking for the answer.

LANGUAGE — SPECIALTY, TRAINED ONLY

Languages are unusual skills. They are not based on an ability score and do not require checks. Instead, your rank in Language measures how many languages you can speak, read, and write. Unskilled characters can speak, read, and write their native language. For each rank in Language, you are fluent in an additional language.

- *Literacy:* Characters are assumed to be literate in their native language and any other language they know. At the GM's discretion, characters may have to spend an additional rank to be literate in a language with a different alphabet or style of writing from the character's native language (such as Japanese *kanji* or Greek for an English speaker). Completely illiterate characters may have a drawback (see **Drawbacks**, page 124).

MEDICINE WIS, MANIPULATION, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

You're trained in treating injuries and illness.

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task.

- *Diagnosis (DC 10):* You can diagnose injuries and ailments with an eye toward treatment. At the GM's discretion, a successful diagnosis provides a +2 bonus on Medicine checks for treatment.
- *Provide Care (DC 15):* Providing care means treating a wounded person for a day or more or providing routine medical treatment. If successful, the patient adds your Medicine rank to any recovery checks (see **Damage**, page 163). You can tend up to your skill rank in patients at one time.
- *Revive (DC 15):* You can remove the dazed, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a character. This check is a full-round action. A successful check removes one condition. You can't revive a dying character without stabilizing him first.
- *Stabilize (DC 15):* As a standard action, a successful Medicine check stabilizes a dying character.
- *Treat Disease (DC 15):* You can tend a character infected with a disease. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects (after the initial contamination), you make a Medicine check requiring 10 minutes. If your check succeeds, you provide a bonus on the character's saving throw equal to your Medicine rank.
- *Treat Poison (DC 15):* You can tend a poisoned character. When a poisoned character makes a saving throw against a poison's secondary effect, you make a Medicine check as a standard action. If the check succeeds, you provide a bonus on the character's saving throw equal to your Medicine rank.
- *Surgery (DC 15-30):* You can perform surgical operations. The DC ranges from 15 for routine procedures to 30 or more for tricky operations like heart or brain surgery.

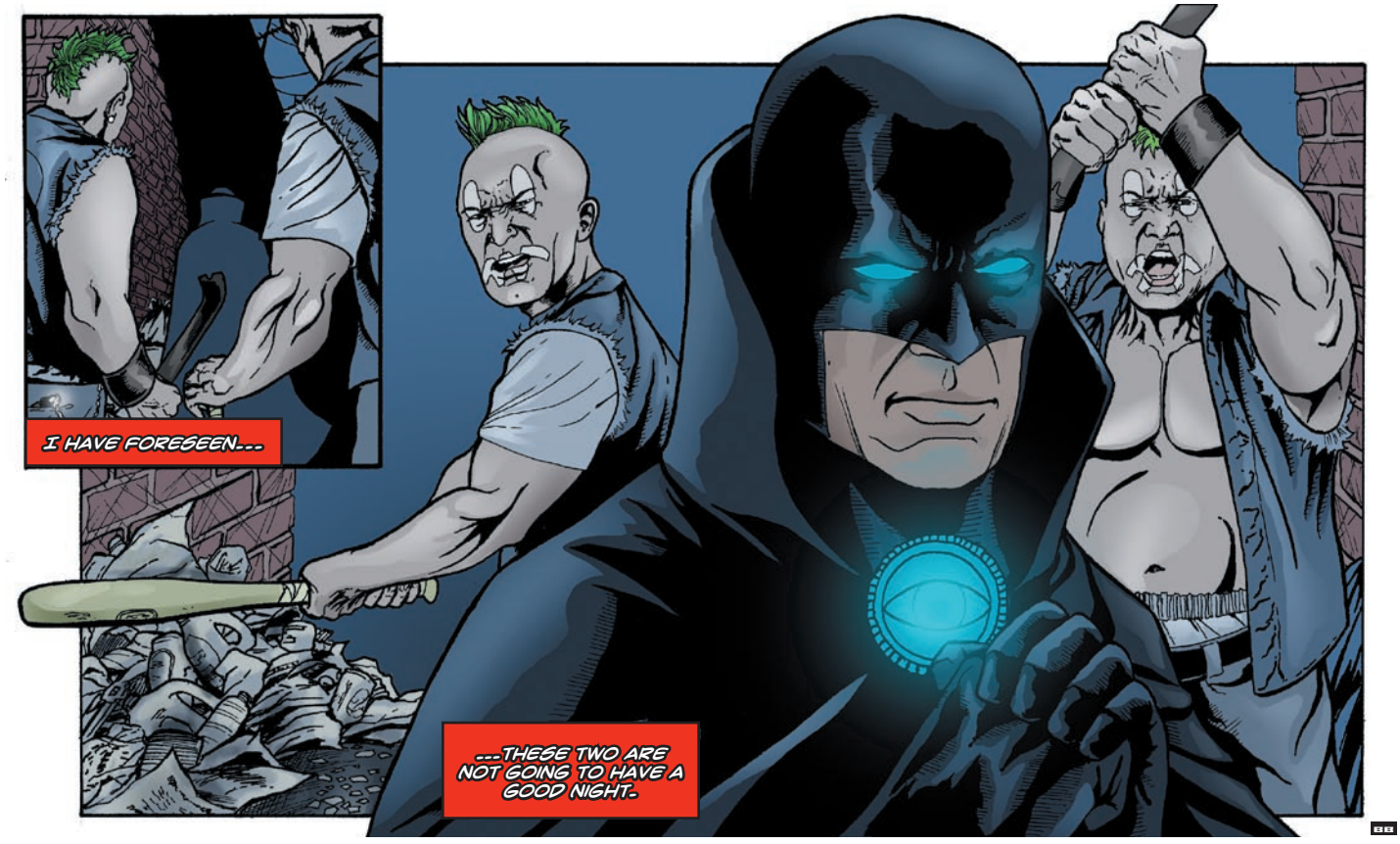
Try Again: Yes, for reviving dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters, and stabilizing dying characters. No, for all other uses of the skill.
Action: Medicine checks take time based on the task, as described above.
Special: You can take 10 when making a Medicine check. You can take 20 only when giving long-term care or attempting to revive dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters.
If you do not have the appropriate medical equipment, you take a –4 penalty on your check.
You can use the Medicine skill on yourself only to diagnose, provide care, or treat disease or poison. You take a –5 penalty on checks when treating yourself.

NOTICE WIS

Use this skill to notice things.

Check: Make a skill check to notice something. Notice checks generally suffer a penalty of –1 per 10 feet between you and the thing you're trying to notice. If you're distracted, you take a –5 penalty on Notice checks. Making out details—such as clearly hearing conversation or reading text—requires you to exceed the DC by 10 or more.

The GM may make Notice checks secretly so you don't know whether there was nothing to notice or you just failed to notice it. The most common sorts of Notice checks are:



- *Listen (auditory):* Make a check against a DC based on how loud the noise is or against an opposed Stealth check. A normal conversation is DC 0, a quiet noise DC 10. Listening through a door is +5 DC, +15 for a solid wall. While you're asleep, hearing something well enough to wake up is +10 DC.
- *Spot (visual):* Make a check against a DC based on how visible the object is or against an opposed Stealth check. Spot is also used to detect someone in disguise (see **Disguise**, page 47), or to notice a concealed object.
- *Other Senses:* You can make Notice checks involving other sense types as well as various special senses (see page 103 for more on sense types and unusual senses). Noticing something obvious to a sense is DC 0. Less obvious things are DC 10 or so, hidden things DC 20 or more, and making out details requires you to exceed the DC by 10 or more.

Try Again: You can make a Notice check every time you have the opportunity to notice something new. As a move action, you can attempt to notice something you failed (or believe you failed) to notice previously.
Action: A Notice check is either a reaction (if called for by the GM) or a move action (if you take the time to try and notice something).
Special: When several characters try to notice the same thing, the GM can make a single d20 roll and use it for all the characters' skill checks. Various sensory effects provide modifiers on Notice checks (see **Super-Senses**, page 102, for details).

Taking 20 on a Notice check means you spend 1 minute attempting to notice something that may or may not be there.

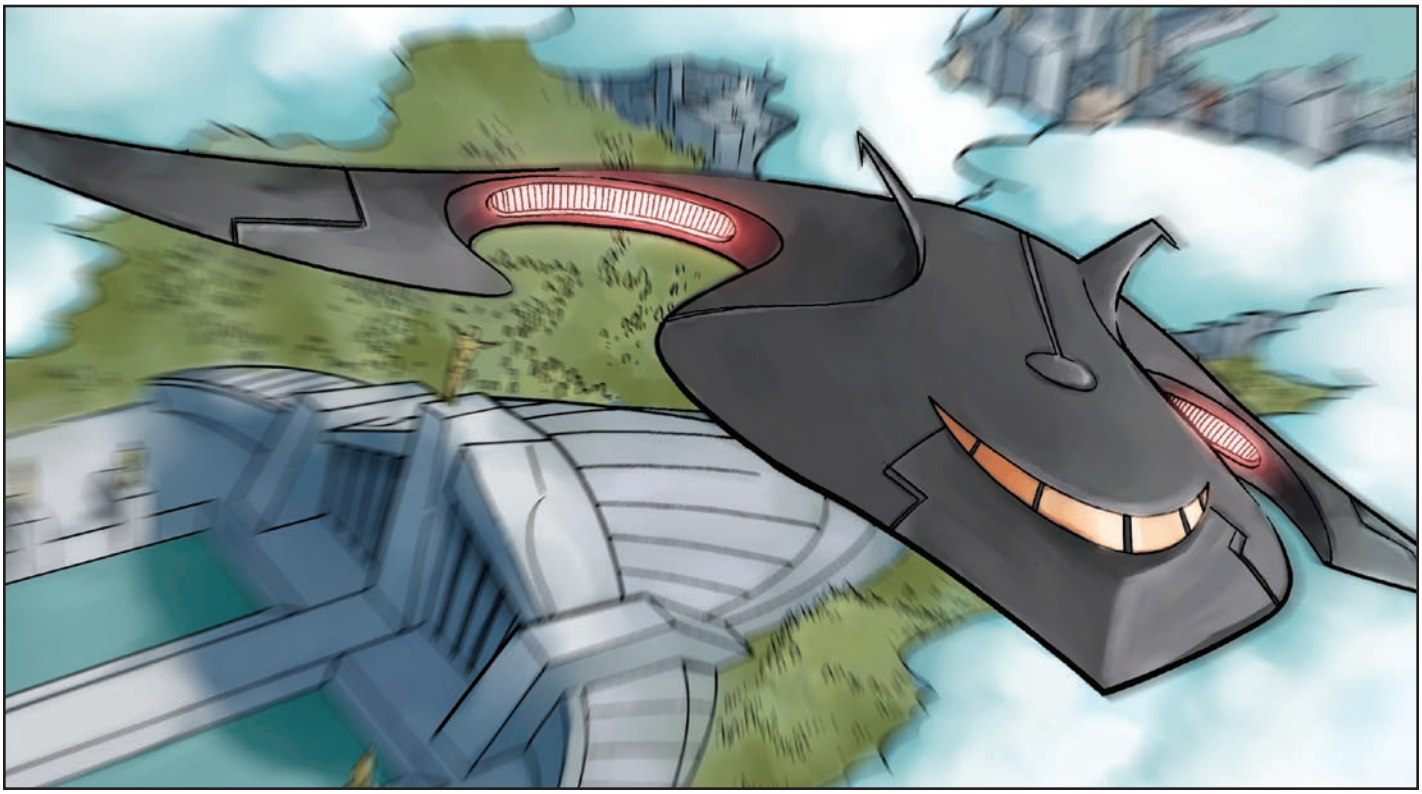
PERFORM — CHA, SPECIALTY, TRAINED ONLY

This skill encompasses several types of performance, each treated as a separate skill. The Perform specialties are:

- **Acting:** You can perform drama, comedy, or action-oriented roles with some level of skill.
- **Comedy:** You are a comedian, capable of performing a stand-up routine for an audience.
- **Dance:** You are a dancer, capable of performing rhythmic and patterned movements to music.
- **Keyboards:** You can play keyboard instruments, such as piano, organ, and synthesizer.
- **Oratory:** You can deliver effective speeches and monologues.
- **Percussion Instruments:** You can play percussion instruments, such as drums, cymbals, triangle, xylophone, and tambourine.
- **Singing:** You can sing with some level of skill.
- **Stringed Instruments:** You can play stringed instruments, such as banjo, guitar, harp, and violin.
- **Wind Instruments:** You can play wind instruments, such as flute, bugle, trumpet, tuba, bagpipes, and trombone.

Check: The quality of your performance depends on your check result.

Check Result	Performance
10	Amateur performance. Audience appreciates your performance, but isn't impressed.
15	Routine performance. Audience enjoys your performance, but it isn't exceptional.
20	Great performance. Audience impressed.
25	Memorable performance. Audience enthusiastic.
30	Masterful performance. Audience awed.



Try Again: Not for the same performance and audience.
Action: A Perform check usually requires at least several minutes to an hour or more.
Special: You can take 10 when making a Perform check, but can't take 20.

Perform skills requiring musical instruments are manipulation skills. If you don't have an appropriate instrument you automatically fail any Perform check requiring it. At the GM's discretion, impromptu instruments may be employed, but you take a –4 penalty on the check.

PILOT — DEX, MANIPULATION, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to pilot any vehicle that travels through the air or space, such as planes, helicopters, or spacecraft.

Check: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check. Make a check only when piloting in a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, for example, or trying to reach a destination in time). While piloting, you can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts.

Maneuver	DC
Easy (low-speed turn)	5
Average (sudden reverse, dodging obstacles)	10
Difficult (tight turns)	15
Challenging (loop, barrel roll)	20
Formidable (high-speed maneuvers, dodging obstacles)	25

Try Again: Most Pilot checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.
Action: A Pilot check is a move action.
Special: At the Gamemaster's option, Pilot may be further broken down into more detailed categories requiring specialization, such as airplanes, jet-planes, helicopters, starfighters, space transports, or space cruisers.

PROFESSION — WIS, SPECIALTY, TRAINED ONLY

You're trained in a profession such as accountant, doctor, engineer, game designer, lawyer, police officer, reporter, teacher, writer, and so forth. Like Craft, Profession is actually a number of specialties. You can have multiple Profession skills; each acquired as a separate skill.

While a Craft skill represents skill in making things, a Profession skill represents training in a job requiring a broader range of less specific knowledge. Generally speaking, if an occupation is a service industry, it's a Profession skill. If it's in the manufacturing sector, it's a Craft skill.

Check: You can practice a profession and make a living at it. You know how to use the tools of the trade, perform the profession's daily tasks, supervise untrained helpers, and handle common problems. For example, a sailor knows how to tie basic knots, tend and repair sails, and stand a deck watch at sea. The GM sets DCs for job-related tasks.
Action: A Profession check usually requires a minute or more, depending on the task.
Special: Every 5 full points of bonus in Profession give you a +1 bonus to Wealth (see page 132).

RIDE — DEX, MANIPULATION, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to ride a mount, such as a horse or more exotic creatures like dolphins, griffins, or even dragons.

Check: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check. Make a check only when riding in a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, for example, or trying to reach a destination in time). While riding, you can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts.

Easy riding maneuvers, like staying in the saddle in a fight or guiding a mount with your knees, are DC 5. An average maneuver, like a full gallop or dodging around an obstacle, is DC 10. Difficult maneuvers, like using your mount as cover, jumping, or suffering no harm in a fall, are DC 15. Challenging maneuvers, like a fast mount or dismount (as a free action) or controlling a panicking mount, are DC 20 or more.
Try Again: Most Ride checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.
Action: A Ride check is a move action.
Special: At the Gamemaster's option, Ride may be further broken down into more detailed categories requiring specialization, such as running, swimming, and flying mounts, or even by specific mount type (horse, camel, dolphin, giant eagle, etc.).

SEARCH — INT

You can search an area for clues, hidden items, traps, and other details. Notice allows you to immediately notice things, Search allows you to pick up on details with some effort. Search works in conjunction with all accurate senses (see page 102). Sight is the only accurate sense for normal humans.

Check: You must be within 10 feet (one Notice range increment) of the area. You can examine a 5-foot-by-5-foot area or a volume of goods 5 feet on a side with a single check.

A Search check can turn up things like footprints, but does not allow you to follow tracks (see **Tracking**, page 104).

Task	DC
Ransack an area to find a certain object.	10
Notice a secret compartment, a simple trap, or an obscure clue.	20
Find a well-hidden secret compartment or trap, or an extremely obscure clue.	25+

- *Finding Concealed Objects:* The DC for a Search check to find a concealed object is usually based on the Stealth or Slight of Hand check of the character who hid it. The GM can assume characters with the time take 20 on their check to conceal an object.
- *Surveillance:* You can use Search to set up surveillance of a particular area, watching from a stationary location. The DC of the subject's Stealth check to evade your notice is equal to the result of your Search check.
- *Extended Searches:* Certain powers—notably ESP, Quickness, Super-Senses, and Super-Speed—greatly extend the area you can search at once. When searching for something over an extended area, use the following guidelines.

  Determine the area's approximate diameter. For each step up the **Extended Range Table** (starting at 10 feet for twice the normal Search area), move the time required to search the area one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (starting at one minute, the interval above a full round). See pages 69 and 70 for those tables.

  You can reduce the time required for an extended search by increasing the DC of the Search check: each step down the **Time and Value Progression Table**, to a minimum of a full round, is +5 DC. The Quickness power (see page 96) can also reduce the time for an extended search.

You can take 10 and take 20 on extended searches. Taking 20 requires 20 times the base time to search the area, and you can't reduce the time by increasing the DC if you take 20.

Example: *A hero wants to search an area a mile in diameter using ESP. This is four steps up the* ***Extended Range Table****, so the GM moves four steps up the* ***Time and Value Progression Table*** *and gets a base time of one hour to make the search. If the hero wanted to quickly search a mile radius to find a certain object (DC 10), rather than taking an hour, he can increase the DC by +20 (to DC 30) and accomplish the search in one round (four steps down the* ***Time and Value Progression Table****).*

Johnny Rocket, who has Super-Speed 10, wants to search the same 1-mile radius. This would normally take an hour, but Johnny's Super-Speed allows him to perform routine tasks 2,500 times faster than normal. This allows him to perform the search in less than 3 seconds (one standard action). If Johnny decides to take 20 on his Search check, it takes him about 30 seconds (one hour × 20 ⁄ 2,500 = 28.8 seconds) or 5 full rounds to search the whole radius.

Action: A Search check is a full-round action.

SENSE MOTIVE WIS

You can tell someone's true intentions by paying attention to body language, inflection, and intuition.

Check: A successful Sense Motive check allows you to avoid the effects of some interaction skills. You can also use the skill to tell when someone is behaving oddly or to assess their trustworthiness.

- *Evaluate:* You can use this skill to make an assessment of a social situation. With a successful check (DC 20), you can get a feeling when something is wrong. You can also tell if someone is trustworthy and honorable (or not) with an opposed Sense Motive and Bluff check.
- *Notice Influence:* You can make a Sense Motive check to notice someone acting under the influence of a mental power. The DC is 10 + the power's rank.
- *Notice Innuendo:* You can use Sense Motive to detect a hidden message transmitted via the Bluff skill (DC equal to the Bluff check result). If your check result beats the DC, you understand the secret message. If your check fails by 5 or more, you misinterpret the message in some fashion. If you are not the intended recipient of the message, your DC increases by 5.
- *Resist Interaction:* Make a Sense Motive check to resist or ignore the effects of certain interaction skills, such as Bluff or Intimidate. If the result of your check exceeds your opponent's check result, you are unaffected.

Try Again: No, though you can make a Sense Motive check for each interaction attempt against you.
Action: A Sense Motive check may be made as a reaction to notice or resist something. (When that's the case, the GM may roll the Sense Motive check in secret, so you don't know if there's something to notice or not.) Using Sense Motive to evaluate a person or situation takes at least 1 minute.

SLEIGHT OF HAND DEX, MANIPULATION, TRAINED ONLY

You can perform feats of legerdemain such as picking pockets, palming small objects (making them seem to disappear), and so forth.

Check: A check against DC 10 lets you palm a coin-sized object. Minor feats of sleight of hand, such as making a coin disappear, also have a DC of 10 unless an observer is concentrating on noticing what you are doing. When you perform this skill under close observation, your check is opposed by the observer's Notice check. The observer's check doesn't prevent you from performing the action, just from doing it unnoticed.

- *Thievery:* When you try to take something from another person, your opponent makes a Notice check. To obtain the object, you must get a result of 20 or higher, regardless of the opponent's check result. The opponent noticed the attempt if his check result beats your check result, whether you take the object or not.
- *Planting:* You can make a Sleight of Hand check to plant a small object on someone, slip something into their pocket, drop something into their drink, and so forth. To plant the object, you must get a result of 20 or higher, regardless of the opponent's check result. The opponent noticed the attempt if his check result beats your check result, whether you plant the object or not.
- *Concealment:* You can use Sleight of Hand to conceal a small item, making your check result the DC of a Search check to find it.

Try Again: A second Sleight of Hand attempt against the same target, or when being watched by the same observer, has a DC 10 higher than the first check if the first check failed or was noticed.
Action: A Sleight of Hand check is a standard action.
Special: You can make an untrained Sleight of Hand check to conceal something, but must always take 10 when doing so, so you can't do it while under stress.

STEALTH DEX

You're skilled at going unnoticed.

Check: Your Stealth check is opposed by the Notice check of anyone who might detect you. While using Stealth, you can move up to half your normal speed at no penalty. At more than half and up to your full speed, you take a –5 penalty. It's practically impossible (–20 penalty) to use Stealth while attacking, moving all out, or charging.

- *Size Modifiers:* Apply the modifier from your size category to your Stealth checks to represent the relative ease of noticing smaller and larger targets (see **Size**, page 34).
- *Hiding:* If others have spotted you, you can't use Stealth to remain unseen. You can run around a corner so you are out of sight and then use Stealth to hide, but others then know which way you went. You can't hide at all if you have absolutely no cover or concealment, since that means you're standing out in plain sight. Of course, if someone isn't looking directly at you (you're sneaking up from behind, for example), then you have concealment relative to that person. Characters with the Hide in Plain Sight feat (see page 61) can make Stealth checks without the need for cover or concealment.
- *Creating a Diversion to Hide:* A successful Bluff or Intimidate check can give you the momentary diversion needed to make a Stealth check while people are aware of you. When others turn their attention from you, you can make a Stealth check if you can reach cover or concealment of some kind. (As a general guideline, any cover has to be within 1 foot for every rank you have in Stealth.) This check, however, is at a –5 penalty because you have to move quickly.
- *Sniping:* If you're successfully hidden at least one Notice range increment away from a subject (usually 10 feet), then you can make a ranged attack and immediately hide again, but you suffer a –20 penalty to your Stealth check.

- *Tailing:* You can use Stealth to tail someone at your normal speed. This assumes you have some cover or concealment (crowds of people, shadows, fog, etc.). If the subject is worried about being followed, he can make a Notice check (opposed by your Stealth check) every time he changes course (goes around a street corner, exits a building, and so on). If he is unsuspecting, he only gets a Notice check after each hour of being tailed. If the subject notices you, you can make a Bluff check, opposed by Sense Motive. If you succeed, you manage to pass off your presence as coincidence and can continue tailing. A failed Bluff check, or being noticed a second time, means the subject knows something is up.

Action: Stealth is a move action.

SURVIVAL WIS

You use this skill to survive in the wilderness, including finding food and shelter, and safely guiding others.

Check: Make a check to determine the conditions you can handle.

Task	DC
Get along in the wild. Move up to half your overland speed while hunting and foraging (no food or water supplies needed). You can provide food and water for one other person for every 2 points your check result exceeds 10.	10
Gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to half your speed, or a +4 bonus if stationary. You may grant the same bonus to one other character for every point your check result exceeds 15.	15
Avoid getting lost and avoid natural hazards, such as quicksand.	18

- *Navigation:* You can use Survival to navigate outdoors. The DC is 10 if you have the proper tools, 14 if you have no tools, and 18 if you are also avoiding natural hazards (quicksand, gullies, reefs, etc.). At the GM's discretion, characters can also perform this task using an appropriate Knowledge or Profession skill.

Try Again: No.
Action: Survival checks occur each day in the wilderness or whenever a hazard presents itself.
Special: You can take 10 when making a Survival check, but can't take 20.

SWIM STR

You can swim and maneuver underwater.

Check: A successful Swim check allows you to swim one-quarter your speed as a move action or half your speed as a full-round action. If the check fails, you make no progress through the water. If the check fails by 5 or more, you go underwater. If you are underwater you must hold your breath to avoid drowning (see **Suffocation**, page 168). The DC for the Swim check depends on the condition of the water:

Condition	DC
Calm water	10
Rough water	15
Stormy water	20

Each hour you swim, make a Swim check (DC 20). If the check fails, you suffer from fatigue (see page 167). Unconscious characters go underwater and immediately begin to drown.

- *Rescuing:* Rescuing another character who cannot swim (for whatever reason) increases the DC of your Swim checks by +5.

Action: A Swim check is either a move action or a full-round action, as described above.

CHAPTER 4: FEATS

Heroes are more than just skilled, they're capable of amazing *feats*, often far beyond the abilities of ordinary people. In *Mutants & Masterminds*, a feat is a particular special ability. Feats often allow heroes to "break the rules," doing things most people cannot. Feats are not actually classified as powers. Those are covered in **Chapter 5**.

ACQUIRING FEATS

Feats are rated in ranks and bought with power points, just like skills and powers. Feats cost 1 power point per rank.

Feat Cost = 1 power point per feat rank.

FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

Each feat's description explains the benefit it provides. It also says if the feat can be acquired in ranks and what the effects are of doing so. If a feat's description does not specifically say it can be acquired multiple times, then it can only be taken once by a character. Ranks in a feat are noted with a number after the feat's name, such as "Defensive Roll 2" (for a character who has taken two ranks in the Defensive Roll feat), just like skill and power ranks.

TYPES OF FEATS

Feats are categorized as one of four types:.

- *Combat* feats are useful in combat and often modify how combat maneuvers are performed.
- *Skill* feats offer bonuses or modifications to skill use.
- *Fortune* feats require and enhance the use of hero points.
- *General* feats provide special abilities or bonuses not covered by the other categories.

Power feats are a special fifth type of feat, related to powers and described in **Chapter 5**.

FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

Each feat is listed by name, type, and if the feat is available in multiple ranks, followed by a description of the feat's benefits. The effects of additional ranks of the feat (if any) are noted in the text of each feat. In some cases a feat's description mentions the normal conditions for characters who do not have the feat for comparison.

ACCURATE ATTACK — COMBAT

When you make an attack you can take a penalty of up to –5 on your save DC modifier and add the same number (up to +5) to your attack bonus. Your save DC modifier cannot be reduced below +0 and your attack bonus cannot more than double. The changes to attack and save DC modifier are declared before you make the attack roll and last until your next round.

ACROBATIC BLUFF — SKILL

You can use your Acrobatics skill instead of your Bluff skill to feint and trick in combat (see page 42). Your opponent opposes the attempt with Sense Motive or Acrobatics (whichever is better).

ALL-OUT ATTACK — COMBAT

When you make an attack you can take a penalty of up to –5 on your defense bonus and add the same number (up to +5) to your attack bonus. Your defense bonus cannot be reduced below +0 and your attack bonus cannot more than double. The changes to attack and defense bonus are declared before you make the attack roll and last until your next round.

AMBIDEXTERITY — GENERAL

You are equally adept at using either hand. You ignore off-hand penalties to checks and attack rolls. Without this feat, characters suffer a –4 penalty when using their off-hand. Note this does not give you any additional attacks, it merely allows you to use either hand equally well. If you have more than two hands, this feat applies to all of them (see **Additional Limbs**, page 75).

ANIMAL EMPATHY — SKILL

You have a special connection with animals. You can use the Handle Animal skill (see page 49) like Diplomacy (see page 46) to change the attitude of an animal by interacting with it. Unlike a normal use of Diplomacy, you do not have to speak a language the animal understands, and Animal Empathy affects creatures with an Intelligence of 1 or 2 (but still greater than 0). You can also use the Bluff and Gather Information skills normally on animals. You don't actually need to speak to the animals; you communicate your intent through gestures and body language and learn things by studying animal behavior.

SPECIAL

The GM may allow other forms of this feat for interacting with other unusual creatures, such as Machine Empathy, Plant Empathy, Spirit Empathy, Undead Empathy, and so forth. The specifics of using interaction skills with any unusual subjects are left up to the Gamemaster.

ARTIFICER — SKILL

You can use the Knowledge (arcane lore) and Craft skills to create temporary magical devices. See **Magical Inventions**, page 132, for details.

ASSESSMENT — GENERAL

You're able to size up someone's combat capabilities. As a move action, choose a target you can accurately perceive and make a Sense Motive check opposed by the target's Bluff check result. If you succeed, the GM tells you the target's attack and defense bonus relative to yours (lower, higher, or equal). You don't know the target's exact bonus unless it equals your own, only a rough estimate of relative ability. In cases of a 5-point or greater difference, the GM may choose to tell you the target's bonus is

FEATS

COMBAT FEATS

Feat Name	Benefit
Accurate Attack	Reduce damage bonus to increase attack bonus.
All-out Attack	Reduce defense bonus to increase attack bonus.
Attack Focus (+)	+1 bonus to melee or ranged attack rolls.
Attack Specialization (+)	+2 bonus to attack rolls with a specific attack.
Blind-Fight	Re-roll miss chances from concealment. Halve speed penalty in darkness.
Chokehold	Cause an opponent you are grappling to suffocate.
Critical Strike	Score critical hits against targets normally immune to them.
Defensive Attack	Reduce attack bonus to increase defense bonus.
Defensive Roll (+)	+1 Toughness save bonus.
Dodge Focus (+)	+1 dodge bonus.
Elusive Target	Double penalties for ranged attacks against you while you're in melee.
Evasion (+)	Suffer less damage from attacks allowing a Reflex save.
Fast Overrun	Make multiple overrun attempts in a round.
Favored Environment (+)	+1 attack or dodge bonus each round in a particular environment.
Favored Opponent (+)	+1 damage and interaction bonus against a type of opponent.
Grappling Finesse	Use Dex for grapple checks and retain dodge bonus while grappling
Improved Aim	Double normal aiming bonuses.
Improved Block (+)	+2 bonus on attack rolls to block.
Improved Critical (+)	Threaten a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 with a particular attack.
Improved Defense (+)	+6 dodge bonus from the total defense action.
Improved Disarm (+)	+2 bonus on attack rolls to disarm.
Improved Grab	Start a grapple attack as a free action after a successful melee attack.
Improved Grapple	Make grapple checks with only one hand.
Improved Initiative (+)	+4 bonus on initiative checks.
Improved Overrun	+4 bonus on trip checks while overrunning. Opponent cannot avoid you.
Improved Pin	–4 penalty on grappling checks against you to escape.
Improved Sunder	+4 bonus on attack rolls to hit an object.
Improved Throw	Opponent uses lesser of Str or Dex to defend against trip attacks.
Improved Trip	+4 bonus on trip checks, opponent does not get to trip you.
Move-by Action	Move both before and after a standard action.
Power Attack	Reduce attack bonus to increase damage bonus.

COMBAT FEATS

Feat Name	Benefit
Precise Shot (+)	No penalty for shooting or throwing into melee.
Prone Fighting	No penalty for fighting while prone.
Quick Draw (+)	Draw, ready, or reload a weapon as a free action.
Rage (+)	Gain a bonus to Str, Fortitude and Will saves, and a penalty to Defense.
Ranged Pin	Make grapple attacks with ranged weapons.
Redirect	Trick an opponent into hitting someone else.
Set-Up	Transfer the benefit of a combat bonus to an ally.
Sneak Attack (+)	+2 damage when you surprise attack an opponent.
Stunning Attack	Your unarmed attack can stun an opponent.
Takedown Attack (+)	Gain a bonus melee attack when you drop an opponent.
Throwing Mastery (+)	+1 damage with thrown weapons.
Uncanny Dodge (+)	Retain your dodge bonus while flat-footed.
Weapon Bind	Follow a successful melee block with a free disarm attempt.
Weapon Break	Follow a successful melee block with a free sunder attempt.

FORTUNE FEATS

Feat Name	Benefit
Beginner's Luck	Spend a hero point to gain 5 temporary ranks in a skill.
Inspire (+)	Grant allies a bonus to attack rolls, saving throws, and checks.
Leadership	Spend a hero point to remove adverse conditions from an ally.
Luck (+)	Gain an additional starting hero point.
Seize Initiative	Spend a hero point to go first in combat.
Ultimate Effort (+)	Spend a hero point for a 20 result on the die with a particular task.

GENERAL FEATS

Feat Name	Benefit
Ambidexterity	Eliminate off-hand penalties.
Assessment	Know a subject's relative offensive and defensive ability.
Benefit (+)	Gain some minor, but significant, benefit.
Diehard	Automatically stabilize when dying.
Eidetic Memory	Perfect recall of everything you've experienced.
Endurance (+)	+4 bonus on checks requiring endurance or stamina.
Environmental Adaptation	Suffer no penalties from a particular environment.
Equipment (+)	Acquire 5 points worth of equipment.

Feats marked with a (+) sign can be acquired in ranks.

FEATS

GENERAL FEATS	
Feat Name	**Benefit**
Fearless	Immunity to fear effects.
Fearsome Presence (+)	Inspire fear in others.
Instant Up	Stand up as a free action.
Interpose	You can trade places with an adjacent ally subject to attack.
Master Plan	Gain a bonus in situations where you have a chance to plan in advance.
Minions (+)	You have a follower or followers.
Quick Change (+)	You can change clothes as a free action.
Second Chance (+)	You get a second check or save against a particular hazard.
Sidekick (+)	You have a sidekick.
Teamwork (+)	+1 bonus to aid actions.
Trance	Go into a deathlike trance that slows breathing.

SKILL FEATS	
Feat Name	**Benefit**
Acrobatic Bluff	Feint and trick using Acrobatics rather than Bluff.
Animal Empathy	Use Handle Animal to affect the attitudes of animals.
Artificer	Use Knowledge (arcane lore) and Craft to create temporary magical devices.
Attractive (+)	+4 bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks with people affected by your looks.
Connected	Make a Diplomacy check to call in favors or aid.
Contacts	Make a Gather Information checks faster.
Distract (+)	Make a Bluff or Intimidate check to daze an opponent for one round.
Fascinate (+)	Hold a subject's attention with an interaction skill.
Hide in Plain Sight	You don't need cover or concealment to hide.
Improvised Tools	No penalty for not having tools for a skill.
Inventor	You can use Knowledge and Craft to create temporary devices.
Jack-of-All-Trades	Use any skill untrained.
Ritualist	You can create and cast arcane rituals.
Skill Mastery (+)	Choose four skills you can take 10 with even under pressure.
Startle	Feint using Intimidate rather than Bluff.
Taunt	Demoralize using Bluff rather than Intimidate.
Track	Use Survival to follow tracks.
Well-Informed	Make an immediate Gather Information check when meeting someone.

Feats marked with a (+) sign can be acquired in ranks.

considerably more or less than yours. If you lose the opposed roll, the GM should over- or under-estimate the target's bonus.

ATTACK FOCUS — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a +1 bonus to melee or ranged attacks rolls per rank in this feat. Choose which type of roll the bonus applies to when you acquire the feat. Your total attack bonus is limited by the campaign's power level.

ATTACK SPECIALIZATION — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a +2 bonus with a specific attack or weapon per rank in this feat. Choose the attack when you acquire the feat. Your total attack bonus is limited by the campaign's power level.

ATTRACTIVE — SKILL, RANKED

You're particularly attractive, giving you a +4 bonus per rank on Bluff and Diplomacy checks to deceive, seduce, or change the attitude of anyone who might find you appealing. This bonus cannot increase your total effective skill rank higher than the campaign's power level limit.

BEGINNER'S LUCK — FORTUNE

By spending a hero point, you gain 5 ranks in any skill in which you currently have 4 or fewer ranks, including skills you have *no* ranks in, even if they can't be used untrained. These temporary skill ranks last for the duration of the encounter and grant you their normal benefits.

BENEFIT — GENERAL, RANKED

You have some significant perquisite or fringe benefit. The exact nature of the benefit is for you and the Gamemaster to determine. As a rule of thumb it should not exceed the benefits of any other feat, or a power costing 1 point. It should also be significant enough to cost at least 1 point. An example is Diplomatic Immunity (see **Sample Benefits**). A license to practice law or medicine, on the other hand, should not be considered a benefit; it's simply a part of having enough ranks in the appropriate Profession skill and has no significant game effect. Benefits may come in ranks for improved levels of the same benefit. The GM is the final arbiter as to what does and does not constitute a Benefit in the campaign. Keep in mind some qualities may constitute Benefits in some campaigns, but not in others, depending on whether or not they have any real impact on the game.

SAMPLE BENEFITS

The following are some potential Benefits. The GM is free to choose any suitable Benefit for the campaign.

- **Alternate Identity:** You have an alternate identity, complete with legal paperwork (driver's license, birth certificate, etc.). This is different from a costumed identity, which doesn't necessarily have any legal status.
- **Diplomatic Immunity:** By dint of your diplomatic status, you cannot be prosecuted for crimes in nations other than your own. All another nation can do is deport you to your home nation.
- **Security Clearance:** You have access to classified government information, installations, and possibly equipment and personnel.

- **Status:** By virtue of birth or achievement, you have special status. Examples include nobility, knighthood, aristocracy, being a *samurai* in medieval Japan, and so forth.
- **Wealth:** You have greater than average wealth or resources. Increase your Wealth bonus by +4 per rank (see page 132 for more information).

BLIND-FIGHT — COMBAT

In melee combat, you suffer half the usual miss chance due to concealment (see **Concealment**, page 161). If you spend a hero point before rolling the miss chance, you automatically ignore it for that attack. You take only half the usual penalty to speed for being unable to see; darkness and poor visibility reduce your speed to three-quarters rather than half.

CHOKEHOLD — COMBAT

If you pin an opponent (see **Grappling**, page 156), you can apply a chokehold, causing your opponent to begin suffocating for as long as you maintain the pin (see **Suffocation**, page 168).

CONNECTED — SKILL

You know people who can help you out from time to time. You can call in favors by making a Diplomacy check. It might be advice, information, help with a legal matter, or access to resources. The GM sets the DC of the Diplomacy check, based on the aid required. A simple favor is DC 10, ranging up to DC 25 or higher for especially difficult, dangerous, or expensive favors. You can spend a hero point to automatically secure the favor. The GM has the right to veto any request if it is too involved or likely to spoil the plot of the adventure. Use of this feat always requires at least a few minutes (and often much longer) and the means to contact your allies.

CONTACTS — SKILL

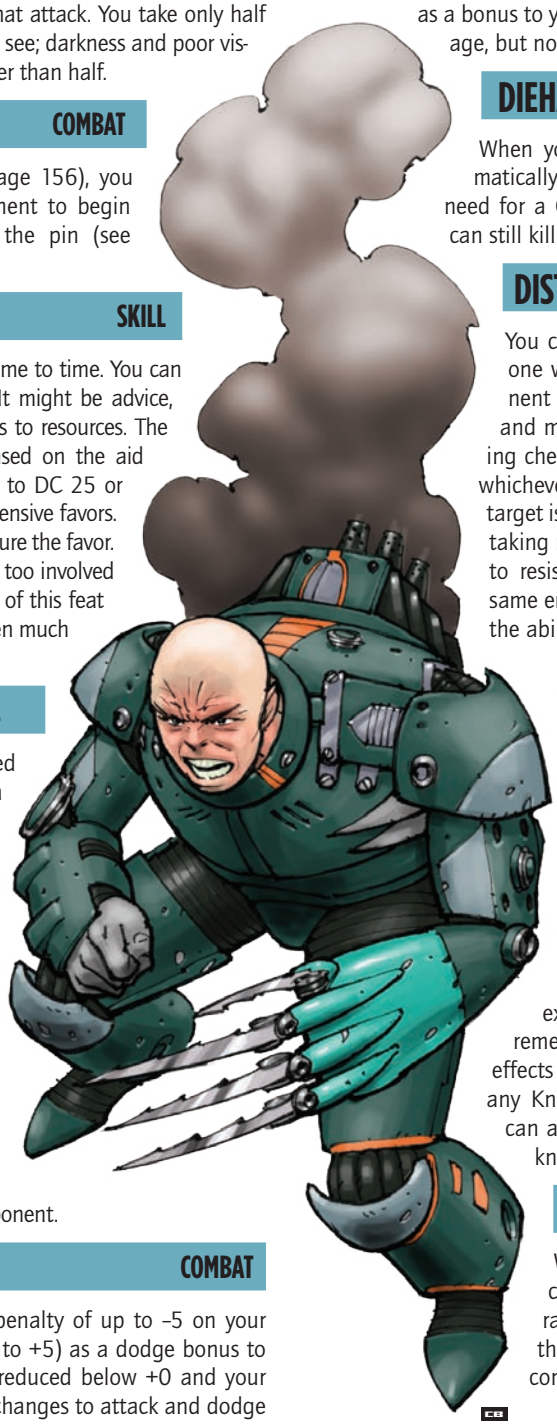
You have such extensive and well-informed contacts you can make a Gather Information check in only one minute, assuming you have some means of getting in touch with your contacts. You can take 10 or take 20 on this check (taking 20 requires 20 minutes rather than 1). Further Gather Information checks on the same subject require the normal length of time.

CRITICAL STRIKE — COMBAT

You can score critical hits normally on favored opponents with Immunity (critical hits) (see **Immunity**, page 89). You must have the Favored Opponent feat (see page 61) in order to make a critical strike against that type of opponent.

DEFENSIVE ATTACK — COMBAT

When you make an attack you can take a penalty of up to –5 on your attack bonus and add the same number (up to +5) as a dodge bonus to your defense. Your attack bonus cannot be reduced below +0 and your dodge bonus cannot more than double. The changes to attack and dodge bonus last until your next action.



DEFENSIVE ROLL — COMBAT, RANKED

You can evade damage through agility and "rolling" with an attack. You receive a bonus to your Toughness saving throws equal to your rank, but lose your Defensive Roll bonus whenever you are denied your dodge bonus or unable to take a free action unless you are able to succeed on a Concentration check (DC based on circumstances, see **Concentration** in **Chapter 3**).. Your total Toughness save bonus, including Defensive Roll, is limited by the campaign's power level. You can add your Defensive Roll rank as a bonus to Reflex saves against area attacks (see **Chapter 8**) or as a bonus to your Toughness save against the resulting damage, but not both.

DIEHARD — GENERAL

When your condition is reduced to dying you automatically stabilize on the following round without any need for a Constitution check, although further damage can still kill you.

DISTRACT — SKILL, RANKED

You can make a Bluff or Intimidate check (choose one when you acquire the feat) to cause an opponent to hesitate in combat. Take a standard action and make a skill check against your target's opposing check (the same skill, Sense Motive, or Will save, whichever has the highest bonus). If you succeed, your target is dazed for one round (defending normally, but taking no action). Targets gain a +1 bonus on checks to resist Distract per attempt against them in the same encounter. You can take this feat twice (gaining the ability to use it with either Bluff or Intimidate).

DODGE FOCUS — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a +1 dodge bonus for each rank in this feat. You lose this bonus whenever you are denied your dodge bonus. Your total defense bonus (including your dodge bonus) is limited by the campaign's power level.

EIDETIC MEMORY — GENERAL

You have perfect recall of everything you've experienced. You have a +4 bonus on checks to remember things, including saving throws against effects that alter or erase memories. You can make any Knowledge skill check untrained, meaning you can answer questions involving difficult or obscure knowledge without ranks in the skill.

ELUSIVE TARGET — COMBAT

While you are fighting an opponent in melee combat, others attempting to target you with ranged attacks are at a –8 penalty rather than the usual –4 penalty for shooting into melee combat.

ENDURANCE — GENERAL, RANKED

You gain a +4 bonus per rank on Swim checks to avoid becoming fatigued and Constitution checks or Fortitude saves to hold your breath, avoid damage from starvation or thirst, avoid damage from hot or cold environments, and to resist suffocation and drowning.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATION — GENERAL

You're adapted to a particular environment, such as underwater, zero gravity, and so forth. You suffer none of the normal die roll or movement penalties associated with that environment, moving and acting normally. You are still affected by environmental hazards like suffocation, exposure, and so forth. You need **Immunity** (see page 89) for resistance to these effects.

EQUIPMENT — GENERAL, RANKED

You have 5 points to spend on equipment per rank in this feat. See **Chapter 7** for details on equipment.

EVASION — COMBAT, RANKED

If you make your Reflex save against an area effect (see page 111), you suffer *no* damage. If you have two ranks in this feat, you only take half damage from an area effect even if you *fail* the Reflex save, and no damage if you succeed.

FASCINATE — SKILL, RANKED

One of your interaction skills is so effective you can capture and hold someone's attention with it. Choose Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Perform when you acquire this feat. You are subject to the normal guidelines for interaction skills, and combat or other immediate danger makes this feat ineffective. Take a standard action and make an interaction skill check against your target's opposing check (the same skill, Sense Motive, or Will save, whichever has the highest bonus). If you succeed, the target becomes fascinated (see **Condition Summary**, page 170). You can maintain the effect (requiring a standard action each round). The fascination ends when you stop or the target overcomes it. You may take this feat more than once. Each time, it applies to a different interaction skill. Like all interaction skills, you can use Fascinate on a group, but you must affect everyone in the group equally.

FAST OVERRUN — COMBAT

If you make a successful overrun attempt (see **Overrun**, page 157) you can make another overrun, so long as you have sufficient movement to reach another target. You can continue making overrun attempts until you either run out of movement or miss an attempt. You can change the direction of your movement between overrun attempts, but you must still move at least 10 feet in a straight line before each attempt.

FAVORED ENVIRONMENT — COMBAT, RANKED

You have an environment you're especially suited for fighting in. Examples include in the air, underwater, in space, in extreme heat or cold, in jungles or woodlands, and so forth. While in your favored environment, you gain either a +1 attack bonus or +1 dodge bonus. Choose at the start of each round whether your bonus applies to attack or dodge. Your maximum attack and defense bonus is limited by the campaign's power level.

FAVORED OPPONENT — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a particular type of opponent you've studied or are especially effective against. It may be a type of creature (aliens, animals, constructs, mutants, undead, etc.), a profession (soldiers, police officers, Yakuza, etc.) or any other category the GM approves. Especially broad categories like "humans" or "villains" are not permitted. You gain a +1 bonus on Bluff, Intimidate, Notice, Sense Motive, and Survival checks dealing with your Favored Opponent as well as +1 damage on all attacks against them. You may take this feat multiple times, either choosing a different opponent or increasing your existing bonus by +1, to a maximum of +5. Your maximum damage bonus is limited by the campaign's power level.

FEARLESS — GENERAL

You are immune to fear effects of all sorts. You automatically succeed on any saving throw against a fear effect. This is the equivalent of the power Immunity 1 (fear effects) (see page 89).

FEARSOME PRESENCE — GENERAL, RANKED

You can inspire fear in others. Take a standard action to strike a suitably fearsome pose or utter an intimidating threat; anyone within (feat rank × 5) feet able to interact with you must make a Will save (DC 10 + rank) or become shaken. If the save fails by 5 or more, the subject flees from you. If the save fails by 10 or more, the subject panics, dropping any held items and fleeing from you as quickly as possible. Your Fearsome Presence rank cannot exceed your Intimidate skill bonus.

GRAPPLING FINESSE — COMBAT

You can use your Dexterity bonus, rather than your Strength bonus, to make grapple checks. You retain your dodge bonus to Defense against all opponents while grappling.

HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT — SKILL

You can make Stealth checks even while being observed and even if you do not have cover or concealment. Characters normally must have cover or concealment to hide and cannot make Stealth checks while being observed.

IMPROVED AIM — COMBAT

When you take a full-round action to aim (see **Aim**, page 154), you gain double the normal bonus: +10 for a melee attack or a ranged attack adjacent to the target, +4 for a ranged attack at a greater distance.

IMPROVED BLOCK — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a +2 bonus on attack rolls to block melee attacks (see **Block**, page 155). If you can block ranged attacks (using the Deflect power, page 81), your Improved Block bonus does not apply to those block rolls, which are improved seperately by adding power ranks.

IMPROVED CRITICAL — COMBAT, RANKED

Your critical threat range with a particular attack (chosen when you acquire this feat) is increased, allowing you to score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20. Only a natural 20 is an automatic hit, however, and an attack that misses is not a critical. Each additional rank applies to a different attack or increases your threat range with an existing attack by one more.

IMPROVED DEFENSE — COMBAT, RANKED

When you take the total defense action in combat you gain an additional +2 dodge bonus (+6 rather than the usual +4 dodge bonus, see **Total**

Defense, page 159). You can take a second rank in this feat, giving you a +8 total dodge bonus with the total defense action.

IMPROVED DISARM — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a +2 bonus per rank on attack rolls when attempting to disarm an opponent and they do not get the opportunity to disarm you (see **Disarm**, page 156).

IMPROVED GRAB — COMBAT

When you hit with an unarmed attack you can immediately start a grapple against that opponent as a free action. The opponent must be no larger than your size. Your unarmed attack inflicts normal damage and counts as the initial attack roll required to start grappling.

IMPROVED GRAPPLE — COMBAT

You can make grappling attacks with only one hand, leaving the other free. If you pin your opponent, you can maintain the pin while still using your other hand to perform actions.

IMPROVED INITIATIVE — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a +4 bonus to your initiative checks per rank in this feat.

IMPROVED OVERRUN — COMBAT

When you make an overrun attempt, your opponent cannot choose to avoid you, and you have a +4 bonus on the trip check (see **Overrun**, page 157).

IMPROVED PIN — COMBAT

Your grappling attacks are particularly difficult to escape. Opponents suffer a –4 penalty on grappling checks against you to escape a grapple or pin.

IMPROVED SUNDER — COMBAT

You have a +4 bonus to attack rolls to hit an object held by another character.

IMPROVED THROW — COMBAT

You're skilled at throwing opponents off-balance. When making a trip attack (normally or using a power), choose which ability bonus your opponent uses to defend, Strength or Dexterity.

IMPROVED TRIP — COMBAT

You have a +4 bonus on checks to trip an opponent (normally or using a power) and they do not get the opportunity to trip you. If you use this feat with a ranged trip attack it's only half as effective (a +2 bonus).

IMPROVISED TOOLS — SKILL

You ignore the –4 penalty for using skills without proper tools, since you can improvise sufficient tools with whatever is at hand.

INSPIRE — FORTUNE, RANKED

You can inspire your allies to greatness. You must be able to interact and you can affect a number of allies equal to your Charisma bonus. By taking a full-round action and spending a hero point, your allies gain a +1 bonus on all attack rolls, saving throws, and checks for the following round. Each additional time you take this feat increases the bonus by +1, to a maximum of +5. You do not gain the inspiration bonus, only your allies do. The inspiration bonus can exceed power level limits, like other uses of hero points. Multiple uses of inspiration do not stack, only the highest bonus applies.

INSTANT UP — GENERAL

You can stand up from a prone position as a free action.

INTERPOSE — GENERAL

Once per round, when an ally adjacent to you is targeted by an attack, you can choose to trade places with that ally as a reaction, making you the target of the attack instead. If the attack hits, you suffer the effects normally. If the attack misses you, it also misses your ally. You must declare your intention to trade places with an ally before the attack roll is made. You cannot use Interpose if you are stunned or otherwise incapable of taking free actions.

INVENTOR — SKILL

You can use the Knowledge (technology) and Craft skills to create inventions and temporary devices. See **Inventing**, page 131, for details.

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES — SKILL

You can use any skill untrained, even skills that normally cannot be used untrained, although you must still have proper tools if the skill requires them.

LEADERSHIP — FORTUNE

Your presence can reassure and lend courage to allies. As a standard action, you can spend a hero point to remove one of the following conditions from an ally with whom you can interact (see **Interaction Skills**, page 38): dazed, fascinated, fatigued, panicked, shaken, or stunned. Your Leadership cannot remove damage (although it may alleviate some of its effects) nor can it remove other conditions, including exhausted, disabled, or unconscious.

LUCK — FORTUNE, RANKED

You have an extra hero point, over the normal starting amount, per rank in this feat (see **Hero Points**, page 121). You cannot have more ranks in luck than half the campaign's power level. The GM may choose to set a lower limit on this feat, depending on the campaign.

MASTER PLAN — GENERAL

If you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter you can formulate a plan. This requires at least a few minutes, longer at the Gamemaster's discretion. Make an Intelligence check (DC 10). If successful, you and your allies gain a bonus on all skill checks and attack rolls in the encounter depending on the result of your roll: +1 for a roll of 10-14, +2 for 15-25, and +3 for 25 or higher. This bonus is not subject to power level limits. You choose when during the encounter to initiate your master plan. The bonus lasts for 3 rounds, then begins decreasing at a rate of 1 per round until it is gone. You can only use this feat when you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter in advance, not when dealing with sudden or unexpected encounters.

MINIONS — GENERAL, RANKED

You have a follower or minion. This minion is an independent character with a power point total of (rank × 15). Minions are subject to the normal power level limits, and cannot have minions themselves. Your minions automatically have a helpful attitude toward you. If you double the cost of this feat (2 points per rank) your minions are fanatical. They are subject to the normal rules for minions (see page 163).

Rather than increasing the power points available to create your minion, a rank in this feat can move your total number of minions of the same type one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (see page 70). So Minions 5 can give you one 75-point minion, or two 60-point minions, or five 45-point minions, or ten 30-point minions, and so forth. Your minions don't have to be identical, but should be generally of the same type (human agents, infernal demons, zombies, etc.).

Any lost minions are replaced in between adventures with other followers with similar abilities at the Gamemaster's discretion.

MOVE-BY ACTION — COMBAT

When taking a standard action and a move action you can move both before and after the standard action, provided the total distance isn't greater than your movement speed.

POWER ATTACK — COMBAT

When you make an attack you can take a penalty of up to –5 on your attack bonus and add the same number (up to +5) to your attack's saving throw DC. Your attack bonus cannot be reduced below +0 and your save DC modifier cannot more than double. The changes to attack and saving throw DC are decided before you make your attack roll and last until your next round. This feat does not apply to effects requiring no attack roll or allowing no saving throw.

PRECISE SHOT — COMBAT, RANKED

When you make ranged attacks on an opponent engaged in melee with your allies, you reduce the attack roll penalty by 4. This eliminates the normal –4 penalty, and reduces the penalty for Elusive Target (see page 60) to –4.

A second rank ignores the defense bonus for anything less than total cover and the miss chance from anything less than total concealment. It also completely negates the penalty for the Elusive Target feat.

PRONE FIGHTING — COMBAT

You suffer no penalties on attack rolls for being prone, and adjacent opponents do not gain any bonus to hit you while you are prone (although opponents making ranged attacks are still at –4 on their attack rolls). You can crawl at half your speed rather than the usual 5-feet per move action.

QUICK CHANGE — GENERAL, RANKED

You can change clothes—such as changing into your costume or your secret identity—as a free action. Normally, changing clothes requires at least a minute (10 rounds). If you take this feat a second time, you can change into any outfit at will. This allows you to use the Disguise skill (see page 47) as a move action rather than taking the usual time.

QUICK DRAW — COMBAT, RANKED

You can draw or load a weapon as a free action, rather than a move action. You can only do one of these things as a free action each round; the others remain move actions as normal. So you could draw a weapon as a free action, then load it as a move action, for example, but not draw *and* load it as a free action. Quick Draw 2 allows you to both draw and load a weapon in the same round as free actions.

RAGE — COMBAT, RANKED

You can fly into a berserk rage as a free action, gaining +4 Strength, +2 to your Fortitude and Will saves, and a –2 penalty to Defense. While raging you can't use skills or powers requiring concentration (with a duration of Concentration or Sustained), and you can't take 10 or 20 on checks. Your rage lasts for five rounds, after which you are fatigued for five rounds.

Each additional rank gives you +2 Strength and a +1 Fortitude and Will save bonus to a maximum of +10 Strength and +5 to saves total at 4 ranks (the –2 penalty to Defense and other effects remain the same). Your maximum Strength and save bonuses are limited by the campaign's power level.

Instead of increasing your Rage benefits, a rank in this feat can extend the duration by 5 rounds. This extends the duration of your post-rage fatigue by the same amount.

RANGED PIN — COMBAT

You can use a ranged weapon to pin an opponent to a nearby surface. The target must be within 5 feet of a wall, tree, or similar surface. Make a normal attack roll against the target. If your attack is successful, the target makes a Reflex saving throw against your attack roll result. Failure means the target is entangled and unable to move. To break free, the victim must take a move action and make a successful Strength or Escape Artist check (DC 15). A Strength or skill bonus greater than the DC allows the target to escape as a free action.

REDIRECT — COMBAT

If you successfully trick an opponent (see **Bluff**, page 42), you can redirect a missed attack against you from that opponent at another target as a reaction. The new target must be adjacent to you and within range of the attack. The attacker makes a new attack roll with the same modifiers as the first against the new target.

RITUALIST — SKILL

You can use the Knowledge (arcane lore) skill to create and cast arcane rituals (see page 131).

SECOND CHANCE — GENERAL, RANKED

Choose a particular hazard, such as falling, being tripped, triggering traps, being mind controlled (or affected by another specific power, such as Blast with the fire descriptor) or a particular skill with consequences for failure. If you fail a saving throw against that hazard or a check with that skill, you can make another roll immediately and use the better of the two results. You only get one second chance for any given save or task, and the GM decides if a particular hazard or skill is an appropriate focus for this feat. Each additional rank in this feat applies to a different hazard or skill.

SEIZE INITIATIVE — FORTUNE

You can spend a hero point to go first in the initiative order, without having to roll for initiative. You may only do so when you would normally roll initiative. If more than one character uses this feat, they roll for initiative normally and act in order of their initiative result, followed by all the other characters involved in the combat.

SET-UP — COMBAT

You can transfer the benefits of a successful combat use of an interaction skill to a teammate. For example, you can feint and allow your ally to make the surprise attack against that opponent. The interaction skill requires its normal time and skill check.

SIDEKICK — GENERAL, RANKED

You have another character serving as your partner and aide. Create your sidekick as an independent character with (rank × 5) power points, and subject to the campaign's power level limits. A sidekick's power point total must be less than yours. Your sidekick is an NPC, but automatically fanatically loyal to you (provided you treat your sidekick fairly and well). Gamemasters should generally allow you to control your sidekick, although sidekicks remain NPCs and the GM has final say in their actions.

Sidekicks do not earn power points. Instead, you must spend earned power points to increase your rank in Sidekick to improve the sidekick's power point total and traits; each point you spend to increase your rank in Sidekick grants the sidekick 5 additional power points. Sidekicks also do not have hero points, but you can spend your own hero points on the sidekick's behalf with the usual benefits. Sidekicks are not minions, but full-fledged characters, so they are not subject to the minion rules.

Rather than increasing the power points available to create your sidekick, a rank in this feat can move your total number of sidekicks of the same point total one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (see page 70), so one additional rank gives you two sidekicks, two additional ranks give you five, and so forth. The GM may limit the number of sidekicks a character can have to keep things from becoming unmanageable during play.

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SKILL MASTERY — SKILL, RANKED

Choose four skills. When making checks with those skills, you can take 10 even when distracted or under pressure. This feat does not allow you to take 10 with skills that do not normally allow you to do so. Each additional rank applies Skill Mastery to four more skills.

SNEAK ATTACK — COMBAT, RANKED

When you make a surprise attack (see **Surprise Attack**, page 163), increase your attack's damage bonus by +2. You cannot sneak attack an opponent you cannot accurately perceive (due to concealment) and opponents immune to critical hits suffer no additional damage. Additional ranks increase your Sneak Attack damage bonus by +1, to a maximum of +5. Your total damage bonus is limited by the campaign's power level.

STARTLE — SKILL

You can make an Intimidate check rather than a Bluff check to feint in combat (see **Feint** on page 42). Targets resist with Intimidate, Sense Motive, or Will (whichever is best) and gain a +1 bonus on their resistance check per startle attempt against them in the same encounter.

STUNNING ATTACK — COMBAT

When you make a damaging melee attack, you can choose not to inflict normal damage. Instead, the target makes a Fortitude save against a DC of 10 plus your damage bonus. A successful save results in no effect, a failed save means the target is dazed for one round. Failure by 5 or more means the target is stunned for one round, and failure by 10 or more means the target is unconscious.

TAKEDOWN ATTACK — COMBAT, RANKED

If you knock out or disable an opponent with a melee attack, you get an immediate extra attack against another opponent within range and within 5 feet of where the previous target was when attacked. You can't move before making this extra attack. The extra attack is with the same attack and attack bonus as the first. You can use this feat once per round, except when fighting minions, where you can use it an unlimited number of times, until you miss or there are no more opponents within range of your attack or your last target.

You can take this feat a second time, allowing you to move up to 5 feet between each attack you make, but you still cannot move more than your total speed, regardless of the number of attacks you make.

TAUNT — SKILL

You can demoralize an opponent with a Bluff check rather than an Intimidate check. Use the normal rules for demoralizing (see page 49), substituting Bluff for Intimidate. Targets resist using Bluff, Sense Motive, or Will (whichever is best) and gain a +1 bonus on their resistance check per taunt attempt against them in the same encounter.

TEAMWORK — GENERAL, RANKED

You're more effective at helping out friends. When you use the aid action (see page 154), you grant a bonus 1 higher than usual for each rank in this feat, up to a maximum of 3 ranks (for an additional +3 bonus).

THROWING MASTERY — COMBAT, RANKED

You have a +1 damage bonus with thrown weapons per rank in this feat. You can also throw normally harmless objects—playing cards, pens, paper clips, and so forth—as weapons with a damage bonus equal to your rank, a range increment of 10 feet, and a maximum range of 50 feet. Your maximum damage bonus with this feat is limited by power level.

TRACK — SKILL

You can use the Survival skill to visually follow tracks like the Tracking Super-Sense (see page 104).

TRANCE — GENERAL

Through breathing and bodily control, you can slip into a deep trance. It takes a minute of uninterrupted meditation and a DC 15 Concentration check. While in the trance you add your Concentration bonus (not rank) to your Constitution score to determine how long you can hold your breath and you make Concentration checks rather than Constitution checks to avoid suffocation (see **Suffocation**, page 168). Poison and disease effects are suspended for the duration of the trance. It requires a Notice check with a DC equal to your Concentration check result to determine you're not dead. You are aware of your surroundings while in trance and can come out of the trance at any time at will. You cannot take any actions while in the trance.

ULTIMATE EFFORT — FORTUNE, RANKED

When spending a hero point on a particular task, you treat the roll as a 20 (meaning you don't need to roll the die at all, just apply a result of 20 to your modifier). This is not a natural 20, but is treated as a roll of 20 in all other respects. You choose the particular action the feat applies to when you acquire it and the GM must approve it. You can take Ultimate Effort multiple times, each time, it applies to a different action.

SAMPLE ULTIMATE EFFORTS

The following are potential Ultimate Efforts. The GM is free to add any others suitable to the campaign.

- **Ultimate Aim:** When you take the time to aim an attack (see **Aim**, page 154), you can spend a hero point to apply a 20 result to the attack roll. Since the Ultimate Aim bonus is not a natural 20, it also does not qualify as an automatic or critical hit.
- **Ultimate Save:** You can spend a hero point to apply a 20 result to a saving throw with one type of save (Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, or Will).
- **Ultimate Skill:** You can spend a hero point to apply a 20 result to checks with a particular skill.

UNCANNY DODGE — COMBAT, RANKED

You are especially attuned to danger. You retain your dodge bonus when surprised or flat-footed. You cannot be surprise attacked (see **Surprise Attack**, page 163). Uncanny Dodge does not prevent loss of your dodge bonus from anything other than being surprised or flat-footed, such as if you are immobilized, pinned, or helpless, or when you move all out, and so forth. It also does not protect against feints and other combat maneuvers.

Uncanny Dodge must belong to a particular sense type (see page 68). Opponents with total concealment from that sense type can surprise attack you normally. You can apply additional ranks of Uncanny Dodge to different sense types, if you wish (making it harder to overcome).

WEAPON BIND — COMBAT

If you successfully block an armed melee attack (see **Block**, page 155), you can make a disarm attempt immediately as a free action. The disarm attempt is carried out normally, including the attacker getting the opportunity to disarm you.

WEAPON BREAK — COMBAT

If you successfully block an armed melee attack (see **Block**, page 155), you can make an attack against the blocked weapon immediately as a free action. This requires an attack roll and inflicts normal damage to the weapon if it hits (see **Attacking Objects**, page 155, for details).

WELL-INFORMED — SKILL

You are exceptionally well-informed. When encountering an individual, group, or organization for the first time, you can make an immediate Gather Information check as a reaction to see if your character has heard something about the subject. This takes the place of a normal Knowledge check (if any). Use the guidelines for Gather Information checks (see page 48) to determine the level of information you gain, and the guidelines for Knowledge checks (see page 50) for the sorts of questions you can answer. You receive only one check per subject, although the GM may allow another upon encountering the subject again once significant time has passed.

FIGHTING STYLES

You can use combinations of feats to create different "fighting styles" ranging from martial arts to superhero combat techniques. For example, a "soft" fighting style focusing primarily on defense may include the feats Defensive Attack, Improved Block, Improved Defense, Improved Trip, and Instant Up. A "hard" fighting style focused on offense might include All-out Attack, Improved Critical, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, and Startle. You can combine various feats to create specific styles or allow players to mix-and-match to design their own unique styles.

Fighting styles also provide useful "shorthand" for summing up a number of combat feats on a character's sheet without having to list them all.

SAMPLE FIGHTING STYLES

Use the following feat combos as examples of how to create different fighting styles. Students who have not yet mastered a style may have only some of a style's associated feats rather than all of them.

- **Boxing** (6 points) All-out Attack, Defensive Attack, Elusive Target, Improved Block, Power Attack, Takedown Attack.
- **Judo** (7 points) Accurate Attack, Defensive Attack, Improved Disarm, Improved Grab, Improved Pin, Improved Trip, Stunning Attack.
- **Kung Fu** (8 points) Defensive Attack, Improved Block, Improved Critical, Improved Sunder, Improved Trip, Instant Up, Power Attack, Startle.
- **Sword-fighting** (7 points) Accurate Attack, Defensive Attack, Improved Block, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Taunt.
- **Wrestling** (5 points) Chokehold, Improved Escape, Improved Grab, Improved Pin, Power Attack.

CHAPTER 5: POWERS

Although some heroes and villains rely solely on skills and feats, most are set apart by their super-human *powers*. *Mutants & Masterminds* characters can lift tanks, fly through the air, throw lightning from their hands, shoot lasers from their eyes, or any number of other amazing things. These powers and many others are described in this chapter.

ACQUIRING POWERS

Players spend power points on various powers for their heroes, much like acquiring skills or other traits.

POWER COSTS

Powers are acquired in *ranks*, much like skill ranks. The more ranks a power has, the greater its effect. Each power has a standard cost per rank.

POWER MODIFIERS (EXTRAS & FLAWS)

Power modifiers change how a power works, making it more effective (an *extra*) or less effective (a *flaw*). Extras increase a power's cost per rank while flaws decrease it. For more information see **Power Modifiers,** on page 110.

POWER FEATS

Powers also have *power feats,* minor enhancements or additional things they can do, much like regular feats. Power feats have the same cost as regular feats: 1 power point each. For more information see **Power Feats**, page 108.

The final cost of a power is determined by base cost, modified by extras and flaws, multiplied by the power's rank, plus any power feats.

Power cost = (base cost + extras – flaws) × rank + power feats

POWER DESCRIPTORS

The rules in this chapter explain what the various powers do, that is, what their game effects are, but it is left up to the player and Gamemaster to apply *descriptors* to define exactly what a power is and what it looks (and sounds, and feels) like to observers.

A power's descriptors are primarily for color. It's more interesting and clear to say a hero has a "Flame Blast" or "Lightning Bolt" power than a generic "Blast." "Flame" and "lightning" are descriptors of the Blast power. Descriptors do have some impact on the game since some powers work only on or with effects of a particular descriptor. A hero may be immune to fire and heat, for example, so any effect with the "fire" or "heat" descriptor doesn't affect that character. The different sense types (see page 68) are descriptors pertaining to sensory and concealment powers. Different allegiances (see page 118) may also be descriptors.

Generally speaking, a descriptor is part of what a power is called beyond its game system name. For example, a weather-controlling heroine has the following powers: Blast, Environmental Control, and Obscure. Her Blast is the power to throw lightning bolts, so it has the descriptor "lightning." If a villain can absorb electricity, then his power works against the heroine's damage (since lightning is electrical in nature). Her Environmental Control is the power to control the weather, giving it the descriptor "weather." Obscure creates thick banks of fog, giving it the "fog" or "mist" descriptor. If an opponent transforms into mist, with the ability to regenerate in clouds or fog, he can regenerate inside the heroine's Obscure area. If the heroine's power comes as a gift from the gods, it may also have the descriptor "divine" or "magical." On the other hand, if it comes from her mutant genetic structure, then it has the descriptor "mutant."

The number of power descriptors is virtually limitless. The players and Gamemaster should cooperate to apply the appropriate descriptors to characters' powers and use common sense when dealing with how the different descriptors interact. Just because one hero throws "lightning" and an opponent can absorb "electricity" doesn't mean the villain's absorption doesn't work because it's not the exact same descriptor. Lightning is a form of electricity. A certain amount of flexibility is built into descriptors, allowing them to cover the full range of possible powers. As in all things, the GM is the final arbitrator and should be consistent when ruling on whether or not a particular descriptor is appropriate and how all powers and descriptors interact in the campaign.

The powers in this chapter provide additional examples of descriptors. Feel free to create as many of your own as desired.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTORS

- **Allegiances:** Anarchy, Chaos, Evil, Good, Justice, Law, Liberty, Tyranny
- **Elements:** Air, Earth, Fire, Plant, Water, Weather
- **Energy:** Acid, Chemical, Cold, Cosmic, Darkness, Electricity, Gravity, Heat, Kinetic, Light, Magnetic, Radiation, Sonic, Vibration
- **Phenomena:** Colors, Dimensions, Dreams, Entropy, Ideas, Luck, Memes, Mind, Quantum Forces, Space, Thought, Time
- **Sources:** Alien, Biological, Chi, Divine, Magic, Mystic, Mutant, Preternatural, Psionic, Psychic, Skill, Technology, Training

REQUIRED DESCRIPTORS

In some campaign settings, the Gamemaster may *require* certain descriptors for all powers. Usually, a required descriptor reflects some common element of the campaign. For example, if all characters with powers are mutants, then all powers have the "mutant" descriptor, unless the player comes up with a good explanation why they shouldn't. If all superhumans are psychic mutants, then all powers have both the "psychic" and "mutant" descriptors. Likewise, if all powers derive from quantum forces in some way, "quantum" might be a required descriptor. The GM sets the rules as far as what descriptors are required (or restricted) in the campaign.

NOTICING POWER EFFECTS

Instant, Concentration, and Sustained powers must be noticeable in some way. For example, a Blast effect might have a visible beam or make a loud noise (ZAP!), or both. Some powers are quite obvious, such as Flight, Insubstantiality, Growth, or Shrinking. Powers with a Continuous or Permanent duration do not need to be noticeable (although they can be, if you wish).

Steve Conley

If an Instant, Concentration, or Sustained power's duration is changed using power modifiers, it remains noticeable. So a Sustained Blast or Permanent Insubstantiality remains noticeable! A Continuous or Permanent power made Instant, Concentration, or Sustained duration becomes noticeable. The Subtle power feat (see page 110) can make noticeable powers difficult or impossible to detect. The Noticeable drawback (see page 127) makes a normally subtle power effect noticeable.

POWERS THAT AREN'T

"Powers" in *Mutants & Masterminds* refer to all extraordinary traits other than ability scores, skills, and feats. Whether a character with powers is "super-human" or not is largely a matter of opinion. For example, there are lots of comic book characters with superhuman traits still considered "normal" humans. Their amazing powers come from talent, training, self-discipline, devices, or some similar source, with appropriate descriptors. They're still "powers" in game terms, but they don't necessarily mean the character is something other than human.

Ultimately it's up to the GM to decide if having certain effects makes a character something "other than human," (and what, if anything, that means) depending on the nature of powers in the campaign setting.

POWER EFFECT TYPES

Powers have various effects, which fall into certain categories or types. Effects of the same type follow similar rules and provide descriptors for certain uses of powers. This section discusses the different effect types and the rules governing them.

ALTERATION

Alteration effects change or transform the body in some way. Most alteration effects work on their user, but can be modified to work on others as well. Alteration effects targeting other creatures require a standard action and an attack roll and offer a saving throw.

ATTACK

Attack effects are used offensively in combat. They require an attack roll and damage, hinder, or otherwise harm their target in some way. Attack effects require a standard action. Their duration is usually Instant, although their results—whether damage or hindrance—may linger until the target recovers from them. Attack effects *always* allow for a saving throw.

DEFENSE

Defense effects protect in various ways, typically offering a bonus to saving throws, or granting immunity to particular effects or conditions. Most defense effects work only on the user and are Permanent, functioning at all times (but also cannot be turned off or improved with extra effort).

GENERAL

General power effects don't fit into any particular category. They're not governed by any special rules other than those given in the effect's description.

MENTAL

Mental effects influence the mind. Any power requiring an initial Will saving throw is considered a mental effect.

Mental effects are unnoticeable except to characters with mental senses like mental awareness (see **Super-Senses**, page 102). However, the target of a mental effect can sense it, and the effect's source, unless the effect has the Subtle power feat (see page 110). So the target of Mind Reading, for example, can sense the mental intrusion, and has a feeling where it is coming from, unless the Mind Reading power is Subtle.

MOVEMENT

Movement effects allow characters to get around in various ways. There are three types of movement: normal move, accelerated move, and all out movement. A normal move is a move action and allows you to move your speed. An accelerated move is a full action (two move actions) and doubles your speed. All out movement is also a full action and quadruples your speed. You lose your dodge bonus while moving all out but gain a Defense bonus based on your speed (see **Movement Pace**, page 33).

Movement powers always require at least a move action to use, but the move action is counted as part of the character's normal movement.

SENSORY

Sensory effects enhance or alter the senses. Some sensory effects improve the user's senses while others grant new senses or fool the senses in some way.

SENSE TYPES

Senses are grouped into *sense types*, descriptors for how different sensory effects work. The different sense types, and the senses included in them, are:

- **Visual:** normal sight, darkvision, infravision, low-light vision, microscopic vision, ultravision, X-Ray vision
- **Auditory:** normal hearing, blindsight (sonar), ultrasonic hearing
- **Olfactory:** normal smell and taste, scent
- **Tactile:** normal touch, blindsight (vibration), tremorsense
- **Radio:** blindsight (radar), radio
- **Mental:** blindsight (mental), ESP, mental awareness, Mind Reading, Precognition, Postcognition
- **Special:** the catchall for other sensory descriptors not given above, including unusual senses or exotic descriptors like cosmic, gravitic, magical, and so forth.

TRAIT

Trait effects influence a target's traits: abilities, saves, skills, powers, and so forth. Most trait effects are touch range and require a standard action. Trait effects don't work on traits with the Innate power feat (see page 109).

TRAIT TYPES

Traits are grouped into *trait types*, descriptors for how different trait effects work. The different trait types, and the traits included in them, are:

- **Abilities:** all ability scores and saving throws
- **Skills:** all skills, attack bonus, and defense bonus
- **Feats:** all feats
- **Powers:** Each power effect type is considered a separate trait type. Alternately, all powers of a particular descriptor (regardless of effect type) may be considered a single trait type.

HOW POWERS WORK

Using powers is a fairly simple matter. Some powers work automatically, with effects given in their descriptions. Other powers—particularly those affecting other people—require some effort, an attack roll, or a power check to use. Powers affecting others allow saving throws against their effects.

POWER CHECKS

In some cases, you may be required to make a *power check* to determine how well a power works. A power check is just like any other check: d20, plus the power's rank, plus any applicable modifiers, against a Difficulty Class set by the Gamemaster. Unlike skill checks, ability modifiers are not added to power checks. The results of various power checks are described in this chapter.

Power Check = d20 + power rank + modifiers vs. Difficulty Class

TAKING 10 AND 20 ON POWER CHECKS

You can take 10 on a power check if you are not under pressure, the same as with a skill check. You can take 20 on a power check if you are not under pressure and there is no penalty for failure, also the same as a skill check. Taking 20 requires 20 times the usual time to make the power check.

OPPOSED POWER CHECKS

In some cases, usually when one power is used directly against another, an opposed check is called for (see **Opposed Checks**, page 9). If a contest is entirely a matter of who's power is greater, a comparison check (see page) is called for; the character with the higher power rank wins automatically.

POWER VS. SKILL CHECKS

On occasion a power may be opposed by a skill or vice versa. This is a normal opposed check, comparing the power's check result against the skill's check result. The same is true when an ability score opposes a power (and vice versa).

ACTION

Using a power requires a particular amount of time. Some require a full round or longer. See **Actions**, page 153, for details about the different types of actions. Power modifiers may change the action a power requires.

- **Reaction:** It requires no action to use the power. It operates automatically in response to something else, such as an attack.
- **Free:** It requires a free action to use or activate the power. Once a power is activated or deactivated, it remains so until your next round. As with all free actions, the GM may limit the total number of powers a hero can turn on or off in a single round.
- **Move:** Using the power requires a move action. For powers with movement effects, the power use is part of the character's movement that round
- **Standard:** Using the power requires a standard action.
- **Full:** Using the power requires a full-round action. Some powers require more than a full action to use, as given in the power's description.

RANGE

Each power has a default range, which may be changed by power modifiers.

- **Personal:** The power works only on you, the user.
- **Touch:** The power works on anyone or anything you can touch. Touching an unwilling subject requires an unarmed attack roll against the subject's Defense.
- **Ranged:** The power works at a distance with a range increment of (rank × 10 feet) and a maximum range of ten increments. So a ranged rank 10 power has a range increment of 100 feet and a maximum range of 1,000 feet. A ranged power suffers a –2 penalty to attack rolls for every range increment past the first.
- **Perception:** The power works on any target you can perceive with an accurate sense, such as sight (see **Super-Senses**, page 102, for more on accurate senses), without any need for an attack roll. If the target has total cover or concealment from your accurate senses, your power cannot affect it. The GM may require a Notice check to determine if you can perceive the target sufficiently to affect it with a perception range power. Since perception range powers do not require attack rolls, they cannot score critical hits.
- **Extended:** The power works at a fixed range determined by its rank, as shown on the **Extended Range Table**.

EXTENDED RANGE

Rank	Range
1	10 feet
2	100 feet
3	1,000 feet
4	1 mile
5	5 miles
6	20 miles
7	200 miles
8	2,000 miles – continental
9	20,000 miles – anywhere on Earth
10	200,000 miles – Earth to the Moon (approximately)
11	2 million miles
12	20 million miles
13	200 million miles
14	2 billion miles
15	Anywhere in the same solar system
16	Nearby star systems
17	Distant star systems
18	Anywhere in the same galaxy
19	Nearby galaxies
20	Anywhere in the universe

DURATION

Each power lasts for a particular amount of time, which may be changed by power modifiers.

- **Instant:** The power's effect occurs and ends instantly, although its results may linger. Most attack effects are Instant; the attack's effect happens immediately, although it may take some time for the target to recover.
- **Concentration:** The power lasts as long as you concentrate on maintaining it. Concentration is a standard action (see **Standard Actions**, page 154) and distractions may cause your concentration to lapse (see the **Concentration** skill, page 44, for details). If your concentration lapses (voluntarily or because of a failed Concentration check) the power stops working. You can maintain a Concentration power as a move action rather than a standard action with a Concentration skill check (DC 10 + power rank) once per round. A failed check means the power lapses.
- **Sustained:** The power lasts as long as you wish, requiring only a free action each round to maintain it. If you are incapable of taking free actions (stunned or unconscious, for example), the power turns off. You can maintain a Sustained power as a reaction (allowing you to attempt to maintain it if you are stunned, for example) with a Concentration skill check (DC 10 + power rank). A failed check means the power lapses.
- **Continuous:** The power lasts as long as you wish, without any concentration or effort on your part. Once activated, it stays that way until you deactivate it, even if you are stunned or knocked out.

TIME AND VALUE PROGRESSION

Rank	Time	Value
1	3 seconds (1 action)	1
2	6 seconds (1 round)	2
3	1 minute (10 rounds)	5
4	5 minutes	10
5	20 minutes	25
6	1 hour	50
7	5 hours	100
8	1 day	250
9	1 week	500
10	1 month	1,000
11	3 months	2,500
12	1 year	5,000
13	5 years	10,000
14	10 years (decade)	25,000
15	50 years	50,000
16	100 years (century)	100,000
17	500 years	250,000
18	1,000 years (millennium)	500,000
19	5,000 years	1 million
20	10,000 years	2.5 million

- **Lasting:** A Lasting duration denotes a power with a lasting effect the target must recover from by making additional saving throws, with a cumulative +1 bonus per previous save. A successful save ends the power's effect. An Instant Lasting power allows a new saving throw each round on the initiative count when the effect occurred. A Concentration Lasting power allows a new save for each interval on the **Time and Value Progression Table** (see below) that passes, starting one minute after the power takes effect. A Sustained Lasting power allows new saves at the same intervals, except it requires only a free action to maintain, and if you concentrate during a time interval (taking a standard action each round), the subject does not gain the cumulative +1 save bonus for that interval. If you stop maintaining a Sustained Lasting power, its effects continue until the target successfully saves to shake off the power's effects. A Continuous Lasting power does not allow new saves against it at all; it lasts until the power's effect is countered or reversed in some way, even if you switch to an Alternate Power (see page 108).
- **Permanent:** The power is always active and *cannot* be turned off, even if you want to. A Permanent power cannot be improved using extra effort (see page 120). Permanent powers can only counter other powers at the GM's discretion (see **Countering Powers**, below).

PROGRESSION

Many power effects are measured in time, distance, area, mass affected, and so forth. The **Time and Value Progression Table** handles these measurements for effects in *Mutants & Masterminds*. Uses of the table are referenced in the individual power and modifier descriptions in this chapter.

SAVING THROW

Powers affecting other characters allow a saving throw to resist. The type of save (Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, or Will) depends on the power and its modifiers. The DC of the saving throw is 10 + the power's rank. So the DC of a Reflex save against a rank 12 Snare is 22 (10 + rank 12). Toughness saves have a DC of 15 + the attack's damage bonus (usually equal to the power's rank).

A successful save means there is no effect. In some cases, the target's saving throw bonus increases the DC of the power check, which may reduce or eliminate the power's effect.

Saving Throw Difficulty Class = 10 + power rank

Willing characters can forgo their saving throw against a power, if they wish. This includes characters who *think* they're receiving a beneficial effect, even if they're not! You can't forgo Toughness saves.

Immunity (see page 89) allows characters to automatically succeed on saving throws against certain effects.

COUNTERING POWERS

In some circumstances the effects of one power may *counter* another, negating it. Generally two powers must have opposed descriptors to counter each other. For example, light and darkness powers can counter each other, as can heat and cold, water and fire, and so forth. In some cases, such as with mental effects, powers of the same descriptor can also counter each other. The GM is the final arbiter as to whether or not a power of a particular descriptor can counter another. The Nullify power (see page 94) can counter any power of a particular descriptor or even any power at all!

HOW COUNTERING WORKS

To counter a power, you must take the ready action (see page 158). In doing so, you wait to complete your action until your opponent tries to use a power. You may still move, since ready is a standard action.

You must be able to use the readied power as a standard, move, or free action. Powers usable as a reaction do not require a ready action; you can use them to counter at any time. Powers requiring a full action or longer cannot counter another power in combat (although they may counter ongoing effects, see the following section).

If an opponent attempts to use a power you are able to counter, use your countering power as your readied action. You and the opposing character make power checks (d20 + power rank). If you win, your two powers cancel each other out and there is no effect from either. If the opposing character wins, your attempt to counter is unsuccessful. The opposing power works normally.

> ***Example:*** *Siren, goddess of the seas, is fighting the White Knight. The hate-mongering villain hurls a Blast of white-hot fire. Having prepared an action, Siren's player says she wants to counter White Knight's fire Blast with her water powers. The GM agrees the two powers should be able to counter each other, so he asks Siren's player to make a Water Control check, while he makes a power check for White Knight. Siren's player rolls a result of 26 while the GM rolls a result of 19 for White Knight. Siren successfully counters the flame Blast, which fizzles out in a gout of steam.*

COUNTERING ONGOING EFFECTS

You can also use one power to counter the ongoing or lasting effect of a power, or the lingering results of an Instant power (like flames ignited by a fiery Blast). This requires a normal use of the countering power and an opposed power check, as above. If you are successful, you negate the effect (although the opposing character can attempt to re-establish it normally).

> ***Example:*** *Mastermind has placed Johnny Rocket under his Mind Control. Lady Liberty has the power to break such bonds (the Nullify power). She shines the light of liberty on her teammate and makes a power check (d20 + her Nullify rank). The GM makes a power check of d20 + Mastermind's Mind Control rank. If Lady Liberty wins, Johnny is free of Mastermind's control. If she fails, the Freedom League will have to come up with another plan to neutralize their super-fast teammate without hurting him.*

INSTANT COUNTERING

You can spend a hero point to counter another power as a reaction, without the need to ready an action to do so. See **Hero Points**, page 121, for details.

> ***Example:*** *The witch Seven and her teammates face off against Malador the Mystic, who hurls a powerful spell at them. Seven's player chooses to spend a hero point, allowing Seven a shot at countering the incoming spell with her own Magic before it hits. She and Malador make power checks (d20 + Magic rank). Seven manages to win and block the necromancer's spell... this time.*

POWER DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes various powers available in *Mutants & Masterminds*. Here is the format for power descriptions:

POWER NAME

Effect:	**Action:**
Range:	**Duration:**
Cost:	

Effect: The type of effect the power has.
Action: The action required to use the power.
Range: The range at which the power functions.
Duration: The power's duration. Lasting powers have "(Lasting)" listed after their duration.
Cost: How many power points the power costs per rank.
Saving Throw: The saving throw used to resist the power's effects.
A description of the power and what it does in game terms follows.

POWER FEATS

A listing of any power feats relevant to the power.

EXTRAS

A listing of any extras relevant to the power.

FLAWS

A listing of any flaws relevant to the power.

If any of these entries do not apply, they are omitted. So if a power does not require or allow a saving throw, for example, the saving throw entry is absent. Likewise, if a power has no particular extras associated with it, the extras entry is omitted.

ABSORPTION (PHYSICAL/ENERGY)

Effect: Trait/Defense	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 4 points per rank	

You can absorb a particular type of damage and use its energy to improve a trait or heal yourself.

Choose physical or energy damage. Subtract your Absorption rank from the damage bonus of the affected attack. If the remaining bonus is +0 or greater, make a normal Toughness save against the remaining damage bonus, otherwise you ignore the attack's damage completely. Your Absorption rank counts as a bonus to your Toughness saves for power level purposes.

After absorbing damage, as a reaction, you can immediately use Boost (see page 77) on a particular trait or Healing (see page 87) on yourself, at a rank equal to your Absorption rank or the absorbed attack's damage bonus, whichever is less. Choose which effect you want during character creation; if you

ALTERNATE POWERS

A particularly important power feat is Alternate Power, which allows you to use one power to essentially duplicate the effects of another. So, for example, you can use your Telekinesis to create a powerful kinetic blast, or your Fire Control to forms sculptures of flame. Many of the powers in this chapter list potential Alternate Power feats suitable to the power's effects. The listing in the Power Feats section describes Alternate Powers in detail but the important limitations to keep in mind is that a set of Alternate Powers (called an array) must all have the same costs and you can only use one of them at full power at any one time.

POWERS

Name	Effect	Action	Range	Duration	Save	Cost
Absorption	Trait/Defense	Reaction	Personal	Continuous	–	4/rank
Adaptation	Alteration	Full	Personal	Continuous	–	6/rank
Additional Limbs	Alteration	Reaction	Personal	Permanent	–	1/rank
(Alternate) Form	Alteration	Free	Personal	Varies	–	5/rank
Anatomic Separation	Alteration	Move	Personal	Continuous	–	2/rank
Animal Control	Mental	Standard	Perception	Sustained (L)	Will	2/rank
Animal Mimicry	Trait	Free	Personal	Continuous	–	9/rank
Animate Objects	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	–	3/rank
Astral Form	Sensory	Standard	Extended	Sustained	–	5/rank
Blast	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Tough	2/rank
Boost (Trait)	Trait	Standard	Touch	Instant	–	1-5/rank
Burrowing	Movement	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Cold Control	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	Fort	2/rank
Communication	Sensory	Free	Extended	Sustained	–	1/rank
Comprehend	Sensory	Reaction	Personal	Continuous	–	2/rank
Concealment	Sensory	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	2/rank
Confuse	Mental	Standard	Perception	Instant (L)	Will	1/rank
Corrosion	Attack	Standard	Touch	Instant	Fort/Tough	2/rank
Cosmic Energy Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Tough	2/rank
Create Object	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	Ref	2/rank
Darkness Control	Sensory	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	–	2/rank
Datalink	Sensory	Free	Extended	Sustained	–	1/rank
Dazzle	Sensory	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Ref/Fort	1-4/rank
Deflect	Defense	Standard	Touch	Instant	–	1-3/rank
Density	Alteration	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	3/rank
Device	General	Reaction	Personal	Innate	–	3-4/rank
Dimensional Pocket	Movement	Standard/Move	Touch	Instant (L)	Ref/Will	2/rank
Disintegration	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Fort/Tough	4/rank
Drain (Trait)	Trait	Standard	Touch	Instant	Fort	1-5/rank
Duplication	Alteration	Standard	Personal	Sustained	–	2/rank
Electrical Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	–	2/rank
(Element) Control	General	Standard	Perception	Sustained	–	2/rank
Elongation	Alteration	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Emotion Control	Mental	Standard	Perception	Sustained (L)	Will	2/rank
Enhanced Ability	Ability	Reaction	Personal	Continuous	–	1/rank
Environmental Control	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	Varies	1-2/rank
ESP	Sensory	Move	Extended	Concentration	–	1-4/rank
Fatigue	Attack	Standard	Touch	Instant	Fort	2/rank
Flight	Movement	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	2/rank
Force Field	Defense	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Friction Control	Attack	Standard	Perception	Instant	Ref	3/rank
Gestalt	Alteration	Full	Personal	Continuous	–	1/rank
Gravity Control	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	–	2/rank
Growth	Alteration	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	3/rank
Healing	Alteration	Full	Touch	Instant	–	2/rank
Hellfire Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Tough	2/rank
Illusion	Sensory	Standard	Perception	Concentration	Will	1-4/rank
Immovable	Defense	Reaction	Personal	Permanent	–	1/rank
Immunity	Defense	Reaction	Personal	Permanent	–	1/rank
Insubstantial	Alteration	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	5/rank
Invisibility	Sensory	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	4 or 8
Kinetic Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Tough	2/rank
Leaping	Movement	Move	Personal	Instant	–	1/rank
Life Control	General	Standard	Perception	Instant (L)	–	4/rank

Powers with (L) listed after their duration are Lasting powers.

POWERS

Name	Effect	Action	Range	Duration	Save	Cost
Light Control	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	–	2/rank
Luck Control	General	Reaction	Perception	Instant	–	3/rank
Magic	General	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Varies	2/rank
Magnetic Control	General	Standard	Perception	Sustained	–	2/rank
Mental Blast	Attack/Mental	Standard	Perception	Instant	Will	4/rank
Mimic (Trait)	Alteration	Standard	Touch	Sustained	–	1-5/rank
Mind Control	Mental	Standard	Perception	Concentration (L)	Will	2/rank
Mind Reading	Mental	Standard/Full	Perception	Concentration (L)	Will	1/rank
Mind Shield	Defense/Mental	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Mind Switch	Mental	Standard	Perception	Sustained (L)	Will	2/rank
Morph	Alteration	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	1-3/rank
Nauseate	Attack	Standard	Touch	Instant (L)	Fort	2/rank
Nemesis	Trait	Free	Perception	Continuous	–	8/rank
Nullify (Power)	Trait	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Will	1-3/rank
Object Mimicry	Trait	Move	Touch	Sustained	–	6/rank
Obscure	Sensory	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	–	1-4/rank
Paralyze	Attack	Standard	Touch	Instant (L)	Will	2/rank
Plant Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Ref	2/rank
Plasma Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Tough	2/rank
Possession	Mental	Standard	Perception	Sustained (L)	Will	4/rank
Power Control	Mental	Standard	Perception	Sustained (L)	Will	2/rank
Protection	Defense	Reaction	Personal	Permanent	–	1/rank
Quickness	General	Free	Personal	Continuous	–	1/rank
Radiation Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Tough	2/rank
Regeneration	Alteration	Reaction	Personal	Permanent	–	1/rank
Sensory Shield	Defense	Reaction	Personal	Permanent	–	1-2/rank
Shapeshift	Alteration	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	8/rank
Shield	Defense	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Shrinking	Alteration	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Snare	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Ref	2/rank
Sonic Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Ref	2/rank
Space Travel	Movement	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Spatial Control	Movement	Move	Personal	Instant	–	2/rank
Speed	Movement	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Spinning	Defense	Free	Personal	Sustained	–	2/rank
Strike	Attack	Standard	Touch	Instant	Tough	1/rank
Stun	Attack	Standard	Touch	Instant (L)	Fort	2/rank
Suffocate	Attack	Standard	Touch	Concentration	Fort	2/rank
Summon (Minion)	General	Standard	Touch	Sustained	–	2/rank
Super-Movement	Movement	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	2/rank
Super-Senses	Sensory	Free	Personal	Permanent	–	1/rank
Super-Speed	Movement	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	5/rank
Super-Strength	General	Reaction	Personal	Continuous	–	2/rank
Swimming	Movement	Move	Personal	Sustained	–	1/rank
Telekinesis	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	–	2/rank
Telepathy	Mental/Sensory	Standard	Per/Ext	Concentration (L)	–	2/rank
Teleport	Movement	Move	Personal	Instant	–	2/rank
Time Control	Movement	Move	Ranged	Sustained	–	7/rank
Transfer	Trait	Standard	Touch	Instant	Fort	2-10/rank
Transform	Alteration	Standard	Ranged	Sustained (L)	Fort	3-6/rank
Trip	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	–	1/rank
Vibration Control	Attack	Standard	Ranged	Instant	Tough	2/rank
Weather Control	General	Standard	Ranged	Sustained	Fort	2/rank

Powers with (L) listed after their duration are Lasting powers.

choose Boost, you must also determine what trait it will be applied to. Your Boost can increase a power you don't normally have–such as Blast–granting you temporary use of that power. If an Absorption Healing attempt fails, you can try again the next time you absorb energy (rather than having to wait or spend a hero point like Healing normally requires).

You can acquire the other effect of Absorption as an Alternate Power feat, but you can't use both at the same time. So if you have the ability to Boost, you can acquire Healing as a power feat, but have to choose one effect or the other (Boost or Healing) each time you absorb energy. You can also acquire different forms of Boost as Alternate Powers, or apply Boost modifiers to your Absorption for a broader boosting effect. See **Boost**, page 77, for details.

POWER FEATS

- **Energy Conversion:** You can convert absorbed energy from one type to another (sound into light, or kinetic energy into heat, for example). This allows you to absorb one type of energy and project another, if you have a Blast power (or if your Absorption Boost grants you a Blast power).
- **Slow Fade:** This power feat reduces the rate at which your stored energy fades (see page 110).

EXTRAS

- **Both Types (+1):** You absorb physical and energy damage, not just one or the other.
- **Energy Storage (+1):** You can "store" absorbed energy. Each attack gives you energy equal to the damage bonus your Absorption stops. You can have up to (rank × 10) energy points at once (excess energy dissipates harmlessly). Stored energy harmlessly "bleeds off" at a rate of 1 point per round. You can reduce this rate with the Slow Fade feat. You can use your stored energy points to fuel your other absorption effects (Boost or Healing) as desired on a 1 point per rank basis. The Progression feat (see page 110) increases your storage capacity by one multiple per application (×11, ×12, and so forth).
- **Power Magnet (+1):** You can absorb energy from suitable sources (such as bonfires, generators, speakers, and so forth) at a distance of (power rank × 100 feet) with a ranged attack roll. It takes a standard action to absorb energy in this way. Reduce the power source's output that round by your power rank and gain energy equal to its rank or your power rank, whichever is less. This extra allows you to use Absorption to counter powers or the appropriate type at a distance and absorb their energy (see **Countering Powers**, page 70).

FLAWS

- **Limited (–2):** Your Absorption affects only a specific type of energy, such as cold, electricity, heat, radiation, and so forth.

ADAPTATION

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Full
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 6 points per rank	

You can adapt to changing conditions. When you encounter a hostile environment, you acquire the powers you need to function in that environment, up to (rank × 5) power points worth. No adapted power can have a rank higher than your Adaptation rank. So you might acquire aquatic traits when submerged in water, for example or become denser (and therefore stronger) on a heavy gravity world (see **Density**, page 81). Immunity (see

page 89) is a particularly common Adaptation power. You can suggest Adaptation powers, but the GM has final approval. Your Adaptation only functions once per round; it can't adapt to changing conditions faster than that. It takes a full round to adapt to a new environment, during which you cannot take any other action. This means you can't adapt to attacks, because the power doesn't react quickly enough.

EXTRAS

- **Reaction (+4):** You can adapt to any harmful effect, including attacks, once per round as a reaction. Usually, you acquire Immunity to that effect, provided the required Immunity rank is less than or equal to your Adaptation rank. So if you are hit with a flame Blast, you adapt Immunity to Fire, for example. If you're hit with multiple harmful effects in the same round, you only adapt to the first one. You can choose to delay your Adaptation (consciously overriding it) if you wish to adapt to a later attack in the round.

ADDITIONAL LIMBS

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Permanent
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You have one or more additional limbs, such as arms, legs, tentacles, or a prehensile tail. You have one extra limb at rank 1. Each additional rank moves the number of extra limbs one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. Additional Limbs do *not* allow you to take extra actions in a round, although they do provide the benefits of the Improved Grapple feat (see page 62) and may make you more resistant to trip attacks (if they make your stance more stable, see **Trip**, page 159). All limbs except your dominant limb are considered your "off-hand." If you have the Ambidexterity feat, you have no off-hand penalties with any of your limbs.

(ALTERNATE) FORM

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Varies
Cost: 5 points per rank	

You can exist in a form other than mere flesh and blood, giving you additional traits. It requires a free action to change into or out of your Alternate Form and you can do so once per round.

You have 5 power points per Alternate Form rank to apply to powers related to your form. Once you choose your Alternate Form's traits, they are fixed and do not change. No Alternate Form power can have a rank greater than your Alternate Form rank. Your non-Instant Alternate Form powers must all have the same duration, which determines your Alternate Form's duration.

- **Energy:** You are made up of energy, such as fire or electricity. Apply your points to Blast, Flight, Immunity, Insubstantial 3, Strike (Aura), and Teleport (Medium –1).
- **Gaseous:** You are a cloud of gas, like fog or mist. Apply your points to Concealment, Flight, Immunity, Insubstantial 2, and Suffocate.
- **Ghost:** You are incorporeal and invisible, largely unaffected by the physical world. Apply your points to Concealment, Flight, Immunity, and Insubstantial 4.
- **Liquid:** You are made up of liquid (such as water) apply your points to Blast, Concealment (Limited to underwater –1), Elongation, Immunity, Insubstantial 1, Suffocate, and Swimming.
- **Particulate:** Your body is composed of a granular or particulate substance like sand, dust, salt, and so forth. Apply your points to Blast, Elongation, Immunity, Insubstantial 1, Strike, and Super-Movement (slithering).
- **Shadow:** You transform into a living shadow. Apply your points to Concealment (visual, Limited to areas of shadow –1), Fatigue (chilling touch), Immunity, Insubstantial 4, and Super-Movement (slithering, wall-crawling).
- **Solid:** You are made up of a hard substance like stone or metal. Apply your points to Density, Immunity, and Protection.
- **Swarm:** Your "body" is actually thousands of other tiny creatures: insects, worms, even little robots. Apply your points to Blast, Flight, Immunity, Insubstantial 2, Strike, and Super-Movement (slithering, wall-crawling).
- **Two-Dimensional:** You can flatten yourself to become almost infinitely thin. Apply your points to Concealment (visual, Limited to one side –1), Insubstantial 1 (for slipping through narrow spaces), Strike (Penetrating), and Super-Movement (slithering).

Example: *Kate is playing Nereid, who has the power to transform into water. She has Alternate Form 6. Kate assigns the 30 power points from Nereid's Alternate Form as follows: Insubstantial 1 (5 points), Concealment 4 (visual, Limited to underwater –1, 4 points), Immunity 9 (life support, Sustained +0, 9 points), Swimming 3 (3 points), and Suffocate 4 (8 points). She puts the remaining point into the Environmental Adaptation (underwater) feat with the GM's permission. Since all her non-Instant powers are Sustained, her Alternate Form has a Sustained duration as well.*

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** Since you can only exist in one alternate form at a time, you can take any other alternate form with an equal or lesser cost as an Alternate Power feat of the first (switching between forms as a free action once per round).

ANATOMIC SEPARATION

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can split off parts of your body and keep all of the parts functioning relatively normally. The process of separation causes you no harm, although it can be disconcerting to watch. You can split off a number of segments equal to your power rank; so rank 1 might allow you to detach a hand, arm, or foot (or even your head). Rank 5 could allow you to detach all your limbs (including your head), and so forth. You choose how you separate when you acquire the power and it cannot be changed. Separating your segments, or reassembling them, requires a move action.

Your separate parts remain fully functional, so you can see out of a separated eye, manipulate things with a separated hand, and so forth. Separated parts are limited to whatever movement their form allows, so a hand can crawl and a leg can hop, for example, an eyeball can even roll, but a separated head or torso isn't capable of much movement. You can use movement powers (such as Flight) in conjunction with your separated parts. Separate parts have modifiers based on their size (see **Size**, page 34).

Each segment gets a move action each round, but you can only take one standard action among them, regardless of how many segments you

break into. The GM assesses any suitable modifiers to your actions based on your current state of disassembly.

Separated parts have your normal Toughness save, but any failed save renders a separated part staggered or disabled. A second failed save renders the separate part immobile. When the damaged part is reattached, remove its damage and add a bruised or injured condition to your character's damage track. Your recover from this damage normally.

EXTRAS

- **Variable Split (+1):** You can choose how you separate each time you use your power. For example, at rank 1 you can choose to detach any one body part.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Sustained (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can exert mental control over animals (creatures with Int 1 or 2). See **Animals** on page 229 for some guidelines. Make a power check against the result of the animal's Will saving throw. If you succeed, you control the animal's actions. If you fail, there is no effect. You can try again, but the animal gets a cumulative +1 on Will saves for each successive attempt in the same encounter.

Issuing a command to an animal you control is a move action and requires you to speak or gesture. You can only issue simple commands an animal can understand, like "go there," "stop," or "attack."

Animals get a new Will save for each interval on the **Time and Value Progression Table**, with a cumulative +1 bonus per save. Animals commanded to carry out an action against their nature get a new Will save immediately with a +1 to +4 bonus, depending on the type of command. Success breaks your control. Obviously self-destructive commands are automatically ignored, but do not break your control.

POWER FEATS

- **Mental Link:** You can give commands to controlled animals telepathically over any distance (with no need to speak).

EXTRAS

- **Sensory Link (+1):** You can perceive everything one of your controlled animals does. Your own senses are inactive while you are using your sensory link.

FLAWS

- **Limited (–1):** You can only control particular kinds of animals, such as avians, sea-life, or reptiles.

ANIMAL MIMICRY

Effect: Trait	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 9 points per rank	

You can gain the traits of any animal. See **Animals** on page 229 for some guidelines. You get the animal's physical ability scores and skills bonuses (if they are higher than yours), feats, and powers, up to a total of (rank × 5) power points. No bonus or rank can be higher than your power rank. You can change animal subjects once per round as a free action. So one round you can mimic the speed and agility of a cheetah, then the strength of an elephant, the claws of a tiger, and the soaring flight of an eagle on subsequent rounds. You can only mimic one animal at a time.

EXTRAS

- **Extra Subject (+1):** You can mimic the traits of two animals at once. Multiple traits of the same type do not stack, use only the highest bonus. Each additional application of this extra moves the maximum number of animals you can mimic at once one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (5 subjects, then 10, 25, etc.).
- **Stacking (+1):** Your mimicked traits stack to a limited degree. You gain the highest mimicked trait and increase it by +1 each time you mimic the same trait. So, if you mimic three animals, all with great Strength, you take the highest Strength rank and add +2 for the other two subjects. The total stacked bonus still cannot exceed your power rank.

FLAWS

- **Subject Required (–1):** You require an animal subject to mimic, so you cannot mimic any animal, just those within (power rank) miles of you. Your power is very effective in a jungle or zoo, less so in a downtown urban environment.

ANIMATE OBJECTS

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 3 points per rank	

You can imbue objects with animation and a semblance of life, making them constructs under your control (see **Constructs**, page 148). Create the object as a construct with (rank × 15) total power points, or see **Chapter 11** for some sample constructs. Constructs are subject to the campaign's power level limits. The object gains movement according to its form: statues can get up and walk, for example, rugs can crawl, balls roll, cars drive, etc.

POWER FEATS

- **Progression:** Each time you apply this feat, move the total number of objects you can animate at once one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (2, 5, 10, etc.). You can still only animate one object per standard action.

EXTRAS

- **Additional Type (+1/+2):** You can animate things other than solid objects. Choose one of the following: gases (including air), images (pictures, including drawings, paintings, and photographs), liquids (including water), and shadows. For a +2 modifier you can animate all of these other types of things. You are still limited to animating things with a power level no greater than your power rank and power points no greater than your rank × 15. Alternately, you can substitute an additional type for solid objects for a +0 modifier, making your power into Animate Images or Animate Shadows, for example.
- **Horde (+1):** You can animate your maximum number of objects with one standard action. You must have the Progression power feat to take this extra.

FLAWS

- **Limited (–1):** You can only animate one type of object, such as corpses (creating zombies), machines, natural earth and stone, and so forth.

ASTRAL FORM

Effect: Sensory | **Action:** Standard
Range: Extended | **Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 5 points per rank

You can separate your astral form—your mind, spirit, or life force—from your physical body. Your body sinks into a coma while your astral form is free to move about on its own. Your astral form is invisible and incorporeal, immune to physical effects, and able to pass freely through material objects.

You can move a distance away from your body based on your power rank on the **Extended Range** table (see page 69). You can move anywhere within your maximum range instantly as a move action. Others can sense the presence of your astral form (a general sense of a presence or being watched) with a Notice check (DC 10 + rank), unless you have the Subtle power feat (see page 110). Characters with Mental Awareness (see page 103) can perceive your astral form automatically (as if you were visible) unless it is Subtle. Your astral form has your normal visual, auditory, and mental senses.

While in astral from, you can become visible at will and mentally speak with other people. This is a mental effect, visible only to creatures with all three mental ability scores. You can apply the Selective feat (see page 110) to make your astral form visible and audible to only some people and not others. Mental and sensory effects work on your astral form, and you can use your own mental and sensory effects on the physical world while in astral form.

While your astral form is away, you are unaware of your physical body, although you immediately know if your body suffers any damage. You can return to your body instantly at any time as a free action.

POWER FEATS

- **Dimensional:** Your astral form can travel to other dimensions: one other dimension with one application of this feat, a related group of dimensions with two, and any dimension in the setting with three.

BLAST

Effect: Attack | **Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged | **Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank | **Saving Throw:** Toughness

You can make a damaging ranged attack. It might be a blast of energy, a projectile (arrow, bullet, throwing blade, etc.), or some similar effect. You make a ranged attack roll to hit the target. The attack's damage equals your power rank.

BOOST (TRAIT)

Effect: Trait | **Action:** Standard
Range: Touch | **Duration:** Instant
Cost: 1-5 points per rank

You can improve a trait or traits temporarily. You can boost yourself or other characters by touch.

Take a standard action to use Boost. Each rank improves the targeted trait by 1 power point. These temporary points fade at a rate of 1 per round until they are gone (this rate can be slowed using the Slow Fade power feat, page 110).

UNDER THE HOOD: BOOST

Boost poses two primary concerns in play. The first is the campaign's power level limits. Generally, the GM shouldn't allow Boost to improve the heroes' traits beyond these limits. The second is using Boost to improve all of the hero's traits at once for a bargain price. Gamemasters should be cautious about allowing this type of Boost. Heroes who rely on some outside source of power, occasionally losing their powers rather than having them fade, should consider the Power Loss drawback (see **Drawbacks**, page 127).

You can boost the trait again before the temporary power points have faded, but boosts are not cumulative; only the highest-ranked one applies to any given trait. So combining Boost 3 and Boost 8 results in an increase of 8 power points, not 11, and applying Boost 10 to a trait after 5 power points have faded raises the temporary power points back to 10, not 15. The cost per rank determines the effects of Boost:

- **1 point:** Boost affects a single trait, chosen when the power is acquired (such as Strength, the Blast power, etc.). If the subject does not have the targeted trait they may gain it temporarily, at the GM's discretion. To affect a list of specific traits, one at a time, acquire different Boosts as Alternate Power feats.
- **2 points:** Boost can affect any trait suiting your descriptors, one at a time. If the subject does not have the targeted trait they may gain it temporarily, at the GM's discretion.
- **3 points:** Boost affects all of a narrow group of traits at once (ability scores, skills, feats, or one type of power such as attack effects, movement effects, or powers of a specific descriptor). Each affected trait gains the benefits of the Boost. The subject must have the targeted trait(s).
- **4 points:** Boost affects all of the subject's powers at once.
- **5 points:** Boost affects all of the subject's traits at once.

You cannot Boost Permanent powers. Boosted traits must remain within the campaign's power level limits, although the GM should feel free to waive or modify this requirement as best suits the needs of the game.

FLAWS

- **Others Only (–1):** You can Boost other characters, but not yourself.
- **Personal (–1):** Your Boost is personal range and affects only you.

BURROWING

Effect: Movement | **Action:** Move
Range: Personal | **Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank

You can burrow through the ground, leaving a tunnel behind you. You move at a speed of 1 MPH at rank 1. Each additional rank moves your speed one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**, to a speed of around 5,000 miles per *round* at rank 20, allowing you to dig straight through the Earth! (Provided you can survive the conditions near the Earth's molten core.) You burrow through soil and sand at your normal speed. Burrowing through hard clay and packed earth reduces your speed one rank. Burrowing through solid rock reduces it by two ranks. The tunnel you leave behind is either permanent or collapses behind you immediately (your choice when you begin burrowing each new tunnel).

COLD CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can create an area of extreme cold with a radius of 5 feet at rank 1. Each additional rank moves the area one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. See **The Environment**, page 167, for the effects of extreme cold.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Blast (cold or ice), Create Object (ice shapes), Drain Toughness (Ranged, Limited to objects by super freezing them –1), Environmental Control (Distraction, Hamper Movement), Obscure (visual, blinding snow), and Snare (ice bonds).

COMMUNICATION

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Free
Range: Extended	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can communicate over a distance using a medium other than your voice. Choose a sense type as the medium for your communication (infrared, ultrasonic, radio, or mental communication, for example). You may also use a special sense type (neutrinos, gravitons, magical sendings, and so forth) noticeable only to the appropriate form of Detect (see page 103).

Base range for Communication is 10 feet at rank 1. Each additional rank increases range as shown on the **Extended Range Table**. It can extend even further with the Dimensional power feat (see page 108). Communication is instantaneous with any subject within your range.

The recipient of your communication must be within range and have a means of perceiving your transmission (a receiver of some sort; a score of 1 or more in all mental abilities is all that's needed to receive Mental Communication). You can receive Communication of the same medium as your own. Receivers can choose to ignore your Communication, if they wish. Communication is language-dependent; you and the subject must share a common language (see **Comprehend** to communicate across language barriers). Your Communication is point-to-point (sent to a single receiver within your range).

Others with an acute sense able to detect your Communication medium can "listen in" on your transmissions with a Notice check (DC 15 + your power rank). The eavesdropper must be within normal sensory range of you or the receiver. Your transmissions can be blocked or "jammed" by powers such as Dazzle or Obscure affecting your medium.

POWER FEATS

- **Selective:** If you have the Area extra, you can choose which receiver(s) within range get your Communication, excluding everyone else. This allows you to go from a single receiver (point-to-point) to all potential receivers in range (omni-directional) or anywhere in between.
- **Subtle:** Your Communication cannot be "overheard" (it is encrypted, scrambled, or otherwise protected). If you apply the feat twice, your Communication cannot even be *detected* (that is, no one can tell you are even transmitting, much less what you're saying).

EXTRAS

- **Area (+1):** You can broadcast omni-directionally to every receiver within your maximum Communication range.

COMPREHEND

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can comprehend different sorts of communication. Each rank allows you to choose one of the following options:

- **Languages:** You can either speak or understand the language of any intelligent creature. You can speak only one language at a time, although you can understand several languages at once. This effect does not enable you to speak with creatures that don't possess a language. For two ranks you can both speak and understand all languages. For an additional rank anyone able to hear you can understand what you're saying, regardless of language. Being able to read any language requires one more rank.
- **Animals:** You can either speak to or comprehend animals (creatures with Int 1 or 2). You can ask questions and receive answers, although animals are not any more friendly or cooperative than normal. Furthermore, wary and cunning animals are likely to be terse and evasive, while especially stupid ones make inane comments. If an animal is friendly toward you, it may do some favor or service for you. For two ranks you can both speak to and understand animals.
- **Plants:** You can either comprehend or communicate with plants, both normal plants and plant creatures. You can ask questions of and receive answers from plants. A plant's sense of its surroundings is limited, so it won't be able to give (or recognize) detailed descriptions or answer questions about events outside its immediate vicinity. For two ranks you can both speak to and understand plants.
- **Machines:** You can verbally communicate with electronic devices. Most are limited by their programming and peripherals in terms of what they know, and may not be able to answer some inquiries. Machines tend to be cold and mechanical, and may not be cooperative. At the GM's discretion, you can use the Computers and Disable Device skills in place of Diplomacy and Bluff when speaking with machines. For two ranks you can both speak to machines and understand their replies.
- **Objects:** You can communicate with inanimate objects, granting them the ability to speak to you or simply "reading" impressions from them. This requires two Comprehend ranks. Objects only "know" about events directly affecting them or occurring in their immediate area. Gamemasters can apply the guidelines for Postcognition (see page 103) to this effect.

FLAWS

- **Broad Type (–1):** You can only comprehend a general type of subject (only elves, canines, avians, or sea creatures, for example).
- **Narrow Type (–2):** You can only comprehend a particular type of subject (dogs, falcons, or dolphins, for example).

CONCEALMENT

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

Using this effect, you gain total concealment from a particular sense—usually sight or hearing—although you are still detectable to other senses

(even other senses of the same sense type). Each additional rank gives you concealment from another sense; two ranks give you concealment for an entire sense type. Concealment from visual senses costs double (2 ranks for normal sight, 4 ranks for all visual senses). You cannot have concealment from tactile senses, for that, see **Insubstantial** (see page 89). So at rank 5, you can have total concealment from all visual senses (4 ranks) and normal hearing (1 rank), for example. At rank 10 you have total concealment from all sense types, except tactile.

While concealed, you can make surprise attacks against targets unaware of your presence (see **Surprise Attack**, page 163). Attackers have a 50% miss chance against you (a roll of 11 or better on d20). Attackers able to perceive you with an accurate sense suffer no penalties, and combat is resolved normally.

Someone can sense the presence of a concealed character at close range (30 feet) with an acute sense (see **Super-Senses**, page 102) and a DC 20 Notice check (for example using hearing to detect a character concealed from sight). The observer gains a hunch "something's there" but can't perceive or target it accurately. A concealed character holding still is harder to notice (DC 30). An inanimate object or a completely immobile creature is very hard to notice at close range (DC 40). It's practically impossible (+20 DC) to accurately pinpoint a concealed character's location using an acute sense, and even if the searcher succeeds on such a check, the character still benefits from total concealment.

POWER FEATS

- **Close Range:** The "close range" where someone can sense your presence with an acute sense is 5 feet rather than 30 feet.

FLAWS

- **Blending (–1):** You "blend" into the background. Your Concealment only functions as long as you move no faster than 30 feet per round.
- **Limited (–1):** Your Concealment only works under certain conditions, such as in fog, shadows, or in urban locales.
- **Partial (–1):** Your power only provides partial concealment (see **Concealment**, page 161).
- **Passive (–1):** Your Concealment only lasts until you make an attack, at which point it stops working until you reactivate it, which you may do as a free action on the round *after* you attack.

CONFUSE

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Instant (Lasting)
Cost: 1 point per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

The target of this power becomes confused, unable to independently determine their actions. If the target's Will save fails, roll on the following table at the beginning of the subject's turn each round to see what the subject does that round.

d20	Behavior
1-2	Attack the user of the Confuse effect.
3-5	Act normally.
6-10	Do nothing but babble incoherently.
11-14	Flee at top possible speed.
15-20	Attack nearest creature.

A confused character unable to carry out the indicated action does nothing but babble incoherently. Attackers are not at any special advantage when attacking a confused character. Any confused character who is

attacked automatically attacks its attackers on its next turn, as long as it is still confused. The target gets a new Will save each round to shake off the Confuse effect, with a +1 bonus each round.

CORROSION

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude/Toughness

Your touch causes matter to weaken and corrode. Living targets make a Fortitude save. If the save fails, subtract your rank from the target's Toughness save bonus before inflicting damage equal to your power rank. Nonliving objects lose Toughness automatically and suffer damage according to their lowered Toughness score. Damage is inflicted whether the target loses Toughness or not. A living target's Toughness save cannot drop below –5, an object's can drop to as low as –10. Living targets recover lost Toughness at a rate of 1 point per round. Objects must be repaired.

EXTRAS

- **Range:** A ranged version of Corrosion is the Disintegration power (see page 82).

COSMIC ENERGY CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Toughness

You wield primal cosmic power. You can project Blasts (see page 77) of cosmic force.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Animation, Boost, Create Object, Dazzle, Disintegration, Healing, Snare, and Teleport. Each effect is a separate power feat. Other Alternate Powers are possible at the GM's discretion.

CREATE OBJECT

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Reflex (see below)

You can form solid objects out of nowhere. They may be solidified energy, transmuted matter, ice, stone, or something else entirely, depending on your descriptors. You can create any simple geometric shape or common object (such as a cube, sphere, dome, hammer, lens, disk, etc.). The GM has final say on whether or not a particular object is too complex. Your objects can't have any moving parts more complex than a hinge. They can be solid or hollow, opaque or transparent, as you choose when you use the power.

You can create an object up to one 5-foot cube in size per power rank with Toughness up to your power rank. Created objects can be damaged or broken like ordinary objects (see **Damaging Objects**, page 166). They also vanish if you stop sustaining them. You can repair all damage to a created object at will as a standard action.

A created object can provide cover or concealment (if the object is opaque) just like a normal object. Cover provided by a created object can block incoming attacks, but blocks outgoing attacks as well. Attacks hitting the covering object damage it normally. Indirect effects (see page 109) can bypass the cover a created object provides just like any other cover.

You can trap a target inside a large enough hollow object (a cage or bubble, for example). The target gets a Reflex saving throw to avoid being trapped. A trapped character can break out of the object normally. Limiting the target's mobility in addition to trapping them requires Snare (see page 99), which you may acquire as an Alternate Power feat of Create Object.

Dropping a created object on a target is treated like an Area Attack (see page 159) equal to the object's size. The object inflicts damage equal to its Toughness, and targets get a Reflex saving throw. A successful save results in no damage.

POWER FEATS

- **Innate:** Your created objects can't be nullified.
- **Precise:** You can create more precise and detailed objects.
- **Progression:** Each time you apply this power feat, the base size of your objects per power rank increases one step on the **Time and Value Progression Table** (10-ft. cube per rank, then 25-ft., etc). Other attributes based on rank (such as Toughness and save DC) do not change.
- **Stationary:** Your created objects can hang immobile in the air. They resist being moved with a Strength bonus equal to your power rank. Unless you have the Tether power feat or the Movable extra, you cannot move a stationary created object once it's placed somewhere any more than anyone else can.
- **Subtle:** The Subtle feat either makes created objects not noticeable as such (they look just like real objects) or not noticeable at all (such as objects composed of invisible force).
- **Tether:** Your created objects can move along with you at your normal movement speed, maintaining their position relative to yours.

EXTRAS

- **Duration:** Create Object with the Continuous modifier creates objects that remain until they are destroyed, nullified, or you choose to dismiss them.
- **Movable:** You can move your created objects around as if you possessed Telekinesis (see page 105) at your power rank.

DARKNESS CONTROL

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can blanket an area in darkness, creating total visual concealment in a 5-foot radius at rank 1. Each additional rank moves the radius one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Animate Shadows, Blast, Create Object (shadow constructs), Dazzle (visual), Drain Constitution (life-energy drain), Fatigue (energy drain), ESP (visual and auditory, Medium: darkness or shadows –1), Snare (shadow bonds), Strike (shadow weapon), and Teleport (Medium: darkness or shadows –1).

DATALINK

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Free
Range: Extended	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can interface with computers over a distance. Choose a sensory medium, as with Communication (see page 78). Datalink is typically a mental or radio sense effect. Your power has a range of 10 feet at rank 1. Additional ranks increase your range on the **Extended Range Table**. To interface with an unfamiliar computer, you must be able to accurately sense it, or you must search for it (see **Extended Searches**, page 53). You can use the Computers skill on a computer while interfaced with it, taking the usual time. This power works like Mental Communication (see page 78) on intelligent computers.

POWER FEATS

- **Machine Control:** In addition to digital devices, you can mentally control and operate machines. You can operate any machine in your range as if you were physically operating it or had a remote control for it. You make normal use of your various skills to operate machines, if necessary.

DAZZLE

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant (Lasting)
Cost: 1-4 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Reflex/Fortitude

You can overload all of a target's senses of a particular type—usually visual or auditory—rendering them temporarily useless. Make a ranged attack roll against the target. If the attack hits, the target must make a Reflex save to avoid the effect. If the save fails, that sense type is rendered useless. A successful save means no effect.

Each round thereafter the target makes a Fortitude save to recover from the Dazzle attack. The target gains a +1 bonus to the save each round after the first. A successful save allows the target to use the dazzled sense(s) again, but at –1 on all rolls involving them. The following round, the target's senses return to normal. Targets immune to Fortitude effects cannot be dazzled.

Dazzle costs 1 point per rank if it affects one sense type, 2 points per rank if it affects two sense types, 3 points per rank if it affects three sense types, and 4 points per rank if it affects all sense types. Visual senses count as two sense types, so a 3-point per rank Dazzle effect could affect visual and one other sense type, for example.

DEFLECT

Effect: Defense	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 1-3 points per rank	

You can block ranged attacks as well as melee attacks. This is like a normal melee block (see **Block**, page 155) using your Deflect rank in place of your normal attack bonus. You can attempt to deflect any number of attacks in a round, but each attempt after the first imposes a cumulative –2 modifier on the block check. Once you fail a block roll you cannot deflect again until your next round.

The types of attacks you can deflect determine the effect's cost per rank. For 1 point per rank you can choose one of the following: slow projectiles (including thrown weapons and arrows), fast projectiles (like bullets), energy attacks, and mental attacks. For 2 points per rank, you can deflect all ranged attacks. For 3 points per rank, you can deflect ranged and mental attacks. Deflecting mental attacks requires a Deflect roll against the attack's Will save DC (since mental attacks do not require attack rolls). Deflect does not work against area attacks (see **Area Attack**, page 159).

EXTRAS

- **Action (+1):** You can reduce the action needed to block attacks. If you can deflect as a free action and you take a standard action to block that round, you take no penalty for blocking multiple attacks, otherwise you have the normal penalty. If you can use Deflect as a reaction, you take no penalty for blocking any number of attacks as a free action.
- **Automatic (+1):** You can deflect even surprise attacks, but you must still be able to take the normal action required to use your Deflect power.
- **Ranged (+1):** You can deflect attacks made against any target within range (power rank × 100 feet). You suffer a –2 penalty on your block check per range increment of (rank × 10 feet) between you and the target.
- **Reflection (+1):** You can reflect blocked attacks back at the attacker as a free action. Make a normal attack roll to hit with the reflected attack.
- **Redirection (+1):** You can redirect blocked attacks at any target within the attack's normal range, as Reflection, above. You must have the Reflection extra to take Redirection.

DENSITY

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 3 points per rank	

You can increase your mass, and therefore your Strength and durability. Every rank of Density activated enhances your Strength by 2 points. Every two ranks give you a rank of Protection with the Impervious extra (see page 96). Every three ranks give you a rank of Immovable (see page 89) and Super-Strength (see page 104) and move your mass one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. Your additional Strength does not improve your Climb or Swim skills or the distance you can jump (since your mass also increases). In fact, you automatically fail Swim checks while Density is active at 3 ranks or more because of your negative buoyancy.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** To increase *or* decrease your density, take Insubstantial (see page 89) as an Alternate Power of Density.

DEVICE

Effect: General	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Permanent (Innate)
Cost: 3-4 points per rank	

You have a device—an item giving you certain traits. The device might be a piece of super-science technology, a magical artifact, or a focus of cosmic power. Each rank gives you 5 power points you can use to pur-

chase the device's traits. So long as you have the device, you have access to its traits. You cannot use points from a Device to buy another Device. Although the Device itself is Permanent and Innate, the Device's powers may or may not be, depending on their duration.

The cost of a Device depends on how easily you can lose it. For 4 points per rank, the device is hard to lose. It can only be taken away from you while you are helpless (see **Condition Summary**, page 171). For 3 points per rank, the device is easy to lose. It can be taken away from you with a successful Disarm action (see **Disarm**, page 156). An item that cannot be taken away from you at all isn't a Device. For example, a bionic arm may grant you Super-Strength, but since it can't be taken away, it doesn't count as a Device.

With the GM's permission, you can split power points from this power into several devices, so long as they can all be taken away from you in the same manner. It's harder to take away all of your devices, but easier to take away their benefits one-by-one.

When you acquire a device, choose whether strain of extra effort applies to you or the device (see **Extra Effort**, page 120). If it applies to you, follow the normal extra effort rules. If it applies to the device, then using extra effort to enhance the device's traits places stress on its construction or systems. A "fatigued" device suffers a –1 modifier to all ranks. An "exhausted" device suffers a –3 modifier to all power ranks, and a device pushed beyond exhausted stops working altogether. The modifiers last until the device is repaired (a Complex or Advanced repair task, respectively, see **Craft**, page 45).

See **Chapter 7** for more on how devices work, how characters acquire them, and various examples.

POWER FEATS

- **Restricted:** Only certain people can use your Device. It might only work for members of a particular bloodline, people with extraordinary (20+) Strength or Wisdom, only women, and so forth. For everyone else, the Device has no powers at all. If you apply this feat twice, only you—and no one else—can use your device. It can be taken away, but not used against you.

DIMENSIONAL POCKET

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Standard/Move
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Reflex/Will

You have a "pocket" dimension capable of holding an amount of material, or even creatures. Your Dimensional Pocket has a 100 lb. capacity at rank 1. Each additional rank moves it one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. You can store up to your maximum capacity of items in your pocket, retrieving them at a later time. If you try to fit an item into your pocket that would exceed your capacity, nothing happens. Moving things into and out of your pocket is a move action.

You can trap opponents in your dimensional pocket, if you have sufficient capacity to hold them. Make a melee attack roll. The target gets a Reflex save to avoid being trapped. A trapped target can use Dimensional Movement to escape. Additionally, the trapped target gets a Will save each round to escape from your pocket with a cumulative +1 bonus for each previous save.

DISINTEGRATION

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 4 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude/Toughness

You can project an attack weakening and destroying the structure of objects. Make a ranged attack roll to hit your target. If successful, the target makes a Fortitude saving throw or loses Toughness equal to your power rank; objects (and other targets without a Constitution score) automatically fail this save. Toughness may be reduced as low as –5 (–10 for objects). The target then makes a Toughness save (at the reduced score) against damage equal to your power rank. If the save fails by 20 or more, the target is atomized, leaving nothing behind. Damage and reductions in an object's Toughness are Permanent until repaired. Targets with Con 1 or more regain 1 point of Toughness per round and recover from the damage normally.

POWER FEATS

- **Reversible:** You can instantly and completely restore a target you have disintegrated as a free action.

DRAIN (TRAIT)

Effect: Trait	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 1-5 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can temporarily lower one of a target's traits: an ability, skill, feat, or power, chosen when you acquire this power. You must touch the target, making a normal melee attack roll, and the target makes a Fortitude save. If the save fails, each rank of Drain removes 1 power point from the affected trait. The lost points return at a rate of 1 per round, except for inanimate objects, which do not recover drained Toughness and must be repaired. This rate can be reduced with the Slow Fade power feat (see page 110). Drain's cost per rank determines the affected traits:

- **1 point:** Drain affects a single trait (such as Strength score or Will save bonus), chosen when the power is acquired. (To affect a list of traits, one at a time, take Alternate Powers; see page 108.)
- **2 points:** Drain affects any one trait, one at a time.
- **3 points:** Drain affects all traits of a single type (ability scores, skills, feats, one type of power effect, or all powers of a particular descriptor) all at once (subtracting its rank in power points from each).
- **4 points:** Drain reduces all powers at once.
- **5 points:** Drain reduces all traits at once.

DUPLICATION

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Standard
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can create a duplicate of yourself. Your duplicate is a minion (see page 63) with the same capabilities as you, except for this power and any hero points. You can spend your own hero points for your duplicate's actions.

You must have this power at a rank equal to your power point total divided by 15 and rounded up for your duplicate to possess your full abilities. If you have it at a lower rank, create your duplicate as a scaled-down version of yourself, with a power level equal to your power rank and starting power points determined accordingly (power rank × 15). So a power level 11 hero who has Duplication 8 creates a power level 8 duplicate with (8 × 15) 120 power points and proportionately lower-ranked traits.

Your duplicate thinks and acts just like you, so it is automatically helpful toward you. Gamemasters should generally allow the hero's player to determine the duplicate's actions. Your duplicate disappears if your power is countered for any reason. You can also make your duplicate disappear at will by turning off your power.

POWER FEATS

- **Absorption Healing:** You can make an immediate recovery check by "re-absorbing" an undamaged duplicate.
- **Mental Link:** You have a mental link with your duplicates, allowing you to communicate with them over any distance and know whatever they know.
- **Progression:** Each time you apply this feat, move your total number of duplicates one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (2, 5, 10, etc.). You can still only create one duplicate per standard action.
- **Sacrifice:** When you are hit with an effect requiring a saving throw, you can spend a hero point to shift the effects to one of your duplicates instead. In essence, the attacker hit a duplicate and not the "real" you. The duplicate must be within range and a viable target of the effect.

EXTRAS

- **Heroic (+1):** Your duplicates are not subject to the minion rules.
- **Horde (+1):** You can summon up to your maximum number of duplicates with one standard action. You must have the Progression power feat to take this extra.
- **Survival (+1):** If you die while duplicated, one of your duplicates becomes the "real" you and gains Duplication at your original power rank. You must have Duplication at a rank equal to your power level to take this extra.

FLAWS

- **Feedback (–1):** If one of your duplicates is damaged, you suffer painful psychic feedback. Make a Will saving throw against damage equal to the damage your duplicate suffered, with a bonus to the save equal to your duplicate's Toughness save bonus.
- **Real (–1):** All of your duplicates are the "real" you—perhaps from different time-lines or periods. You suffer the worst damage of all duplicates when you stop using this power. If *any* of your duplicates die, you die as well! You cannot have the Survival extra.
- **Unconscious (–1):** You are unconscious and helpless while one or more of your duplicates are in existence.

ELECTRICAL CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can generate electricity, projecting a Blast (see page 77) of lightning at your power rank.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Animate Objects (Limited to electrical devices –1), Confuse, Datalink, Dazzle (auditory or visual), Strike (Aura, electrical), Stun, and Teleport (Medium: power lines –1).

(ELEMENT) CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You have the ability to shape and direct a particular element—air, earth, fire, or water—like a use of Telekinesis (see page 105) at your Element

Control rank. Choose one element from the list given here; you can acquire the other elements as Alternate Powers.

ELEMENTS

- **Air:** You can control the movement of masses of air. You can create powerful winds, pushing or pulling objects or tripping targets (see **Trip**, page 159) like a use of Telekinesis (see page 105) at your power rank.
- **Earth:** You can control and move a mass of soil, rock, or minerals like a use of Telekinesis (see page 105) at your power rank.
- **Fire:** You can control the movement and spread of flames with a damage bonus less than or equal to your power rank.
- **Water:** You can control a mass of water (fresh or salt water, but not other liquids) like a use of Telekinesis (see page 105) at your power rank.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Blast, Create Object, Obscure, Snare, Stun, and Suffocate, all using your chosen element(s) a medium.

ELONGATION

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can elongate your body and limbs to extend your reach. This allows you to make melee attacks at a greater distance and move your Elongation distance as a move action by stretching out to a spot and pulling the rest of your body after you, or extending your limbs to give you a longer stride. "Snapping back" to your normal shape is a free action. You can elongate 5 feet at rank 1, each additional rank moves your range (in feet) one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**.

You can use Elongation to make melee attacks at a greater distance by elongating your limbs. It requires a full action to both elongate (move action) and attack (standard action). Once elongated, you can make melee attacks within your new reach as a standard action.

Your attacks have a "range increment" of (power rank × 10 feet), each increment beyond the first applies a –2 penalty to your attack rolls and checks, since it's harder for you to coordinate your limbs at that distance. If you can't accurately sense your target at all, apply the rules for concealment (see page 161). The range increment is the distance between your target and your head, so if you elongate your neck so your head is within one increment of your target, you suffer no range penalties.

You gain a bonus to Defense against attacks on your elongated limbs as if you were one size category smaller than usual (see **Size**, page 34). So the elongated limb of a Medium character has a +1 Defense bonus (like a Small character).

Elongation gives you a bonus on Escape Artist checks and grapple checks equal to your power rank.

EMOTION CONTROL

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Will	**Duration:** Sustained (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can instill different emotions in your target, who makes a Will save to resist. You choose the object of the emotion and decide what the target loves, hates, fears, and so forth. You can produce the following emotional effects:

- **Calm:** The subject adopts an indifferent attitude and does not feel any strong emotion. Calm can counter any of the other emotion effects, and they may also counter Calm (see **Countering Powers**, page 70).
- **Despair:** The subject is shaken, suffering a –2 on attack rolls, defense, and checks. Failure by 10 or more means the target is overcome with hopelessness, helpless and unable to take any actions.
- **Fear:** The subject is shaken, suffering a –2 on attack rolls, defense, and checks. Failure by 5 or more means the subject is frightened and flees from the source of the fear (specified by the user) as quickly as possible. Failure by 10 or more means the subject is panicked, dropping any held items and fleeing blindly from the source of the fear. A panicked subject unable to flee cowers and does not attack (most likely using total defense instead, see page 159).
- **Hate:** The subject immediately becomes unfriendly. If the save fails by 5 or more, the subject's attitude becomes hostile. Hate counters and is countered by love.
- **Hope:** The subject feels no fear or despair. Hope counters those emotions and similar effects and is countered by them in return.
- **Love:** The subject's attitude becomes friendly. If the save fails by 5 or more, the subject's attitude becomes helpful. If it fails by 10 or more, the subject becomes fanatical. Love can counter despair, fear, and hate and they may counter it.

POWER FEATS

- **Mind Blank:** Targets don't remember time under your Emotion Control; their memory of that time is blank.

FLAWS

- **Limited—one emotion (–1):** You can only cause one of the listed emotional effects, not any of them.
- **Sense-Dependent (–1):** Your Emotion Control works through a target's senses. Examples include eye contact (visual), music (auditory), or pheromones (olfactory). See the **Sense-Dependent** flaw, page 115, for details.

ENHANCED ABILITY

Effect: Ability	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 1 point per rank	

One of your basic ability scores is enhanced (see **Chapter 2**); each rank in Enhanced Ability gives you +1 to the ability score, just like a normal ability. An Enhanced Ability can be nullified, unlike a normal ability score, but you can also apply extra effort to it (see **Extra Effort**, page 120). The GM approves any extra effort use in conjunction with your Enhanced Abilities. An Enhanced Ability may also have appropriate descriptors applied to it, differentiating it from a normal ability score. You can freely mix normal and enhanced ability scores.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1-2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Varies by condition

You can change the environmental conditions in an area: altering the temperature, creating light, causing rain, and so forth (see **The Environment**, page 167, for the effects of different environmental conditions). For obscuring senses (via darkness, fog, etc.) use **Obscure** (see page 95). Each of the following is a separate Environmental Control power. If you have one, you can acquire others as Alternate Power feats (see page 108), but you can then only use and maintain one at a time. To use or maintain multiple Environmental Control effects simultaneously, add their costs together for the total power cost per rank.

- **Cold:** You can lower the temperature in the area. For 1 point per rank, you can create intense cold, for 2 points per rank, you can create extreme cold.
- **Distraction:** You can create conditions to distract anyone attempting to concentrate, such as driving rain, hail, dust storms, and so forth. For 1 point per rank the distraction is DC 5, for 2 points per rank it's DC 10. See **Concentration**, page 44, for details.
- **Hamper Movement:** You can hamper movement through the area with high winds, icy surfaces, or similar effects. For 1 point per rank, you halve movement speed through the area, for 2 points per rank, you reduce it to one-quarter.
- **Heat:** You can raise the temperature in the area. For 1 point per rank, you create intense heat, for 2 points per rank, you create extreme heat.
- **Light:** You can raise the light level in the area, countering the concealment of darkness, but not other forms of concealment. For 1 point per rank, you can shed enough light to reduce total concealment to partial and partial concealment to none. For 2 points per rank, you can shed light as bright as a sunlit day, eliminating all concealment provided by natural darkness. Obscure effects with the darkness descriptor may be countered with a successful power check (see **Countering Powers**, page 70).

Your Environmental Control has a 5 ft. radius at rank 1. Each additional rank moves the maximum radius one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (with a radius of approximately 2,000 miles at rank 20, sufficient to alter the environment of an entire continent!).

ESP

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Move
Range: Extended	**Duration:** Concentration
Cost: 1-4 points per rank	

You can displace one or more of your senses over a distance, perceiving as if you were at that location, up to 10 feet away. Each additional power rank increases your range, as shown on the **Extended Range Table**. It can extend further with the Dimensional power feat (see page 108). ESP overrides your normal sense(s) while you are using it. Subjects observed via ESP can sense it with a Notice check (DC 10 + rank), unless you have the Subtle power feat (see page 110).

You can make Notice and Search checks normally using your displaced senses. To search a large area for someone or something, use the extended search guidelines under **Search** (see page 53).

Sensory effects targeted on the spot where you have displaced your senses affect you normally (this includes mental effects with the Sense-Dependent modifier; see page 115). If ESP applies to your mental senses, then mental effects targeted on the spot you're perceiving affect you normally as well.

ESP costs 1 point per rank for one sense type, 2 points per rank for two sense types, 3 points per rank for three, and 4 points per rank for all of your senses. Visual senses count as two sense types (so visual ESP is 2 points per rank). You can use sensory powers via ESP if your ESP applies to their sense type. If you can use mental senses and an accurate sense (such as sight) via ESP, you can use it to target mental powers as well.

FLAWS

- **Medium (–1):** You require a medium for your ESP, such as shadows, flames, mirrors, open water, television screens, and so forth. You can only perceive locations where your medium exists.

FATIGUE

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can inflict fatigue on a target. Make a melee attack roll. The target makes a Fortitude save (DC 10 + power rank). A failed save means the target is fatigued: –2 to Str and Dex, –1 to attack and defense, and cannot move all out. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target is exhausted: –6 to Str and Dex, –3 to attack and defense, and unable to move faster than normal pace. If the save fails by 10 or more, the target becomes unconscious. Targets immune to fatigue are unaffected. Already fatigued characters who suffer another fatigue result become exhausted, while exhausted characters who suffer another fatigue result become unconscious. The target recovers normally (see **Fatigue**, page 167).

POWER FEATS

- **Reversible:** You can remove fatigue conditions caused by your power at will as a free action.

FLIGHT

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can fly through the air, including hovering in place. You have a flying speed of 10 MPH at rank 1. Each additional rank moves your speed one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**: 25 MPH at rank 2, 50 MPH at rank 3, and so forth. At rank 19, you can reach anywhere on Earth in a single move action. At rank 20, you can accelerate to near the speed of light!

FLAWS

- **Gliding (–1):** You lose altitude equal to half the distance you travel, meaning the maximum distance you can glide is twice the height you start from. You may be able to gain altitude occasionally by catching thermal updrafts and winds at the GM's discretion. You cannot have more than 4 ranks in Flight.
- **Levitation (–1):** You can only move straight up and down, not side to side, although you can allow yourself to be carried along by the wind. You cannot have more than 4 ranks in Flight.

FORCE FIELD

Effect: Defense	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can surround yourself with a protective field of force. A Force Field gives you a bonus on Toughness saving throws equal to its rank. Since it is Sustained, you can improve your Force Field using extra effort (see page 120). The Force Field turns off if you are unable to maintain it, for example, if you are stunned and fail a Concentration check.

POWER FEATS

- **Selective:** You can "tune" your Force Field to filter out some things while allowing others to pass through it.

EXTRAS

- **Impervious (+1):** Your Force Field stops some damage completely. If an attack has a damage bonus less than your power rank, it inflicts *no* damage on you (you automatically succeed on the Toughness saving throw). Penetrating damage (see page 112) ignores this modifier; you save against it normally.

FLAWS

- **Ablative (–1):** Damage chips away at your Force Field. Each time it provides its bonus, it loses 1 power point of effectiveness. When reduced to 0 power points, it turns off. This is the same as the Fades flaw (see page 114). Your Force Field can't recover lost effectiveness while it's active, it must be turned off first.
- **Limited (–1):** Your Force Field applies to only one broad type of damage (physical or energy). If it applies to only one narrow type of damage (edged weapons, blunt weapons, electricity, fire, magic, etc.) it has a –3 modifier.

FRICTION CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 3 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Reflex

You can affect the friction of an area of (rank × 5) feet in radius. You can either increase friction, causing anyone touching the ground or floor to become stuck like a use of Snare (see page 99, except you can only entangle, not bind, targets) or you can decrease friction, causing everyone in the area to slip like a use of the Trip power (see page 107). Choose one when you take this power. You can acquire the other use of Friction Control as an Alternate Power feat.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Blast (friction heat, Concentration, Perception, Limited to moving targets –1), Dazzle (visual, Perception, by causing a target's eyelids to stick together), Environmental Control (Hamper Movement), Nullify (machines, by causing their moving parts to seize up), and Nullify (Snares, by making it difficult for them to stick).

GESTALT

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Full
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

A Gestalt is two (or more) component creatures joining together to form a single, more powerful, entity. Joining to create the gestalt form requires a standard action, but breaking apart into the component beings is a free action.

The combined form takes this power and the two gestalt components are built on (power rank × 15) power points, and subject to the campaign's power level limits. The combined form and the components have separate traits, although the combined form often (but not always) shares the best of the components' traits. The component creatures can't be built on more points than half the combined character's total. So, your combined character can't have a Gestalt rank greater than your total power points divided by 30.

POWER FEATS

- **Progression:** A gestalt is normally two components. Each application of this feat moves the maximum number of components one step up **Time and Value Progression Table**.

Example: *Team Trinity is three people who can merge together to form Triplicate. The player designs Triplicate as a power level 10 character and each of the members of Team Trinity as power level 5 (75-point) characters. Triplicate takes Gestalt at rank 5, plus one Progression feat for three components, paying 6 points total. This makes Triplicate a 144-point character.*

The Pentacle is made up of five villains, each with elemental powers, able to join together into a single form. The combined form is a 225-point character, while the individuals are power level 7 (105-point) characters. This gives a base rank of 7, plus one Progression feat for five components for a total of 8 points, making the combined whole a 217-point character (after paying for Gestalt).

GRAVITY CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can control the intensity of gravity in a radius of (power rank × 5) feet within your range. This works like Telekinesis (see page 105) at your power rank, except you can only move objects in two directions: toward the Earth (increased gravity) or away from it (decreased gravity).

Targets of increased gravity add your power's heavy load to their encumbrance. If this exceeds the target's maximum carrying capacity, he falls prone and cannot move without making a Strength check (DC 10 + Gravity Control rank). A successful check allows the target to take a standard or move action (but not both). Normal movement is restricted to crawling 5 feet per move action.

Targets of reduced gravity have their weight reduced by up to your power's heavy load. If this results in a negative weight, the target "falls" upward, away from the Earth, as if thrown by someone with (Gravity Control rank × 5) Strength.

Example: *Gravitar (with Gravity Control 14) increases the pull of gravity on Maximus Atom. The young hero is currently 30 feet tall via his Growth power, with Strength 32 and an effective Strength of 42 for carrying capacity (+10 for two increases in size). Gravitar's power has an effective Strength of (14 × 5) or 70. This imposes a heavy load of 200 tons to Maximus' encumberance. His current maximum load is about 10 tons, considerably less, so Max falls prone and can only move by making a DC 24 Strength check (10 + Gravitar's power rank of 14). With his Str bonus of +11, he needs to roll a 13 or better to take a standard or move action (not both) and he can only move by crawling 5 feet per round.*

Next, the Master of Gravity uses his power against Max's "Uncle" Jack Wolf, reducing the effect of gravity on him. Jack weighs about 200 lbs., so he shoots into the air as if thrown by someone with a 70 Strength. He goes to the limit of Gravitar's Gravity Control area (70 feet, or 14 × 5 feet) and hangs there. Gravitar stops maintaining the effect, and Jack drops, suffering +7 falling damage (+1 per 10 feet) unless one of the Atom Family manages to catch him.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include Blast and Telekinesis.

GROWTH

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 4 points per rank	

You can increase your size, and therefore your strength and durability. Every rank of Growth increases your Strength by 2 points and Constitution by 1 point. The additional Strength does not improve your Climb or Swim skills (since your mass also increases).

Every four ranks of Growth increase your size category by one. So a Medium creature with Growth at 4 ranks is Large, at 8 ranks is Huge, at 12 ranks is Gargantuan, at 16 ranks is Colossal, and at 20 ranks is Awesome-sized. You gain all the benefits and drawbacks of your new size category. See **Size**, page 34 for information on the effects of different sizes. Your base movement speed increases by 5 ft. per size category you enlarge.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** If you have Growth, you can acquire Shrinking as an Alternate Power feat.
- **Growth Strike:** You can add the momentum of increasing size to your melee attacks, literally enlarging under an opponent's jaw, for example. This gives you a +1 damage bonus per size category you enlarge until you reach your opponent's size and only works on opponents larger than you are. So growing from Medium to Awesome size as part of an attack does +5 damage, for example.

HEALING

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Full
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can heal injuries by touch. With a full-round action, you can do any one of the following:

- Grant a character an immediate recovery check for the subject's worst damage condition, with a bonus equal to your Healing rank. If the check fails, you must wait the normal recovery time for that condition or use extra effort to try again. If successful, you can use Healing again normally.
- Grant a bonus on saving throws equal to your Healing rank against effects with disease or poison descriptors. The bonus applies to the subject's next save against the effect.
- Stabilize a dying character with a DC 10 Healing check.

You must maintain contact with the target for a full round for the power to take effect.

You can use Healing on yourself. You can't cure your own stunned, staggered, or unconscious conditions or stabilize yourself (since you have to be able to take a full action to use your Healing effect). You can use Healing to cure your own disabled condition, but doing so is a strenuous action. If your recovery check is successful, you suffer no ill effects. If it is not, however, your condition worsens to dying. If you can use Healing as a free action, it can cure any of your conditions and is not considered strenuous.

POWER FEATS

- **Persistent:** You can heal Incurable damage (see **Incurable**, page 109).
- **Regrowth:** When healing a disabled condition, you can cause lost or destroyed organs and limbs to regenerate as well.

EXTRAS

- **Energizing (+1):** You can grant an immediate recovery check for fatigued and exhausted conditions as well as damage conditions. However, you *automatically* take on the subject's fatigue condition and you cannot use Healing to eliminate your own fatigue conditions (although you can still use hero points to recover from them). If the subject's recovery check fails, you must wait the normal recovery time or use extra effort to try again.
- **Resurrection (+1):** You can restore life to the dead! If the subject has been dead for fewer minutes than your power rank, make a DC 20 Con check for the subject with a bonus equal to your power rank. If successful, the patient's condition becomes disabled and unconscious. If the check fails, you can't try again. If you apply the Progression feat, move the amount of time a subject can be dead one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (from power rank minutes to power rank × 5 minutes, then power rank × 20 minutes, power rank hours, and so forth).
- **Total (+1):** You can completely heal multiple damage conditions at once. For every 5 points the recovery check (including your Healing bonus) exceeds the DC, the subject's next worst damage condition heals as well.

FLAWS

- **Empathic (–1):** When you cure someone else of a condition, you acquire the condition and must recover from it normally. You can use your Healing and Regeneration powers to cure conditions you acquire in this way. You can have the Resurrection modifier, but if you use it, you die!

HELLFIRE CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Toughness

You can generate and project a mystical energy called "hellfire," which appears flame-like, although it is not actual fire. You can choose the color and style of your hellfire when you acquire this power. Typical examples include white, black, red, or green flames. By changing the descriptor, you can also make this power "Holy Fire" or "Mystic Fire," for example.

You can project a Blast (see page 77) of hellfire, inflicting damage equal to your power rank.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Create Object (hellfire shapes), Emotion Control (despair, fear, or hate), Mental Blast, Minions (fiends), and Strike (hellfire weapons).

ILLUSION

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Concentration
Cost: 1-4 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can create false sensory impressions. This ranges from visual images to phantom sounds, smells, or even radar or mental images. For 1 point per rank, you can create an illusion affecting a single sense type. For 2 points per rank, you can affect two sense types. For 3 points per rank, you can affect three sense types. At 4 points per rank, you can affect all sense types. Visual senses count as two sense types. Your illusion occupies an area 5 feet in radius.

Illusions have no substance and cannot have any real-world effect. Illusions cannot provide illumination, nutrition, warmth, or the like (although they can provide the *sensations* of these things). Likewise, an illusory wall only prevents people from moving through an area so long as they believe it's real, and an illusory bridge or floor is revealed as false as soon as someone tries to walk across it and falls through!

Characters encountering an illusion do not receive saving throws to recognize it as illusory until they interact with it in some fashion. A successful Will save against an illusion reveals it to be false. A failed saving throw means the character fails to notice anything amiss. A character faced with proof an illusion isn't real needs no saving throw. If any viewer successfully uncovers an illusion and communicates this fact to others, they gain another saving throw with a +4 bonus. Circumstances may grant additional modifiers to the Will save to uncover an illusion, depending on how convincing it is.

Maintaining a static illusion (one that doesn't move or interact) is a free action. Maintaining an active illusion (such as a fighting creature) requires concentration.

POWER FEATS

- **Progression:** Each time you apply this power feat, your Illusion's area moves one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (10-ft. radius, 25 feet, 50 feet, and so forth). You can create a smaller illusion than your maximum area, as usual.
- **Selective:** With this power feat, you choose who perceives your Illusion and who doesn't.

EXTRAS

- **Action (+1):** You can maintain an interactive illusion as a free action.

FLAWS

- **Limited: one subject (–1):** Only a single subject can perceive your illusions.
- **Phantasms (–1):** Your illusion are a mental as well as a sensory effect. Only creatures with Int 1 or more can perceive them. They are undetectable to machines like cameras and microphones.

IMMOVABLE

Effect: Defense **Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal **Duration:** Permanent
Cost: 1 point per rank

You're especially resistant to being moved by attacks. You gain a +4 bonus per rank against all attempts to push, rush, trip, or throw you, and reduce the distance you are knocked back by an attack, adding your Immovable rank to your knockback modifier (see **Knockback**, page 165).

Additionally, when you're struck with a slam attack (see **Slam**, page 158), you suffer less damage while your attacker suffers more! For each rank of Immovable, 1 point of damage bonus from the slam attack is shifted from you to your attacker, up to half the attack's total damage bonus. So a +12 slam attack against a target with Immovable 8 shifts 6 points of damage (or half) back to the attacker; the target suffers +6 damage, while the attacker suffers +12! Slamming into an Immovable target can be even worse than hitting a brick wall.

To gain the benefits of this power, you cannot move more than your normal speed in a round. If you move at accelerated speed (two move actions), your Immovable rank is halved. If you move all out, you lose the benefit of Immovable for the round.

EXTRAS

- **Unstoppable (+1):** Your speed has no effect on your immovability; you can move all out while retaining your full effect rank. You also subtract your Immovable rank from an opponent's Immovable rank before determining its effect, including the damage from a slam attack, allowing you to slam Immovable opponents for more damage than usual. You cannot reduce an opponent's effective Immovable rank below 0.

IMMUNITY

Effect: Defense **Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal **Duration:** Permanent
Cost: 1 point per rank

You are immune to certain effects, automatically succeeding on any saving throws or ability checks against them. You assign ranks of Immunity to various effects (with more extensive effects requiring more ranks). These assignments are permanent:

- **1 rank:** aging, disease, poison, one environmental condition (cold, heat, high pressure, radiation, or vacuum), one type of suffocation (breathe normally underwater or in an alien atmosphere, for example), starvation and thirst, need for sleep, or a rare power descriptor (such as your own powers, a close sibling's powers, etc.).
- **2 ranks:** critical hits, suffocation (no need to breathe at all), or an uncommon power descriptor (such as chemical, gravitic, necromantic, etc.).
- **5 ranks:** alteration effects, dazzle effects, emotion effects, entrapment (grappling, snares, or bonds), fatigue effects, interaction skills, trait effects, or a particular type of damage (such as bullets, cold, electricity, falling, fire, magic, radiation, sonic, etc.).
- **9 ranks:** life support (includes immunity to disease, poison, all environmental conditions, and suffocation).
- **10 ranks:** mental effects, a very common power descriptor (such as cutting, elemental, impact, metal, magic, technological, etc.).
- **20 ranks:** all nonlethal physical damage, all lethal physical damage, all nonlethal energy damage, or all lethal energy damage.
- **30 ranks:** Any effect calling for a particular saving throw: Fortitude, Reflex, or Will.

For example, at Immunity 11 you could have life support (9 ranks) plus Immunity to critical hits (2 more ranks), or life support plus Immunity to aging (1 rank) and a rare power descriptor (1 rank), or any other combination adding up to 11 ranks.

FLAWS

- **Limited (–1):** You suffer half the normal effect rather than being entirely immune to it. For environmental effects, you only make checks half as often. For other effects, halve the effect's rank before determining its saving throw DC. Alternately, if your immunity is to an effect causing lethal damage, it can cause nonlethal damage instead.

INSUBSTANTIAL

Effect: Alteration **Action:** Free
Range: Personal **Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 5 points per rank

You can assume a less solid form, with each Insubstantial rank becoming progressively less solid. You do not gain the ability to assume lower-ranked Insubstantial forms, but you can acquire a lower-ranked form as an Alternate Power feat of a higher-ranked one (see page 108). You can switch between normal and an Insubstantial form at will as a free action once per round.

- **Rank 1:** You become fluid. You can flow or squeeze through any sort of opening, under (or around) doors, through keyholes and pipes, and so forth. You cannot pass through watertight seals. You can automatically flow out of any restraint—such as a snare or grapple—that is not watertight (you automatically succeed on Escape Artist checks). You cannot flow out of a bubble completely enclosing you, for example, but anything less cannot hold you. You can exert your normal Strength and can still carry objects, although your manual dexterity may be limited (at the GM's discretion).

UNDER THE HOOD: IMMUNITY

There are characters in the comics just plain immune to certain things. Immunity is intended to provide this option in *Mutants & Masterminds*. It's just simpler at some point to say a character is immune to something than it is to bother rolling dice. Immunity also encourages creativity. If you can't overcome a foe just by hitting him, what then? Encourage players to use tactics, cleverness, power stunts, and hero points to deal with foes immune to their more conventional attacks.

If you find Immunity—especially at higher ranks—is a problem in your game or ruining everyone's fun, feel free to restrict it (perhaps to no more than 10 ranks) or eliminate it altogether, replacing it with Protection and saving throw bonuses with appropriate power modifiers.

- **Rank 2:** You become a cloud of gas or fine particles. You have no Strength in gaseous form, but you are immune to physical damage. Energy attacks still affect you normally, as do area effects (see page 159). You can flow through any opening that is not airtight.
- **Rank 3:** You become coherent energy. You have no Strength, but you are immune to physical damage. Energy attacks (other than the energy making up your form) damage you normally. You can pass through solid objects, but energy resistant barriers, like heavy shielding or force fields, block your movement.
- **Rank 4:** You become incorporeal. You can pass through solid matter at your normal speed and you are unaffected by physical and energy attacks. Mental and sensory effects still work on you, as do powers with the Affects Insubstantial power feat. Choose one other reasonably common effect that works on you while you are incorporeal. You have no Strength and cannot affect the physical world unless you purchase the Affects Corporeal modifier on one or more of your abilities or powers. Your mental and sensory effects still work normally.

INVISIBILITY

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 4 or 8 points	

You can become invisible at will. This gives you total concealment from normal vision. For double cost (8 points) you gain total concealment from all visual senses. This is effectively 2 (or 4) ranks of the Concealment power (see page 78).

KINETIC CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Toughness

You can generate and project kinetic energy as a Blast of force at your power rank (see page 77).

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Deflect (slow and fast projectiles), Paralyze, Speed, and Telekinesis.

LEAPING

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can make prodigious leaps. Rank 1 Leaping doubles your jumping distances. Each additional rank moves the multiple one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. So at rank 9, you leap 1,000 times your normal distance. At rank 20, you can make leaps of up to *5 million* times your normal distance! (each foot becomes approximately 1,000 miles!) You do not suffer any damage from landing after a jump, so long as it is within your maximum jumping distance.

At rank 5 (50 times normal distance), you are in the air for at least a full round before you land. Each additional rank adds another full round in the air. So a rank 10 leap (×1,000 your normal distance) lasts for six full rounds before you land. You can act normally during this time, as if you were flying, but you can't change your speed or direction without using some other power.

LIFE CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Instant (Lasting)
Cost: 4 points per rank	

You can exert control over the processes of life and, perhaps, over organic matter. You can disrupt the biological functions of another creature in your line of sight like a use of the Nauseate power (see page 94).

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Boost, Drain, Emotion, Fatigue, Healing, Stun, Suffocate, and Transform, all at Perception range.

LIGHT CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can generate light as bright as daylight, like a use of Environmental Control (see page 84).

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Blast, Create Object ("hard" light shapes), Dazzle (visual), Healing ("healing light"), Illusion (visual), Obscure (visual, blinding light), and Strike (light weapon).

LUCK CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 3 points per rank	

You can use your hero points to affect others in various ways (see **Hero Points**, page 121). Each rank, choose one of the following capabilities:

- You can spend a hero point on another character's behalf, with the normal benefits.
- You can spend one of your own hero points to negate a use of Gamemaster fiat (see page 124). This also eliminates the setback of the fiat, so no hero points are awarded for it.
- You can spend a hero point to force someone else to re-roll a d20 roll and take the *worse* of the two rolls. The target of this last effect may spend a hero point to avoid having to re-roll.

Modifiers—such as Area—allowing you to affect multiple targets at once require you to spend one hero point to affect all targets in the area. You need the Selective Attack extra (see page 113) to choose which targets are affected, otherwise, your power affects everyone in the area.

MAGIC

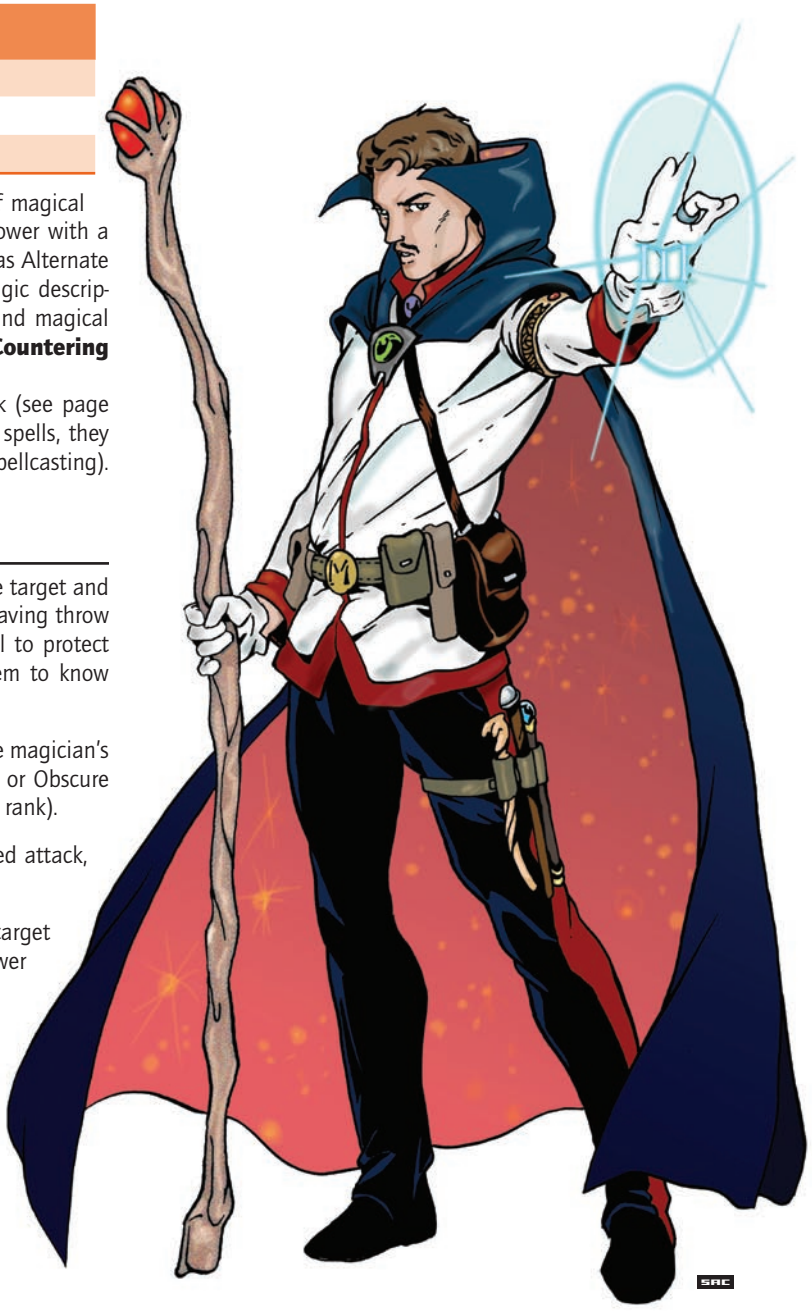
Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You are a sorcerer, witch, or wizard, able to cast a variety of magical spells. Choose one of the power feats below or any other power with a total cost of (power rank × 2) points. You can acquire others as Alternate Power feats. All powers obtained using Magic have the magic descriptor applied to them. So a magical flame blast is both fire and magical in nature. Magic can counter other magical effects (see **Countering Powers**, page 70).

Characters with Magic often have a Power Loss drawback (see page 127): if they are unable to freely speak and gesture to cast spells, they cannot use Magic (or any related magical powers reliant on spellcasting). This drawback, although common, is not required.

POWER FEATS (SAMPLE SPELLS)

- **Fog of Forgetfulness:** Swirling mists rise up around the target and blank out a particular memory if the target fails a Will saving throw (DC 10 + rank). Good magicians typically use this spell to protect innocents from truths too terrible or dangerous for them to know while evil magicians use it to cover their tracks.
- **Light of Truth:** A beam of blazing light radiates from the magician's outstretched hand, nullifying any Concealment, Illusion, or Obscure effects it touches (roll d20 + Magic rank vs. d20 + power rank).
- **Mystic Blast:** A bolt of magical force strikes as a ranged attack, inflicting damage equal to your power rank.
- **Mystic Binding:** Bands of magical energy entrap the target of this spell, like a Snare (see page 99) at your Magic power rank.
- **Mystic Passage:** This spell teleports you across a distance, like Teleport (see page 105) at your Magic rank.
- **Alternate Powers:** You can acquire virtually any other suitable power as an Alternate Power feat of Magic, although such powers are limited to a cost and rank no greater than your Magic power, as usual. Common Alternate Powers include: Concealment, Dazzle, Element Control, ESP, Force Field, Healing, Illusion, Mind Control, Nullify, Obscure, Possession, Super-Movement (dimensional), and Telekinesis.



MAGNETIC CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can move objects of ferrous metal—such as iron and steel—like a use of Telekinesis (see page 105) at your power rank.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Blast, Obscure Radio (static), and Nullify Electronics (electromagnetic pulse).

MENTAL BLAST

Effect: Attack/Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 4 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can strike any target you can accurately perceive with a blast of mental force. The target makes a Will saving throw against a DC of 15 + power rank and suffers damage on a failed save. Mental blasts have no effect on inanimate objects or mindless creatures (those lacking one or more mental ability scores).

FLAWS

- **Mental Weapon (–2):** You can manifest a "weapon" of mental force. Striking with it requires a melee attack roll. The target makes a Will saving throw against a damage bonus equal to your power rank. Like Mental Blast, a Mental Weapon has no effect on inanimate or mindless targets.

MIMIC (TRAIT)

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1-5 points per rank	

You can imitate one (or more) of another character's traits: abilities, skills, feats, or powers. You can mimic a total of (rank × 5) power points in traits per subject. No trait can have a bonus or rank greater than your Mimic rank, or the subject's rank, whichever is lower. For example, Mimic 8 allows you to mimic up to 40 points in traits, no one of which can have a rank or bonus greater than 8.

The cost per rank determines the traits you can mimic:

- **1 point:** Choose a particular type of trait (ability scores, skills, feats, or powers). You can mimic one trait of the chosen type at a time. For example, if you choose ability scores, you can mimic a subject's Strength, then touch a different subject and mimic his Dexterity (losing the previous subject's Strength), and so forth. One type of trait is a subject's appearance. If you choose to mimic it, you gain the benefits of Morph (see page 94): a +5 bonus on Disguise checks per Mimic rank to imitate that subject.
- **2 points:** You can mimic any one trait (ability scores, skills, feats, or powers), one at a time.
- **3 points:** You can mimic all of a target's traits of a particular type (ability scores, skills, feats, or powers of a particular type or descriptor) all at once.
- **4 points:** You can mimic all of a target's powers at once, including enhanced abilities and power feats.
- **5 points:** You can mimic all of a target's traits at once.

You must touch the subject (requiring a melee attack roll) you are mimicking. Mimicked traits last as long as you maintain your Mimic effect. If you are unable to maintain it, you lose any mimicked traits. Mimicked traits do not stack with yours or other mimicked traits; only the highest trait applies. Any mimicked traits require their normal action, checks, and so forth to use.

At the Gamemaster's option, you can trade off maximum trait rank for total power points you can mimic: lowering the maximum rank by 1 increases total power points by 5, while raising it by 1 lowers total power points by 5. For example, Mimic 4 is normally (4 × 5) 20 power points at up to rank 4, but you could change it to up to 35 power points up to rank 1 (broader, but less powerful) or 10 power points up to rank 6 (narrower, but more powerful). Narrowing power points available for Mimic can limit the rank it can reach, except for low-cost traits like skills.

UNDER THE HOOD: MIMIC

Mimic, especially with the right modifiers, can be very powerful. Gamemasters may want to restrict players to certain levels, possibly prohibiting the 5-point level (all traits at once), as well as the Continuous, Perception, and Ranged modifiers, or limiting the power to a certain type of target.

EXTRAS

- **Continuous (+1):** You can retain mimicked traits as long as your power is active, although you cannot exceed your maximum number of mimicked subjects.
- **Extra Subject (+1):** You can mimic the traits of two subjects at once. You must touch each subject separately and each counts as a separate use of your Mimic power. Multiple traits of the same type do not stack; use only the highest bonus. Each additional time you apply this modifier, move the maximum number of subjects one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (5 subjects, then 10, 25, etc.).
- **Perception (+2):** You can mimic any subject you can accurately perceive without the need for an attack roll.
- **Ranged (+1):** You can mimic subjects at normal range by making a ranged attack roll against the subject.
- **Residual (+1):** You can mimic a subject's powers using the residual energy they leave behind in places and objects. This generally requires powers that affect others, and the GM decides what powers and descriptors suit your Residual Mimic effect. You must touch the place or object to absorb any residual energy there.
- **Stacking (+1):** Your mimicked traits stack to a limited degree. You gain the highest mimicked trait and increase it by +1 each time you mimic the same trait. For example, if you mimic three subjects, all with Super-Strength, you take the highest Super-Strength rank and add +2 ranks for the other two subjects. The total stacked bonus still cannot exceed your power rank.

FLAWS

- **Limited (–1):** You can only mimic a particular type of subject. For example, you might only mimic the traits of animals or inanimate objects. Generally, "only humans" doesn't constitute a sufficient limitation, but it may, if nonhumans are especially common in the campaign.
- **Overload (–1):** If you attempt to mimic a trait with a higher rank than your power, you suffer a Side-Effect (see page 115). Typically this is a Blast, Fatigue, or Stun equal to the targeted effect's rank or bonus. For example, if you have Mimic 8 and try to copy a rank 10 power, the attempt fails and you suffer a rank 10 Side-Effect.
- **Resisted (–1):** Subjects get a Will saving throw when you attempt to mimic them (DC 10 + Mimic rank). If the save succeeds, you cannot mimic that subject for the next 24 hours.
- **Tainted (–1):** You acquire your subject's drawbacks (see **Drawbacks**, page 124) as long as you mimic the subject.

MIND CONTROL

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Concentration (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can control another character's mind, and therefore actions. To use Mind Control, make a power check against the result of the target's Will saving throw. If you succeed, you control the target's actions as long as you concentrate. If you fail, there is no effect. You can try again, but the target gets a cumulative +1 on Will saves for each successive attempt in the same encounter.

Issuing a command is a move action, separate from the standard action needed to establish control. If the target has no means of understanding

you, you can only issue simple commands that can be conveyed with gestures (like "go there" or "stop").

Targets of Mind Control get a new Will saving throw for each interval on the **Time and Value Progression Table**, starting at one minute, with a cumulative +1 bonus per save. Targets commanded to carry out an action strongly against their nature get a new Will save immediately with a +1 to +4 bonus, depending on the type of command. Success breaks your control. Obviously self-destructive commands are automatically ignored, but do not break your control.

The subject's consciousness is suppressed while controlled, meaning the target cannot say or do anything without direction, and has no memory of being controlled.

POWER FEATS

- **Mental Link:** You can give commands to your targets telepathically over any distance (with no need to speak).

EXTRAS

- **Conscious (+1):** Your controlled subject is conscious and aware, but completely obedient to your commands. This means the subject can be commanded to relate knowledge or use skills based on mental abilities. Subjects are aware of being controlled once the Mind Control ends unless the power is Subtle, in which case subjects have no explanation for their unusual behavior or simply no memory of it (your choice when you end the control).
- **Sensory Link (+1):** You can perceive everything one of your controlled subjects does. Your own senses are inactive while you are using your sensory link.

FLAWS

- **One Command (–1):** You can only give targets one command, like "don't move" or "live out your repressed desires." This command is chosen when you acquire the power and can't be changed.
- **Sense-Dependent (–1):** Your Mind Control works through a target's senses. Examples include eye contact (visual), hypnotic music (auditory), pheromones (olfactory), etc. See the **Sense-Dependent** flaw, page 115, for details.

MIND READING

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard/Full
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Concentration (Lasting)
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can read another character's thoughts. To use Mind Reading, make a power check against the result of the target's Will save.

If successful, you can read the target's surface thoughts (whatever the target is presently thinking). Mind Reading transcends language; you comprehend the target's thoughts whether or not you share a common language.

If you can interact with your subject, a successful Bluff check against the target's Sense Motive check causes the subject to think about a particular piece of information you're looking for, such as a password or name, allowing you to pluck it from the subject's surface thoughts. The target gets an additional Will save for each interval that passes on the **Time and Value Progression Table**, with a cumulative +1 bonus per save.

If you fail your power check, you cannot read the target's thoughts. You can try again the following round, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus on the Will save per attempt in that encounter.

You can also mentally probe a target's mind for information. Take a full-round action and make a power check against the result of the target's Will save. If successful, you can essentially ask any one question and receive the answer from the target's mind. If the target doesn't know the answer, then you know that. Especially personal or guarded information grants the target a +1 to +5 bonus on the Will save, while information the subject doesn't consciously know (subconscious or forgotten due to amnesia, for example) grants a +5 to +10 bonus on the Will save and the target can't forgo the save.

You can continue to ask questions, one per round, for as long as you maintain your mind probe, requiring a full-round action each round. The target gets an additional Will save for each interval on the **Time and Value Progression Table**, with a cumulative +1 bonus per save.

If you fail your power check, you cannot probe the target's mind. You can try again the following round, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus on the Will save per attempt.

EXTRAS

- **Sensory Link (+1):** You can "tap into" the senses of your subjects, perceiving what they perceive while reading them.

FLAWS

- **Limited (–1):** Mind Reading can be limited to surface thoughts only or probing only, either being a –1 power modifier.

MIND SHIELD

Effect: Defense/Mental	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

This power protects you from mental effects. You automatically succeed on Will saves against any mental effect with a save DC modifier less than your Mind Shield rank. It also gives you a +1 bonus per power rank on Will saves against mental effects. This bonus is subject to the normal power level limits on saving throw bonuses.

MIND SWITCH

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Sustained (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can switch your mind into the body of another creature, putting its mind into your body.

You must be able to accurately perceive the target and it must have an Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma score. Take a standard action and make a power check, opposed by the target's Will saving throw. If successful, your minds switch bodies.

You retain your mental ability scores, skills, and powers and gain the target's physical ability scores, skills, and powers, the same being true for the target occupying your body. Once the switch has taken place, it continues with no effort on your part.

The target of the Mind Switch gets a new Will saving throw for each interval on the **Time and Value Progression Table**. A successful save switches your minds back to their respective bodies. This is also the case if your Mind Switch power is ever countered. You can switch back any time as a free action.

MORPH

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1-3 points per rank	

You can alter your appearance to that of other creatures or even objects of the same mass. Your traits do not change; your new form is merely a cosmetic change. You gain a +5 bonus to Disguise checks per rank when using Morph to assume a different form. For 1 point per rank you can assume a single other appearance. For 2 points per rank you can assume any form from a broad group like humanoids, animals, machines, and so forth. For 3 points per rank you can assume any form of the same mass. For the ability to change your size as well as appearance see **Growth** (see page 87) and **Shrinking** (see page 98). To take on the other traits of forms you assume, see **Shapeshift** (see page 98).

POWER FEATS

- **Metamorph:** Morph only changes your appearance; you have all the traits of your normal self. This feat allows you to have an alternate set of traits, essentially an alternate *character*, you can change into. You can switch between sets of traits at will, once per round, as a free action. Your other forms must have the same point total as you and are subject to the same power level limits. They must also have traits suitable to your Morph power. For example, if you can only Morph into humanoid forms, then your alternate forms can't have non-humanoid traits. The GM may require certain common traits for all of your forms. Each additional rank of this feat gives you another set of traits you can change into. Metamorph is best-suited for characters with a defined list of alternate traits. For a character able to transform into numerous forms with different traits, see **Shapeshift** (see page 98).

NAUSEATE

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can inflict weakness on a target. You may do so through nausea, momentary illness, pain, or even extreme pleasure. You must touch the target, who makes a Fortitude saving throw. If the save fails, the target is *sickened*, suffering a –2 penalty on all attack rolls and checks. If the save fails by 5 or more, or on a second successful use of the power, the target is *nauseated*, unable to do anything other than take a single move action each round. If the save fails by 10 or more, or on a third successful use of the power, the target is *helpless*. The victim gets a new saving throw each round to recover from the effects, with a +1 bonus for each previous save.

FLAWS

- **Sicken (–1):** Your power cannot inflict more than a sickened result.

NEMESIS

Effect: Trait	**Action:** Free
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 8 points per rank	

You can adapt the powers you need to confront a particular opponent. Once per round, you can designate an opponent in perception range as a free action. You gain powers suited to fighting that opponent, up to (rank × 5) power points total. No individual power can have a rank greater than your Nemesis rank and the powers must remain within the campaign's power level limits. The Gamemaster decides what powers you get; you don't have any control over it. You can only designate one opponent as your Nemesis for each round.

NULLIFY (POWER)

Effect: Trait	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 1-3 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can counter a target's powers (see **Countering Powers**, page 70). Make a ranged attack roll to hit the target. Then, make an opposed power check of your Nullify rank and the target power's rank or the target's Will save, whichever is higher. If you are targeting the subject of the power rather than the power's user, make an opposed power check against the user (Will save is not a factor). If you win, the targeted power turns off, although the user can re-activate it normally. You can't nullify Innate powers (see **Innate**, page 109). The cost per rank determines what you can counter:

- **1 point:** Counter any one power of a particular descriptor at a time (fire powers, magical powers, mental powers, etc.).
- **2 points:** Counter all powers of a particular descriptor (such as fire or magic) or type (like attack or sensory effects) at once. Choose the affected descriptor or type when you acquire the power.
- **3 points:** Counter all powers at once.

EXTRAS

- **Duration (+1 per duration step):** If Nullify's duration is increased above Instant, any countered effect cannot be re-activated until the duration expires. The user of the countered effect may use extra effort (see page 120) to gain another opposed check. If successful, the effect can be re-activated.
- **Nullifying Field (+0):** Rather than targeting a specific individual, you can Nullify any affected powers in a radius of (rank × 5) feet around you as a standard action. This is a combination of the Touch range (–1) and burst Area (+1) modifiers. Some characters have a Nullifying Field as an Alternate Power of Nullify.
- **Power Resistance (+1):** You can use Nullify to counter powers used on you (and only you) as a reaction. You cannot nullify other powers. This essentially changes the power's action to Reaction (+3) and its range to Personal (–2).

OBJECT MIMICRY

Effect: Trait	**Action:** Move
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 6 points per rank	

You can copy the properties of objects you touch, giving you various powers. Essentially, you can assume different alternate forms (see **Alternate Form**, page 75), gaining any applicable powers for that form at your Object Mimicry rank. So, by touching a steel girder, for example, you transform into steel, by touching fire, you transform into flame, and so forth. You gain (rank × 5) power points in traits and cannot assume an alternate form with powers greater in rank than your

Object Mimicry rank or the properties of the mimicked object, whichever is lower. It requires a move action to touch and mimic an object and you can do so once per round.

OBSCURE

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1-4 points per rank	

You can create total concealment in an area (see **Concealment**, page 161). Obscure costs 1 point per rank if it affects one sense type, 2 points per rank if it affects two sense types, 3 points per rank if it affects three sense types, and 4 points per rank if it affects all sense types. Visual senses count as two, so a 3 points per rank Obscure power could affect visual and one other sense type, for example. An Obscure effect can be centered on you or created at a distance as a standard action. It does not move once created, although you can reposition it as a move action. Characters suffer the effects of total concealment when unable to perceive an opponent and may suffer other hindrances as the GM sees fit. Your Obscure covers an area 5 feet in radius at rank 1. Each additional rank moves the radius one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**.

POWER FEATS

- **Selective:** You can choose who, within your area of effect, is and is not affected by your Obscure power.

FLAWS

- **Partial (–1):** Your Obscure effect provides partial rather than total concealment.

PARALYZE

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can reduce a target's speed and reaction time. Make an attack roll; if successful, the target makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, the target is *slowed* and can only take a standard or move action each round (not both). The target takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls, Defense, and Reflex saves. A slowed target moves at half normal speed. If the save fails by 5 or more, or on a second successful attack, the target is *paralyzed*: helpless and unable to move or take any actions. The target gets a new Will save each round to overcome the effect, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

FLAWS

- **Slow (–1):** Your power cannot inflict more than a slow result.

PLANT CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Reflex

You can control the growth and movement of plants. You can cause plants in an area of (rank × 5) feet in radius to entangle opponents like a use of Snare (see page 99).

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Create Objects (out of plants and wood), Fatigue, Nauseate (controlling intestinal flora), and Stun (pollen causing allergic reactions).
- **Photosynthesis:** Your skin is tinged green with chlorophyll, allowing you to photosynthesize food from water and sunlight. You have the benefits of Immunity (starvation).

PLASMA CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Toughness

You can generate and project Blasts of high-energy plasma.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Dazzle (visual) and Disintegrate.

POSSESSION

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Sustained (Lasting)
Cost: 4 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can merge with and assume control of a target's body. Make a power check against the result of your target's Will save. If you succeed, your body vanishes, merging with the target, and you assume control of the target's body. You retain your mental ability scores, skills based on mental abilities, and powers with mental effects, and gain the target's physical ability scores, skills based on physical abilities, and powers with physical effects.

The target's mind is suppressed and unconscious while you are in control. A victim of Possession gets a new saving throw for each interval on the **Time and Value Progression Table**. Possessed characters used to carry out an action strongly against their nature get a new Will save immediately with a +1 to +4 bonus, depending on the type of action. A successful save ejects you from the target's body; your own body reappears in the nearest open space. The same occurs when you leave the target's body voluntarily.

POWER CONTROL

Effect: Mental	**Action:** Standard
Range: Perception	**Duration:** Sustained (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Will

You can exert influence over the powers of others, controlling when and how they operate and overriding the victim's control. The target gets a Will save to resist.

You can cause the target's powers to do anything they normally do, although you do not control the target's body. For example, you could turn on a target's laser eye-beams, but you can't direct where the target is looking. At the GM's discretion, extra effort on your part can grant the target of your Power Control a temporary power feat or alternate power, pushing their powers beyond their normal limits. See **Extra Effort**, page 120, for more information.

PROTECTION

Effect: Defense	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Permanent
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You're particularly resistant to harm. You gain a bonus on your Toughness saving throws equal to your Protection rank.

EXTRAS

- **Impervious (+1):** Your Protection stops some damage completely. If an attack has a damage bonus less than your Protection rank, it inflicts *no* damage (you automatically succeed on your Toughness saving throw). Penetrating damage (see page 112) ignores this modifier; you must save against it normally. This modifier can also be applied to the Toughness save bonus from Constitution (costing 1 point per +1 save bonus made Impervious).

FLAWS

- **Ablative (–1):** Damage chips away at your Protection. Each time it provides its bonus, it loses 1 power point of effectiveness. When reduced to 0 power points, it no longer protects you at all. This is the same as the Fades flaw (see page 114).
- **Limited (–1):** Your Protection applies to only one of a broad type of damage (physical or energy). If your Protection applies to only one of a narrow type of damage (edged weapons, blunt weapons, electricity, fire, magic, etc.) it has a –3 modifier.

QUICKNESS

Effect: General	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can perform routine tasks quickly. For purposes of this power a "routine task" is one where you can take 20 on the check. At rank 1 you perform such tasks at twice normal speed (x2). Each additional rank moves your speed one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (x5, x10, x25, and so forth). At rank 20, you perform routine tasks at *5 million* times normal speed! Tasks where you cannot take 20 (including combat actions) are unaffected by Quickness, nor is movement speed.

You can take 20 normally using Quickness and, if your power rank is high enough, you may be able to take 20 on a task in a single standard action (3 seconds) or less. If you can perform a task in less than a second, the GM may choose to treat that task as a free action for you (although the GM can still limit the number of free actions you can accomplish in a round as usual). Among other things, this allows you to do things like take 20 on a Disable Device check by trying all possible combinations of a lock at great speed, or take 20 on a Knowledge check by reading all available research materials in an instant.

FLAWS

- **One Type (–1):** Your Quickness applies to only physical or mental tasks, not both.
- **One Task (–2):** Your Quickness applies to only one particular task, such as reading, mathematical calculations, and so forth.

RADIATION CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Toughness

You can generate and project Blasts of radiation. Note this is usually "comic book" radiation, visible as glowing energy with effects similar to intense heat. More realistic radiation is Subtle (invisible to all but specialized radiation detection) and has effects more like Drain Constitution. Radiation Control can counter other radiation effects.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Dazzle (visual), Drain Constitution (Disease +2, Ranged +1, radiation sickness), Nullify (mutation-based powers), Transform (mutations).

REGENERATION

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Permanent
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You recover from damage more easily. For each rank of Regeneration, choose one of the following benefits:

- **Recovery Bonus:** You gain a +1 bonus on your Constitution checks to recover from damage. If you have no Constitution score, one rank allows you to make recovery checks at –4, with each additional rank improving your bonus normally (–3 at rank 2, +0 at rank 5, then increasing from there). At a +9 or better bonus, you automatically succeed on recovery checks (since they are DC 10).
- **Recovery Rate:** You make checks to recover from a particular damage condition faster. Each rank moves the rest time required to make a recovery check for that condition one step down the **Time and Value Progression Table** (see page 70). So, for example, characters normally get one check per hour of rest to recover from being injured. One Regeneration rank reduces that time to 20 minutes, two to 5 minutes, three to 1 minute, and so forth. If the time is brought below one action (3 seconds), the character gets a recovery check for that condition once per round with no need for rest. Each damage condition (Bruised, Injured, Unconscious, Staggered, and Disabled) requires a separate application of Regeneration ranks, as follows:

  Bruised or Unconscious: One rank allows a recovery check after one round, two ranks per standard action, three ranks once per round with no rest. Bruised conditions recover automatically after the required time, with no check necessary.

  Injured or Staggered: One rank allows a recovery check once per 20 minutes, two ranks per 5 minutes, three ranks per minute, and four ranks per round, five ranks per standard action, and six ranks per round with no rest. Injured conditions recover automatically after the required time, with no check necessary.

  Disabled: One rank allows a recovery check per 5 hours, two ranks per hour, three ranks per 20 minutes, four ranks per 5 minutes, five ranks per minute, and six ranks per round, seven ranks per standard action, and eight ranks per round with no rest.
- **Ability Damage:** One Regeneration rank allows you to recover a point of ability damage (see page 166) per 5 hours, two ranks per hour, three ranks per 20 minutes, four ranks per 5 minutes, five ranks per minute, six ranks per round, seven ranks per standard action, and eight ranks per round without resting.
- **Resurrection:** You can recover from death! If you die, make a DC 10 recovery check a week later. If successful, your condition becomes unconscious and disabled (from which you recover normally). If the check fails, you're permanently dead. You must specify a reasonably common effect or set of effects that keep you from recovering from death (such as beheading, cremation, a stake through the heart, etc.). You can increase the rate you make recovery checks from death with additional ranks, seperately from your normal recovery rate. At nine ranks you can check to recover from death each round. At ten ranks, you get a recovery check instantly when your condition becomes dead. If successful, you don't die.

Total Regeneration—the ability to make a damage recovery check, including resurrection, every round without rest—requires 35 ranks, not including ranks allocated to recovery check bonus. If you also recover ability damage once per round, increase to 43 ranks.

POWER FEATS

- **Persistent:** You can regenerate Incurable damage (see page 109).
- **Regrowth:** When you recover from being disabled, you regrow severed or crippled limbs and organs as well.
- **Reincarnation:** When you recover from death (and only then) you can redistribute your character's power points to different traits. They remain fixed until the character dies again.

FLAWS

- **Source (–1):** Your Regeneration only works when you have access to a particular source, such as blood, electricity, scrap metal, sunlight, and so forth. Without this source, your power doesn't work and you recover at normal speed. At the GM's discretion, a weaker form of the source means you recover slower (your effective Regeneration rank is lower, in other words).

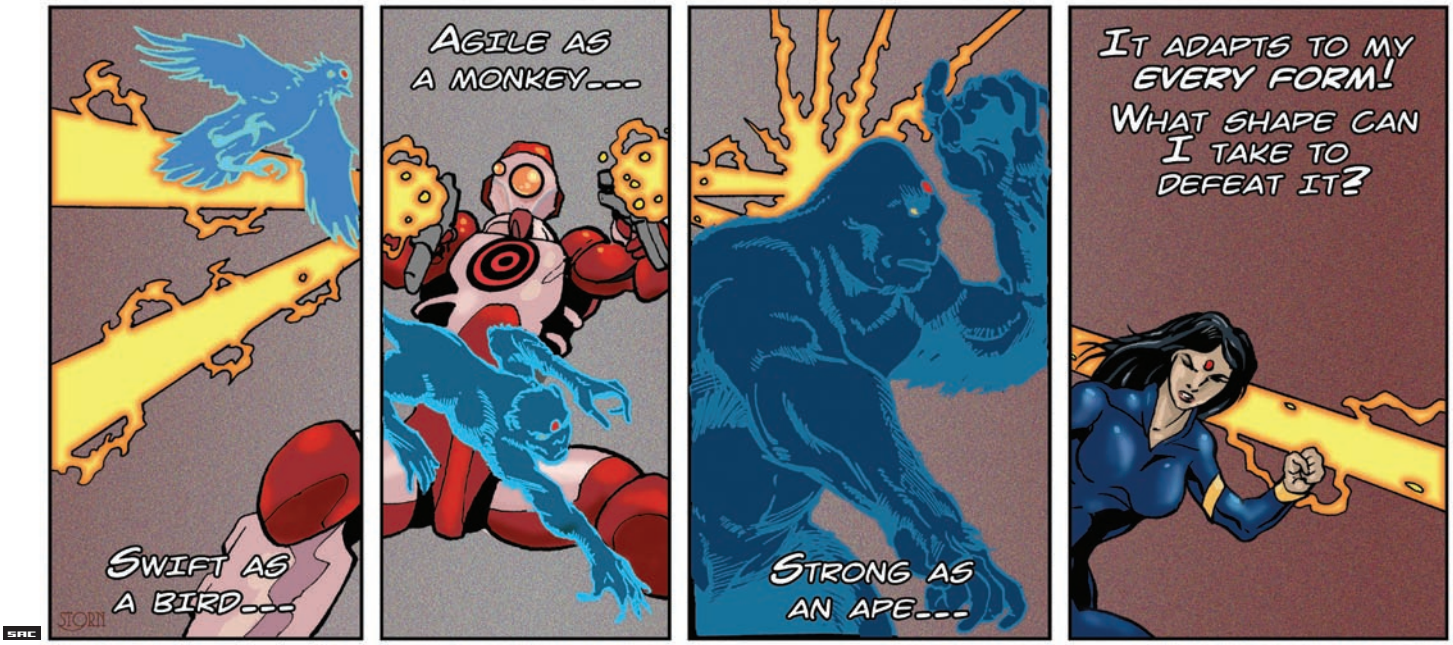
SENSORY SHIELD

Effect: Defense	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Permanent
Cost: 1-2 points per rank	

One of your senses (chosen when you acquire this power) is protected against overload, giving you a +2 bonus per rank on saves against Dazzle attacks (see **Dazzle**, page 81). You automatically succeed on saves against Dazzle attacks with a rank lower than your Sensory Shield rank. For 2 points per rank, all of your senses are protected against Dazzle attacks.

UNDER THE HOOD: QUICKNESS

Quickness is obviously not realistic; it allows you to do things like disassemble an entire car in a single round at high enough ranks, but doesn't have any effect at all on how many attacks you can make. Why? Two reasons: first because allowing any character potentially *millions* of attacks per round would slow down the game and be hugely unbalancing (to say the least). Second, and perhaps more important, it's how superhuman quickness works in the comics: speedsters do routine things in the blink of an eye, but in fights they don't really act more often than anyone else. See **Super-Speed** (see page 104) for some examples of the special attacks speedsters might have, in addition to their Quickness.



SHAPESHIFT

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 8 points per rank	

You can transform into different forms, gaining the physical traits (abilities, skills, feats, and powers) of the assumed form. You gain (rank × 5) power points worth of traits. No rank or bonus of the assumed form can be higher than your Shapeshift rank. You can also redistribute power points spent on your own physical traits (lowering your Strength to apply those points elsewhere, for example). For shape-changers who don't acquire a subject's physical traits, use **Morph** (see page 94). To assume larger or smaller forms, apply points from your Shapeshift to appropriate ranks of **Growth** (see page 87) or **Shrinking** (see page 98).

FLAWS

- **Limited (–1):** You can only shapeshift into a limited category of forms, like only animals, only machines, only people, and so forth. The GM determines if a particular category is suitably limited. This modifier is recommended for most acquisitions of Shapeshift, to help limit its usefulness.

SHIELD

Effect: Defense	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You have a shield able to deflect the brunt of attacks. You gain a dodge bonus to Defense equal to your Shield rank. Since you have to be able to bring your shield to bear, you lose this bonus whenever you are denied your regular dodge bonus or are unable to take a free action. The dodge bonus from your Shield is subject to the normal power level limits.

Note that your Shield isn't necessary a Device (page 128), although it may be. It could also be an effect you can create out of nowhere, like a disk-shaped force field.

SHRINKING

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can reduce your size. Every rank of Shrinking reduces your Strength by 1 (with a minimum of Str 1). Additionally, every four ranks reduce your size category by one. So a Medium-sized creature is Small at rank 4, Tiny at rank 8, Diminutive at rank 12, Fine at rank 16, and Miniscule at rank 20. You gain all the benefits and drawbacks of your new size. For the effects of reduced size refer to the **Size** table (see page 34). You lose 5 feet of movement speed per size category you shrink, down to a minimum speed of 5 feet at Miniscule size.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** If you have Shrinking, you can acquire Growth as an Alternate Power feat.
- **Atomic Size:** If you have Shrinking 20, you can shrink down past Miniscule size to the atomic scale, allowing you to pass through solid objects by slipping between their atoms. You're effectively immune to attacks at a higher scale, although the GM decides the effect of any given attack or hazard while you are at atomic size.
- **Growth Strike:** You can add the momentum of increasing size to your melee attacks, literally enlarging under an opponent's jaw, for example. This gives you a +1 damage bonus per size category you enlarge until you reach your opponent's size and only works on opponents larger than you are. So growing from Miniscule to Medium size as part of an attack does +5 damage.
- **Microverse:** If you have Shrinking 20, you can shrink down past Miniscule size, to the point where you cross dimensional barriers and enter a "microverse" (which may or may not *really* exist at the sub-

atomic level). Entering or leaving a microverse is a move action. In the microverse, you lose your Shrinking power, but gain Growth equal to your Shrinking rank (and when you grow larger than Awesome size, you leave the microverse and return to the normal universe where your powers return to normal).

EXTRAS

- **Normal Strength (+1):** You suffer no reduction in Strength, carrying capacity, or movement speed when you shrink.

SNARE

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Reflex

You can restrain a target with bonds of ice, glue, webbing, bands of energy, and so forth (whatever suits your descriptors). Make a ranged attack roll. If successful, the target makes a Reflex saving throw. On a failed save, the target is *entangled*, suffering a –2 penalty to attack rolls and Defense, and a –4 penalty to Dexterity. If the Snare is anchored to an immobile object (such as the ground), the entangled character cannot move from that spot. Otherwise, he can move at half speed, but can't move all out.

If the Reflex save fails by 5 or more, or on a second successful Snare attack, the target is *bound* and helpless. The target is unable to move, loses his defense bonus, and suffers a further –5 modifier to Defense. Each additional Snare "layered" onto a helpless target increases the Snare's Toughness by +1, to a maximum of double its normal Toughness. A bound target gains cover from the Snare (see **Cover**, page 160). Entangled characters do not gain this benefit.

Targets can break out of a Snare using Strength or an effect that doesn't require freedom of movement (this may restrict the use of some powers and devices, for example). The Snare makes Toughness saves like an inanimate object with Toughness equal to its rank. If the trapped character has an attack with a damage bonus 5 or more greater than the Snare's Toughness, he can break the Snare automatically as a standard action. If the trapped character has an attack with a damage bonus greater than the Snare's Toughness +10, he can break the snare automatically as a free action. Alternately, a Snare victim can attempt an Escape Artist check to slip free as a full-round action, with a DC of 20 + the Snare's rank.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** If you want to use your snare to form objects, acquire Create Object as an Alternate Power feat.
- **Reversible:** You can remove your snare from a target at will as a free action.
- **Tether:** You have a tether attached to your snare, allowing you to reel in or otherwise exert your strength against the target. Its maximum length is rank × 100 feet.

EXTRAS

- **Backlash (+1):** Your snare reflects any internal attack that fails to destroy it back on the ensnared character (who saves against it normally). Attacks that destroy the snare are not reflected.
- **Blocks Sense (+1):** The snare blocks one of a bound target's senses of a particular type. It may cover the eyes or ears, for example. This has no effect on targets that are only entangled. Each additional sense blocked increases the modifier by +1, for a +4 modifier, the snare blocks all of a bound target's senses.
- **Engulf (+0):** You "snare" targets by grappling them. This includes creatures that swallow opponents whole or heroes able to engulf targets in an animated cloak. Your snare has no range and requires a melee attack roll. However, your target is rendered bound and helpless on a failed save, rather than entangled. Once you have engulfed the target, the snare has a Sustained duration. You suffer Feedback (see page 115) from any attacks against the snare, since you *are* the snare! If you are stunned, any engulfed victims are freed.
- **Regenerating (+1):** Any damage that does not break the snare disappears on the start of each of your rounds, making it difficult to wear it down.
- **Transparent (+1):** The snare can't be broken from the outside, only the inside. Attacks on the snared target do not affect the snare in any way, and it offers the target no cover.

FLAWS

- **Entangle (–1):** Your snare cannot inflict more than an entangle result and cannot be layered.

SONIC CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Reflex

You can generate a deafening blast of sound in a radius of (rank × 5) feet that acts as an auditory Dazzle effect (see page 81).

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Blast, Obscure (auditory), Drain Toughness (Ranged +1, Limited to crystalline or brittle objects –1), Illusion (auditory), Nauseate (vertigo), and Stun.

SPACE TRAVEL

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 points per rank	

You can travel faster than the speed of light through the vacuum of space (but not in a planetary atmosphere). You can fly at light speed at rank 1, crossing one light year per year. Each additional rank moves you one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. So rank 2 allows you to travel twice the speed of light, then five times, and so forth. This effect does not provide protection from the rigors of outer space (for that, see **Immunity**, page 89).

SPATIAL CONTROL

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can twist and distort space, including distances and topography. You can jump across distances instantly by bending space as if you had Teleport (see page 105) at your power rank.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Blast (spatial shockwave, Area, Explosion, or Indirect), Deflect (by "warping" space so attacks miss), Duplication (Real –1, by co-existing in multiple places at once), Elongation (distorting your own spatial proportions), Speed (by shortening distances), Super-Movement (dimensional), and Teleport (Attack +0 or Portal +2).

SPEED

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank	

You can move faster than normal. You have a ground speed of 10 MPH at rank 1. Each additional rank moves your speed one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. At rank 19, you can reach anywhere on Earth in a single move action. At rank 20, you can accelerate to near the speed of light!

SPINNING

Effect: Defense	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can spin rapidly along your vertical axis at tremendous speed without becoming disoriented. You gain a bonus to avoid grapples and Snares equal to your power rank and a bonus on Toughness saves against physical attacks equal to your power rank as long as your continue spinning.

POWER FEATS

- **Radius Sight:** You gain the ability to see in all directions while spinning, like the Super-Senses (Radius) power (see page 102).

STRIKE

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 1 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Toughness

This power inflicts damage in melee combat. It might be claws, energy fields, focused striking strength, and so forth, depending on your descriptors. Melee weapons are devices or equipment with this power (see **Chapter 7**).

Your Strike rank substitutes for your Strength modifier to determine your melee damage. This means there's no reason to take Strike at a rank less than your Strength bonus without the Mighty power feat (see the following). Your maximum damage is limited by the campaign's power level (see page 24).

POWER FEATS

- **Mighty:** You can add your Strength bonus to your Strike rank to determine your melee damage when using your Strike. The total damage is still limited by the campaign's power level. Any extras applied to your Strike damage must also be applied to your Strength damage (increasing the cost of your Strength) in order for your Strength bonus to stack. So, for example, if you want your Strike to be Penetrating (a +1 modifier), you must also pay the cost of a +1 modifier to your Strength in order to add it to your Penetrating Strike.
- **Thrown:** Your can "throw" your Strike attack to hit a target at a distance, with a range increment of (Thrown rank × 10) feet and a maximum range of five increments (Thrown rank × 50 feet). Each application of this feat increases your throwing range. It may represent a throwing weapon or the ability to "throw" natural weapons like quills or claws. If you have a Mighty Thrown Strike, you can add your Strength bonus to the damage, but no more than the Strike's rank (so you can only add +2 Strength bonus to a rank 2 Mighty Thrown Strike). Once you have thrown your Strike attack, you cannot use it again until you recover it. This may involve picking up a thrown weapon, or regrowing a natural weapon. The exact circumstances are up to the GM, but it should usually be something you can do automatically at the end of a combat. For a "throwing attack" you can use every round, either because of unlimited ammunition or a weapon that automatically returns to you, take the Blast power (page 77).

EXTRAS

- **Ranged:** Strike cannot have a range greater than touch (except using the Thrown power feat). A "ranged Strike" is actually the Blast power, the ability to inflict damage at normal range (see page 77).

STUN

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can stun a target. Make a melee attack roll. If successful, the target must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + power rank). A failed

UNDER THE HOOD: STRENGTH AND STRIKE

The primary reason why Mighty Strike pays a premium on extras is to prevent a strong character from taking a rank 1 Strike with a lot of extras, adding Strength bonus on top of it, and getting all the benefits with almost none of the cost.

If you want a kind of halfway point between requiring an additional cost on Mighty Strike extras and not having one at all, you can allow unmodified Strength to add to the Strike at a lesser bonus, based on the Strike's total cost.

Essentially, each point of Strength bonus provides an extra "power point" for adding to the Strike. For an unmodified Strike—with a cost of 1 point per rank—this is a 1-to-1 increase; 1 point of Str bonus equals +1 Strike damage. For a Strike costing more, divide Str bonus accordingly. For example a Strike with +2 in modifiers (costing 3 points per rank), divides Str bonus by 3 before stacking it, a +6 Str bonus would add only +2 damage to this Strike.

This option involves a bit more complexity, but also offers a little more flexibility in terms of applying power modifiers to Mighty Strikes.

save means the target is dazed. A save that fails by 5 or more means the target is stunned. Targets failing the Fortitude save by 10 or more are unconscious and recover normally. The target gets a new save each round to recover from being dazed or stunned, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

FLAWS

- **Daze (–1):** Your power cannot inflict more than a dazed result.

SUFFOCATE

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Concentration
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can cause a target to suffocate (see **Suffocation**, page 168). Make a melee attack roll. If successful, the target must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + power rank). If the save fails, the target takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls, Defense, and Reflex saves, can only take a standard or move action each round (not both), and moves at half normal speed. The target must make a Constitution check each round (DC 10, +1 DC per round), starting the round the Fortitude save fails. A failed check means the character becomes unconscious. If the power is maintained after that point, the character's condition is dying on the following round and dead the round after that. A successful initial Fortitude save negates the Suffocate effect. Targets with Immunity to Suffocation are also unaffected.

SUMMON (MINION)

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You can call upon another creature—a minion (see page 63)—to aid you. This creature is created as an independent character with (rank × 15) power points. Summoned minions are subject to the normal power level limits, and cannot have minions themselves.

You can summon your minion to you automatically as a standard action; it appears in the nearest open space beside you. You always have the same minion unless you apply power modifiers allowing you to summon different minions. Your minion automatically has a helpful attitude and does its best to aid you and obey your commands (see page 175 for descriptions of NPC attitudes).

Unconscious and dead minions disappear. Defeated minions recover normally except they recover from death as if they were disabled. You cannot summon a defeated minion until it has completely recovered. Your summoned minions also vanish if your power is turned off, countered, or nullified.

POWER FEATS

- **Progression:** Each time you apply this feat, move your total number of minions one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (2, 5, 10, etc.). You can still only summon one minion per standard action.
- **Mental Link:** You have a mental link with your minions, allowing you to communicate with them over any distance.
- **Sacrifice:** When you are hit with an effect requiring a saving throw, you can spend a hero point to shift it to one of your minions instead. The minion must be within range of the attack and a viable target of the effect. Needless to say, this is not a particularly heroic feat. The Gamemaster may wish to restrict it to villains or non-player characters (in which case a hero *earns* a hero point when a villain uses this feat to avoid an effect by sacrificing a minion).

EXTRAS

- **Fanatical (+1):** Your summoned minions have a fanatical attitude and devotion to you (see page 175).
- **Heroic (+1):** Your minions are not subject to the minion rules (see page 163), but treated like normal non-player characters.
- **Horde (+1):** You can summon up to your maximum number of minions with one standard action. You must have the Progression power feat to take this extra.
- **Type (+1/+2):** Minions are normally identical in terms of traits. It's a +1 modifier to summon minions of a general type (elementals, birds, fish, etc.), +2 to summon minions of a broad type (animals, demons, humanoids, etc.).

FLAWS

- **Attitude (–1):** Your summoned minions are less than cooperative. For a –1 modifier, they are indifferent. They are unfriendly for a –2 modifier, and hostile for a –3 modifier.

UNDER THE HOOD: SUMMON

Summon is a useful power; it doesn't cost much to summon up a horde of minions, giving you a *lot* of effective actions per round! Gamemasters may wish to limit large numbers of minions (summoned or otherwise) to villains and non-player characters. Player character minions are subject to the campaign's power level limits (see **Power Level**, page 24). There are also practical matters limiting just how much minions can do at any one time.

First, directing your minions to do something is a move action. If you want to issue different commands to different groups of minions, then it's one move action per command. So it's easier to tell all of your minions "attack!" than it is to issue complex commands to each one in the midst of combat.

Second, Gamemasters may wish to have groups of minions use aid actions rather than rolling their actions separately. For example, instead of rolling eight attacks for eight different minions, the GM has seven minions aid the eighth, giving that minion a +14 bonus from their aid actions. This makes groups of minions more effective and efficient overall. GMs should keep in mind the limits on the number of opponents that can gang up on a character at once (see page 161).

Also, Gamemasters should keep in mind that lower power level minions have limits. For example, while a group of eight minions may easily be able to hit an opponent (especially if they use teamwork to give themselves one attack roll with a +14 bonus), they may not be able to *hurt* their target quite so easily.

In particular, Gamemasters may wish to limit the use of the Heroic extra. Treating minions as normal characters can greatly slow down combat, since it becomes that much harder to take them out of a fight.

SUPER-MOVEMENT

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You have a special form of movement. For each rank in this effect, choose one of the following:

- **Air Walking:** You can "walk" on air at half your normal ground movement speed as if it were solid ground, and move up or down at a 45 degree angle at half speed (one-quarter your ground movement speed). For two ranks, you move at your normal ground movement speed (half speed when ascending or descending).
- **Dimensional Movement:** You can move from one dimension to another. Dimensional Movement is Instant duration. For one rank, you can move between your home dimension and one other. For two ranks you can move between any of a related group of dimensions (mystical dimensions, alien dimensions, etc). For three ranks you can travel to any dimension. You can carry up to 100 lbs. with you when you move. Each Progression power feat moves this amount one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (250 lbs., 500 lbs., etc.). Since this effect can be extremely useful in some situations, the GM should carefully regulate its use, possibly requiring modifiers like Limited or Unreliable or even disallowing it for player characters altogether.

- **Permeate:** You can pass through solid objects as if they weren't there. For one rank, you can move at one-quarter your speed through any physical object as a move action and half your speed as a full action. For two ranks, you can move at half your speed as a move action and your full speed as a full action. For three ranks, you can move at your normal speed through any obstacles. You cannot breathe while inside a solid object, so you need Immunity to Suffocation or you have to hold your breath. You may also need a Super-Sense (such as X-Ray Vision) to see where you're going. Permeate is often Limited to a particular substance (like earth, ice, or metal, for example) as a –1 modifier. Permeate provides no protection against attacks, although you do gain total cover while inside an object (see **Cover**, page 160).
- **Slithering:** You can move along the ground at your normal speed while prone instead of crawling at a rate of 5 feet per move action. You suffer no penalties for making attacks while prone.
- **Slow Fall:** As long as you are capable of action, you can fall any distance without harm. You can also stop your fall at any point along a distance so long as there is a handhold or projection for you to grab (such as a ledge, flagpole, branch, etc.). If you have the Wall-Crawling Super-Movement power, then any surface provides you with a handhold.
- **Swinging:** You can swing through the air at your normal ground movement speed, using a swing-line you provide or available lines and projections (tree limbs, flagpoles, vines, telephone- and power-lines, etc.).
- **Sure-Footed:** You're better able to deal with obstacles and obstructions to movement. Reduce the speed penalty for hampered movement (see page 34) by one-quarter for each application of this effect. For example, heavy obstructions or a bad surface only reduce your speed by one-quarter rather than one-half, for example. If you reduce the movement penalty to 0 or less, you are unaffected by that condition and move at full normal speed.
- **Temporal Movement:** You can move through time. Temporal Movement is Instant duration. For one rank, you can move between the present and another fixed point in time (such as 100 years into the past, or 1,000 years into the future). For two ranks you can move to any point in either the past or the future. For three ranks, you can travel to any point in time. You can carry up to 100 lbs. with you when you move. Each Progression power feat moves this amount one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (250 lbs., 500 lbs., etc.). Temporal mechanics and the effects of time travel are left up to the GM. Since this is an extremely powerful ability, the GM should carefully regulate its use, possibly requiring modifiers like Limited or Unreliable or even disallowing it for player characters altogether.
- **Trackless:** You leave no trail and cannot be tracked using visual senses (although you can still be tracked using scent or other means). You step so lightly you can walk across the surface of soft sand or even snow without leaving tracks and you have total concealment from tremorsense (see **Concealment**, page 161).
- **Wall-Crawling:** You can climb walls and ceilings at half your normal speed with no chance of falling and no need for a Climb skill check. You're still flat-footed while climbing unless you have 5 or more ranks of Climb (see page 42). An additional rank of Super-Movement applied to this effect means you climb at your full speed and are not flat-footed while climbing.

- **Water Walking:** You can move or stand on the surface of water, quicksand, and other liquids without sinking.

SUPER-SENSES

Effect: Sensory	**Action:** Free
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Permanent
Cost: 1 point per rank	

One or more of your senses are enhanced. Each rank gives you one of the following effects. Some options require more than one rank, noted in their descriptions.

ENHANCED SENSES

The following effects enhance or improve existing senses, whether one of the five normal senses or the additional senses listed in the following section.

- **Accurate (2 or 4 ranks):** You can use a sense to pinpoint something's exact location. You can use an accurate sense to target something in combat. Visual senses are accurate for humans. 2 ranks for one sense, 4 for an entire sense type.
- **Acute (1 or 2 ranks):** You can sense fine details about anything you can detect with a particular sense. Visual and auditory senses are acute for humans. 1 rank for one sense, 2 for an entire sense type.
- **Extended (1 rank):** You have a sense that operates at greater than normal range. Your range increment with the sense is increased by a factor of 10. Each additional time you apply this option, your range increment increases by an additional factor of 10, so one increase makes the range increment 100, two makes it 1000, and so on.
- **Radius (1–5 ranks):** You can make Notice checks with a Ranged sense against any point around you. Subjects behind you cannot use Stealth to hide from you without some other concealment. *Cost:* 1 rank for use with one sense, 2 ranks for one sense type, 5 ranks for all your senses.
- **Ranged (1 rank):** You can use a sense that normally has no range (taste or touch in humans) to make Notice checks at a normal range increment (–1 per 10 feet).

ADDITIONAL SENSES

The effects here grant additional sensory capabilities or senses beyond the normal five senses.

- **Awareness (1 rank):** You can sense the use of powers or effects with a particular descriptor with a successful Notice check (DC 10, modified by range). Examples include Cosmic Awareness, Divine Awareness, Magical Awareness, Mental Awareness, and so forth. You can apply other Super-Senses to your Awareness to increase its range and scope. Choose the sense type of your Awareness; usually, it is a mental sense.
- **Blindsight (4 ranks):** Using a non-visual sense type (chosen when you take this effect), you can maneuver as well as a sighted character. Obscure effects are irrelevant to you unless they specifically affect the sense type you use (such as Obscure Radio against a radar sense). You can make Notice checks using Blindsight, but you cannot distinguish fine detail or colors (Blindsight is accurate, but not acute.)
- **Communication Link (1 rank):** You have a link with a particular individual, chosen when you acquire this option, who must also have this power. The two of you can communicate over any distance like a use of the **Communication** power (see page 78). Choose a communication medium when you select this option.
- **Danger Sense (1 rank):** When you would normally be surprised in combat (see **Surprise**, page 153), make a Notice check (DC 15). Success means you are not surprised and may act during the surprise round (if any). Failure means you are surprised (although, if you have the Uncanny Dodge feat, you retain your dodge bonus to Defense). The GM may raise the DC of the Danger Sense check in some circumstances. Your Danger Sense must belong to a particular sense type (see **Sense Types**, page 68). Sensory effects targeting that sense also affect your Danger Sense ability and may "blind" it.
- **Darkvision (2 ranks):** You can see normally in the dark, even darkness created by an Obscure effect (although other Obscure descriptors, such as fog or blinding light, affect you normally).
- **Detect (1 rank):** You can detect a particular item or effect with a move action and a Notice check. Detect has no range and only indicates the presence or absence of something. Choose what sense type your Detect falls under. +1 rank allows you to use Detect as a free action (making it a Sense). A seperate +1 rank can permit you to detect at range.
- **Direction Sense (1 rank):** You always know what direction north lies in and can retrace your steps through any place you've been.
- **Distance Sense (1 rank):** You can accurately and automatically judge distances.
- **Infravision (1 rank):** You can see in the infrared portion of the spectrum, allowing you to see heat patterns. Darkness does not provide concealment for objects differing in temperature from their surroundings. If you have the Track option, you can track warm creatures by the faint heat trails they leave behind.
- **Low-Light Vision (1 rank):** You can see twice as far in low-light conditions as normal.
- **Microscopic Vision (1–4 ranks):** You can view extremely small things. You can make Search checks to see tiny things in your own area. This costs 1 rank for dust-sized objects, 2 ranks for cellular-sized, 3 ranks for DNA and complex molecules, 4 ranks for atomic-sized. The GM may require a Knowledge skill check, particularly Knowledge (physical sciences) to interpret what you see.
- **Postcognition (4 ranks):** You can perceive events that took place in the past. You can make Notice and Search checks to pick up on past information in an area or from a subject. The Gamemaster sets the DC for these checks based on how obscure and distant in the past the information is, from 15 (for a vague vision that may or may not be accurate) to 30 (for near complete knowledge of a particular past event as if you were actually present). Your normal (present-day) senses don't work while you're using Postcognition; your awareness is focused on the past. Your postcogntive visions last for as long as you concentrate. Postcognition does not apply to mental powers like Mind Reading or any other ability requiring interaction with the past.
- **Precognition (4 ranks):** You can perceive events that *may* happen in the future. Your precognitive visions represent *possible* futures. If circumstances change, then the vision may not come to pass. When you use this ability, the Gamemaster chooses what information to impart. Your visions may be obscure and cryptic, open to interpretation. The Gamemaster may require appropriate Notice skill checks for you to pick up on particularly detailed information, with a DC ranging from 15 to 30 or more. The GM can also activate your Precognition

UNDER THE HOOD: PRECOGNITION AND POSTCOGNITION

Precognition and Postcognition can be problematic, since they provide players with considerable information. Keep in mind precognitive and postcognitive information is often cryptic or unclear, and changes in circumstances may lead to changes in visions of the future. If players use either too often, feel free to have their visions become less and less clear as the timelines become tangled by so much constant surveillance and intervention. Generally, Precognition is best treated as a plot device for the GM to provide information to the player as suits the adventure, similar to a free use of the inspiration ability of hero points (see page 122). In fact, GMs looking to limit Precognition and Postcognition may wish to require extra effort or hero points to use them, or require the Uncontrolled flaw (see page 115).

to impart specific information to you as an adventure hook or plot device. Your normal (present-day) senses don't work while you're using Precognition; your awareness is focused on the future. Your precognitive visions last as long as you concentrate. Precognition does not apply to mental powers like Mind Reading or any other ability requiring interaction with the future.

- **Radio (1 rank):** You can "hear" radio frequencies including AM, FM, television, cellular, police bands, and so forth. This allows you to pick up on Radio Communication (see page 78).
- **Scent (1 rank):** You can detect and identify individuals by scent alone, although you cannot determine things like exact location, only their presence or absence (your sense of smell is acute, but not accurate).
- **Time Sense (1 rank):** You always know what time it is and can time events as if you had an accurate stopwatch.
- **Tracking (1 rank):** You can follow trails and track using a particular sense. The basic DC to follow a trail is 10, modified by circumstances, as the GM sees fit. You only move at half normal speed while tracking. For 2 ranks, you can move at full normal speed while tracking, for 3 ranks you can move all-out while tracking.
- **Tremorsense (3 ranks):** You can accurately feel the location of moving objects in contact with the same surface as you (such as the ground). If used underwater, you can feel objects moving through the water all around you, like a Radius sense.
- **Ultra-Hearing (1 rank):** You can hear very high and low frequency sounds, like dog whistles or ultrasonic signals.
- **Ultravision (1 rank):** You can see ultraviolet light, allowing you to see normally at night by the light of the stars or other UV light sources.
- **X-Ray Vision (4 ranks):** You can see through solid objects as if they weren't there (such objects provide no concealment to you). You have to define one reasonably common substance you can't see through (such as lead, gold, iron, wood, etc.). A subject with no cover or concealment relative to you cannot use Stealth to hide from you.

SUPER-SPEED

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 5 points per rank	

You have **Quickness** (see page 96) and **Speed** (see page 100) equal to your power rank and a +4 bonus to initiative checks per power rank. You also gain one of the power feats below at your power rank (choose one when you acquire Super-Speed). You can acquire the others as standard power feats.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Power:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Air Control, Burrowing, Deflect, Spinning, Strike, Stun, and Suffocate.
- **Insubstantial:** If you have Super-Speed rank 10 or higher, you can acquire the **Incorporeal** level of Insubstantial (see page 89) as an Alternate Power feat.
- **Rapid Attack:** You can make a melee attack against any opponents in a radius of (power rank × 5 feet) around of you, provided you can physically reach them. This includes a normal strike or a special action like Disarm or Trip (see **Actions**, starting on page 153). Make one attack roll and compare it against all targets in the area.
- **Rapid Fire:** You can throw small objects at super-sonic speeds, like bullets, doing damage equal to your power rank with the Autofire modifier (see page 112).
- **Wall Run:** You can run up and down walls and other vertical surfaces without a Climb check.
- **Water Run:** You can run across the surface of water without sinking as long as you keep moving.

EXTRAS

- **Share Speed:** You can share the benefits of your Speed effect with others, allowing someone in close contact to move at the same speed as you. This is the Affects Others extra (see page 111).

SUPER-STRENGTH

Effect: General	**Action:** Reaction
Range: Personal	**Duration:** Continuous
Cost: 2 points per rank	

You're capable of lifting and carrying more than normal for your Strength score, maybe *much* more. Each rank of Super-Strength grants you a +5 bonus to your Strength score when figuring carrying capacity (see **Carrying Capacity**, page 35). Your Super-Strength also gives you a +1 bonus per rank on Strength checks involving sustained application of strength or pressure, including grapple checks and breaking objects (see page 166), but not Strength-based skills or melee or grappling damage.

POWER FEATS

- **Groundstrike:** You can strike the ground, creating a powerful tremor, radiating out a radius of (Strength bonus × 10) feet from you. Make a Strength check. Anyone in the area makes a check to resist a trip attack equal to your check result (see **Trip**, page 159). Reduce your result by –1 per 10 feet between you and the target, out to the maximum radius. Targets in the area can make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Strength bonus) to halve the DC to avoid the trip attack.

- **Shockwave:** By slamming your hands together, you create a tremendous blast of air pressure, inflicting physical damage equal to your Strength bonus in a cone-shaped area in front of you with a length and width (at the far end) equal to your Strength bonus × 10 feet. Targets in the area can make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Strength bonus) to halve the damage.
- **Super-Breath:** You can exhale a powerful blast of air, making a Strength check to trip targets in a cone-shaped area with a length and width at the far end equal to your Strength bonus × 10 feet. Targets in the area can make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Strength bonus) to halve the DC to avoid the trip attack. Your Super-Breath also blows out flames with a damage bonus equal to or less than (your check result – 10).
- **Thunderclap:** By clapping your hands together, you create a blast of deafening noise in an area of (Strength bonus × 5) feet around you. Those in the area must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Strength bonus) or suffer the effect of an auditory Dazzle attack (see **Dazzle**, page 81).

SWIMMING

Effect: Movement | **Action:** Move
Range: Personal | **Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 1 point per rank

You can swim faster than normal. You have a water speed of 2.5 MPH (25 ft.) at rank 1. Each additional rank moves your speed one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. You can always take 10 on Swim skill checks. This power does not allow you to survive underwater (for that, see **Immunity**, page 89).

TELEKINESIS

Effect: General | **Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged | **Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank

You can move objects at a distance without touching them. Telekinesis has no action/reaction; a moving object cannot drag the character "holding" it, for example. Telekinesis is also not considered "physical contact" or "touch" for effects requiring it.

Your effective Strength for lifting and moving objects is 5 times your power rank (see **Carrying Capacity**, page 35). By taking a full action and concentrating you can increase this by +5 Str for as long as you concentrate. This is in addition to using extra effort to further double your carrying capacity (see page 120).

Telekinesis can move objects, but cannot perform tasks of fine manipulation (like untying knots, typing, or manipulating controls) without the Precise power feat (see page 109). Objects move as if thrown with your effective Strength (see page 36). Objects massing a heavy load or more move at a rate of 5 feet per round. Objects thrown as weapons base their damage off your Telekinesis rank as if it were your Strength bonus.

Telekinesis cannot inflict damage directly; you can't "punch" or "crush" objects with it. You can use it to make disarm and trip attacks. Using Telekinesis to "grab" a creature is an attack similar to a grapple with a Strength bonus equal to your Telekinesis rank (see **Grapple**, page 156). The target cannot grapple you and you cannot inflict damage, only pin and hold the target immobile. You can move a pinned target like you would any other object, so long as the target remains pinned. Using Telekinesis to grapple requires a standard action.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** You can acquire Blast as an Alternate Power feat.

EXTRAS

- **Damaging (+1):** Your Telekinesis can inflict damage equal to its rank, like an application of normal Strength. This includes damaging targets in grapples and making ranged telekinetic "punch" attacks.
- **Perception (+1):** Your Telekinesis affects any target you can accurately perceive, with no need for an attack roll. This power is sometimes called *psychokinesis* and assigned a psionic or psychic descriptor.

FLAWS

- **Limited (–1):** You can only move a particular type of object or material, such as only metals, water, rock, and so forth.

TELEPATHY

Effect: Mental/Sensory | **Action:** Standard
Range: Perception/Extended | **Duration:** Concentration (Lasting)
Cost: 2 points per rank

You can read minds and project your thoughts into the minds of others. You have the powers of mental **Communication** (see page 78) and **Mind Reading** (see page 93) at your Telepathy power rank. To allow anyone to understand your projected thoughts, regardless of language, add a rank of **Comprehend** (see page 78).

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Emotion Control, Illusion, Mental Blast, Mind Control, Mind Switch, and Stun.

TELEPORT

Effect: Movement | **Action:** Move
Range: Personal | **Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank

You can move instantly from place to place without crossing the distance in between. You can teleport yourself and up to 100 lbs. of additional mass a distance of (power rank × 100) feet as a move action. Unwilling passengers get a Reflex save (DC 10 + power rank) to avoid being taken along.

At rank 3 and above, you can also take a full action and teleport the distance shown on the **Extended Range Table** (see page 69) instead, but you lose your dodge bonus for one round after you arrive at your destination due to disorientation. You can only teleport to places you can accurately sense or know especially well (in the GM's judgment). You retain your facing and relative velocity when you teleport. So if you are falling, for example, when you teleport, you are still falling at the same speed when you arrive at your destination.

POWER FEATS

- **Change Direction:** You can change your direction or orientation after a teleport.
- **Change Velocity:** You can teleport "at rest" to your destination. Among other things, this means you can teleport out of a fall and suffer no damage.

- **Easy:** You are not disoriented when making full round teleports; you retain your dodge bonus after doing so.
- **Progression:** You increase the mass you can carry with you when you teleport. Each additional time you take this stunt, it moves your maximum "cargo" one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (×2, ×5, ×10, etc.).
- **Turnabout:** You can teleport, take a standard action, and teleport back to your starting point in a single round, so long as the total distance doesn't exceed your Teleport range. This is Teleport's version of the Move-by Action feat (see page 63).

EXTRAS

- **Accurate (+1):** You don't need to be able to accurately sense your destination to teleport there, just be able to generally describe it, such as "inside the capitol building lobby" or "atop the Goodman Building's roof."
- **Portal (+2):** You open a portal or gateway between two points as a free action. The portal is 5-ft.-by-5.ft. in size. Anyone stepping through (a move action) is transported. The portal remains open as long as you concentrate. You can apply Progression feats to increase the size of your portal.

FLAWS

- **Long-Range (–1):** You can only teleport your extended range distance as a full-round action. You can't make ranged teleports as a move action.
- **Medium (–1):** You require a medium for your teleportation, such as electrical or telephone wires, root structures, waterways, shadows, flames, mirrors, and so forth. You can only teleport from and to locations where your medium exists.
- **Short-Range (–1):** You can't make extended range teleports.

TIME CONTROL

Effect: Movement	**Action:** Move
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 7 points per rank	

You can control the flow of time. You have all the benefits of **Super-Speed** (see page 104) and can share them with one other character in your range. You can acquire any of Super-Speed's power feats as Time Control feats.

UNDER THE HOOD: TRANSFER

Like Boost and Drain (which it essentially combines), Transfer can be a powerful effect. Gamemasters may wish to limit player characters to lower levels of Transfer, as well as limiting levels of the Slow Fade power feat. One means of simulating the effects of Transfer while making it a little less fearsome is to use the **Mimic** power instead (see page 92). Increase its cost by 1 point per rank, and have the target suffer from a Linked Fatigue effect (see **Linked**, page 112), to represent the loss of "vital energy." So the target retains his normal traits, but might be somewhat tired out by the "energy transfer," making for a more even struggle.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power, in addition to those listed for Super-Speed, include: Paralyze (Slow, Ranged) and Super-Senses (Postcognition, Precognition).

TRANSFER

Effect: Trait	**Action:** Standard
Range: Touch	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2-10 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can take power points from one of a target's traits and add them to one of your own.

You must touch the target (succeeding at a melee attack roll) and the target makes a Fortitude save. If the save fails, each rank of Transfer removes one power point from the affected trait and transfers it to yours. The trait lowered does not have to be the same as the one increased (so you could, for example, transfer an opponent's Strength to your Blast power). The traits you can transfer from and to must be chosen when you take this power and cannot change. You do not need to have points already in the acquired trait; in other words it can be a trait or effect you gain only after transferring points into it. You lose transferred points, and the target regains them, at a rate of one per round. The Slow Fade power feat reduces this rate (see page 110).

You can only transfer power points up to your power rank. Once you have done so, you cannot transfer any more from a subject until some of the transferred power points fade.

To determine your Transfer's cost, take the cost of a **Drain** power (see page 82) with the appropriate effect and add it to the cost of a **Boost** power (see page 77) with the appropriate effect. So if you lower one target trait and raise one of yours, for example, Transfer costs 2 power points per rank.

FLAWS

- **Tainted (–1):** You acquire the subject's drawbacks (see **Drawbacks**, page 124) as long as you retain transferred points from the subject.

TRANSFORM

Effect: Alteration	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained (Lasting)
Cost: 3-6 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can change a target into something else. Make an attack roll to hit your target, who makes a Fortitude save (DC 10 + power rank). If the save fails, the target transforms. Inanimate targets transform automatically, so long as you can affect their mass. Characters can make a Reflex saving throw for any worn or held object. You can transform 1 pound of inanimate mass at rank 1. Each additional rank moves this one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. The transformation lasts as long as you continue sustaining it. When you stop, the target reverts to normal. What you can transform affects cost per rank:

- **3 points:** Transform one thing into one other thing (flesh into stone, people into frogs, metal into wood, broken objects into repaired ones, etc.).
- **4 points:** Transform a narrow group of targets into one of a narrow group of results (animals into humanoids, or vice versa, one type of metal into any other, etc.). Transform targets of a broad group into one result or vice versa.

- **5 points:** Transform targets of a broad group into one of a broad group of results (inanimate objects or living creatures).
- **6 points:** Transform anything into anything else.

You can change around a transformed target's physical traits, so long as their point total remains the same or less. Adding new traits (such as giving a target wings) can be paid for by adding drawbacks or reducing other traits to compensate.

MENTAL TRANSFORM

Transformed targets retain their mental traits and their normal personality, although animate targets made inanimate are unconscious. Transform with the Alternate Save (Will) modifier can change targets mentally as well as physically. A mental transformation is considered a seperate power; apply modifiers and power stunts to it seperately. To transform a target both mentally and physically at once, add the cost of the two Transforms together. The type of mental transformation determines cost per rank:

- **1 point:** Change the target's memories or recollections, making the target forget something, or remember things differently.
- **2 point:** Change the target's personality, causing the target to behave differently.
- **3 points:** Completely alter the target's mind, effectively creating an entirely new one. You can change around their mental traits as desired, so long as their point value remains the same or less.

EXTRAS

- **Continuous (+1):** Your transformations last until you choose to reverse them (or they are nullified).

FLAWS

- **Touch (–1):** You must touch your target (with a successful melee attack roll) in order to transform it.

Example—Petrifying Gaze: *Your baleful gaze can turn living creatures to stone! Take a standard action; the opponent must meet your gaze (see* ***Sense-Dependent****, page 115). Targets get a Reflex saving throw to glance away at the last moment. If it fails, they make a Fortitude save. On a failure, they turn to immobile stone. They remain so until you choose to restore them, your power is nullified, or they are restored by another Transform effect. This is a singular Transform (flesh to stone, 3 points per rank) with the Range (Perception) and Duration (Continuous) extras and the Sense-Dependent flaw. It costs 4 points per rank.*

Example—Memory Alteration: *You can mentally alter a person's memories. Choose a target you can accurately perceive. The target makes a Will save. If it fails, the target's memories are altered as you wish. This is a Mental Transform (memories, 1 point per rank) with the Range (Perception) extra. It costs 2 points per rank.*

TRIP

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 1 point per rank	**Saving Throw:** See below

You can make a trip attack (see **Trip**, page 159) at normal range, with no modifier for size category. The target makes a Strength or Dexterity check, whichever is better, against the results of your power check. If you win, the target falls prone. The target does not get the opportunity to trip you.

EXTRAS

- **Knockback (+1):** If you successfully trip the target, you also knock the target back with an effective "damage bonus" equal to your Trip power rank. See **Knockback**, page 165, for details.

UNDER THE HOOD: TRANSFORM

Transform is a powerful effect, particularly in the hands of a cunning player. To a degree, Transform can duplicate certain other powers, such as trapping a target by transforming air into a solid material (Snare) or turning oxygen into an unbreathable gas (Suffocate). This is perfectly allowable; use the rules for those other effects as guidelines.

Keep in mind, however, that Transform has a Sustained duration (not Instant like Snare, or Concentration like Suffocate). This may affect how such "tricks" work (e.g., the snare disappears if the character is stunned, the suffocating gas quickly dissipates unless the character concentrates each round to continue transforming it, etc.). As always, the GM should use common sense and good judgment, following **Rule Number One** (see page 7).

Gamemasters may wish to limit the higher levels of Transform and Mental Transform, especially the "anything into anything" level, to NPCs only. The 5-point level of any inanimate object into any other works well for "transmuter" characters, however.

VIBRATION CONTROL

Effect: Attack	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Instant
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Toughness

You can generate and project a Blast (see page 77) of vibratory energy.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Drain Toughness (Ranged, Limited to crystalline or brittle objects), Nauseate (vertigo), Obscure (Tremorsense), Strike (vibro-weapon), and Stun.

WEATHER CONTROL

Effect: General	**Action:** Standard
Range: Ranged	**Duration:** Sustained
Cost: 2 points per rank	**Saving Throw:** Fortitude

You can alter the weather. Choose one of the following effects of **Environmental Control** (see page 84): cold, distraction (precipitation), hamper movement (icy or slick surfaces), or heat. You can acquire the others as Alternate Powers.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Suitable Alternate Power feats for this power include: Air Control, Blast (lightning), Dazzle (auditory and visual, thunder and lightning), Fatigue (humidity), Obscure (visual, fog), and Snare (ice).

POWER FEATS

Power feats expand a power's utility in various ways. Acquiring a power feat costs 1 power point, just like a normal feat. Power feats are options for a power; you can decide to use them or not when you use the power. Characters can use extra effort to temporarily acquire a power feat they don't already have (see page 120).

ACCURATE

A power with this feat is especially accurate; you get +2 on attack rolls with it. This power feat can be applied multiple times, each time it grants an additional +2 on attack rolls. The campaign's power level limits maximum attack bonus with any given power (see **Power Level**, page 24). The GM may choose to waive this limit for Accurate feats acquired via extra effort.

AFFECTS INSUBSTANTIAL

A power with this feat works on insubstantial targets in addition to having its normal effect on corporeal targets. One application of Affects Insubstantial allows the power to work at half its normal rank (rounded down) against insubstantial targets; two applications allow it to function at its full rank against them. Mental and sensory effects do not require this feat, since they already affect insubstantial targets.

ALTERNATE POWER

This power feat is actually another power or powers, mutually exclusive with the primary power this feat is applied to and any Alternate Power feats of that power, which *can't* be used or maintained at the same time. For example, a **Blast** (see page 77) power with the descriptor of laser might have a visual **Dazzle** (see page 81) as an Alternate Power: the same light beam can be used to damage or blind a target, just not both at once. Think of Alternate Powers as different "settings" for a power. A set of Alternate Powers is called an *array*. For combinations of powers that work simultaneously, see the **Linked** extra (see page 112).

An Alternate Power can have any power, rank, or combination of modifiers and power feats. Alternate Powers may also have different descriptors, usually thematically linked, within reason. This allows you to have two versions of a Blast power, for example: a fire blast and an ice blast. Permanent powers cannot have Alternate Power feats, nor can they be Alternate Powers (since they can't be turned on and off).

The Alternate Power cannot have a total cost greater than the primary power. So a rank 10 primary power costing 20 power points can have any Alternate Power with a cost of 20 power points or less. This cost does not include the cost of any Alternate Power feats the primary power may have. So if the 20-point power has 5 Alternate Powers (making the final cost 25 points), each Alternate Power is still limited to a total value of 20 points (including any power feats it may have), that of the base power.

An Alternate Power may be made up of two or more other powers, but that Alternate Power cannot exceed the cost of the primary power. Adrian Eldritch, Earth's Master Mage, has Astral Form at rank 6. Eldritch's player chooses the Alternate Power feat and selects Flight at rank 3 and Force Field at rank 12 with the Impervious extra. Even though Flight and Force Field are two powers, they count as only one Alternate Power.

Alternate Powers cannot be used or maintained at the same time as any other power in the same array; they are mutually exclusive. Switching between powers requires a free action and can be done once per round. If anything disables, nullifies, or drains *any* power in an array, all of them are affected in the same way. The effects of Lasting powers remain, even if you switch your array to a different power, until the target recovers.

DYNAMIC ALTERNATE POWERS

For two ranks (2 power points) an Alternate Power is *dynamic*; it can share power points with other Dynamic Alternate Powers of that power (so a power must have two Dynamic Alternate Powers for this option to be useful). You decide how many power points are allocated to the various powers once per round as a free action. Making the base power of an array Dynamc requires one Alternate Power rank (1 power point).

> ***Example:*** *Adrian Eldritch, Earth's Master Mage, has the* ***Magic*** *power (see page 90) at rank 16. Eldritch's player chooses Mystic Blast as the power's free effect (and primary power in the array) as well as the following Alternate Powers as spells Eldritch has mastered: Dazzle (visual), ESP (visual and auditory), Illusion, Obscure (visual), Obscure (auditory), and Telekinesis.*
>
> *Each Alternate Power can have a cost of up to 2 power points per Magic rank (or 32 points total) and a rank no greater than 16. For those powers costing 2 points per rank, like Dazzle, Obscure, and Telekinesis, this gives them the same rank as the power, or 16. ESP for visual and auditory senses costs 3 points per rank, so it has a rank of 10 (30 points), and Illusion for all senses costs 4 points per rank, so it has a rank of 8 (32 points). Eldritch can only use one Magic power at a time. If he wants to use his Mystic Blast, he has to stop using Illusion, Telekinesis, or whatever other Alternate Power he's currently using.*
>
> *Later, Eldritch's player decides to make some of his Alternate Powers dynamic. He spends an extra power point on the ESP, Obscure (visual), and Telekinesis Alternate Power feats. This allows Eldritch to mix-and-match points from his Magic power between those three Alternate Powers. So he could split his points between two or more of them at one time, for example. However, he can still only use the other Alternate Powers one at a time. If the player wants to make Eldrich's Mystic Blast (the primary power) Dynamic as well, it costs 1 power point to do so.*
>
> *If Eldritch's player comes up with a particular spell he wants the Master Mage to pull off during the game (one not already on Eldritch's character sheet as an Alternate Power), he can use extra effort or spend a hero point to acquire the new Alternate Power feat as a power stunt (see* ***Power Stunt****, page 120).*

DIMENSIONAL

This feat allows a power to affect targets in another dimension (if any exist in the campaign). You affect your proximate location in the other dimension as if you were actually there, figuring range modifiers from that point.

You can take this feat multiple times. If you take it a second time, your power can reach into any of a related group of dimensions (mythic dimensions, mystic dimensions, fiendish planes, and so forth). If you take it a third time, it can reach into any other dimension in the setting.

For many powers, you may need Dimensional **ESP** (see page 85) to target them. Otherwise, targets have total concealment from you, and any attack has a 50% miss chance, assuming it's targeted in the right area at all.

EXTENDED REACH

Each time you apply this feat to a touch range power, you extend the power's reach 5 feet. This may represent a short-ranged power or an effect with a somewhat greater reach, like a whip or similar weapon.

HOMING

This feat grants a power an additional opportunity to hit. If an attack roll with a Homing power fails, it attempts to hit again on the following round on your initiative, requiring only a free action to maintain and leaving you free to take other actions, including making another attack.

The Homing power uses the same accurate sense as the original attack, so concealment effective against that sense may confuse the Homing attack and cause it to miss. You can buy Super-Senses Linked to the Homing power, if desired (to create things like radar-guided or heat-seeking missiles, for example). If a Homing attack is blocked or countered before it hits, it loses any remaining chances to hit.

You can apply this feat multiple times, each time moves the number of additional chances to hit one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**, but the attack still only gets one attack roll per round.

IMPROVED RANGE

This feat improves the range increment of a ranged power, moving the base increment (power rank × 10 feet) one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. So Improved Range 1 makes a ranged power's increment (rank × 25) feet, then (rank × 50), and so forth. The power still has a maximum range of 10 increments.

INCURABLE

The damage caused by the power with this feat cannot be healed by powers such as Healing and Regeneration; the target must recover at the normal rate. Powers with the Persistent feat can heal Incurable damage.

INDIRECT

A power with this feat can originate from a point other than the user, ignoring cover between the user and the target, such as walls and other intervening barriers, so long as they do not provide cover between the power's origin point and the target. The power's range modifier is based on the distance from the attacker to the target, regardless of where the power originates. An Indirect power normally originates from a fixed point directed away from you. In some cases, using an Indirect power may count as a surprise attack (see page 163).

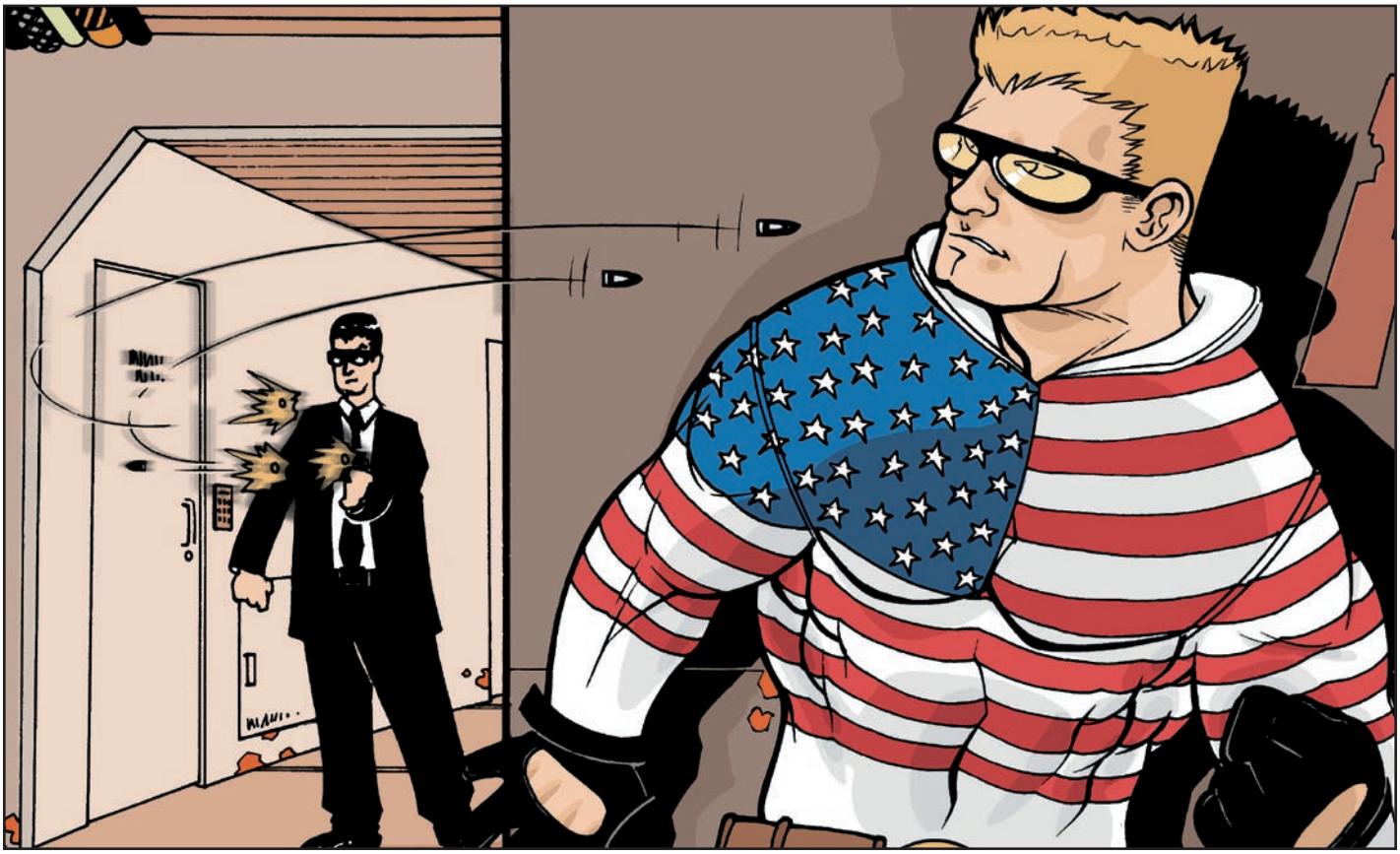
If you apply this feat a second time, the power's effect can come from any point directed away from you, including behind you. If you apply it three times, the effect can also be directed *toward* you (hitting a target in front of you from behind, for example).

INNATE

A power with this feat is an integral part of your nature. Trait effects, such as Boost, Drain, or Nullify, cannot alter it. Gamemasters should exercise caution in allowing the application of this feat; the power must be a truly Innate trait, such as an elephant's size or a ghost's incorporeal nature. If the power is not something normal to the character's species or type, it probably isn't Innate. Unlike other power feats, the use of Innate is *not* optional: a power is either Innate or it is not.

PRECISE

Powers with this feat are especially precise. You can use a Precise power to perform tasks requiring delicacy and fine control, such as using a Precise Blast to spot-weld or carve your initials, Precise Telekinesis to type or pick a lock, Precise



Cold Control to match a particular temperature exactly, and so forth. The GM has final say as to what tasks can be performed with a Precise power and may require a power, skill, or ability check to determine the degree of precision with any such task. An attack effect with the Precise modifier gains the benefits of the Precise Shot feat (see page 63), which is essentially the same thing.

PROGRESSION

Each time you apply this feat, move the area, range, mass, subjects, or other trait of the power one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. See the power and modifier descriptions for details on specific applications of Progression.

REVERSIBLE

You can remove the effects of an Instant power with this feat at will as a free action. Examples include removing the damage of an attack effect like Blast, repairing damage done by Drain Toughness, or removing the effects of the Dazzle or Snare powers instantly. Normally, you have no control over the lingering effects of such powers.

RICOCHET

You can ricochet, or bounce, an attack effect with this feat off of a solid surface once to change its direction. This allows you to attack around corners, overcome cover and possibly gain a surprise attack bonus against an opponent (see page 163). It does *not* allow you to affect multiple targets. The "bounce" has no effect. You must be able to define a clear path for your attack, which must follow a straight line between each ricochet. You can take this feat multiple times; each time allows you to ricochet the attack an additional time before it hits.

SEDATION

A power able to cause unconsciousness can, with this feat, keep an unconscious subject from regaining consciousness as a Lasting Sustained effect (see **Duration**, page 70). The subject gets a recovery check from unconsciousness for each interval on the **Time and Value Progression Table** rather than each minute, starting at one minute. If you concentrate during the time interval, the subject gains no bonus to the save to recover from that interval (as with a normal Lasting Sustained power).

SELECTIVE

A power with this feat is discriminating, allowing you to decide who is and is not affected. This is most useful for Area effects (see **Area**, page 110). You must be able to accurately perceive a target in order to decide whether or not to affect it. If the power requires or allows a saving throw, then Selective is an extra instead of a power feat (see **Selective Attack**, page 113).

SLOW FADE

An effect that fades over time—such as a trait effect or a power with the Fades modifier—does so slower with this power feat. Each application moves the time interval one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**: from one round to five rounds to one minute (10 rounds), and so forth.

SPLIT ATTACK

With this feat, a power normally affecting one target can split its effect between two targets. The attacker chooses how many ranks to apply to each target up to the power's total rank. So a rank 10 power could be split 5/5, 4/6, 2/8, or any other total adding up to 10 (whole numbers only). If an attack roll is required, the attacker makes one roll, comparing the results against each target. The power affects the target normally at its reduced rank.

Each additional application of this feat allows the power to split an additional time, so two applications of this feat allows a power to split among three targets, then four, and so forth. A power cannot split to less than one rank per target.

SUBTLE

Subtle powers are not as noticeable. A subtle power may be used to catch a target unaware and may in some cases qualify for a surprise attack (see page 163). One application of this feat makes a power difficult to notice; a DC 20 Notice check is required, or the power is automatically noticeable only noticeable to certain exotic senses (at the GM's discretion). A second application makes the power completely unnoticable.

TRIGGERED

An Instant duration power with this feat can be "set" to activate under particular circumstances, such as in response to a particular danger, after a set amount of time has passed, in response to a particular event, and so forth. The circumstances must be detectable by your senses. Setting the power requires the same action as using it normally. Any necessary rolls are made when you set the power's trigger. Setting the power requires the normal action to use it.

A Triggered power lying in wait may be detected with a Notice check (DC 10 + power rank) and in some cases disarmed with a successful Disable Device check or appropriate power check (such as Nullify or another countering power) with a DC of (10 + power rank).

A Triggered effect is good for one use that has an Instant duration. You can apply the Duration extra (see page 112) separately to the power to extend the trigger's duration, allowing the effect to go off multiple times, so long as it is maintained (this usually requires a Continuous duration). This does not affect the power's normal duration.

If you apply this feat a second time, you can change the trigger condition each time you set it.

POWER MODIFIERS

Power modifiers enhance or weaken effects in various ways, sometimes significantly changing how they work.

APPLYING MODIFIERS

Modifiers are permanent changes to how powers work. Positive modifiers, called *extras*, increase a power's cost per rank by 1. Negative modifiers, called *flaws*, reduce a power's cost per rank by 1. To determine the final cost, add the base cost per rank, plus the total positive modifiers, minus the total negative modifiers. If the result is a positive number, that's the effect's new cost per rank. So a 2 points per rank effect with modifiers of +3 and –1 has a final cost per rank of 4 points (2 + 3 – 1 = 4).

FRACTIONAL COSTS

If modifiers reduce an effect's cost to less than 1 power point per rank, each additional –1 modifier beyond that *adds* to the number of ranks you get by spending 1 power point on a 1-to-1 basis.

A power's cost can be expressed as the ratio of power points per rank (PP:R). So an effect costing 3 power points per rank is 3:1. If that effect

has a total of –2 in modifiers, it costs 1:1, or 1 power point per rank. Applying another –1 modifier adds to the second part of the ratio, making it 1:2, or 1 power point per two ranks, and so forth.

Continue the progression for further reductions. Gamemasters may wish to limit the final modified cost ratio of any effect in the campaign (to 1:1, 1:2, 1:4, or whatever figure is appropriate). As a general rule, 1:5 (five ranks per power point) should be the lowest modified cost for a power in *Mutants & Masterminds*, but the GM sets the limit (if any).

> ***Example:*** *The Soldier has Protection, but only effective against blunt physical attacks (a –3 modifier) and the Impervious extra (a +1 modifier) for a total modifier of –2. Since Protection costs 1 point per rank, the –2 modifier increases the number of ranks per power point, so the final cost of the power is 1 power point per 3 ranks of Protection.*

PARTIAL MODIFIERS

You can apply a modifier to only *some* of a power's ranks and not others to fine-tune the effect. A modifier must apply to at least one rank, and may apply to as many ranks as the power has. The change in cost and effect applies only to the power ranks with the modifier; the unmodified ranks have their normal cost and effect.

> ***Example:*** *Talona's claws provide her with 8 ranks of the Strike power, but have a limited ability to penetrate Protection. The last 4 ranks have the flaw Limited (not against ranks of Protection), so they cost 1 point per 2 ranks rather 1 point per rank. The first 4 ranks have their normal cost (1 point per rank), so the Strike power costs 6 points total: 4 points for the first 4 ranks and 2 points for the second 4 ranks. Against targets with Protection, Talona has a +4 melee damage bonus from her claws rather than +8.*

EXTRAS

Unless specified otherwise, the following extras increase a power's cost per rank by 1 point per application of the extra.

ACTION +1 MODIFIER/STEP

Using a power requires one of the following types of actions: reaction, free action, move action, standard action, full action. Reducing the action required to use a power is a +1 modifier per step (full action to standard action, for example). Gamemasters should be cautious about allowing this extra for powers with attack effects. Powers with movement effects cannot take this extra, since the move action required to use a movement effect is part of the character's normal movement. See **Actions**, page 153.

AFFECTS CORPOREAL +1 MODIFIER

An incorporeal being can use a power with this extra to affect the corporeal world normally. See **Insubstantial**, page 89.

AFFECTS OTHERS +0 OR +1 MODIFIER

This extra allows you to give someone else use of a personal power. You must touch the subject, and they have control over their use of the power, although you can withdraw it when you wish. If you are unable to maintain the power, it stops working, even if someone else is using it. Both you and your subject(s) can use the power simultaneously. If the power *only* affects others, and not you, there's no change in cost, essentially a combination of Affects Others and Limited (only others). You can increase the number of characters you can grant the power to simultaneously with the Progression power feat (see page 110).

ALTERNATE SAVE +0/+1 MODIFIER

A power with this modifier has a different saving throw than usual. The power's effects and saving throw Difficulty Class remain the same; only the save differs. This is particularly important for Toughness save powers, which have a base DC of 15 + rank, rather than 10 + rank. If you change a power with a Toughness save to another save, its save DC remains 15 + rank.

When applied to powers requiring a Toughness saving throw, Alternate Save is a +1 modifier and can only make the power's save Fortitude or Will. Fortitude generally represents a toxic effect like a poison, while Will represents a mental or spiritual attack, and makes the power a mental effect (see **Mental** under **Power Effect Types**, page 68). In either case the power only works on targets with the appropriate save; Fortitude only affects living targets with a Constitution score. Will only affects creatures with all three mental ability scores. Neither works on inanimate objects.

Applied to powers requiring other save, this modifier does not change a power's cost (it is a +0 modifier). The GM may choose to add a modifier if the alternate save grants a significant advantage in the campaign, but usually the differences in utility against various targets even out.

AREA +1 MODIFIER

Powers with this extra affect all targets in a given area rather than just a single target. Use the Area Attack rules (see page 159) for powers requiring an attack roll. Choose one of the following options when you apply this extra:

- **Burst:** The effect has a circular area with a 5-foot radius per rank.
- **Cloud:** The effect fills a circular area with 5-foot diameter (not radius) per rank and lingers in that area for one round after its duration expires (affecting any targets in the area normally during the additional round).
- **Cone:** The effect fills a cone with a length and width of 10 feet per rank.
- **Explosion:** The effect radiates out 10 feet per rank from a center point, much like a burst (above), except it loses one rank of effectiveness per 10 feet after the first (having its full effect in the first 10-foot radius, then minus 1 rank, minus 2, and so forth).
- **Line:** The effect fills a path 5 feet wide and 25 feet per rank long in a straight line.
- **Shapeable:** The effect fills one 5-foot cube per rank, which you can arrange in any shape you wish, so long as all of the cubes are touching. Each application of the Progression power feat increases the number of cubes per rank (2, 5, 10, and so forth).
- **Trail:** The effect fills a line up to 25 feet per rank *behind* you as you move, affecting anyone in the area you've moved through. Note the action required to use the effect does not change unless you also apply an Action modifier. So as a default, you have to take a standard action each round to use an attack effect.

You may affect a smaller area by lowering the power's rank (reducing its effects as well). So a rank 8 burst area has a radius of 40 feet (8 × 5 feet). If you lower the power's rank to 4, you reduce the radius to 20 feet.

Powers with the Full Power drawback cannot adjust their area, since you cannot voluntarily lower the power's rank.

The Progression power feat (see page 110) increases the size of an area effect, moving it one step up the **Time and Value Progression Table**. Since power feat use is optional, you can choose not to use extra area from Progression without lowering the power's rank. A touch range area effect is always centered on you, but does not affect you.

The Progression feat can also *reduce* the size of an area effect: each feat lowers the power's effective rank by one to a minimum of one rank. This is a separate application of Progression and is likewise optional; you choose how much to reduce the area's size, or if you actually reduce it at all.

ATTACK +0 MODIFIER

This extra applies to personal range powers, making them into attack effects. Examples include Shrinking and Teleport, causing a target to shrink or teleport away. Unlike most extras, the power's cost does not change, although its effects do.

The power no longer works on you, so a Teleport Attack can't be used to teleport yourself. It affects one creature of any size or 100 lbs. of inanimate mass. You can increase the affected mass with the Progression power feat. The power has touch range and requires a melee attack roll to touch the subject. The target gets an appropriate saving throw, determined when the Attack Power is purchased. Generally Reflex or Will saves are the most appropriate, with a DC of 10 + the power's rank.

You must define reasonably common defenses that negate the attack effect entirely, such as force fields or the ability to teleport blocking a Teleport Attack. You control the power, and maintain it if it has a duration longer than Instant.

If you want both versions of an Attack Power, such as being able to Teleport yourself and Teleport others as an attack, take the Attack Power as an Alternate Power feat of the personal power (see **Alternate Power**, page 108). To use both at once, apply a +1 modifier.

AURA +1 MODIFIER

A touch range power with this extra automatically affects anyone touching you, including anyone you touch or strike with an unarmed attack. The aura and the unarmed attack affect the target separately. You can turn your aura on or off as a free action and it is Sustained in duration (the power's effect has its normal duration, so a Stun Aura's effect is still Instant and Lasting in duration). You can change your aura's duration with Duration modifiers. You can apply the Selective feat to control what parts of your body the aura covers.

AUTOFIRE +1 MODIFIER

An Autofire power fires multiple shots in a single attack action. Autofire can apply to any power requiring an attack roll (see **Autofire Attack**, page 160, for details).

Applying this extra a second time reduces the Autofire interval (the amount your attack roll needs to exceed the target's Defense) to 1 instead of 2.

The maximum bonus from autofire is +5 (for exceeding the target's Defense by 10 normally) or half the attack's normal bonus, rounded up, whichever is less. Another application of this extra increases the maximum bonus to +10 or the attack's normal bonus, whichever is less. The bonus granted by Autofire does not count against power level limits.

CONTAGIOUS +1 MODIFIER

Contagious powers work on both the target and anyone coming into contact with the target. New targets save against the power normally. They also become contagious, and the effect lingers until all traces have been eliminated. A Contagious power is also eliminated if you stop maintaining it, although Continuous Contagious effects remain without need for maintenance. Examples of powers with this extra include "sticky" Snares trapping anyone touching them, contagious Disease Drains, or even a Nullify effect spreading from one victim to another.

DISEASE +2 MODIFIER

This extra, when applied to a power requiring a Fortitude saving throw, causes it to work like a disease. To apply this to a power with a different save, apply the Alternate Save (Fortitude) modifier first.

If the target's Fortitude save fails, the target is infected, but the disease does not take effect immediately. Instead, on the following day, the target makes another Fortitude save. If that save fails, the power takes effect, if the save succeeds, there is no effect that day. The target makes another save each day. Two successful saves in a row eliminate the disease from the target's system, otherwise it continues to take effect each day. The target cannot recover from the disease's effects until cured.

Healing (see page 87) can counter a Disease power with a (DC 10 + power rank) check. Disease powers have no effect targets without a Constitution score or those with Immunity to Disease.

DURATION +1 MODIFIER

A power has one of the following durations: Instant, Concentration, Sustained, or Continuous. Increasing duration one step (from Instant to Concentration, for example) is a +1 modifier. Permanent duration is a flaw applied to Continuous powers. See **Duration**, page 70, for more information.

LINKED +0 MODIFIER

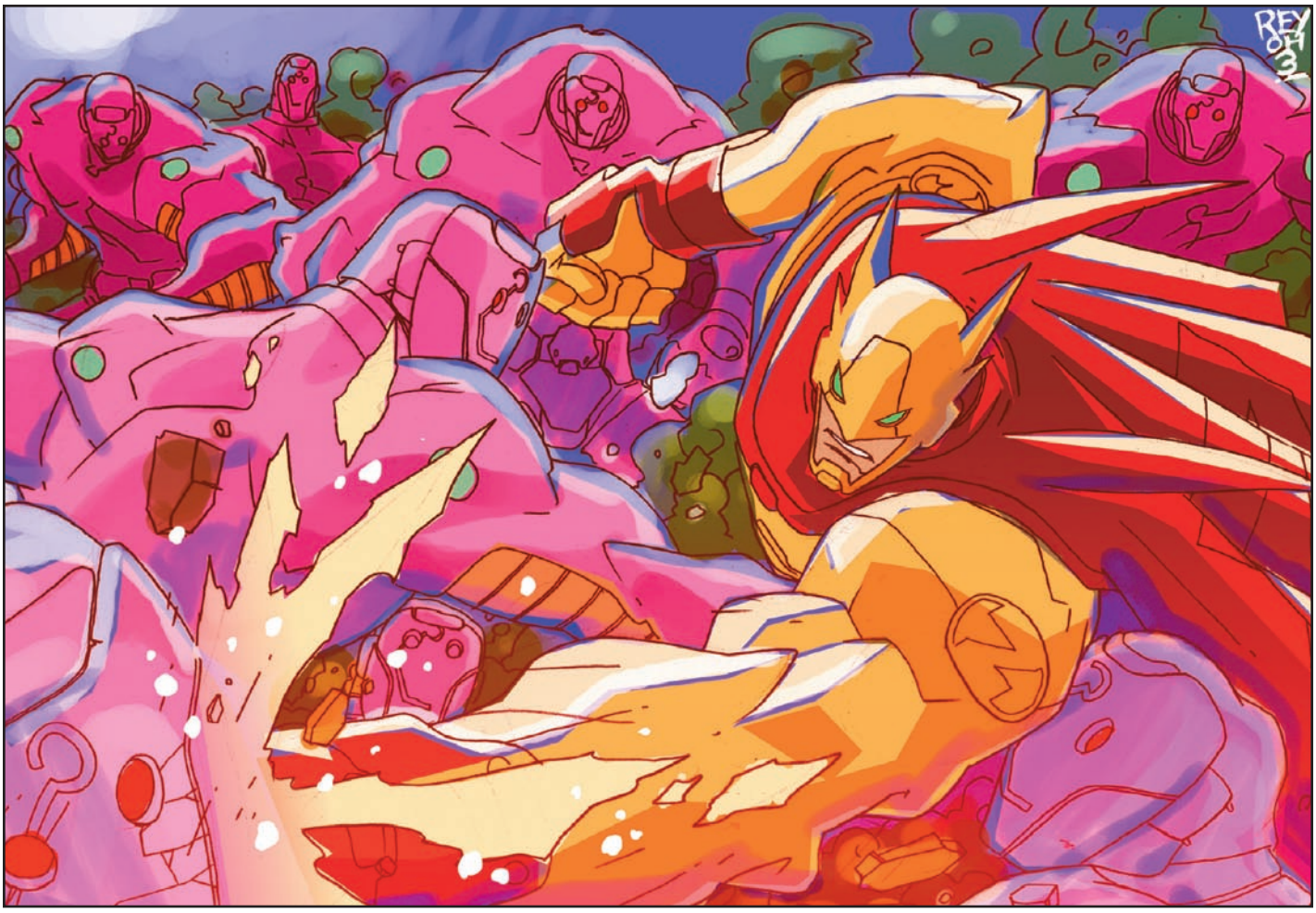
This modifier applies to two or more powers of different types. Thereafter, those powers only work in conjunction as effects of a single power. For example, you might have an auditory Dazzle and a lightning bolt Blast Linked together to represent the deafening thunder accompanying the lightning.

The Linked powers must have the same range (modify their ranges so they match). The action required to use the combined power is the longest of its component powers and they use a single attack roll (if one is required) and saving throw (if both powers use the same type of save). If the powers use different saves, targets save against each separately. Alternate Powers cannot be Linked to each other, since they can't be used at the same time, although they can be Linked to other powers.

This modifier does not change the cost of the component powers; simply add their costs together to get the new power's cost. If you can use the Linked powers either separately or together, increase the cost of all but the most expensive power by +1 per rank (if the powers all have the same cost, choose one), or acquire non-Linked versions as Alternate Powers.

PENETRATING +1 MODIFIER

A damaging power with this extra reduces the effect of Impervious Toughness by its rank. So a rank 7 Penetrating attack reduces the Imperviousness of a



target's Toughness by 7. So rank 11 Impervious Toughness would be treated as a +11 Toughness bonus, but only 4 points of it Impervious (11 – 7). Any remaining Impervious Toughness is applied normally against the attack.

POISON +1 MODIFIER

This extra, when applied to a power requiring a Fortitude saving throw, causes it to work like a toxin. To apply this to a power with a different save, apply the Alternate Save (Fortitude) modifier first.

If the target's Fortitude save fails, the power takes effect. One minute later, the target must make another Fortitude save or suffer the power's effect a second time. Then the power stops.

Healing (see page 87) can counter a Poison power with a (DC 10 + power rank) check and eliminate the power's effects with a similar check. Poison powers have no effect on targets without a Constitution score or those with Immunity to Poison.

RANGE +1 MODIFIER/STEP

A power has a range of Touch, Ranged, or Perception. Increasing range one step (from touch to ranged, for example) is a +1 modifier (see **Range**, page 69). Going from personal to touch range requires the Affects Others or Attack extras, not this extra. Extended range powers cannot have this modifier; their range determined by power rank. To change the power's range, increase or decrease its rank.

SELECTIVE ATTACK +1 MODIFIER

An attack with this extra is discriminating, allowing you to decide who is and is not affected. This is most useful for area effects (see **Area**, page 111). You must be able to accurately perceive a target in order to decide whether or not to affect it. This modifier is for powers requiring a saving throw. For other area effect powers, use the Selective power feat (see page 110).

SLEEP +0 MODIFIER

When this modifier is applied to a power that causes unconsciousness (such as Blast, Fatigue, or Stun), the power puts targets into a deep sleep whenever it would normally render them unconscious. The target makes a recovery check to wake up only once per hour rather than once per minute, but may be awoken by loud noise (make a Notice check for the subject with a –10 modifier, a successful check means the subject wakes up). Someone taking an aid action can awaken a sleeping character automatically. A sleeping character that takes damage automatically wakes up.

TOTAL FADE +1 MODIFIER

Traits altered by trait effect powers with this extra don't fade normally (at a rate of 1 power point per round). Instead, when the total fade time is up, the trait returns to its normal level. For example, an ability score receives an adjustment of 10 points. This would normally fade in a minute, or ten

rounds (at a rate of 1 point per round). With total fade, the ability score retains the 10-point adjustment for one minute, and then loses the entire amount at once, back to its original value.

VAMPIRIC +1 MODIFIER

When you successfully damage a target with an attack effect with this extra, you can make an immediate recovery check for the same damage condition you inflict (or a lesser condition, if you wish). You get a bonus on the check equal to your attack's damage bonus. So, if you inflict an injured result on a target with a lethal vampiric attack, you can make an immediate recovery check if you are injured. If you are not injured, only bruised, you can still make the check. That would not be the case if you inflicted a bruised result with a nonlethal vampiric attack and were injured; a bruised condition is less than an injured condition, so you don't get a check to recover from it. See **Damage**, page 163, for more information.

FLAWS

Unless specified otherwise, the following flaws reduce a power's cost per rank by 1 point per application.

ACTION –1 MODIFIER/STEP

Using a power requires one of the following types of actions: reaction, free action, move action, standard action, full action. Increasing the required action one step (standard to full action, for example) is a –1 modifier. After a full action, each step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** (full action to one minute, then five minutes, etc.) is a 1-point power drawback. See **Drawbacks**, page 124.

DISTRACTING –1 MODIFIER

Using a Distracting power requires more concentration than usual, causing you to lose your dodge bonus on any round the power is used or maintained. Effects allowing you to retain your dodge bonus (such as the Uncanny Dodge feat) do not apply to Distracting powers.

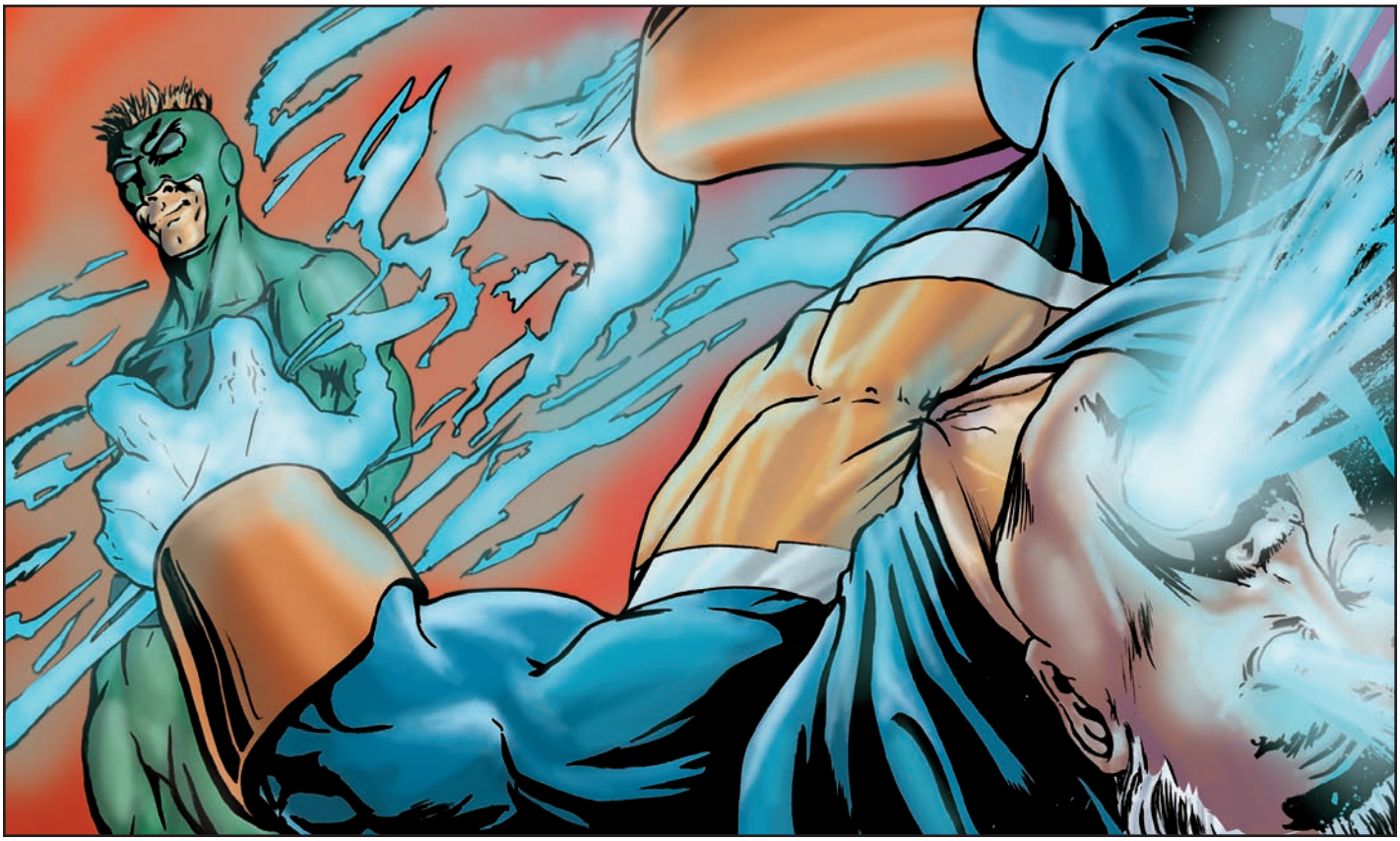
DURATION –1 MODIFIER/STEP

A power has one of the following durations: Instant, Concentration, Sustained, or Continuous. Reducing duration one step (Sustained to Concentration, for example) is a –1 modifier. See **Duration**, page 70.

FADES –1 MODIFIER

Each time you use the power with this flaw, it loses 1 power point (not rank) and a commensurate amount of effectiveness. For powers with a duration longer than Instant, each round is considered "one use." Once the power reaches 0 points (or below the minimum cost for one rank), it stops working. A faded power can be "recovered" in some fashion, such as recharging, rest, repair, reloading, and so forth. The GM decides when and how a faded power recovers, but it should generally occur outside of combat and take at least an hour's time. The GM may allow a hero to recover a faded power immediately and completely by spending a hero point. The Slow Fade modifier (see page 110) reduces the rate at which a power fades.

> ***Example:*** *Chris creates a character that has Animal Mimicry 6 with the Fades flaw. After the first round of using the power it drops to 5 ranks, but he can use it eight more times (or sustain it for eight more rounds) before it drops to 4 ranks, because it costs 9 points per rank and it only loses 1 power point per use.*



FEEDBACK –1 MODIFIER

You suffer pain when a manifestation of your power is damaged. This flaw only applies to powers with physical manifestations, such as Create Object, Duplication, Snare, or Summon, for example. If your power's manifestation is damaged, make a saving throw against damage equal to the attack's damage, using the manifestation's Toughness save bonus in place of your own. For example, if you create a Toughness 12 object and it is attacked for +15 damage, you must make a save against +15 damage with a +12 bonus (the object's Toughness) in place of your normal Toughness save.

LIMITED –1 MODIFIER

A power with this flaw is not effective all the time. Limited powers generally break down into two types: those usable only in certain situations and those usable only on certain things. For example Only Useable While Singing Loudly, Only Usable While Flying, Only Usable on Men (or Women), Only Usable Against Fire, Not Usable on Yellow Things, and so forth. As a general rule, the power must lose about half its usefulness to qualify for this modifier.

If your power is only *somewhat* effective in particular circumstances apply the flaw to only some of its ranks. For example, an attack effect that does half damage against targets with Protection (to represent a diminished ability to penetrate armor, for example) applies the Limited flaw to only half of its ranks.

PERMANENT –1 MODIFIER

A Continuous power with this flaw *cannot* be turned off; it is always on by default. If some outside force turns it off—usually Nullify (see page 94)—it turns back on automatically at the earliest opportunity. Additionally, you cannot improve a Permanent power using extra effort. This includes adding temporary power feats. Permanent powers may be rather inconvenient at times (including things like being permanently incorporeal or 30 feet tall); this is included in the value of the Permanent flaw.

RANGE –1 MODIFIER/STEP

A power has a range of Touch, Ranged, or Perception. Decreasing a power's range by one step (from ranged to touch, for example) is a –1 modifier. Extended range powers have their range determined by power rank. To change the power's range, increase or decrease its rank. See **Range**, page 69.

RESTORATIVE –1 MODIFIER

A trait effect with this flaw only restores traits to their normal values and cannot raise or lower them above or below that level. Traits restored to their normal values do not fade, as normal.

SENSE-DEPENDENT –1 MODIFIER

A perception range power with this flaw works through the *target's* senses rather yours. So a sight-dependent power requires the target to see you, hearing-dependent to hear you, and so forth. You may choose a target able to sense you and automatically affect them unless the target makes a successful Reflex saving throw. The DC is 10 + the effect's rank. A successful save means the target has managed to avert his eyes, cover his ears, etc. and the power doesn't work. Otherwise the power works normally (and the target is allowed the usual saving throw against it, if applicable). A Sense-Dependent power still requires its normal action to use.

Opponents aware of a Sense-Dependent power can deliberately block the targeted sense. This gives you partial concealment from that sense but your Sense-Dependent effect has a 50% miss chance. An opponent unable to sense you at all (blind, deaf, etc.) is immune to the power's effect. Opponents can do this by closing their eyes, wearing ear- or nose-plugs, or using powers like Obscure (see page 95). This gives you total concealment from that sense.

Note a Sense-Dependent power based on the sense of touch is essentially the same as touch range (see **Range**, page 69), since you still need to touch the target. This modifier isn't required; reduce the power's range to touch instead.

SIDE-EFFECT –1 MODIFIER

Failing to successfully use a power with this flaw causes some problematic Side-Effect. Failure includes missing an attack roll, or the target successfully saving against the power's effect. The exact nature of the Side-Effect is for you and the Gamemaster to determine.

As a general guideline, it should be a power about the same in value as the power with this flaw, not including the cost reduction for the flaw. So a power with a cost of 20 points should have a 20-point Side-Effect. Typical side effects include Blast, Drain, and Stun, or the same effect as the power (it essentially rebounds and affects you). The Side-Effect does not require an attack roll and only affects you, although the GM may permit some Side Effects with the Area modifier on a case-by-case basis.

If the Side-Effect *always* occurs when you use the power, it is a –2 modifier.

TIRING –1 MODIFIER

A power with this flaw causes fatigue when you use it (see **Fatigue**, page 167). You recover from this fatigue normally, and can use hero points to overcome it. In essence, the power requires extra effort to use (see **Extra Effort**, page 120). This makes Tiring a useful flaw for creating a power you can *only* use with extra effort.

UNCONTROLLED –1 MODIFIER

You have no control over a power with this flaw. Instead, the Gamemaster decides when and how the power works (essentially making it a plot device, see page 130). This flaw is best suited for mysterious powers out of the characters' direct control or effects the GM feels more comfortable having under direct, rather than player, control.

UNRELIABLE –1 MODIFIER

Your power doesn't work all the time. Each round before you use a power with this flaw, roll a die. On a roll of 10 or less, the power doesn't work this turn, but you've still used the action the power requires. You can check again on the following round to see if it works, although you must take the normal action needed to activate the power again. Spending a hero point on your reliability roll allows you to succeed automatically (since the roll is at least an 11).

Alternately, instead of having a reliability roll, you can choose to have five uses where you power works normally, then it stops working until you can "recharge" it in some way (see the **Fades** flaw for more on this). The GM may allow you to spend a hero point to automatically recharge a spent Unreliable power.

Powers that are only occasionally Unreliable (less than about 50% of the time) are better handled as complications (see **Complications**, page 122).

CHAPTER 6: CHARACTERISTICS

While ability scores, skills, feats, and powers describe a lot about a hero, they don't cover everything. There are many details like your hero's name (both super identity and real name), appearance, costume, age, background, and so forth. You choose these details to fit the way you imagine the character.

This chapter rounds out the information about your hero, including finishing details, personality, background, and complications, as well as the hero's drawbacks: weaknesses or vulnerabilities. It also explains how heroes can go that extra mile when they need to pull out all the stops in order to succeed, using extra effort and hero points.

DETAILS

A lot of details go into making your hero more than just a collection of numbers. Take a moment (if you haven't already) to consider some of the following things about your character.

NAME

What is your character's name? That is to say, what is the name the character uses in public, that appears in one-inch type in the newspaper headlines? Most heroes adopt unique and distinctive "code names," so consider a suitable name for your character. Code names are often based on powers, theme, or style. Here are some options to consider:

- **Origin:** A name may be based on the hero's origin, power source, nation (or even world) of birth, and such.
- **Powers:** Choose a name based on the hero's powers: Firestarter or Blaze for a flame-controlling character, Thunder or Spark for an electrical character, and so forth.
- **Theme:** Maybe the character has a theme or style suggesting a name: Paladin might be a medieval knight displaced into the present day, with magical sword and armor. Ms. Mystic may be all about magic and the occult.
- **Titles and Ranks:** Names may include various titles like Mister, Miss, Ms., Doctor, Sir, Lord, Lady, and Madam or even royal titles like King, Queen, Prince, Princess, Duke, Baron, and so forth. Military ranks are also popular parts of hero names, especially General, Major, and Captain.
- **Gender:** Names often include gender designations like Man/Woman, Boy/Girl, Lad/Lass, and so forth.
- **Sound:** Some code-names don't really have anything to do with a character's powers or background—they just sound cool: Kismet, Scion, Animus, Damask, and so forth. They may hint at the hero's powers or origin, or have nothing to do with them.
- **Real Name:** Some heroes go by their real name, not using a code-name at all. Oftentimes these real names *sound* like code-names, however. For example, Alexander Atom, heroic scientist, known as Dr. Atom, the adventurer Johnny Danger, or Chuck Shepard, Space Ranger.

AGE

How old is the character? Superheroes tend to hover in that indeterminate age between 20 and 40, but some heroes are younger, usually teenagers, and some are older, possibly *much* older, depending on a hero's background. For example, the hero might have fought in World War II but ended up in the present day due to time travel or suspended animation. Heroes with Immunity to Aging are effectively immortal—they might be *thousands* of years old.

Consider the effects of age on your hero. Someone who fought in the Second World War is likely to have a different worldview than a modern teenager who just acquired super-powers, to say nothing of an immortal who has seen civilizations rise and fall or a godlike being from the dawn of time. A character's age may influence the choice of certain traits. Aged characters are likely to have lower physical ability scores, for example, while younger characters may have fewer skill ranks (having had less time to train in various skills).

APPEARANCE

What does your hero look like? Consider things like the character's race, sex, ethnicity, and other factors in appearance. Is the hero even human? Superheroes can be aliens, robots, androids, spirits, and beings of pure energy. Is the character short or tall? What about hair and eye color? Does the hero have any distinguishing marks or unique features; is his appearance unusual in any way (apart from running around in a costume, that is)?

COSTUME

A costume is a big part of a superhero's appearance. Like code names, most heroes have a distinctive costume, usually something skin-tight and colorful, often emblazoned with a symbol or logo. Other heroes wear more military-style outfits, fatigues or body armor with numerous bandoleers and belts. A suit of armor may serve as the hero's costume: anything from ancient mail to a high-tech battlesuit. A few heroes don't wear a special costume, just ordinary street clothes (which can be pretty distinctive among a group of spandex-clad heroes).

In the comics, costumes are generally immune to the kind of routine wear-and-tear a hero's powers should inflict on them. For example, heroes who can burst into flames don't usually incinerate their clothing. The same is true for heroes who change their size or shape. Although a hero's costume can be damaged or torn by attacks and other circumstances, it's usually immune to the hero's powers. This doesn't cost any points; it's just the way costumes work. In a more realistic campaign, the Gamemaster may choose to make such a costume a special piece of equipment. For more on costumes as equipment, see **Chapter 7**.

ALTERNATE IDENTITY

Although heroes spend a lot of time fighting crime and using their powers to help others, most also try to find time to have lives of their own. Consider the hero's "normal" life, both before acquiring super-powers and since. Does the hero maintain a secret identity, hiding behind a mask or other guise in order to have a semblance of a normal life while "off duty"? Describe the hero's other identity and what the hero does while not out fighting the forces of evil.

Other heroes abandon all pretense of a "civilian" identity, revealing their true names to the world and living in the public eye. This means no juggling two separate lives, but also no refuge from the media, adoring fans, or the hero's enemies, who can all keep track of the hero more easily.

Stevens '05

Both approaches have their good and bad points. Consider which is best for your hero.

ORIGIN

What's the origin of your hero's powers? It can be anything from a character born with the potential for powers to someone granted them by an accident—exposure to a strange meteor, radiation, genetic engineering, or any of countless similar encounters. Here are some of the more common superhero origins, for more on origins, see **Chapter 11**.

- **Accident:** Perhaps the most common origin. The hero gains powers accidentally from exposure to some force like radiation, chemicals, unleashed mystic energies, being struck by lightning, and so forth. Accidents are often one-time events, although sometimes there is an effort to re-create an accident to deliberately make super-beings. Accidental origins are influenced by the science of the setting. Golden Age heroes in the 1940s often gained their powers from chemical accidents while Silver Age heroes in the Atomic Age of the '60s got their powers from radiation and modern heroes acquire powers from accidents involving genetic engineering, nanotech, and similar cutting-edge technologies.
- **Alien:** A hero may be a member of an alien race with unusual powers compared to humans. Either all members of the race have similar powers or particular conditions (lighter gravity, solar radiation, etc.) grant them powers on Earth. Some "alien" races in the comics are actually superhuman offshoots of humanity living isolated from the rest of the human race. "Aliens" also include mystical beings from other dimensions, from angels and demons to elementals and actual gods, as well as mortal half-breeds descended from them. An alien hero's powers might even have another origin; being an alien only explains part of the character's powers or is merely a background element.
- **Endowment:** Some outside force grants the hero powers. This might be an experimental procedure (see the next entry), a godlike higher power, a secret organization that hands out powerful devices, a mysterious wizard, or something similar. The patron might expect something in return from the hero for this boon, or the gift could be unconditional.
- **Experiment:** Some heroes gain powers from a deliberate attempt, such as a scientific or mystical technique for transforming someone into a super-being. Like accidents, experiments are often impossible to duplicate. The hero may be a willing volunteer or a victim chosen to test out the technique. Some heroes create their own powers, either by developing the procedure or building their own devices.
- **Mutant:** A hero may simply be born "different," with the potential for super-powers. These latent powers typically emerge in a time of stress, especially the changes brought on by puberty, although they might also appear as a result of an accident (combining the accident and mutant origins). In some settings mutants are mistrusted because they represent a new species or evolutionary step for humanity, and some fear they will ultimately displace or enslave ordinary humans.
- **Training:** Finally, some heroes acquire powers through hard work and training, whether physical discipline, studying esoteric martial arts techniques, meditation and introspection to unlock hidden mental powers, or mastering the arcane arts of magic. Such training is typically arduous and not everyone has what it takes to accomplish it. Heroes who gained their powers through training may have rivals who trained with them (see the Enemy and Rivalry complications, pages 122-123).

ORIGINS AS DESCRIPTORS

Origins can serve as descriptors for a character's powers (see page 66). For example, a super-powered mutant has the "mutant" descriptor, meaning the character may be detected by mutant-detection powers, affected by mutant-specific devices, and so forth. The same is true for a mystic, an alien, or any other origin.

PERSONALITY

How would you describe your hero's personality? While heroes tend to share a desire to use their powers for good and uphold the law, they also show a diverse range of attitudes. One hero may be dedicated to the ideals of truth, justice, and equality while another is a vigilante willing to break the law in order to ensure justice is done. Some heroes are forthright and cheerful while others are grim and unrelenting. Consider your hero's attitudes and personality traits.

ALLEGIANCE

Heroes' beliefs and motivations are at least as important as their amazing powers and abilities. These are reflected by their *allegiances*.

A character may have up to three allegiances, listed in order from most to least important. These allegiances are indications of what the character values. A character may have fewer allegiances, no allegiances (being either a free spirit or a loner), or may change allegiances over time. Also, just because the character fits into a certain category of people doesn't mean that category is necessarily an allegiance. Allegiances are things toward which a character feels an especially strong devotion.

If a character acts against an allegiance, the GM may choose to strip the character of that allegiance and assign one more suitable to those actions.

PLEDGING ALLEGIANCE

A hero's allegiance can take the form of loyalty to a person, organization, belief system, nation, or an ethical or moral philosophy. Having an allegiance implies the ability to make moral or ethical choices. As a result, characters must have Intelligence and Wisdom scores of 3 or higher in order to have allegiances. Creatures with lower scores—such as animals—have no allegiances.

Allegiances include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Person or Group:** This includes a leader or superior, a family, a team or group, and so forth.
- **Organization:** This may be a company or corporation, a gathering of like-minded individuals, a fraternal brotherhood, a secret society, a branch of the armed forces, a local, state, or national government, a university, an employer, or an otherwise established authority.
- **Nation:** This may be the nation of the hero's birth or an adopted nation. Patriotic heroes typically have an allegiance to their nation (although not necessarily their nation's government).
- **Belief System:** This is usually a particular faith or religion, but can also be a specific philosophy or school of thought. Belief systems also include political beliefs or philosophical outlooks. Silver Age comic book characters are often committed to belief systems like communism, democracy, free thought, and so forth.
- **Ethical Philosophy:** This describes how one feels about order, as represented by law and chaos. An individual with a lawful outlook tends to tell the truth, keep his or her word, respect authority, and honor tradition, and expects others to do likewise. An individual with

a chaotic outlook tends to follow instincts and whims, favor new ideas and experiences, and behave in a subjective and open manner in dealings with others.

- **Moral Philosophy:** This describes one's attitude toward others, as represented by good and evil. An individual with a good allegiance tends to protect innocent life. This belief implies altruism, respect for life, and a concern for the dignity of other creatures. An evil allegiance shows a willingness to hurt, oppress, and kill others, and to debase or destroy innocent life. A good allegiance is especially common among heroes.

ALLEGIANCES AND INFLUENCE

An allegiance can create an empathic bond with others of the same allegiance. With the GM's permission, the character gains a +2 bonus for positive conditions on interaction skill checks when dealing with someone of the same allegiance. Similarly, the character may suffer a –2 penalty when dealing with characters of an opposing allegiance. The character must have some interaction with other characters to bring these modifiers into play.

ALLEGIANCES AS DESCRIPTORS

At the GM's option allegiances can function as descriptors for powers (see **Power Descriptors**, page 66), allowing character to have a power affecting only subjects of a particular allegiance, for example, or the ability to detect characters with a particular allegiance (see **Detect**, page 103). Gamemasters should be careful when applying power modifiers based on allegiance. An attack power affecting only "evil" targets, for example, is useless against inanimate objects, constructs, and animals (and other creatures or things with Int or Wis below 3). It also doesn't affect characters without a specific allegiance to evil (such as selfish mercenaries, violent vigilantes, or despots devoted solely to order, but not evil per se).

ALLEGIANCES AS ORIGINS

Some characters may derive their powers from their allegiance in some way, such as heroes who draw strength from their convictions, their faith, or their morality. This provides a descriptor for those powers, but the hero may also suffer Power Loss (see page 127) from a change or wavering in allegiance.

ALLEGIANCES IN CONFLICT

Characters with different allegiances may find them in conflict. Such conflicts provide roleplaying opportunities and complications for players and story hooks for the Gamemaster. For example, a hero with allegiances to America, Truth, and Justice may discover a secret government agency acting against the interests of justice in the world. What is stronger, the hero's patriotism or the desire to see the truth known and justice done? Some conflicts may result in heroes abandoning or changing allegiances, or reordering their priorities (and therefore allegiances). See **Complications**, page 122, for more on handling such conflicts in the game.

MOTIVATION

Another important element of a hero's background is what motivated the character to become a hero in the first place and what keeps the hero going when things get tough. Sometimes motivation is the only difference between a hero and a villain. What made your hero decide to fight for justice rather than turning toward more selfish goals? How does it affect the hero's methods of fighting crime? Is there anything that might change or affect the hero's motivation? Common heroic motivations include the following:

- **Acceptance:** The hero feels different or isolated (perhaps for being a non-human in human society) and does good to gain the trust and acceptance of others and perhaps discover what it means to be human. Some such heroes see their powers as more of a curse than a blessing, but try to do some good with them while hoping and looking for a way to have a normal life.
- **Goodness:** Some heroes fight the good fight simply because it's the right thing to do and they believe in doing the right thing no matter what. Their strong moral center may come from a good upbringing (or a bad one that showed them what *not* to do) or the guidance or inspiration of a mentor or idol.
- **Greed:** There are those motivated by nothing more than the opportunity to make a profit off their heroic careers. They may be mercenaries for hire or marketing machines who do good deeds but also rake in the proceeds from licensing fees and public appearances. More altruistic heroes tend to look down upon their profit-mongering peers.
- **Justice:** An overwhelming thirst for justice drives some heroes, a need to see the innocent protected and the guilty punished, even if they are beyond the reach of the law. These heroes walk a thin line. For some justice becomes a thirst for vengeance for injury done to the hero in the past, like the death of a loved one.
- **Recognition:** Some heroes just want recognition, and dressing up in a bright costume and fighting crime is one surefire way to get people to notice you. The hero may be a shy nobody out of costume or a glory-hog who loves the spotlight.

- **Responsibility:** The responsibility of having great power can be a heavy burden but some heroes feel it is their duty to use the powers they've been given for the greater good. Oftentimes these heroes are trying to live up to an ideal like a mentor or a predecessor who inspired them.
- **Thrills:** For some the life of a superhero is all about excitement, thrills, danger, and challenge. These heroes are in it for the action more than anything else.

GOALS

Finally, what are your hero's goals? All heroes want things like peace and justice to one degree or another, but what other things does your hero want? One hero may want to find his long-lost family while another may want to avenge a terrible wrong done to her in the past. A monstrous or alien hero may seek acceptance and a new home on Earth, while a teen hero may want to live up to the legacy of a mentor or predecessor. Giving your hero a goal beyond simply "doing good" can help give the character more depth and provide opportunities for roleplaying and complications during the game. Don't overlook it.

EXTRA EFFORT

Often, heroes are called upon to perform feats beyond even their amazing abilities. This calls for *extra effort*. Players can use extra effort to improve a hero's abilities in exchange for the hero suffering some fatigue. The benefits of extra effort are not limited by power level.

USING EXTRA EFFORT

Extra effort is a free action and can be performed at any time during the hero's action (but is limited to once per round). A hero using extra effort gains one of the following benefits:

- **Check bonus:** +2 bonus on a single ability, skill, or power check. This does not include attack rolls.
- **Increase carrying capacity:** +5 effective Strength for determining the hero's carrying capacity for one round.
- **Increase movement:** The hero's speed for all modes of movement doubles for one round.
- **Increase power:** Increase a power by 2 ranks for one round. This only increases the power's rank; you cannot apply power modifiers (but see the **power stunt** benefit). Permanent powers cannot be improved in this way.
- **Power stunt:** Temporarily add a power feat to a power. This includes an Alternate Power of an existing power. The power feat must follow the normal rules for adding a power feat. The temporary power feat lasts for the duration of the encounter or until you choose to stop maintaining it, whichever comes first. This includes turning off the power or switching to a different Alternate Power. Power stunts cannot be applied to Permanent powers via extra effort.
- **Willpower:** Gain an immediate additional saving throw against a power with a Lasting effect, such as Mind Control or Nullify (see **Duration**, page 70). You get this save even if the Lasting power has a Continuous duration (which doesn't normally allow for additional saves at all). If you're mind-controlled, the fatigue from the extra effort doesn't affect you until you're free of it.
- **Surge:** Gain an additional standard or move action, before or after your normal actions for the round (your choice). Using this extra action does not change your place in the initiative order. You can use

a standard action gained from extra effort to start or complete a full-round action in conjunction with your normal actions for the round.

FATIGUE FROM EXTRA EFFORT

At the beginning of the round immediately after extra effort, the hero becomes fatigued (see **Fatigue**, page 167). A fatigued hero becomes exhausted and an exhausted hero becomes unconscious the round after using extra effort. If you spend a hero point at the start of the round following extra effort to shake off the fatigue, the hero suffers no adverse effects.

HERO POINTS

Whether it's luck, talent, or sheer determination, heroes have something setting them apart from everyone else, allowing them to perform amazing deeds under the most difficult circumstances. In *Mutants & Masterminds* that something is *hero points*. Spending a hero point can make the difference between success and failure. When you're entrusted with the safety of the world that means a lot!

Hero points allow players to "edit" the plot of the adventure and the rules of the game to a degree. They give heroes the ability to do the amazing things heroes do in the comics, but with certain limits, and they encourage players to make the sort of choices heroes do in the comics, in order to get more hero points.

Heroes start each game session with 1 hero point. During the adventure they get opportunities to earn more hero points. Players can use various tokens (poker chips, glass beads, etc.) to keep track of their hero points, handing them over to the Gamemaster when they spend them. The Gamemaster can likewise give out tokens when awarding hero points to the players. Unspent hero points don't carry over to the next adventure; the heroes start out with 1 point again.

USING HERO POINTS

Unless otherwise noted, spending a hero point is a reaction, taking no time. You can spend as many hero points as you have, but only one hero point on any given benefit per round. You can spend hero points for any of the following things.

IMPROVE ROLL

One hero point allows you to re-roll any die roll you make and take the better of the two rolls. On a result of 1 through 10 on the second roll, add 10 to the result, an 11 or higher remains as-is (so the second roll is always a result of 11-20). You must spend the hero point to improve a roll *before* the GM announces the result of your roll. You cannot spend hero points on die rolls made by the GM or other players without the Luck Control power (see page 90).

HEROIC FEAT

You can spend a hero point to gain the benefits of a feat (either a regular or power feat) you don't already have for one round (see **Chapter 4**). You must be capable of using the feat and cannot gain the benefits of fortune feats, only other types of feats. If the feat has another feat as a prerequisite, you must have the prerequisite to gain the benefit of the more advanced feat. For feats acquired in ranks, you gain the benefit of one rank of the feat by spending a hero point. The GM can veto any performance of a feat acquired with a hero point if considered inappropriate for the game.

DODGE

You can spend a hero point to double your dodge bonus for one round. This includes any modifiers to your dodge bonus from feats, powers, or combat actions (such as the total defense action, page 159). The improved dodge bonus lasts until the beginning of your next round. You can also spend a hero point whenever you are denied your dodge bonus, but still capable of action (surprised, flat-footed, etc.). In this case, you retain your dodge bonus until your next action (this is the same as spending a hero point to perform the Uncanny Dodge feat).

INSTANT COUNTER

You can spend a hero point to attempt to counter a power used against you as a reaction. See **Countering Powers**, page 70, for details.

CANCEL FATIGUE

Any time you would suffer fatigue (including the effects of the Fatigue power and the use of extra effort), you can spend a hero point and reduce the amount of fatigue by one level (so you suffer no fatigue from a fatigued result, are fatigued by an exhausted result, etc.).

RECOVER

You can spend a hero point to recover faster. A hero point allows you to immediately shake off a stunned or fatigued condition.

If you are exhausted, spending a hero point causes you to become fatigued. If you have suffered damage, a hero point allows you an immediate recovery check as a full-round action (see **Recovery**, page 165). It takes two rounds for a staggered hero to make a recovery check, since you

UNDER THE HOOD: HERO POINTS

Hero points serve several purposes, all intended to allow heroes to pull off the kinds of stunts they do in the comic books. Hero points essentially provide players with the ability to change their characters' traits, or influence the outcome of events in the game, but only a certain number of times per game and to a certain preset degree.

One particularly useful aspect of hero points is the ability to perform feats a character doesn't have. Essentially, any combat, general, or skill feat in **Chapter 4** is a potential use of hero points. Consider some like Improvised Tools or Jack-of-All-Trades as examples. They may not be part of a hero's normal repertoire, but they can be useful to have in a pinch, so long as the player is willing to spend a hero point to use them.

Players may wish to note some appropriate heroic feats and power stunts they can refer to in play for ideas and inspiration. For example, maybe your character doesn't have the Inventor feat (see page 62) but does have ranks in Knowledge and Craft. You could spend a hero point in play to allow your character to come up with an invention. Likewise, characters may have "special moves" they use only rarely. Rather than paying power points for them, they may spend hero points to acquire them as needed.

The same guidelines hold true for using extra effort to acquire power feats (and possibly spending a hero point to cancel the fatigue). You don't have to pay points for every possible permutation of your hero's powers: just note some suitable power stunts and spend hero points to use them in play.

You might eventually want to spend the power points necessary to make a sometime feat or power stunt a permanent part of the character's abilities, especially if it's something you use all the time, giving you a natural way of improving and developing your character. So remember, extra effort and hero points are excellent tools when it comes to making and playing a flexible and interesting hero!

can only take a standard or move action each round while staggered. This check is made normally, the hero point just allows you to make it in addition to your normal recovery checks. If the recovery check is successful, it turns out the damage wasn't as serious as it first appeared, or your hero is able to shake it off.

While disabled, you can spend a hero point to take a strenuous action for one round without your condition worsening to dying. If you spend a hero point on a normal recovery check for bruised or injured conditions, a successful check eliminates all of that condition, rather than just one. The hero point does not improve the recovery check, only its effect.

ESCAPE DEATH

Spending a hero point automatically stabilizes a dying character (you or someone you are assisting), although this doesn't protect the character from further damage.

INSPIRATION

Once per game session, you can spend a hero point to get a sudden inspiration in the form of a hint, clue, or bit of help from the GM. It might be a way out of the villain's fiendish deathtrap, a vital clue for solving a mystery, or an idea about the villain's weakness. It's up to the GM exactly how much help the players get from inspiration.

Gamemasters may even wish to expand the "inspiration" facet of hero points to allow players greater control over the environment of the game, effectively allowing them to "edit" a scene to grant their heroes an advantage. For example, a hero is fighting a villain with plant-based powers in a scientific lab. The player deduces the villain may be vulnerable to defoliants, so she asks the GM if there are any chemicals in the lab she can throw together to create a defoliant. The Gamemaster requires to player to spend a hero point and says the right chemicals are close at hand.

How much players are allowed to "edit" circumstances is up to the individual Gamemaster, but generally hero points should not be allowed to change any event that has already occurred or any detail already explained in-game. For example, players cannot "edit" away damage or the effects of powers (hero points already allow this to a limited degree). The GM may also veto uses of editing that ruin the adventure or make things too easy on the players. Inspiration is intended to give the players more input into the story and allow their heroes chances to succeed, but it shouldn't be used as a replacement for planning and cleverness, just a way to enhance them.

COMPLICATIONS AND POWER FLAWS

Generally speaking, power flaws are *not* complications and heroes do not earn hero points when their flaws come into play. A flaw provides a cost-break on the power in exchange for reducing its effectiveness, while a complication provides hero points in exchange for an additional challenge to overcome. The two don't mix, and the Gamemaster is not required to hand out hero points for exploiting a hero's flaws: the player already got the flaw's "payoff" in the form of reduced power cost.

So, for example, taking a Device away from a hero is *not* a power loss complication, it's inherent in the way Devices work. On the other hand, arranging circumstances so the hero's Device just stops working altogether (because it jams or runs out of power, for example) counts as a complication. Likewise, saying a winged character can't fly while grappled isn't a complication if the character has the Power Loss drawback. But having part of the adventure take place in a vacuum or on a heavy-gravity world where the hero's wings are useless is a complication (a temporary Power Loss drawback).

The Gamemaster makes the final decision as to whether a particular difficulty the heroes encounter is a complication or not. Generally, if it's a normal part of how a power flaw works, then it's not a complication.

EARNING HERO POINTS

In comic book stories, heroes often confront the villain(s) and deal with various setbacks. Perhaps the villain defeats them in the first couple encounters. Maybe one or more of the heroes have to overcome a personal problem. The villain may have a secret the heroes need to discover, and so forth. By the end of the story, the heroes have overcome these challenges and they're ready to take on the villain.

Mutants & Masterminds reflects this kind of story structure through the awarding of hero points. The heroes gain additional hero points as an adventure progresses. When the going gets tough, the heroes get tougher, because they get hero points to help them overcome future challenges.

Heroes get hero points from setbacks, complications, acts of heroism, roleplaying, stunts, and instances of Gamemaster fiat.

SETBACKS

Setbacks are when things just aren't going the hero's way. When a hero suffers a significant failure, the player gets a hero point. Generally, a "significant failure" is a failed skill check or saving throw with the *worst* possible result: a Climb check where the hero falls, a Toughness save where the hero is knocked out, a Reflex save that leaves the hero helpless, a Will save where the hero is mind-controlled, and so forth. The GM decides if a particular failure is significant or not. Generally, routine failures, like missing an attack roll or suffering some lesser effect from a failed save, is not significant enough to count as a setback and earn a hero point.

A newly acquired hero point cannot be used to eliminate the setback that granted it. So you can't suffer a significant failure and then spend the hero point you get to avoid failing, and you can't get knocked out by a bad Toughness save and spend the hero point immediately to try and wake up. You *can* spend hero points you already have, but if you overcome a setback by spending a hero point you *don't* gain a hero point for that setback, since it isn't really a setback!

COMPLICATIONS

Complications are essentially setbacks players choose for their heroes in advance. Comic books are full of personal complications, and players are encouraged to come up with some for their heroes. When a complication causes a significant setback for a hero, it's worth a hero point award. Possible complications, and their uses in adventures, include:

- **Accident:** You cause or suffer some sort of accident. Perhaps a stray blast damages a building or hurts an innocent bystander, your fire powers set off sprinkler systems, or you cause volatile chemicals to explode. The GM decides the effects of an accident, but they should be troublesome. Accidents can lead to further complications; perhaps the hero develops a guilt-complex, obsession, or phobia involving the accident.
- **Addiction:** You need something, whether for physical or psychological reasons. You'll go out of your way to satisfy your addiction, and being unable to satisfy it may lead to a temporary weakness drawback (see **Temporary Drawbacks as Complications**, page 126). When your addiction causes you a setback, that's a complication.
- **Enemy:** You have an enemy, or enemies, trying to do you harm. The GM can have your enemy show up to cause you trouble, and adventures involving your enemy tend to be more complicated for you; even personal grudge-matches, if the enmity goes both ways. When having

UNDER THE HOOD: AWARDING HERO POINTS

One benefit of the system of awarding hero points is it allows the Gamemaster to reward players for suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. It in fact *encourages* them to do so, since players know they'll get hero points for the setbacks and complications their heroes face.

For example, since things like saving throws are voluntary, players can *choose* to fail a saving throw in order to place their heroes into situations where they can earn hero points. With this system, you can "bribe" players, saying, "Okay, if you let Mastermind take over your character and do his bidding for this scene, you get an extra hero point." Likewise, it serves as a reward for players who choose to rescue civilians and let the villain get away at the start of the adventure, or suffer a humiliating defeat at the hands of the villain early on, just like the heroes in the comics.

an enemy causes a particular problem for you (such as your enemy abducting a loved on), you get a hero point.

- **Fame:** You're a public figure, known almost everywhere you go, hounded by the media, swamped by fans and well-wishers, and similar problems.
- **Hatred:** You have an irrational hatred of something, leading you to actively oppose the object of your dislike in some way, no matter the consequences.
- **Honor:** You have a strong personal code of honor. Generally this means you won't take unfair advantage of opponents or use trickery, but you can define the exact terms of your code with the GM. Honor is only a complication when it puts you in a bind or on the horns of a moral dilemma.
- **Obsession:** You're obsessed with a particular subject and pursue it to the exclusion of all else, which can create some complications.
- **Phobia:** You're irrationally afraid of something. When confronted with it you have to fight to control your fear, causing you to hesitate or act irrationally (and earning a hero point).
- **Prejudice:** You are part of a minority group subject to the prejudices of others. Some Gamemasters and gaming groups may prefer not to deal with issues of prejudice in their games, in which case the GM is free to ban this complication.
- **Reputation:** You have a bad reputation, affecting what others think of you (whether you deserve it or not). Having someone adopt a bad attitude toward you because of your reputation is a complication.
- **Responsibility:** You have various demands on your time and attention. Responsibilities include family obligations, professional duties, and similar things. Failing to live up to your responsibilities can mean loss of relationships, employment, and other problems.
- **Rivalry:** You feel a strong sense of competition with a person or group and have to do your best to outdo your rival at every opportunity.
- **Secret:** You have something potentially damaging or embarrassing you're hiding from the world. The most common secret for *Mutants & Masterminds* heroes is their true identity. Occasionally, something (or someone) may threaten to reveal your secret.
- **Temper:** Certain things just set you off. When you lose your temper you lash out at whatever provoked you.

You get a hero point for each encounter where a complication comes into play. The GM decides when a particular complication comes up, although you can offer suggestions on suitable opportunities.

You should choose one or two regular complications for your hero, and feel free to suggest others to the Gamemaster during play. The GM decides what complications are appropriate and can overrule any particular complication, depending on the needs of the story. Keep in mind the adventure needs to have room for all the heroes' complications, so individual ones can only come up so often.

> ***Examples:*** *The teen superhero Sonic has finally made a date with the new girl at school. Unfortunately, his enemy Rant decides to go on a rampage in Southside that evening. Sonic has to ditch his date and deal with Rant quick before she gets suspicious. The GM awards Sonic's player a hero point for the romantic complication and one for the enemy complication, which Sonic uses to kick Rant's butt as fast as he can, so he can get back to his date.*
>
> *The witch Seven suffers from claustrophobia. When the vampire lord Dracula places her in a coffin in preparation for becoming one of his brides, Seven is overcome with panic and unable to use her magic to free herself. The GM awards Seven's player a hero point for the setback resulting from her complication.*

Complications can (and generally should) change over the course of a series: old enemies die or are put away for life, rivalries and psychological issues are resolved, new romances and relationships begin, and so forth. Work with the GM to come up with new complications for your hero as old ones are resolved. The Gamemaster may set limits on how many ongoing complications your hero can have in play at any given time.

HEROISM

You earn hero points for acts of heroism, the kind of things we expect from comic book superheroes. To qualify for a hero point, the act must be truly heroic and self-sacrificing. Beating up on a group of thugs who are no real threat isn't heroism, but taking a hit for a friend is. Rescuing people from a burning building is heroism. Being willing to surrender to a villain in order to save the lives of hostages is heroism. Allowing a villain to get away so you can catch a runaway train before it crashes is heroism.

The GM decides if a particular act is suitably heroic, and should provide the players with plenty of opportunities for heroism. Note that some complications also provide opportunities for heroism. For example, if a hero's boyfriend is on a train while she's fighting the villain, that's a complication worth a hero point (the hero has to look out for him). If the hero breaks off fighting the villain and lets him escape in order to save the train and its passengers from certain doom, that's heroism, good for another hero point.

ROLEPLAYING

Although the dialogue in some Silver Age comics is corny enough to make us groan, consider the occasions when a hero's rousing speech or clever quips make us cheer or smile. When a player provides similar dialogue in the game: something that makes everyone at the table laugh or applaud, award the player a hero point. This doesn't have to be limited to just dialogue; a player who provides a fantastic description of a hero's action, or helps entertain the group in some other way can also qualify for a hero point.

STUNTS

Sometimes heroes manage to pull off stunts that make us go "wow!" When a hero in the game does the same thing—performing a cool stunt and impressing everyone at the table—the player gets a hero point. Note this applies to stunts performed using extra effort (see page 120) and spending the hero point you get for performing a cool stunt to eliminate the fatigue from the extra effort is allowed, so especially cool power stunts and such can become "freebies" if the GM awards a hero point for them.

GAMEMASTER FIAT

Lastly, players earn hero points when the Gamemaster "bends" the rules of the game in favor of the bad guys. The GM essentially gets to "cheat" on behalf of the villain(s), but the heroes get hero points when this happens.

> ***Example:*** *The GM may spring an "inescapable" trap on the heroes, allowing the villain to place them into a fiendish deathtrap and tell them his master plan before leaving them to their fate. The GM declares Gamemaster Fiat to make the trap truly inescapable; the heroes all automatically fail their saving throws against it. However, they each get a hero point. The deathtrap that follows is a complication, earning them another hero point.*

Some uses for GM Fiat include:

- Giving a non-player character the benefit of a hero point.
- Allowing a villain to escape an encounter automatically. Circumstances conspire to allow the villain to get away scot-free: debris blocks pursuit, the villain goes missing in an explosion or falls to a mysterious "death," and so forth.
- Have a hero automatically fail a saving throw against a particular hazard, like a villain's trap, to help further the plot.
- Have the heroes automatically surprised by an opponent at the start of an encounter.
- Cause some additional problem for the heroes. Essentially, bringing a complication into play can be seen a use of GM Fiat (see **Complications**).

A good rule of thumb with Gamemaster Fiat is any time the GM effectively grants a non-player character the benefits of a hero point or the equivalent, the affected hero or heroes get a hero point in exchange. This is important, since only the heroes have and earn hero points. NPCs make use of GM Fiat as the Gamemaster sees fit.

UNDER THE HOOD: DRAWBACKS VS. COMPLICATIONS

Many things that might be considered drawbacks in other games are actually complications in *Mutants & Masterminds*. For example, having a secret identity, an unrelenting code of justice, unquenchable curiosity, or an elderly aunt in need of your support are not drawbacks, but they *are* potential complications, which can earn you hero points during the game.

As a general rule, complications are things you roleplay: your hero's attitudes, relationships, personal issues, and so forth. Drawbacks have defined game effects, usually physical ones. Sometimes there's a fine line between the two. For example, a freakish-looking hero doesn't have a drawback, but may encounter prejudice (a potential complication). On the other hand, a freakish character who can't speak has a definite drawback (being mute) and may *also* encounter prejudice, but it's the inability to speak that's the drawback, not looking freakish.

The Gamemaster should make an effort to use both GM Fiat and the authority to award hero points fairly, to make the adventure more fun and exciting. See **Chapter 9** for more information on awarding hero points and using Gamemaster Fiat.

DRAWBACKS

Drawbacks are weaknesses for characters to overcome. They're the flip side of a character's skills, feats, and powers. Drawbacks serve two main purposes. First, they provide characters with additional depth and a degree of vulnerability, which can be important for heroes able to move mountains or bounce bullets off their chests. Second, drawbacks give you additional power points during character creation to spend on improving your character's traits. The maximum number of points you can get from drawbacks is generally equal to the campaign's power level, as set by the GM (see **Power Level**, page 24).

DRAWBACK VALUE

A drawback's power point value is based on two things: its *frequency* (how often the drawback affects your character) and its *intensity* (how seriously the drawback affects your character). The more frequent and intense the drawback, the more points it's worth. Drawbacks generally range in value from 1 power point for something that comes up rarely and has little effect to 5 power points for a drawback that comes up all the time and seriously weakens the character.

FREQUENCY

Drawbacks have three levels of frequency: uncommon, common, and very common. Uncommon drawbacks show up about a quarter of the time, every four adventures or so. Common drawbacks show up about half the time, and very common drawbacks show up three-quarters of the time or more.

Each level has a *frequency check* associated with it, which is a simple d20 roll with no modifiers against a DC (15, 10, or 5). A GM who wants to randomly check a drawback makes a frequency check to see if it shows up in the adventure. Otherwise, the GM can simply choose to bring a drawback into play based on its frequency.

Note that frequency represents how often the drawback comes up during the game, not necessarily how common it is in the campaign setting. Even if glowing meteors are extraordinarily rare in the *setting*, if they show up every other adventure, they're still common in frequency.

INTENSITY

The intensity of a drawback measures how much impact it has on the character. There are three levels of intensity: minor, moderate, and major. Minor drawbacks have a slight impact or are not difficult to overcome. Moderate drawbacks impose some limits, but can be overcome about half of the time. Major drawbacks impose serious limits and are quite difficult to overcome.

POWER DRAWBACKS

Some drawbacks are *power drawbacks*, meaning they apply to a particular power rather than necessarily to the character. You can think of power drawbacks as the reverse of power feats: minor limits on the power. A power can have a total value in drawbacks equal to 1 point less than its total cost (so the power must cost at least 1 power point, regardless of how many drawbacks it has).

FITTING DRAWBACKS TO THE CAMPAIGN

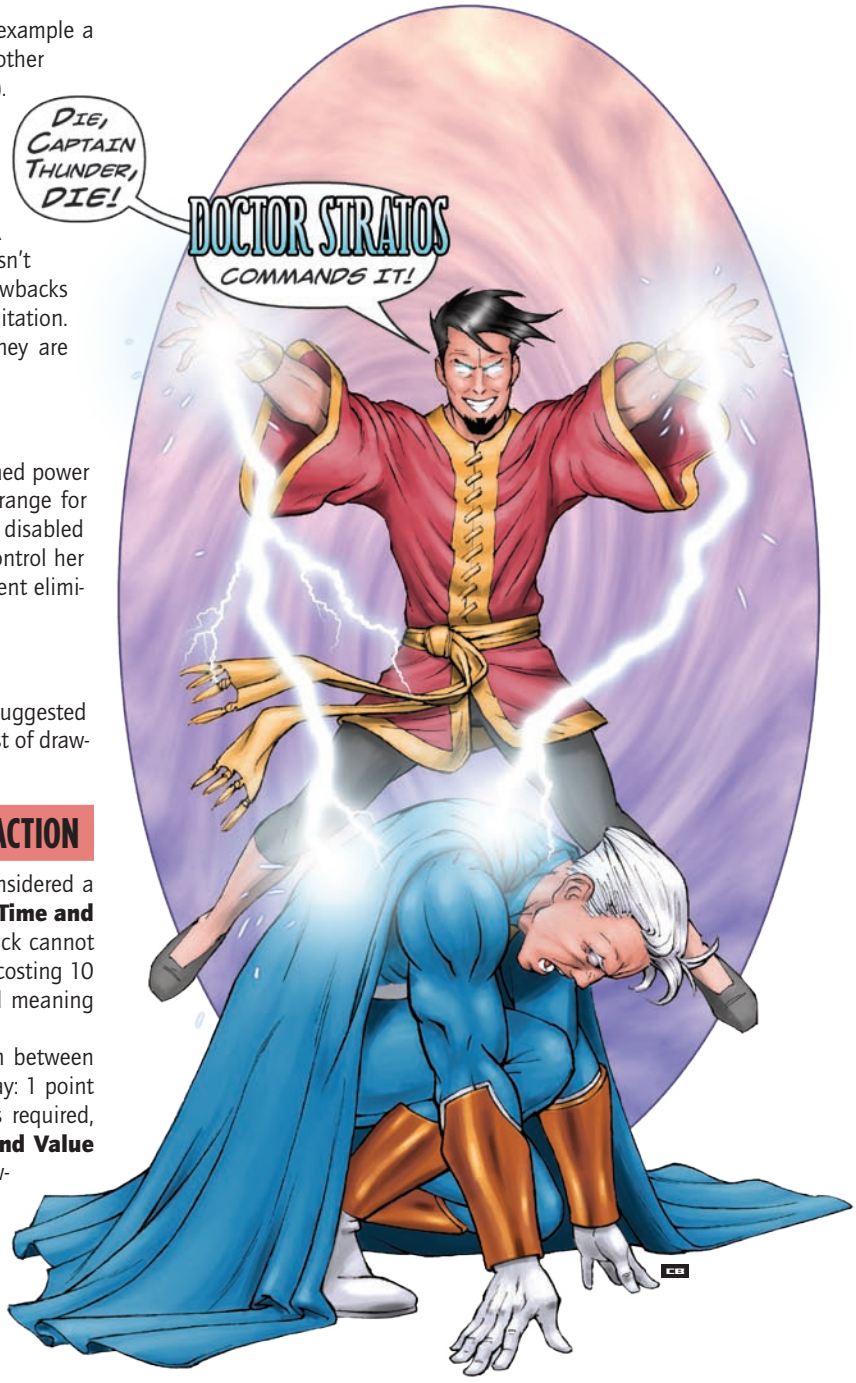
Although suggested values are given for various drawbacks in the following sections, the value of any drawback is based largely on its effect. So

DRAWBACK VALUE

Value	Frequency: How often does the drawback come up?
+1	Uncommon (every few adventures. DC 15)
+2	Common (every other adventure, DC 10)
+3	Very Common (once per adventure, DC 5)
Value	**Intensity: How seriously does the drawback affect you?**
+0	Minor: DC 5 to overcome, less capable than the character, or slight limitation.
+1	Moderate: DC 10 to overcome, as capable as character, or modest limitation
+2	Major: DC 15 to overcome, more capable than the character, or major limitation

drawback values can vary from one campaign to another. For example a common Vulnerability in one setting may be uncommon in another and non-existent in a third (making it worthless as a drawback). The Gamemaster must judge the frequency and intensity—and therefore value—of each drawback based on the context of the character and the campaign as a whole.

One important guideline for Gamemasters is to ensure that drawbacks *actually limit or hinder characters in some way*. A drawback that doesn't do so isn't really a drawback at all and isn't worth any points. Beware of players trying to create such drawbacks to give their characters the most points for the least actual limitation. If need be, you can disallow certain drawbacks entirely, if they are unsuited to the campaign.



ELIMINATING DRAWBACKS

Players can remove a drawback from a character by paying earned power points equal to the drawback's value. The GM should also arrange for suitable events in the story to eliminate the drawback. So a disabled hero might be healed in some way, a novice learns to better control her powers (eliminating the Full Power drawback), a special treatment eliminates the hero's Weakness, and so forth.

DRAWBACK DESCRIPTIONS

Each entry here describes the drawback's game effect and its suggested value. Gamemasters should feel free to expand or modify this list of drawbacks as desired to suit the campaign.

ACTION

A power requiring longer than a full-round action to use is considered a drawback (see the **Action** flaw on page 111). Each step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** is a 1 point drawback. The drawback cannot equal or exceed the value of the associated power. So a power costing 10 points cannot have more than 9 points in this drawback (and meaning the power takes three months to use!).

This drawback can also apply to the time needed to switch between alternate powers (see **Alternate Powers**, page 108) in an array: 1 point if a move action is required, 2 points if a standard action is required, 3 points if a full action is required, each step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** thereafter is an additional 1 point drawback. In this case the drawback's value cannot equal or exceed the power's total Alternate Effect feats, so a power with four Alternate Effects can only get 3 points out of this drawback (requiring a full action to switch between them).

DISABILITY

You lack a particular ability most people have. The frequency of the drawback is based on how often this lack limits you, while the intensity represents how serious a limitation it is. Some examples include blindness (very common, major, 5 points), deafness (very common, moderate, 4 points), one arm (very common, moderate, 4 points), mute (very common, moderate, 4 points), paraplegic (common, major, 4 points), one eye (–4 with ranged attacks, common, moderate, 3 points), and illiterate (uncommon, minor, 1 point).

Note characters with certain powers may have this drawback at a lesser value. Being blind is an uncommon, minor drawback for a character with Blindsight, for example, just as being mute is an uncommon, minor drawback for a character with Mental Communication, since the drawback comes into play less often and is less trouble for the character in general.

FULL POWER

You have less than full control over the effects of a power. Powers subject to this drawback *must* be used at full power rank or intensity, or not at all. This means you cannot pull punches with an attack (see page 163), move at less than full speed, and so forth, depending on which power this drawback is assigned. You can still turn the power on and off as you wish (it is neither Permanent nor Uncontrolled), you just can't fine-tune it, it's either on at full intensity or off entirely. You can't have the Precise feat (see page 109) for any power affected by this drawback. Full Power is an uncommon, minor drawback, worth 1 point.

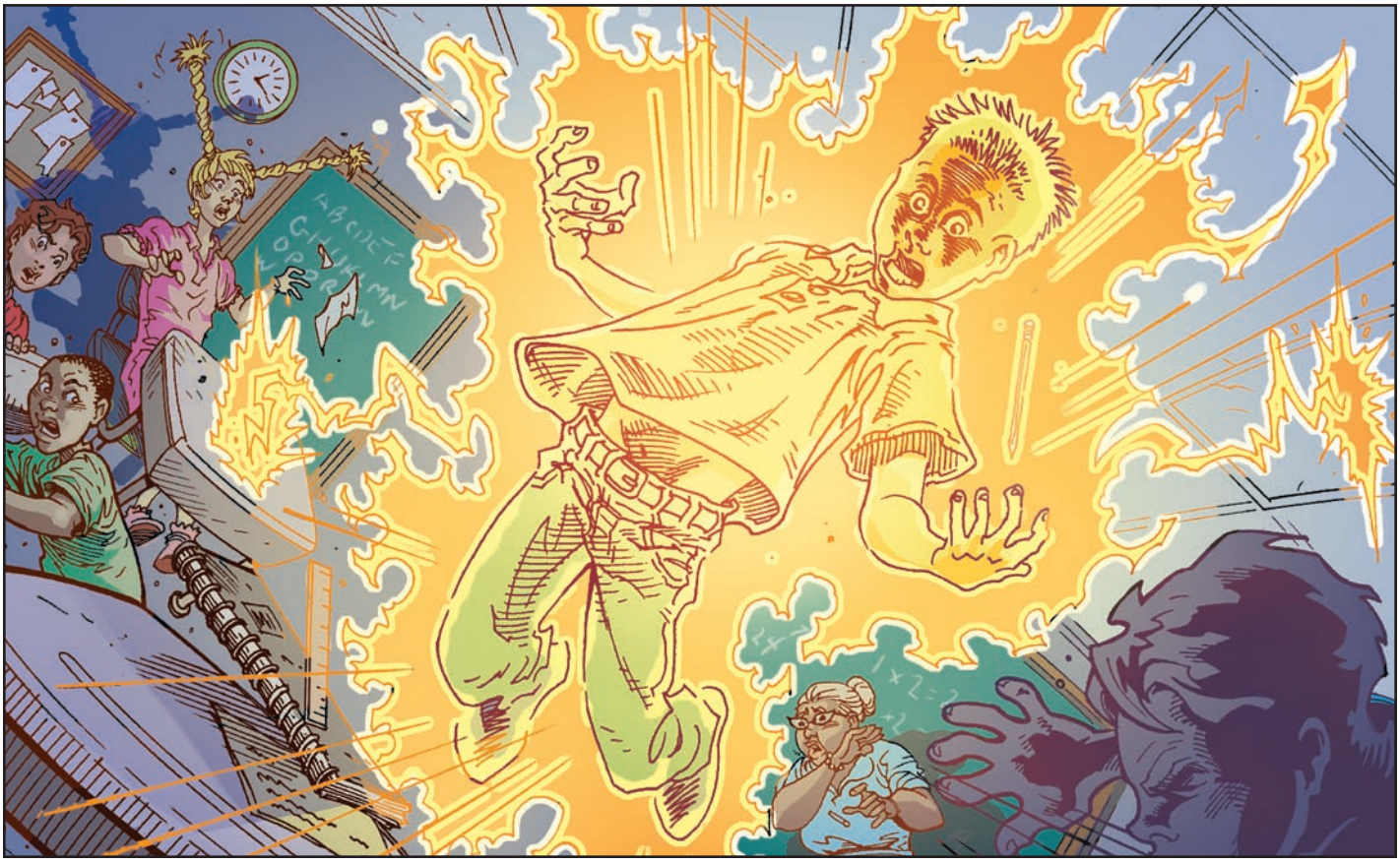
INVOLUNTARY TRANSFORMATION

You have two or more forms or identities you sometimes change between against your will. The value of the drawback is based on how often you change (frequency) and how difficult it is for you to resist the change (intensity). If you *cannot* resist the change, no matter what, the intensity value is 3 points. If you involuntarily switch between super-powered and normal human forms, you also have the Normal Identity drawback.

NORMAL IDENTITY

You have two identities: a super-powered one and a normal one. This is not the same as having a secret identity (although you may have that, too). The difference is your normal identity has *none* of the powers or extraordinary abilities of your superhuman self. So in your normal identity you might be an average teenager, businessman, or other everyday person. Characters with Devices may have this drawback, but not necessarily. For example, a hero who wears a suit of powered armor might have a Normal Identity while he's out of the armor, but a hero who wields a magic ring doesn't have a Normal Identity unless he can't wear or have the ring with him for some reason.

To qualify for this drawback there must be some reasonable means of preventing you from changing from your normal to your super identity. For example, you might require access to a Device (which can be stolen or disabled), you might need to speak a magic word or incantation (blocked by an auditory Obscure, a gag, or a simple chokehold), you might need to take a particular pill or formula, and so forth. The GM decides whether or not a particular condition qualifies for this drawback. If you can switch between a normal and super identity at will and nothing can prevent it, you don't qualify for this drawback. If you can't always control switching between identities, you also have the Involuntary Transformation drawback.



OPTION: TEMPORARY DRAWBACKS AS COMPLICATIONS

At the GM's option, characters can acquire temporary drawbacks as complications. This is like the reverse of temporarily acquiring power stunts using extra effort: the hero suffers a one-time application of the drawback and, in exchange, earns a hero point.

For example, perhaps an incident in the adventure causes temporary Power Loss or imposes a drawback like Full Power, Involuntary Transformation, or Weakness. Each scene where the hero is saddled with the drawback, the player earns an extra hero point. These temporary drawbacks do not provide characters with additional power points, and they're generally gone by the end of the adventure.

On the rare occasion when a hero acquires a *permanent* drawback during play, the GM should award the hero extra power points equal to the drawback's value.

The Gamemaster also has the option of making *all* drawbacks in the game into complications. In this case, characters cannot take drawbacks for additional power points. They can, however, have drawbacks come up as complications and earn hero points when they do. So, instead of being a drawback worth power points, a hero's Normal Identity or Power Loss is a complication, like any other.

You define the traits of your Normal Identity. Your Normal Identity cannot have any powers, and the GM may restrict the application of feats and ability scores above 20. Your Normal Identity must also be built on fewer points than your super-identity (how many fewer is up to the GM, but no more than half is a good rule of thumb). The simplest Normal Identity has the same traits as your super identity, minus any powers.

The intensity of this drawback is major (since you lose access to all your powers). The frequency depends on how difficult it is for you to assume your super-identity. If it takes a free action, then it's uncommon (3 points). If it takes a full-round action, it's common (4 points), and if it takes longer than a full-round action it's very common (5 points).

NOTICEABLE

A Continuous, Permanent, or mental power with this drawback is noticeable in some way (Instant, Concentration, and Sustained powers are noticeable by default, see **Noticing Power Effects**, page 66). Choose a noticeable effect of the power. For example Noticeable Mind Control might cause the subject's eyes to glow or skin to change color. Noticeable Protection may take the form of armored plates or a tough, leathery-looking hide. Noticeable is an uncommon, minor drawback, worth 1 point.

ONE-WAY TRANSFORMATION

When you transform through the use of a power such as Alternate Form or Shapeshift or due to the Normal Identity or Involuntary Transformation drawbacks, it takes some time for you to return to "normal." This may be due to a need to "bleed off" excess energy, letting the transformation lapse slowly, or a requirement to reset certain mechanical system parameters. Whatever the case, undoing your transformation is involved.

One-Way Transformation is a very common drawback (less if you don't transform every adventure). Its intensity is minor if it takes a matter of hours for you to return to normal. It's moderate if it takes hours plus certain resources (a lab, workshop, special equipment or components, and so forth). It's major if it takes a matter of days or longer.

POWER LOSS

You lose the use of a power with this drawback under certain conditions. Examples include when exposed to a particular substance, when immersed in water, when unable to speak, and so forth. You can also suffer power loss from a failure to do something, like not recharging a power, breaking an oath, not taking a pill, and so forth. Power Loss is minor intensity, with frequency based on how often you encounter the conditions, giving it a value of 1–3 points. You regain use of the power when the condition that triggered the loss no longer affects you.

The loss of Devices and Equipment is *not* covered by this drawback. Losing Device and Equipment powers due to theft is a part of those traits and factored into their cost. So characters cannot take Power Loss with the condition "when devices or equipment are removed."

VULNERABLE

You're vulnerable to a particular type of attack. Frequency is based on how often you encounter your vulnerability. Intensity measures how vulnerable you are; minor vulnerabilities add +1 to saving throw DC. Moderate vulnerabilities increase the modifier to the save DC by 50% (× 1.5, round up). Major vulnerabilities increase the save DC modifier by 100% (× 2). So, for example, an attack doing +7 damage normally does +8 damage to someone with a minor vulnerability (7+1), +11 to someone with a moderate vulnerability (7 × 1.5 = 10.5, rounded up), and +14 to someone with a major vulnerability (7 × 2).

WEAKNESS

You suffer harm from something normally harmless to others. It may be a vampire's weakness to sunlight or holy water or a hero's weakness when exposed to glowing meteorites. Alternately it may be the *lack* of something, like a vampire's need for blood, an addict's need for a drug, an amphibian's need for water, and so forth. Frequency is based on how often you encounter your weakness. Intensity is based on the effect the weakness has on you.

- **Minor:** cumulative –1 on checks, attack bonus, or defense bonus.
- **Moderate:** cumulative –1 penalty to all checks, attack rolls, and Defense, or a –1 cumulative drain on an ability score.
- **Major:** cumulative –1 drain on all ability scores.

The base time before a weakness affects you is 20 minutes. Increase the drawback's value by 1 for each step up the **Time and Value Progression Table** and decrease it by 1 for each step down. So a weakness that affects you each round is +4 points while one that only affects you once a day is –3 points. If your weakness is an Instant rather than a continuing effect, like an attack, it has a time modifier of +0. If your weakness affects your Constitution score (and therefore might kill you) add +1 to its value.

WEAK POINT

This drawback makes a defense power that provides a Toughness save vulnerable to critical hits. A critical hit completely bypasses the power, ignoring its bonus to Toughness saves when the target saves against the attack's damage. This is in addition to the normal effects of a critical hit (+5 damage). Weak Point is a 1-point drawback.

CHAPTER 7: DEVICES & EQUIPMENT

From blaster rifles to anti-gravity belts, teleportation rings, and battlesuits, heroes and villains develop all manner of gadgets. Villains are forever coming up with doomsday machines and fiendish deathtraps while heroes use devices to aid them in their fight for justice. This chapter looks at various sorts of devices and equipment. It also describes vehicles, headquarters, and constructs, ranging from zombie minions to giant robots.

DEVICES

A *device* is an item that provides a particular power or powers (see the **Device** power, page 81). If the character doesn't have the device, he doesn't have access to those powers.

While devices are typically creations of advanced science, they don't have to be. Many heroes and villains have magical devices such as enchanted weapons and armor, magical talismans, wands and staves of power, and so forth. Some devices are products of alien technology so advanced they might as well be magical, or focuses of cosmic power beyond the understanding of both magic and science. All devices work the same way in game terms, regardless of their origin or descriptors.

Just like other powers, devices cost power points. Characters who want to have and use a device on a regular basis have to pay power points to have it, just like having any other power. The device becomes a part of the character's abilities. If the device is lost, stolen, or destroyed, the character can replace it, given time, since the device is considered a permanent part of the character. Only a re-allocation of the character's power points will change this, and Gamemasters should allow characters to re-allocate power points spent on a Device if it is somehow permanently lost.

In other cases, characters may make temporary use of a device. Most devices are usable by anyone able to operate them, in which case characters may loan devices to each other, or may pick up and use someone else's device (or even steal a device away from someone in order to use it against them). The key concept here is the use of the device is *temporary*, something that happens during a single encounter or, at most, a single adventure. If the character wants to continue using the device beyond that, he must pay power points to make the device part of his regular abilities. Otherwise the GM can simply rule that the device is lost, reclaimed by its owner, runs out of power, breaks down, or whatever, and is therefore no longer accessible. Characters with the Inventor and Artificer feats can also create temporary devices for use in an adventure.

Gamemasters may require characters to spend a hero point to make temporary use of a device that doesn't belong to them. This helps to limit the loaning and temporary use of devices.

BATTLESUITS

A common staple of comic books is the *battlesuit*, also known as *power-armor*. It is an advanced suit of technological armor, giving the wearer powers.

Battlesuits commonly grant the following powers:

- **Protection:** This is the foundation power for a battlesuit. Whether it is armor plating, metallic mesh, flexible ballistic material, or some combination of these and other cutting-edge technology, a battlesuit protects its wearer from damage. Some battlesuits provide a Force Field, either in place of or in addition to their Protection.
- **Immunity:** A part of the protection a battlesuit offers is a sealed environment, offering Immunity to various conditions. Many battlesuits provide Immunity (life support). Some might have more extensive or specialized forms of Immunity.
- **Attacks:** Battlesuits are typically equipped with some kind of weapon or weapons, based around various attack powers, particularly Blast. A battlesuit with an array of weapons may have a primary attack powers and several others as Alternate Powers (see page 108).
- **Super-Strength:** A battlesuit might have servomotors or other mechanisms to magnify the wearer's Strength. This is typically done with the Strike and Super-Strength powers, allowing a normal-Strength wearer to strike for increased damage and lift tremendous weights. A battlesuit may also simply provide Enhanced Strength, or some combination of the two options.
- **Movement:** After defense and offense, battlesuits typically allow the wearer to get around, whether it's hydraulic-assisted Leaping, boot-jets or anti-gravity repulsion for Flight, turbines for Swimming, or some other movement effect.
- **Sensors:** Finally, battlesuits often come equipped with a suite of sensors providing Super-Senses (see page 103). Blindsight (radar or sonar), darkvision, direction sense (possibly from a global positioning system), infrared vision, radio, time sense (from a chronometer), and ultra-hearing are all common battlesuit sensors.

COSTUMES

In addition to being stylish, costumes may be made of unusual materials much tougher than they appear (courtesy of super-science or magic), allowing them to provide a Protection effect. Costumes may have other properties and can even be the source of a hero's powers, such as in the case of battlesuits (above).

Comic book costumes are usually immune to their wearer's powers. They don't burn, tear, or otherwise suffer damage when the wearer changes size or shape, bursts into flames, freezes, and so forth. In a four-color superhero campaign, the GM can assume this is just a feature of all costumes. It costs no points, since everyone has it. In a more realistic campaign, Gamemasters may wish to make Immunity (wearer's powers) a 1-point feature and require characters to pay for it if their characters have such a costume. Otherwise characters have to make do with ordinary clothing (which may be damaged or destroyed when they use their powers).

ENHANCED EQUIPMENT

Some devices are otherwise normal equipment (see page 132) with special properties. Magical items, normal equipment imbued with magical properties, are examples. Magical weapons may have greater damage bonuses or grant attack roll bonuses while magical armor has no armor check penalties and provides greater protection. Such enchantments move archaic weapons and armor from the realm of mundane equipment to devices. The same is true of super-alloys, bulletproof cloth, and other wonders of super-science.

SANCTORU

UNDER THE HOOD: DEVICES VS. EQUIPMENT

There can sometimes be a fine line between devices and equipment. The primary differences are devices are part of the character's abilities, they grant effects beyond the capabilities of normal equipment, and they're only ever lost or taken away temporarily. If an item is integral to the character's concept or abilities, it's probably a device. Equipment, on the other hand, is limited to fairly "mundane" things, can be taken away or even destroyed with impunity, and merely supplements the character's traits. Equipment doesn't grant "powers" per se (although equipment does provide certain effects similar to powers). Here are some examples of devices vs. equipment:

- A high-tech suit of powered armor. *Device.*
- A utility belt full of items like grapple lines, handcuffs, pepper spray, and throwing weapons. *Equipment.*
- A sword or other mundane melee weapon. *Equipment.*
- A magical weapon able to slice through tank armor. *Device.*
- The character can summon weapons out of thin air. These weapons never run out of ammo and vanish when taken away from the character, who can summon another weapon as a free action. *Neither.* This is just a descriptor for various attack effect powers. Since the "weapons" can't *really* be taken away, they're not Devices or Equipment.
- The character wears a cape allowing him to glide on air currents. *Device.*
- The character has a commlink installed in her costume. *Equipment.*
- The character has an implant allowing him to "hear" radio waves. *Neither.* Although it has a technological descriptor, the implant can't be removed without surgery, so it isn't a Device or Equipment. The same is true of devices like bionic claws or other implants.

Ultimately, it is up to the Gamemaster whether or not a particular item is considered a device or equipment, depending on the nature of the campaign and the characters.

WEAPONS

Weapons are common devices, ranging from super-powered versions of ordinary weapons like swords, bows, or guns to more exotic weapons like magic wands or alien power rings. A weapon device usually has one or more attack powers but may have virtually any power the player wants to include. Weapon devices often have several different attacks as Alternate Powers. One example is a set of magic rings, each with its own power, but only usable one at a time.

OTHER DEVICES

The full range of devices *Mutants & Masterminds* characters can create and use is limited solely by your imagination. Essentially any item with a power is considered a device. Players and GMs may well come up with additional devices beyond those described here. Use the guidelines in this chapter and in **Chapter 5** to handle any new devices and their capabilities.

PLOT DEVICES

A *plot device* is an item or even character whose function is important to the story, but is not a part of a character's regular abilities. Therefore the actual power point cost or sometimes even game statistics of a plot device are irrelevant, so long as the device fulfills its role in the story. Technically, nearly any character or device the heroes don't directly interact with can be seen as a plot device, freeing the GM up from having to assign game stats to every single thing in the game world.

For example, part of an adventure is planned to take place on board a vast alien city-ship. While the GM may want to know things like the Toughness of the city-ship's walls or the game stats of the alien soldiers the heroes may fight, it's not important to assign game statistics to the city-ship's engines or it's planet-busting main gun. They're plot devices. It's also not necessary to determine how much the ship costs in power points, unless the player characters are going to use it as their regular vehicle or base of operations. It's sufficient to know the city-ship can get where it needs to go and its main gun will shatter any planet it's fired at unless the heroes manage to stop it in time. Likewise, consider a cosmic device able to reshape reality at will. This is far beyond any of the powers in **Chapter 5**, so it's best to simply treat it as a plot device: the wielder of the object can make anything happen, as called for in the adventure.

Plot devices are best kept in the hands of the Gamemaster, since unlimited power in the hands of the players can quickly spoil everyone's fun. If the heroes aren't wise enough to reject absolute power, the GM can come up with any number of reasons why a plot device no longer works once the heroes get their hands on it. It may run out of power, be attuned only to particular users, or perhaps cosmic beings reclaim it. It's fine to allow a hero to use a plot device occasionally, such as the hero who takes the Cosmic Crown from a villain and uses it to undo all the damage the villain has done before casting the Crown into the heart of the sun (or something similar). But long-term use (and abuse) of plot devices can ruin a game, and the GM would be wise to have the Cosmic Crown disappear or have powerful entities reclaim it before heroes to abuse its power.

If you're looking for some inspiration for a plot device or what to call one, roll a couple times on the following table. Optionally, roll twice for the first column, ignoring duplicates, for gadgets with three-word names (e.g. Ultimate Cosmic Neutralizer or Quantum Spatial Disruptor).

RANDOM POWERFUL DEVICE NAMES

d20 Roll	First Word	Second Word
1-2	Cosmic	Control Rod
3-4	Infinity	Disruptor
5-6	Negative	Energizer
7-8	Quantum	Gauntlet
9-10	Spatial	Generator
11-12	Spirit	Inhibitor
13-14	Stellar	Neutralizer
15-16	Temporal	Nullifier
17-18	Ultimate	Projector
19-20	Universal	Weapon

INVENTING

Characters with the necessary Knowledge and Craft skills and the Inventor feat (see page 62) can create inventions, temporary devices. To create an invention, the inventor defines its traits and its total cost in power points. This cost is used for the necessary skill checks, and determines the time required to create the invention. Inventions are subject to the same power level limits as other powers in the campaign.

DESIGN CHECK

First, the inventor must design the invention. This is a Knowledge (technology) skill check. The DC is 10 + the invention's power point cost. It requires an hour's work per power point of the invention's cost. The character can take 10 or 20 on the check. In the latter case, the design process takes 20 times longer (20 hours per power point). You can halve the design time by taking a –5 on the Knowledge check.

Design Check = DC 10 + invention's point cost

If the check is successful, you have a design for the invention. If the check fails, the design is flawed and you must start over. If the check fails by 10 or more, the character is not aware of the design flaw; the design *seems* correct, but the invention won't function (or at least won't function properly) when it's used. For this reason, the GM should make the design check secretly and only inform the player whether or not the character appears to have succeeded.

CONSTRUCTION CHECK

Once the design is in-hand, the character can construct the invention. This requires four hours work per power point of the invention's cost, so an invention costing 10 points takes 40 hours (about a week's work normally, or working two days straight without rest) to construct. When the construction time is complete, make a Craft skill check, using the Craft specialty appropriate to the invention (generally chemical, electronic, or mechanical). The DC is 10 + the invention's power point cost. You can't take 20 on this check, but you can take 10. You can halve the construction time by taking a –5 on the Craft check.

Construction Check = DC 10 + invention's point cost

Success means the invention is complete and functional. Failure means the invention doesn't work. Failure by 10 or more may result in a mishap, at the GM's discretion.

> ***Example:*** *Daedalus needs to whip up a mind-shielding device to confront Lady Lunar, who has seized control of his teammates in the Freedom League, and plans to use them as her army to conquer Farside City. Daedalus' player considers and decides 10 ranks of the Mind Shield power (see page 93) will suffice. It has a cost of 10 power points, so the Knowledge (technology) check is DC 20 (10 + 10) and takes 10 hours. Daedalus' skill bonus is +22, so he succeeds automatically. The GM decides Craft (electronics) is the appropriate skill for the construction check, also DC 20 (10 + the device's cost). It takes 40 hours. Daedalus' skill bonus is +20, so against he succeeds automatically. However, that's 50 hours total to build the mind-shield, and Lady Lunar plans to launch her attack in just a few hours. Daedalus needs the new device right now, so he's going to need to speed things up....*

USING THE INVENTION

Once the invention is complete, it is good for use in one encounter, after which it breaks down or runs out of power. If the character wishes to use the invention again, there are two options. The first is to spend the necessary power points to acquire the Device power and make the invention a part of the character's regular traits; in this case, the new device can be used like any other. The other option is to spend a hero point to get another one-encounter use out of the invention. Each use costs an additional hero point, but doesn't require any further skill checks.

Although it's possible to prepare certain one-use devices in advance, the GM should carefully enforce the guidelines for having items on-hand (see page 133). If an inventor wants to have a particular previously-constructed invention on-hand during an adventure, the GM should require the player to spend a hero point.

JURY-RIGGING DEVICES

An inventor can choose to spend a hero point to jury-rig a device; ideal for when a particular device is needed *right now*. When jury-rigging a device, skip the design check and reduce the time of the construction check to one *round* per power point of the device's cost, but increases the DC of the Craft check by +5. The inventor makes the Craft check and, if successful, has use of the device for one encounter before it burns out, falls apart, blows up, or otherwise fails. You can't take 10 or take 20 when jury-rigging an invention, nor can you speed up the process any further by taking a skill check penalty. You can jury-rig an invention again by spending another hero point.

> ***Example:*** *Needing to get the mind shield device ready right away, Daedalus' player decides to spend a hero point to jury-rig it. He skips the design step altogether and reduces construction time to 10 rounds (a minute). The DC of the construction check increases to 25, but still well within Daedalus' abilities. His player rolls a 28 on the check and, a minute later, the immortal inventor has a makeshift mind-shield he hopes will protect against Lady Lunar's power long enough for him to try and free the rest of the League from her influence.*

MISHAPS

At the GM's discretion, failure by 10 or more, or a natural roll of 1, on any required inventing skill check may result in some unexpected side-effect or mishap. Exactly what depends heavily on the invention. Inventing mishaps can become a source of adventure ideas and put the heroes in some difficult situations. They may also be setbacks, suitable for hero point awards (see page 122).

MAGICAL RITUALS

Characters with the Ritualist feat (see page 63) and the Knowledge (arcane lore) skill can perform *magical rituals*. They are similar to inventions: one-time powers requiring some time and effort to set up.

For rituals, substitute the Knowledge (arcane lore) skill for both the design and construction checks. The design portion of the ritual takes 4 hours per power point of the ritual's cost (pouring over ancient scrolls and grimoires, drawing diagrams, casting horoscopes, meditating, and so forth). The performance of the actual ritual takes 10 minutes per point of the ritual's cost. So a ritual costing 10 power points takes 40 hours to research and 100 minutes to perform. As with inventing, the ritual is good for one encounter. Failing the research check means the ritual isn't usable and failure by 10 or more results in a mishap (at the GM's discretion).

"Jury-rigging" a magical ritual has the same effects as mentioned previously. This allows the ritualist to skip the design check and perform the ritual in a number of rounds equal to its cost. A Knowledge (arcane lore) check against a DC equal of (15 + the ritual's cost) is needed to successfully perform the ritual.

MAGICAL INVENTIONS

For magical inventions, use the normal inventing rules, but use the Knowledge (arcane lore) skill for the design check and the appropriate Craft skill (probably artistic or structural) for the construction check.

EQUIPMENT

In addition to their amazing devices, characters often make use of various mundane equipment—ordinary things found in the real world—ranging from a simple set of tools to cell phones, laptop computers, and even common appliances. These items are called *equipment* to differentiate them from devices. *Tools* allow a character to use a particular skill properly (see **Tools**, page 137).

EQUIPMENT COST

Equipment is acquired with points from the Equipment feat (see page 60). Each piece of equipment has a cost in points. The character pays the item's cost out of the points from the Equipment feat and it becomes part of the character's regular equipment.

EQUIPMENT EFFECTS AND FEATURES

An item's equipment cost is based on its effects and features. Effects cost the same as corresponding powers (see **Chapter 5**), so a ranged weapon costs the same as the Blast power (which inflicts damage at range). *Features* are particular minor things equipment can do, similar to feats. Generally, each feature costs 1 equipment point, although some features are more expensive (or actually involve multiple features). Various equipment features are described in this chapter.

WEALTH (OPTIONAL)

The *Mutants & Masterminds* game, like the comics, doesn't pay much attention to money. A character's wealth has little or no impact on the game. However, some may prefer to keep track of character wealth and resources, in which case the following system may be used.

Every character has a Wealth bonus which reflects buying power—a composite of income, credit rating, and savings. A character's Wealth bonus serves as the basis for a wealth check, used to purchase equipment and services.

WEALTH BONUS

A character's base Wealth bonus is +8. The Benefit feat (see page 59) provides a +4 Wealth bonus per rank. The Profession skill (see page 53) grants a bonus to Wealth, +2 for 5 or more ranks in a Profession. Decreases to base Wealth *grant* power points, like decreasing an ability score: 1 point for a Wealth bonus of +4, 2 points for a Wealth bonus of +0.

Over the course of play, your Wealth bonus decreases as you purchase expensive items.

A character's Wealth bonus can never fall below +0, and there is no limit to how high Wealth bonus can climb. If your Wealth bonus is +0, you don't have the buying power to purchase any item or service with a purchase DC of 10 or higher, and you can't take 10 or take 20 on Wealth checks.

WEALTH BONUS

Wealth Bonus	Financial Condition
+0	Impoverished
+1 to +4	Struggling
+5 to +10	Middle class
+11 to +15	Affluent
+16 to +20	Wealthy
+21 to +30	Rich
+31 or higher	Filthy rich

MAKING PURCHASES

Wealth bonus reflects your buying power. Every item and service has a purchase Difficulty Class based on how expensive it is. To purchase something, make a Wealth check against the purchase DC. As a general guideline, the equipment purchase DC equals 10 + the equipment's point cost. The GM sets the Wealth check DC for any particular purchase.

SAMPLE PURCHASE DIFFICULTIES

Item	Purchase DC
Flashlight	4
Restaurant meal	4
Common household item	4-5
Casual clothing	8
Cell phone	9
Professional services	10 + skill rank
Weapon	10 + point cost
Expensive clothing	12-15
Tool kit	13
Plane ticket	14
New computer	22
New automobile	28
House	30
Mansion	36

THE WEALTH CHECK

A Wealth check is a d20 roll plus your current Wealth bonus. Wealth bonus is fluid; it increases as you gain Wealth and decreases as you make purchases.

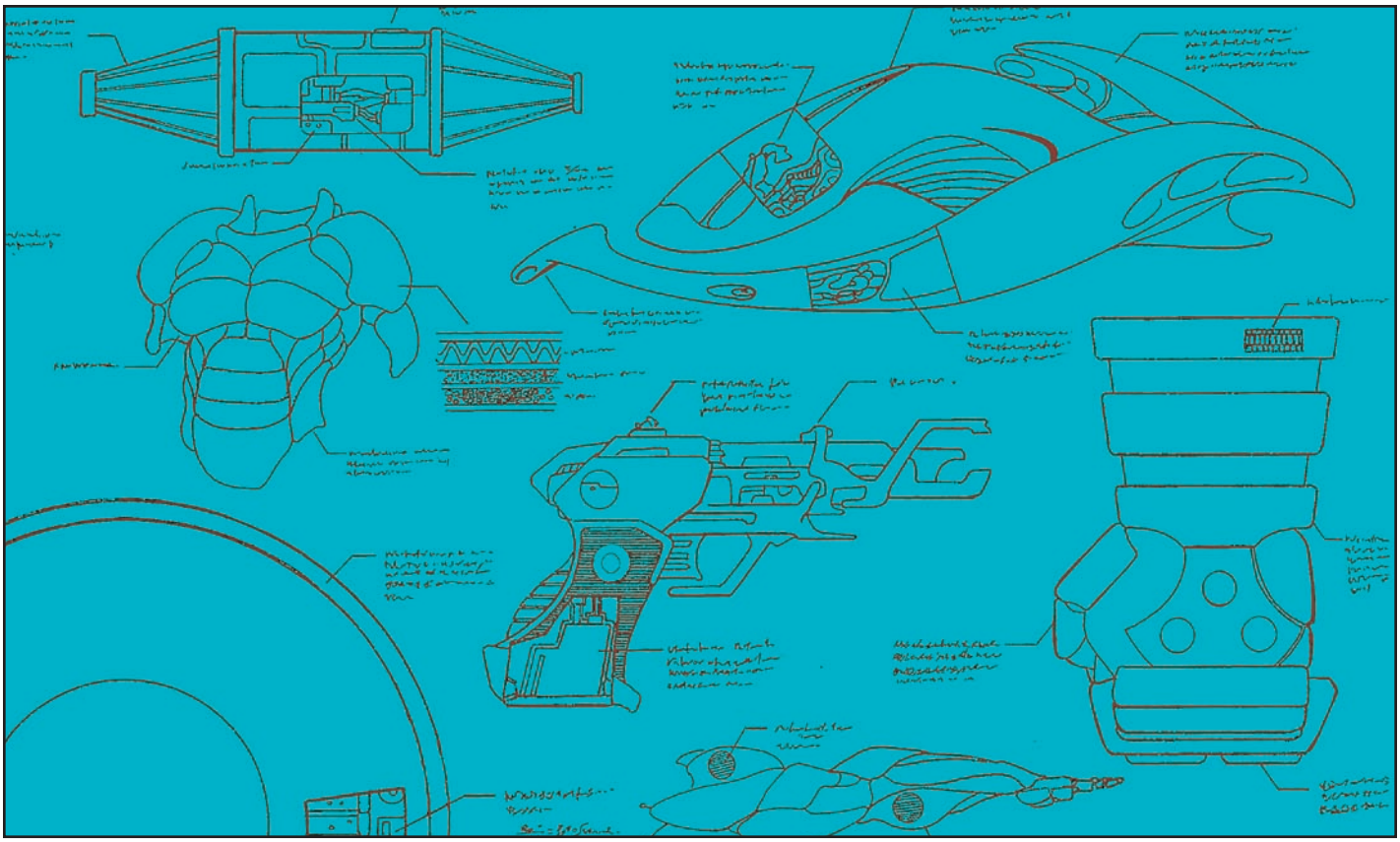
If you succeed on the Wealth check, you purchase the item. If you fail, you can't afford the item at this time.

If your current Wealth bonus is equal to or greater than the DC, you automatically succeed.

If you successfully purchase an item with a purchase DC higher than your current Wealth bonus, your Wealth bonus decreases by 1 point for every 5 points the purchase DC is higher than your current Wealth bonus (1 point for 1–5 points higher, 2 points for 6–10 points higher, etc.). Lost Wealth bonus returns at a rate of 1 point per month.

TRY AGAIN

You can try again if you fail a Wealth check, but not until the character has spent an additional number of hours shopping equal to the purchase DC of the object or service.



TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

You can take 10 or take 20 when making a Wealth check. Taking 20 requires 20 times as long as normal. (You're shopping around for the best price.)

SHOPPING AND TIME

Buying less common items generally takes a number of hours equal to the purchase DC of the item, reflecting the time needed to locate the item and close the deal. Getting a license or buying a legally restricted item also increase the time needed to make purchases.

FINANCIAL AID

You can make an aid attempt (DC 10) to help someone else purchase an item. If the attempt is successful, you provide the purchaser with a +2 bonus on the Wealth check. If you aid a Wealth check for an item with a purchase DC higher than your current Wealth bonus, it decreases as normal.

WEALTH AND INVENTING

Gamemasters may wish to add a Wealth check to the inventing process (see page 131). Once the inventor has come up with a design for the device, make a Wealth check to obtain the necessary components (DC = device's point cost). A failed check means you can't afford the materials. Spending a hero point to jury-rig the device out of materials at hand allows you to skip the Wealth check.

ON-HAND ITEMS

Characters may not necessarily carry all their equipment with them at all times. The GM may allow players to spend a hero point in order to have a particular item of equipment "on-hand" at a particular time. This is essentially a one-time use of the item for one encounter, and the Gamemaster rules whether or not having a particular item on-hand is possible. For example, a hero out for an evening in his secret identity might have something like a concealed weapon or other small item on-hand, but it's unlikely the character is carrying a large weapon or item unless he has some means of concealing it.

RESTRICTED EQUIPMENT

The Gamemaster may rule some equipment is simply not available to characters or they must pay for an additional feature (or more) in order to have it. This may include certain kinds of weapons, vehicles, and anything else the GM feels should be limited in the campaign.

MASTERWORK EQUIPMENT

Some items are especially well-made, custom-built, or otherwise superior to normal equipment. These *masterwork* items grant a bonus greater than a normal item, usually a +1 with an attack roll or +2 with a check made with the item. Masterwork quality is considered an additional feature for the item of equipment. At the GM's discretion, superior masterwork items may grant higher bonuses for additional features.

CONCEALED ITEMS

Characters may attempt to conceal items on their person. It's assumed the character is wearing clothing offering places to conceal things. To conceal a weapon or other object, make a Sleight of Hand check. If you conceal an object before heading out into public you can usually take 10 unless you are rushed, trying to conceal it when others might see, or under other unusual constraints. Sleight of Hand can be used untrained in this instance, but you must take 10 to do so.

SIZE AND CONCEALMENT

The object's size affects the check result, as shown on the **Concealing Weapons and Objects Table**. The type of holster used or clothing worn, and any attempt to make a weapon easier to draw, can also affect the check.

CONCEALING WEAPONS AND OBJECTS

Condition	Sleight of Hand Modifier
Size of Weapon or Object	
Miniscule	+16
Fine	+12
Diminutive	+8
Tiny	+4
Small	+0
Medium-size	–4
Large	–8
Huge or larger	can't conceal
Clothing is tight or small (such as a skintight costume)	–4
Clothing is especially loose or bulky	+2
Clothing is specifically modified for concealing object	+2
Weapon in a concealed holster	+4
Weapon can be drawn normally	–2
Weapon can be drawn as free action with Quick Draw feat	–4

NOTICING CONCEALED OBJECTS

Detecting a concealed weapon or other object requires a Notice check. The DC varies: If the target made a roll when concealing an object, the DC of the check is the target's Sleight of Hand check total. An observer attempting to Notice a concealed object receives a –1 penalty for every 10 feet distance to the target, and a –5 penalty if distracted.

Patting someone down for a concealed object requires a similar check. However, the skill employed is Search, and the searcher gets a +4 bonus for the hands-on act of frisking the target. Searchers typically take 10 or take 20 for pat-down searches. Some equipment may also offer bonuses under certain circumstances (a metal detector offers a bonus to Search checks to find metal objects, for example).

NOTICING CONCEALED ARMOR

Concealable armor can be worn under clothing if the wearer wants it to go unnoticed. Don't use the modifiers from the **Concealing Weapons and Objects Table** when wearing concealable armor. Instead, anyone attempting to notice the armor must make a Notice check (DC 20).

DAMAGING EQUIPMENT

Most equipment can be damaged like other objects (see **Damaging Objects**, page 166), based on its Toughness. Equipment suffering damage loses some effectiveness. The item loses 1 feature or suffers a –1 penalty on checks involving it each time it is damaged. These penalties are eliminated once the item is repaired.

REPAIRING AND REPLACING EQUIPMENT

Repairing an item requires a Craft check. You can also affect jury-rigged repairs to temporarily restore the item to normal (see **Craft**, page 45, for details).

Replacing damaged or destroyed equipment requires only time, although the GM has the final say as to how much time. It's easy to replace a lost item when the store is right around the corner, harder when it's the middle of the night or you're out in the middle of nowhere. Gamemasters can allow players to spend a hero point to have a replacement for a piece of equipment as an on-hand item (see **On-Hand Items**, page 133).

THE LIMITS OF EQUIPMENT

While equipment is useful it does have its limits, particularly when compared to powers or devices. Equipment is less expensive—it's cheaper to have a handgun than a Blast power or even a super-science blaster weapon—but equipment is also more limited. Keep the following limitations of equipment in mind.

TECHNOLOGICAL LIMITS

Equipment includes only items and technology commonly available in the campaign setting. The GM decides what is "commonly available," but as a rule of thumb assume equipment only includes things from the real world, not battlesuits, anti-gravity devices, shrink rays, and so forth. Those are all Devices (see page 128).

AVAILABILITY

Ownership of some equipment is restricted and the GM decides what equipment is available to characters in the campaign. For example, guns may require permits, licenses, waiting periods, and so forth. Also, equipment can be bulky and difficult to carry around. Gamemasters are encouraged to enforce the limitations of carrying a lot of equipment at once. Players who want to have an unusual item of equipment on-hand must either remember to bring it along or use the guidelines for on-hand items. Devices are not so limited and characters are assumed to have an easy means of carrying and transporting them.

BONUS STACKING

Equipment bonuses are limited compared to the bonuses granted by other effects. Generally, they do not stack with each other or other types of bonuses, only the highest bonus applies. Thus a hero with a high Protection bonus doesn't get much, if any, advantage from wearing a bulletproof vest. The only exception to this is weapons that add to the character's Strength bonus, and there are limits on them as well (see **Melee Weapons**, page 137).

NO EXTRA EFFORT

Unlike devices, you do not have the choice of suffering the strain of extra effort when improving equipment, the equipment always takes the strain. You can push your equipment to the limit (eventually causing it to fail) but trying real hard on your part isn't going to make your car go faster or your gun more effective. You also can't use extra effort to perform power stunts with equipment. Instead, you must spend a hero point to do so.

DAMAGE AND LOSS

Equipment is vulnerable to damage, malfunctions, and loss, moreso than devices. One use of a power like Disintegration or Transform can turn a

character's equipment to dust, for example, and equipment tends to be delicate when it comes to super-powered attacks. Equipment may be lost or taken away from the character with impunity, and the GM may sometimes arrange circumstances to separate characters from their equipment as a GM fiat or setback (see **Chapter 6**).

COST (OPTIONAL)

Finally, equipment may have a monetary cost to acquire, maintain, and replace, if the campaign uses the optional wealth rules (see page 132).

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

Equipment is described by a number of statistics, as shown on the **General Equipment Table**.

SIZE

The size of a piece of equipment helps to determine how easy it is to conceal, and also indicates whether using the object requires one hand or two. In general, a character needs only one hand to use any objects of his size category or smaller.

EQUIPMENT COST

This is the number of equipment points the item costs (see the Equipment feat, page 60). Masterwork equipment of the same type has an increased cost (see **Masterwork Equipment**, page 133).

ELECTRONICS

Computers and electronics are common in the modern world. Gamemasters should note most of these devices are fairly delicate (Toughness 5 or less) and vulnerable to electricity, radiation, and powerful magnetic fields, which can short them out entirely.

- **Camera:** A digital or film camera for taking still images. Most cameras have a capacity of 24 or 36 images and you can use one in conjunction with the Craft (visual art) skill.
- **Cell Phone:** A small handheld or headset unit for communication. The battery lasts for approximately 24 hours before it needs to be recharged.
- **Commlink:** A tiny button-sized device for radio communication with an effective range of about a mile (longer if patched into the cellular network or a similar network). Many hero (and villain) teams use commlinks.
- **Computer:** A computer includes keyboard, mouse, monitor, CD drive, printer, modem, and other standard peripherals, and may include things like a scanner at the GM's discretion. You need a computer to make Computers skill checks and do things like searching the Internet (to take 20 on a Knowledge skill check). Masterwork computers represent upgrade packages with faster processors, better software, and so forth.
- **Digital Audio Recorder:** These tiny recorders (about the size of a deck of playing cards) can record up to eight hours of audio and can be connected to a computer to download the digital recording. Digital audio recorders don't have extremely sensitive microphones; they only pick up sounds within 10 feet.
- **PDA:** Personal digital assistants or "palmtops" are handy tools for storing data. They can be linked to a notebook or desktop computer to move files back and forth, but can't be used for Computers or Knowledge checks.

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

Item	Size	Cost
Electronics		
Camera	Tiny	1
Cell Phone	Diminutive	1
Commlink	Miniscule	1
Computer		
Desktop	Large	1
Laptop	Med	1
PDA	Tiny	1
Digital Audio Recorder	Tiny	1
Video Camera	Small	2
Criminal Gear		
Caltrops	Small	1
Handcuffs	Tiny	1
Lock release gun	Tiny	1
Surveillance Gear		
Binoculars	Small	1
Concealable Microphone	Miniscule	1
Mini-Tracer	Miniscule	1
Night Vision Goggles	Small	1
Parabolic Microphone	Small	1
Survival Gear		
Camo Clothing	Medium	1
Flash Goggles	Tiny	1
Flashlight	Tiny	1
Gas Mask	Small	1
GPS Receiver	Tiny	1
Multi-tool	Tiny	1
Rebreather	Tiny	1
SCUBA Gear	Large	1

- **Video Camera:** A hand-held camera that records video and audio on tape or digitally, with a capacity of about 6 hours of footage.

CRIMINAL GEAR

This equipment is most often used by criminals or to catch criminals.

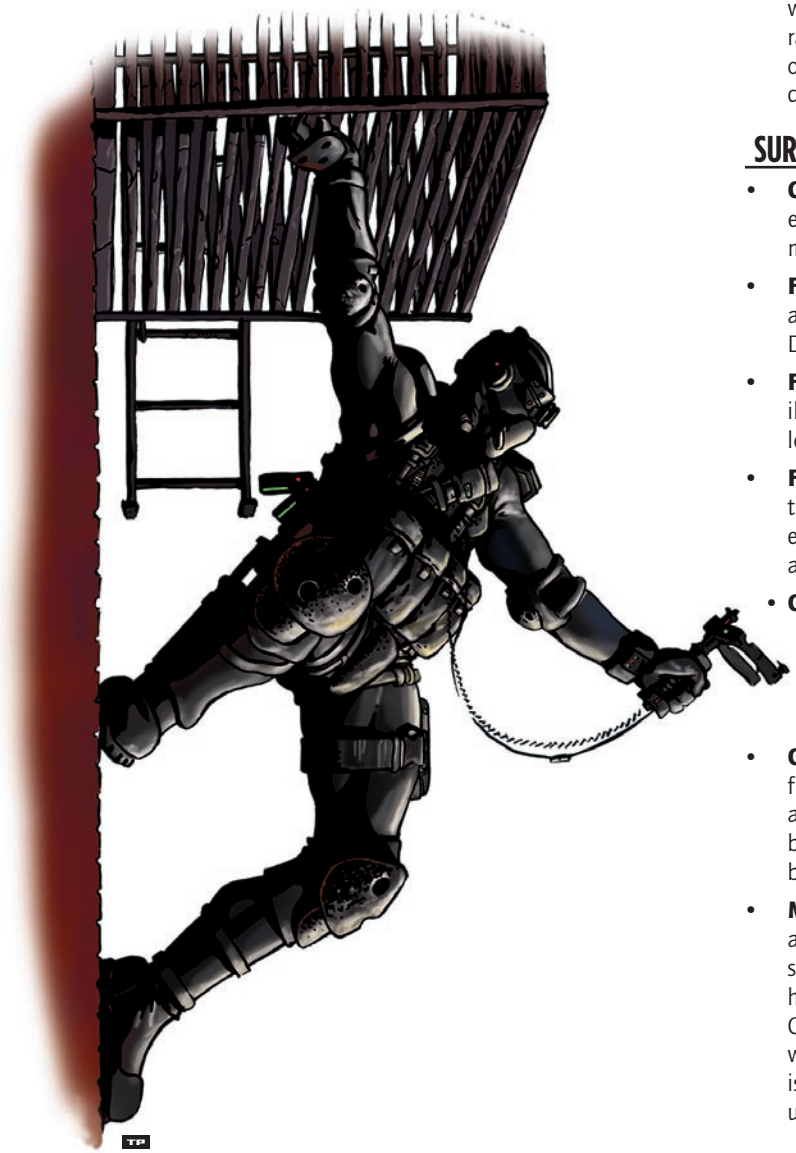
- **Caltrops:** Caltrops are four-pronged metal spikes designed so one prong points up when the caltrop rests on a surface. You can scatter caltrops on the ground to injure opponents, or at least slow them down. One bag of twenty-five caltrops covers up to a 5-ft.-by-5 ft. area. Each time someone moves through an area containing caltrops at any rate greater than half speed, or each round someone spends fighting in such an area, the caltrops make an attack roll (attack bonus +0). If hit, the character must make a Toughness saving throw (DC 15). Any injury forces the character to move at half speed on foot until the damage is eliminated.

- **Handcuffs:** Handcuffs are restraints designed to lock two limbs—normally the wrists—of a prisoner together. They fit any Medium or Small humanoid. Handcuffs can only be placed on a pinned, helpless, or unresisting target. Steel cuffs have Toughness 10 and require a Disable Device check (DC 25) or Escape Artist check (DC 35) to remove without the key.
- **Lock release gun:** This small, pistol-like device automatically disables cheap and average mechanical locks operated by standard keys (no Disable Device check necessary). It does not affect other locks.

SURVEILLANCE GEAR

Heroes often use surveillance gear to keep tabs on criminals and their activities.

- **Binoculars:** Standard binoculars reduce the range penalty for visual Notice checks to –1 for every 50 feet (instead of –1 for every 10 feet). Using binoculars for Notice checks takes five times as long as making the check unaided.
- **Concealable Microphone:** A tiny receiver usable as a listening device. It has a broadcast range of about a mile. It requires a Search check against the results of the Stealth or Sleight of Hand check used to conceal the microphone to find it (assume the hiding character took 20 on the check under most circumstances).
- **Mini-Tracer:** A tiny radio transmitter with an adhesive backing. It requires a successful attack roll to plant a tracer on a target (or a Sleight of Hand check to plant it without the target's knowledge). Noticing the tracer is a DC 20 Notice check (or the results of the character's Sleight of Hand check, whichever is higher). The tracer has a transmission range of about 2 miles.
- **Night Vision Goggles:** Night vision goggles use passive light gathering to improve vision in near-dark conditions. They grant the user darkvision—but because of the restricted field of view and lack of depth perception these goggles provide, they impose a –4 penalty on all Notice and Search checks made while wearing them. Night vision goggles must have at least a little light to operate. A cloudy night provides sufficient ambient light, but a pitch-black cave or a sealed room doesn't. For situations of total darkness, the goggles come with an infrared illuminator that, when switched on, operates like a flashlight visible only to the wearer (or anyone else with IR vision).
- **Parabolic Microphone:** This apparatus has a gun-like microphone with an attached set of headphones. A parabolic mike reduces the range penalty for Notice checks to –1 for every 50 feet (instead of –1 for every 10 feet). Using a parabolic microphone for Notice checks takes five times as long as making the check unaided.



SURVIVAL GEAR

- **Camo Clothing:** Clothing in the right camouflage pattern for the environment grants a +5 bonus on Stealth checks in that environment. Patterns include foliage, desert, urban, and arctic.
- **Flash Goggles:** These tinted eye-coverings provide protection against blinding light, granting a +5 save bonus against visual Dazzle attacks involving bright light.
- **Flashlight:** Flashlights negate penalties for darkness within their illuminated areas. The standard flashlight projects a beam 30 feet long and 15 feet across at its end.
- **Fire Extinguisher:** This portable apparatus uses a chemical spray to extinguish small fires. The typical fire extinguisher ejects enough extinguishing chemicals to put out a fire in a 10-by-10-foot area as a move action. It contains enough material for two such uses.
- **Gas Mask:** This apparatus covers the face and connects to a chemical air filter canister to protect the lungs and eyes from toxic gases. It provides total immunity to eye and lung irritants. The filter canister lasts for 12 hours of use. Changing the filter is a move action.
- **GPS Receiver:** Global positioning system receivers use signals from GPS satellites to determine the receiver's location to within a few dozen feet. A GPS receiver grants its user a +5 equipment bonus on Survival checks to navigate, but because the receiver must be able to pick up satellite signals, it only works outdoors.
- **Multi-tool:** This device contains several different screwdrivers, a knife blade or two, can opener, bottle opener, file, short ruler, scissors, tweezers, and wire cutters. The whole thing unfolds into a handy pair of pliers. A multi-tool can lessen the penalty for making Craft (mechanical), Craft (electronic), or Craft (structural) checks without appropriate tools to –2 instead of the normal –4. The tool is useful for certain tasks, as determined by the GM, but may not be useful in all situations.

UNDER THE HOOD: AMMO, BATTERIES, AND CHARGES

Lots of equipment has a limited lifespan: guns run out of ammo, cars run out of gas, SCUBA tanks run out of oxygen, and batteries run out of juice. However, it can be a hassle to keep track of the lifespan of every piece of equipment the heroes may have (to say nothing of all the villains and supporting characters). So *Mutants & Masterminds* pays fairly little attention to equipment running out or breaking down except when the Gamemaster wishes to create a complication for the heroes (see **Complications**, page 122). Thus equipment failure—either due to running out of fuel or simple malfunction—is a dramatic issue rather than a matter of cost-accounting and keeping track of things like ammo and how much gas is in the tank of the hero's super-car.

The material in this book assumes equipment and devices have effectively unlimited use, except when the GM declares a complication, and that heroes properly maintain, charge, reload, and refuel their gear "off-panel" in between the encounters of an adventure, unless the Gamemaster dictates otherwise.

- **Rebreather:** A small cylinder that fits over the mouth and provides two minutes (20 rounds) of oxygen, during which the character does not need to make suffocation checks.
- **SCUBA Gear:** A back-mounted oxygen cylinder and facemask, used for diving. SCUBA (Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus) gear provides two hours of oxygen, and characters using it do not need to make checks for suffocation unless the gear is damaged or disabled.

TOOLS

Various skills require tools (see page 24). Disable Device requires lock-picking and electronics tools, for example, while Medicine requires a first aid or medical kit. Characters attempting a task without the proper tools have a –4 penalty on their skill check. The Gamemaster can generally assume characters have the right tools for skills requiring them—at no cost in equipment points—unless circumstances dictate otherwise (such as they've been captured and stripped of their equipment by a foe). Masterwork tools cost 1 equipment point and provide a +2 bonus on skill checks using them. In all other ways, tools are like ordinary equipment.

UTILITY BELT

A common piece of equipment for Costumed Adventurers (see page 17) and espionage agents is the utility belt (or bag, pouch, backpack, etc.): a collection of useful tools and equipment in a compact carrying case. A utility belt is an array of Alternate Powers (see page 108) bought as equipment (and with all the usual limitations of equipment). Some characters may have an array of devices instead, allowing for more unusual effects than run-of-the-mill equipment.

Note that equipment with a cost of 1 equipment point doesn't need to be acquired as an Alternate Power feat, since there's no change in cost (an Alternate Power must cost at least 1 point).

By spending hero points you can temporarily add an Alternate Power feat to your utility belt, for those one-time pieces of equipment you may need in a pinch.

SAMPLE UTILITY BELT

Feel free to modify this example (adding or omitting items, for example) to create your own customized utility belts.

- **Bolos:** see page 140. *1 point.*
- **Boomerangs:** see page 140. *1 point.*
- **Explosives:** Equivalent to dynamite (see page 140). *15 points.*
- **Cutting Torch:** Blast 1, Drain Toughness 1. *1 point.*
- **Pepper Spray:** see page 138. *1 point.*
- **Power Knuckles:** Strike 4 (Mighty). *1 point.*
- **Sleep Gas Pellets:** see page 140. *1 point.*
- **Smoke Pellets:** see page 140. *1 point.*
- **Stun Pellets:** see page 140. *1 point.*
- **Tear Gas Pellets:** see page 140, lower rank to 3. *1 point.*
- **Throwing Blades:** Blast 2. *1 point.*

The explosives, as the most expensive effect, have their full cost. The other Alternate Power feats cost 1 point each, making the total equipment point cost of the utility belt 25 equipment points, or 5 power points (for Equipment 5).

WEAPONS

Weapons of various sorts are common for both heroes and villains. They range from melee weapons to ranged weapons like guns and bows and devices like shrink-rays, mind-control helmets and more. Characters who don't have any offensive powers often rely on weapons to get the job done.

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons work like the Strike power (see page 100) adding the wielder's Strength bonus to the damage. Ordinary melee weapons are limited by their Toughness in terms of the amount of Strength bonus they can add. If a wielder's Strength bonus exceeds the weapon's Toughness (4 for wooden weapons, 7 or 8 for metal weapons), the weapon breaks when it is used. Melee weapons have the following traits:

- **Category:** Melee weapons are categorized as simple, archaic, and exotic.
- **Damage Bonus:** The weapon's damage bonus on a successful hit. Melee weapons add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage (the Mighty power feat, page 100), costing a base 1 point. Each point of damage bonus costs 1 point.
- **Critical:** The threat range for a critical hit with the weapon. Some weapons have a larger threat range than others. Increasing a weapon's threat range by 1 costs 1 point.
- **Damage Descriptor:** Melee weapon damage is classified as bludgeoning (weapons with a blunt striking surface, like a club), piercing (weapons with a sharp point), and slashing (weapons with a sharp edge). Some characters may be resistant or immune to some types of damage.
- **Range Increment:** Melee weapons designed for throwing can also be used to make ranged attacks. This costs 1 point. Thrown weapons have a range increment just as other ranged weapons do—but the maximum range for a thrown weapon is five range increments. Any attack at less than the given range increment is not penalized for range. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage Bonus	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Equipment Cost
Simple Weapons						
Brass knuckles	+1	20	Bludgeoning	–	Tiny	2
Club	+2	20	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	4
Knife	+1	19-20	Piercing	10 ft.	Tiny	3
Pepper spray	Dazzle + Stun 5	–	Chemical	–	Tiny	15
Quarterstaff	+2	20	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	4
Sap	+2	20	Bludgeoning	–	Small	3
Stun gun	Stun 7	–	Electricity	–	Tiny	14
Tonfa	+1	20	Bludgeoning	–	Med	2
Archaic Weapons						
Battleaxe	+3	20	Slashing	–	Med	4
Sword	+3	19-20	Slashing	–	Med	5
Spear	+3	19-20	Piercing	20 ft.	Large	7
Warhammer	+3	20	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	5
Exotic Weapons						
Chain	+2	20	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	7
Chainsaw	+6	20	Slashing	–	Large	6
Nunchaku	+2	20	Bludgeoning	–	Small	3
Whip	+0	20	Bludgeoning	15 ft.	Small	5

- **Size:** Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between a weapon's size and its wielder's size defines whether it can be used one-handed, if it requires two hands, and if it's a light weapon. A Medium or smaller weapon can be used one-handed or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands.
- **Equipment Cost:** This is the weapon's cost in points. Characters pay this cost from their equipment points to have a weapon of this type as part of their regular equipment.

SIMPLE MELEE WEAPONS

- **Brass knuckles:** Pieces of molded metal fitting over the fingers, brass knuckles allow you to do +1 damage with your unarmed strikes. They include similar items like armored gauntlets.**Club:** Any of a number of blunt weapons used to strike, including nightsticks, batons, light maces, and similar bludgeoning weapons.
- **Knife:** A bladed weapon with a length less than 18 inches or so. This includes daggers, stilettos, sais, switchblades, bowie knives, and hunting knives, among others.
- **Pepper spray:** A liquid sprayed in a target's face at close range to blind them. Pepper spray combines a visual Dazzle effect with a Stun effect. If the attack roll hits, the target makes a Reflex save (DC 15). Failure means the target is blinded. A blinded target makes a Fortitude save (DC 15) each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per save. A target blinded by pepper spray must also make a Fortitude save (DC 15). On a failure, the target is stunned. The Fortitude save to recover from being blinded is also used to recover from the stun effect.
- **Quarterstaff:** A fighting staff between four and six feet long, including the bo staff used in martial arts.
- **Sap:** A bludgeoning weapon intended to knock out targets without permanently injuring them.
- **Stun gun:** A stun gun hits its target with a powerful charge of electricity, requiring a Fortitude save (DC 17) to avoid a Stun effect.
- **Tonfa:** Police officers often carry and use a tonfa to subdue criminals. It's also a common martial arts weapon.

ARCHAIC MELEE WEAPONS

- **Battleaxe:** A heavy-bladed axe that can be used with one or two hands.
- **Sword:** A blade between 18 and 30 or more inches in length, single or double-edged. It includes longswords, katanas, sabers, scimitars, and similar weapons.
- **Spear:** A bladed pole-arm. Most spears can also be thrown.
- **Warhammer:** A heavy hammer or mace that can be wielded with one or two hands. Warhammers can also be thrown.

EXOTIC MELEE WEAPONS

- **Chain:** You can wield a weighted chain to strike a target up to 10 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats (and its benefits stack if you already have those feats).
- **Chainsaw:** A tool that sometimes sees use as a weapon, particularly against zombies and other slasher-flick monsters. You do not add your Strength bonus to a chainsaw's damage.

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage Bonus	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Equipment Cost
Projectile Weapons (Firearms)						
Hold-out pistol	+2	20	Ballistic	20 ft.	Tiny	4
Light pistol	+3	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	Small	6
Heavy pistol	+4	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	Medium	8
Machine pistol	+3	20	Ballistic, Autofire	30 ft.	Medium	9
Submachine gun	+4	20	Ballistic, Autofire	40 ft.	Medium	12
Shotgun	+5/+6*	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	Large	11
Assault rifle	+5	20	Ballistic, Autofire	50 ft.	Large	16
Sniper rifle	+5	19-20	Ballistic	250 ft.	Large	13
Energy Weapons (Firearms)						
Blaster pistol	+5	20	Energy	50 ft.	Small	10
Blaster rifle	+8	20	Energy	80 ft.	Large	16
Heavy Weapons (Exotic)						
Flamethrower	+6	–	Fire	–	Large	18
Grenade launcher	+5	–	Explosive	70 ft.	Large	15*
Rocket launcher*	+10	–	Explosive	150 ft.	Large	30
Other Ranged Weapons						
Bolos	Snare 4	–	–	40 ft.	Small	8
Boomerang	+2	20	Bludgeoning	20 ft.	Small	6
Bow (Archaic)	+3*	20	Piercing	40 ft.	Large	9
Crossbow (Simple)	+3	19-20	Piercing	40 ft.	Medium	7
Javelin (Simple)*	+2	20	Piercing	30 ft.	Medium	6
Shuriken (Archaic)	+1*	20	Piercing, Autofire	10 ft.	Tiny	3
Taser (Simple)	Stun 5	–	Electricity	5 ft.	Small	12

** = See individual descriptions for more information.*

- **Nunchaku:** A popular martial arts weapon, made of two wooden shafts connected by a short length or rope or chain.
- **Whip:** A whip can strike targets up to 15 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats (and its benefits stack if you already have those feats).

RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged weapons include both thrown and projectile weapons. Thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage. A thrown weapon has a maximum range of five increments. Projectile weapons include bows, crossbows, and guns as well as energy weapons like lasers and blasters.

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

- **Holdout pistol:** A low-caliber, easily concealed pistol, typically used as a back-up or secondary weapon.
- **Light pistol:** A common handgun, found in the hands of police officers and criminals alike.
- **Heavy pistol:** A high-caliber handgun, usually used by those who want a lot of stopping power.
- **Machine pistol:** A small automatic weapon, usable in one hand. Machine pistols are autofire weapons.
- **Submachine gun:** Compact automatic weapons that fire pistol ammunition, submachine guns are common military weapons, also used by criminals with access to more serious firepower. Submachine guns are Autofire weapons.
- **Shotgun:** A shotgun can fire shot, which does +5 damage with a +2 bonus to hit due to the spread, but it does only +3 damage against targets with any increase in their natural Toughness save bonus. It can also load solid slugs, which inflict +6 damage.
- **Assault rifle:** Rifles designed for military-use with both single-fire and autofire options.
- **Sniper rifle:** Rifles designed for long-range use, typically in conjunction with a powerful scope or targeting system.

ENERGY WEAPONS

- **Blaster pistol:** A pistol that fires a coherent bolt of energy.
- **Blaster rifle:** A larger rifle-sized weapon that fires a more powerful bolt of energy.

GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Item	Effect	Radius	Reflex DC	Size	Equipment Cost
Grenades					
Fragmentation	Blast Explosion 5	50 ft.	15	Tiny	15
Smoke	Obscure (visual)	10 ft.	–	Small	4
Flash-bang	Dazzle Burst 4	20 ft.	14	Tiny	16
Sleep gas	Fatigue Explosion 4	40 ft.	14	Tiny	12
Tear gas	Dazzle 4 + Nauseate Explosion 4	40 ft.	14	Small	18
Explosives					
Dynamite	Blast Explosion 5*	50 ft.	15	Tiny	15
Plastic explosive	Blast Explosion 10*	100 ft.	20	Small	30

** = See individual descriptions for more information.*

HEAVY WEAPONS

- **Flame-thrower:** A flame-thrower shoots a stream of fire 5 feet wide and 25 feet long in front of the attacker as an area attack (see **Area Attack**, page 159).
- **Grenade launcher:** A grenade launcher fires various types of grenades, generally fragmentation grenades. Increase cost by +1 for each additional type of grenade carried.
- **Rocket launcher:** A rocket-launcher is generally an anti-tank weapon, although they also make useful anti-superhero weapons as well. It has the Area: Explosion extra (see page 111). Most rocket launchers can fire only one or two shots before they must be reloaded as a full-round action.

OTHER RANGED WEAPONS

- **Bolos:** A set of weighted cords intended to entangle an opponent like a Snare (see page 99).
- **Boomerang:** A common throwing weapon for heroes, a thrown boomerang returns to the thrower's hand, ready to be thrown again on the next round. Boomerang wielders often acquire the Ricochet feat (see page 110), allowing them to throw their weapon so it hits the target on the return arc as a surprise attack (see page 163).
- **Bow:** Although outdated, some heroes and villains favor the bow as a weapon and it can be quite effective in the right hands. Bows add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage (although most bows are only designed to add up to a +5 Str bonus at best). A bow-wielding character may have various "trick" arrows with different powers; such bows and arrows should be treated as Devices (see page 128).
- **Crossbow:** Similar to a bow, and used for the same reasons. A crossbow does not add the user's Strength bonus to its damage.
- **Javelin:** Light, flexible spears intended to be thrown. Javelins can also be used in melee combat.
- **Shuriken:** Flat metal stars or spikes for throwing. Shuriken can be thrown in groups (applying the Autofire extra, page 112). Although they are thrown weapons, shuriken do not add the thrower's Strength bonus to damage.
- **Taser:** A compressed-air weapon firing a pair of darts. On impact they release a powerful electrical charge, requiring a Fortitude save (DC 15) against a Stun effect.

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

The following accessories can be added to the projectile weapons in this section. Each is considered a feature, which costs 1 equipment point.

- **Laser Sight:** A laser sight projects a non-damaging laser beam showing where the weapon is aimed. This grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls with that weapon.
- **Stun Ammo:** Ballistic weapons can fire rubber bullets while bows can fire blunt-tipped arrows or quarrels. This ammunition is intended to inflict nonlethal rather than lethal damage. Switching between ammo types is a move action (or a free action for a character with the Quick Draw feat).
- **Suppressor:** A suppressor muffles the noise of a ballistic weapon, giving it the Subtle power feat (see page 110) and making it difficult for normal hearing to detect it.
- **Targeting Scope:** This item gives a weapon the benefits of the Improved Aim feat (see page 61), doubling the normal benefits of aiming.

GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

- **Fragmentation grenade:** A common military grenade that sprays shrapnel in all directions.
- **Smoke grenade:** A smoke grenade fills an area with thick smoke (colored as desired) providing total concealment to all visual senses except for X-ray vision (see **Concealment** on page 161).
- **Flash-bang grenade:** A flash-bang grenade gives off a bright flash and a loud bang that can render targets temporarily blind and deaf (targets save separately against each Dazzle effect, Reflex save, DC 14).
- **Sleep gas grenade:** This grenade fills a 40-ft. area with a fatigue-inducing gas (Fortitude save, DC 14).
- **Tear gas grenade:** This type of grenade releases a cloud of gas that irritates the eyes and lungs, causing temporarily blindness and nausea (visual Dazzle plus Nauseate, Fortitude save, DC 14).
- **Dynamite:** A common explosive. The damage on the table is for a single stick of dynamite. Each increase of the amount of explosive on the **Time and Value Progression Table** increases damage by +1.
- **Plastic explosive:** Another common explosive, which can be worked into different shapes. The damage listed is for a 1-lb block. Each increase of the amount of explosive on the **Time and Value Progression Table** increases damage by +1.

ARMOR

With so many weapons and super-powered attacks around, characters may need armor to protect them. Some heroes are innately tough enough to stand up to a lot of punishment, while others rely on their high Defense. Others choose to wear armor, ranging from ancient metal armors to modern composites or ultra-modern battlesuits.

All armor is based on the Protection power, providing a bonus to Toughness saves. Like other equipment, armor bonuses do not stack with other bonuses or each other, only the highest bonus applies.

ARCHAIC ARMOR

Some characters in superheroic settings still wear ancient or archaic armor, either because they are from a place or time where such armor is common or because it is tied to their motif or powers in some way.

If you want realistic archaic armor, halve the armor's Toughness bonus against modern weapons (especially firearms) and ignore it altogether for futuristic weapons like lasers or blaster bolts.

- **Leather:** Heavy leather plates covering the torso and other vital areas.
- **Chain-mail:** A shirt of heavy metal chain, often with a hauberk (hood) to cover the wearer's head.
- **Plate-mail:** This is chain-mail augmented with a metal breastplate, greaves (leg-guards) and arm-guards.
- **Full plate:** A full (and heavy!) suit of articulated metal plates, like that worn by medieval knights.

MODERN ARMOR

Modern body armor is common among superheroes and villains, but even more so among people like police officers, soldiers, criminal agents, and so forth.

- **Leather jacket:** A heavy leather jacket (like that worn by motorcyclists) provides a measure of protection.
- **Undercover shirt:** A thin shirt of ballistic armor that can be worn under street clothes.
- **Undercover vest:** A somewhat heavier vest worn by undercover police officers and others in need of discrete protection.

ARCHAIC ARMOR

Armor	Toughness Bonus	Equipment Cost
Leather	+1	1
Chain-mail	+3	3
Plate-mail	+5	5
Full plate	+6	6

MODERN ARMOR

Armor	Toughness Bonus	Other Traits	Equipment Cost
Leather jacket	+1	–	1
Undercover shirt	+2	Subtle	3
Undercover vest	+3	Subtle	4
Tactical vest	+4	–	4
Armored jumpsuit	+3	–	3

SHIELDS

Shield	Dodge Bonus	Deflect	Equipment Cost
Small	+1	+1 on block rolls	2
Medium	+2	+2 on block rolls	4
Large	+3	+4 on block rolls	7
Wooden or metal	–	slow projectiles	–
Composite	–	fast projectiles	+1/2/4

- **Tactical vest:** A heavy bulletproof vest worn by police officers and soldiers.
- **Armored jumpsuit:** A full-body suit of ballistic cloth and padded armor.

SHIELDS

Shields provide a dodge bonus to Defense, much like the bonus provided by cover, since shields are basically mobile forms of cover. Additionally, shields provide some measure of the Deflect power (see page 81), allowing the wielder to block ranged attacks. The dodge bonus is based on the size of the shield, while the Deflect power is based on the shield's size and material composition (what sort of attacks it can resist, and therefore deflect).

VEHICLES

Not every hero can fly, teleport, or run at super-speed. Sometimes heroes make use of various vehicles to get around. Vehicles are used primarily for transportation, although they may come with additional capabilities—including weapons—making them useful in other situations as well. Vehicles are considered equipment and purchased with equipment points. The vehicle tables list two costs; the one before the slash is the equipment point cost and the one after the slash is the vehicle's power point cost.

"Vehicles" with limbs, manipulative capabilities, and other humanoid characteristics (such as giant, piloted robots) should be created as constructs rather than vehicles (see **Constructs**, page 148).

VEHICLE TRAIT COST

Trait	Base Value	Equipment Cost
Strength	10	1 point per +5 Strength
Speed	0	movement power cost
Toughness	5	1 point per +1 Toughness
Size	Medium	1 point per size category
Features	—	1 point per feature
Powers	—	base cost times rank (see **Chapter 5**)

STRENGTH

A vehicle's Strength, much like a character's, determines its carrying capacity. Vehicles have a base Strength of 10 and buy up their Strength in increments of 5 for 1 power point each. A vehicle can move at normal speed carrying up to its medium load, 2/3 speed with a heavy load. It can also pull up to five times its heavy load at ½ speed (up to ten times, if equipped with the proper hauling equipment and given an unobstructed area in which to move). Each increase in size category increases a vehicle's Strength by 10 at no additional cost.

SPEED

A vehicle buys the appropriate movement power(s) for its movement speed, paying the normal cost. Vehicles with multiple modes of movement (air, ground, and water, for example) can pay full cost for one and acquire the others as Alternate Powers (see page 108).

DEFENSE

A vehicle's Defense is 10 + its size modifier.

TOUGHNESS

This is the vehicle's Toughness rating, which starts out at 5 and costs 1 power point for +1 Toughness. Each increase in size category also increases a vehicle's Toughness by +2 at no cost.

SIZE

A vehicle's size is measured like that of a character, as shown on the **Vehicle Size Categories Table**. Vehicle's start out at Medium size and each increase in size category costs 1 power point.

VEHICLE SIZE CATEGORIES

Vehicle Size	Modifier	Size	Examples	Str	Toughness	Defense
Awesome	–12	128–250 ft.	Space transport	60	15	–2
Colossal	–8	64–128 ft.	Passenger jet	50	13	2
Gargantuan	–4	32–64 ft.	Semi, yacht, fighter jet	40	11	6
Huge	–2	16–32 ft.	Stretch limo, SUV, tank	30	9	8
Large	–1	8–16 ft.	Car, truck	20	7	9

GROUND VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	EP/PP Cost
Motorcycle	15	5	10	8	Medium	9/2
Compact Car	30	5	9	8	Large	9/2
Midsize Car	30	5	8	9	Huge	7/2
Full-size Car	35	5	8	9	Huge	8/2
Sports Car	25	5	9	8	Large	8/2
Limousine	35	5	8	9	Huge	8/2
Pickup Truck	40	5	8	9	Huge	9/2
SUV	35	5	8	9	Huge	8/2
Van	35	5	8	9	Huge	8/2
Small Truck	40	5	8	9	Huge	9/2
Bus	45	4	6	11	Gargantuan	8/2
Semi	45	4	6	11	Gargantuan	8/2
Armored Car	35	5	8	12	Huge	11/3
Police Cruiser	30	5	8	9	Huge	7/2
Tank*	50	3	8	12	Huge	64/13
APC*	45	4	8	12	Huge	32/7

** = See individual descriptions for more information.*

FEATURES

Certain features are considered "standard" on any vehicle. These include seating, headlights, safety harnesses or seat belts, air bags, heating and air-conditioning, radio receiver, and similar things. The following features are "optional extras" for vehicles and cost 1 point each. The GM can determine if other features are included in the vehicle or cost points. Some "features" are actually powers, described in the following section.

- **Alarm:** The vehicle has an alarm system that goes off when an unauthorized access or activation attempt is made. A Disable Device check (DC 20) overcomes the alarm. For each additional equipment point, the DC increases by 5.
- **Caltrops:** A vehicle may be equipped with a dispenser for caltrops (see page 135). Activating the dispenser is a standard action. Caltrops automatically blow the tires of ordinary vehicles that run over them (consider such vehicles "minions"). Heroes and villains can make Toughness saving throws for their vehicles; tires are Toughness 3, the DC of the save is 15. An injured result halves the vehicle's movement while a disabled result brings the vehicle to a stop.
- **Hidden Compartments:** The vehicle has hidden compartments or cargo areas holding up to a tenth of the vehicle's medium load in cargo. A Search check (DC 20) allows the searcher to find the hidden compartment. For each additional equipment point, the DC increases by 5.
- **Navigation System:** The vehicle has the equivalent of the direction sense Super-Sense (see page 103), granting a +5 bonus on all skill checks related to navigation. This can be increased by +5 per additional power point to a maximum of +20.
- **Oil Slick:** The vehicle can release an oil slick, covering a 20-ft. by 20-ft. area and forcing the driver of a pursuing vehicle to make a Drive check (DC 15) to retain control of the vehicle. Releasing the oil slick is a standard action.
- **Remote Control:** The vehicle's owner can operate it remotely using a transmitter and control device. Remotely controlling a vehicle requires the same kind of action (usually a move action) as if you were actually behind the wheel of the vehicle.
- **Smokescreen:** The vehicle can generate a smoke screen, visually obscuring an area behind it 10 feet wide and up to 50-feet long (see **Obscure**, page 95). Activating the smoke cloud is a standard action.

POWERS

A vehicle can have various powers of its own, usually reflecting the vehicle's systems. Attack effects are suitable for vehicle-mounted weap-

WATER VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	EP/PP Cost
Jet-Ski	15	4	10	5	Medium	5/1
Speedboat	35	5	8	9	Huge	8/2
Yacht	50	4	6	11	Gargantuan	7/2
Cutter*	60	4	6	12	Gargantuan	26/6
Destroyer*	75	4	2	15	Colossal	45/9
Battleship*	100	3	–2	18	Awesome	58/12
Submarine*	70	3	2	13	Colossal	42/9

** = See individual descriptions for more information.*

AIR VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	EP/PP Cost
Helicopter	30	5	6	9	Huge	12/3
Military helicopter*	40	7	6	11	Gargantuan	32/7
Private Jet	40	7	6	11	Gargantuan	17/4
Jumbo-jet	55	6	5	13	Colossal	17/4
Fighter Jet*	50	9	6	11	Gargantuan	78/16
Bomber*	65	8	2	13	Colossal	59/12

** = See individual descriptions for more information.*

SPACE VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	EP/PP Cost
Space Shuttle	70	10	2	13	Colossal	28/6
Space Fighter*	50	12	6	11	Gargantuan	49/10
Space Cruiser*	100	12	2	15	Colossal	89/18
Space Battleship*	150	14	–2	18	Awesome	115/23

** = See individual descriptions for more information.*

SPECIAL VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	EP/PP Cost
Mole Machine	60	4 (burrow)	6	13	G	13/3
Time Machine*	–	–	9	8	L	3/1
Dimension Hopper*	–	–	9	8	L	3/1

** These "vehicles" have Super-Movement (dimensional, temporal, or both) rather than another movement power.*

ons, while defense effects protect the vehicle (and often the passengers) from harm. Vehicle powers have their normal power point cost for the vehicle (meaning they cost one-fifth the normal amount for the vehicle's owner, since the effects are incorporated into the vehicle and not always available).

- **Armor:** Armor provides Protection for a vehicle in addition to its normal Toughness, possibly including Impervious Protection. Ablative armor (Protection with the Ablative modifier, see page 96) is also common for vehicles. Some vehicles may have Force Fields instead of, or in addition to, Protection.
- **Cloaking Device:** A vehicle may have a "cloaking device" granting Concealment from visual senses. Some vehicles may also have Concealment from auditory senses or things such as radar, giving them a "stealth mode."
- **Immunity:** While vehicles are immune to many environmental conditions, they may also provide immunity to their passengers. Immunity (life support) is necessary for vehicles that travel in space or underwater.
- **Weapons:** Vehicle weapons are based on attack effect powers, particularly Blast with various modifiers. Vehicles may mount versions of some of the weapons listed elsewhere in this chapter.

GROUND VEHICLES

Most cars include such standard features as air conditioning, air bags, antilock brakes, cruise control, keyless entry, and an AM/FM radio with CD player. Luxury (masterwork) vehicles often also include extras such as power seats, leather upholstery, and a sunroof.

- **Tanks** are heavily armed and armored vehicles. The standard tank comes equipped with a cannon (Blast 10, Explosion) and a heavy machine gun (Blast 6, Autofire). It takes a full-round action to get into or out of a tank, and another full-round action to start it up. Half of a tank's Toughness (or 6) is Impervious.
- **APCs** or Armored Personnel Carriers, are designed for carrying troops. They come with a smaller cannon (Blast 6, Explosion), and are set up so soldiers on board can fire their personal weapons from behind the

cover of the APC's armor. One-third of an APCs Toughness (or 4) is Impervious.

WATER VEHICLES

Water vehicles range from small boats and outboards to massive sea-going ships.

- **Cutters** are used by the Coast Guard and the Navy. They're often equipped with light machine guns (Blast 6, Autofire).
- **Destroyers** are main naval ships, carrying heavy guns (Blast 10, Explosion).
- **Battleships** have massive gun batteries (Blast 13, Explosion) and heavy armor.
- **Submarines** are equipped with torpedoes (Blast 8, Explosion) and often ballistic missiles (Blast 15, Explosion, higher if the missile has a nuclear warhead).

AIR VEHICLES

Air vehicles are all capable of flight, some of them at very high speeds.

- **Military helicopters** are equipped with machine guns (Blast 6, Autofire) and rockets (Blast 9, Explosion).
- **Fighter jets** have machine guns (+6 Autofire Blast) and air-to-air missiles (Blast 11, Explosion, Homing).
- **Bombers** may have machine guns and missiles, but also have powerful bombs (Blast 12 or higher, Explosion) they can drop on targets. Bombers are also capable of carrying nuclear weapons and similar payloads.

SPACE VEHICLES

Space vehicles are intended for use outside the atmosphere, some of them for interplanetary or even interstellar travel. Generally space vehicles are found in the possession of alien civilizations, although the GM may choose to allow some organizations and individuals on Earth to have space vehicles.

- **Space fighters** are armed with blaster cannons (Blast 10).
- **Space cruisers** have larger beam weapons (Blast 12) and often energy torpedoes (Blast 12, Explosion, Homing).
- **Space battleships** have the biggest weapons: blaster cannons (Blast 15) and high-energy torpedoes (Blast 15, Area: Explosion, Homing).

SPECIAL VEHICLES

These are unique vehicles, most likely found in the possession of super-villains, aliens, or eccentric inventors.

HEADQUARTERS

Whether it's an underground cave, the top floors of a skyscraper, a satellite in orbit, or a base on the Moon, many heroes and villains maintain their own secret (or not so secret) headquarters. Teams of characters also may even pool their equipment points to have a headquarters they share, with the Gamemaster's approval.

A headquarters is unlike other "equipment" in that it is fixed and serves as a home base, not something normally carried around. An especially large vehicle may serve as a kind of mobile headquarters, and the GM may allow characters to install some headquarters features into vehicles of Gargantuan or greater size.

A character can even have multiple bases of operation. This is more common for villains, who have back-up plans and secret bases they can retreat to when their plans are defeated. If a character's headquarters is destroyed, the character can choose to rebuild it or build a new headquarters with different features. Supervillains often go through a succession of different headquarters. At the Gamemaster's option, characters can have additional headquarters as "Alternate Power" feats of the first (see **Alternate Power**, page 108), since they aren't likely to be used all at once.

HEADQUARTERS TRAITS

Headquarters have two main traits—Toughness and size—and a number of possible features. Each of these costs equipment points to improve.

HEADQUARTERS TRAIT COST

Trait	Starting Value	Equipment Cost
Toughness	5	1 point per +5 Toughness
Size	Small	1 point per size category
Features	—	1 point per feature

TOUGHNESS

A headquarters' Toughness indicates the strength of its structural materials, particularly its outer structure (walls, ceiling, etc.). Toughness 5 is typical for most wooden structures, Toughness 10 for steel-reinforced or concrete structures, and Toughness 15 or more for special alloys or armored structures. A structure's Toughness may be higher if its walls are especially thick. See **Damaging Objects**, page 166, for more information. A structure starts out with Toughness 5 for 0 points. +5 Toughness costs 1 equipment point.

SIZE

A structure's size is measured similar to that of a character or vehicle, and gives a general idea of the overall space it occupies and how much space is available inside it. Structures are measured on a different scale, however. See the **Structure Size Categories Table** for guidelines. A headquarters starts out at Small size for 0 points. Each increase in size category costs 1 point, each decrease in size category gives you an additional point to spend elsewhere on your headquarters.

STRUCTURE SIZE CATEGORIES

Structure Size	Character Size	Size	Examples
Awesome	—	5,000+ ft.	Small town
Colossal	—	2,000—5,000 ft.	City block, private estate
Gargantuan	—	1,000—2,000 ft.	Skyscraper
Huge	—	500—1,000 ft.	Castle
Large	—	250—500 ft.	Mansion, cave complex
Medium	Awesome	128—250 ft.	Warehouse
Small	Colossal	64—128 ft.	House
Tiny	Gargantuan	32—64 ft.	Townhouse
Diminutive	Huge	16—32 ft.	Apartment
Fine	Large	8—16 ft.	Loft
Miniscule	Medium	4—8 ft.	Room

FEATURES

A headquarters may have a number of features, chosen from the list below. A headquarters automatically has the basic structural amenities like doors and windows, power outlets, utilities, and so forth at no cost. Each feature costs 1 equipment point.

COMBAT SIMULATOR

A combat simulator or "danger room" is a special room equipped with various devices intended to test characters' powers and skills and allow them to train in realistic combat situations. Generally, a combat simulator has a suite of devices that can simulate any appropriate attack effect at a rank up to equal to the campaign's power level. A combat simulator normally has safety interlocks so its attacks are always nonlethal damage, but these can be disengaged so the simulator's attacks do lethal damage. For an additional feature, the combat simulator also can project realistic illusions, allowing it to recreate or simulate almost any environment. Combat simulators are useful for training and short "war games" (pitting the characters against each other or simulated opponents). Clever heroes also can try to lure intruders into the combat simulator or an intruder might override the simulator's control systems and trap the heroes in it, turning it into a deathtrap.

COMMUNICATIONS

A communications system allows the headquarters to receive and transmit on a wide range of radio and TV bands, monitor police and emergency channels, coordinate communications between members of a team, and so forth. It includes communications equipment, consoles, and monitors. The system's access to restricted communication bands depends on the clearance and skills of the user. Heroes often have access to special government channels, while a successful Computers skill check (DC 25) can grant a user illegal access to restricted systems.

COMPUTER

A state-of-the-art computer system serving the entire headquarters (a mainframe or mini-frame system). This allows characters to make full use of the Computers skill and the computer can be programmed to handle routine base functions (including monitoring communications channels and controlling defensive systems). For an artificially intelligent computer system, see **Constructs**, page 148.

CONCEALED

The headquarters is hidden from the outside world in some way. It may be camouflaged behind a false façade, buried underground, and so forth. Note this is in addition to the Isolated Location feature, if any. An isolated headquarters is difficult to reach, while a concealed headquarters is difficult to find in the first place. Skill checks to locate the headquarters (Search, Knowledge, etc.) have their DC increased by +10. Each additional feature applied to this increases the DC +5.

DEFENSE SYSTEM

A defense system consists of various weapon emplacements defending the exterior and interior of the headquarters. A defense system can have any attack effect with a rank no greater than the campaign's power level. These attack devices try to disable or restrain anyone approaching or invading the headquarters. Their attack bonus is equal to the campaign's power level. Heroic HQ's usually have nonlethal weapons while villainous defense systems are often lethal.

DOCK

A dock houses water vehicles (see **Vehicles**, page 142) and includes access to a nearby waterway, an airlock or lock system for moving vehicles in and out of the dock, and dry-dock facilities for repairing and maintaining water vehicles. The GM may require the headquarters be located within reasonable distance of a body of water in order to have this feature.

FIRE PREVENTION SYSTEM

The headquarters is equipped with an automatic system for detecting and extinguishing fires. Any large open flame sets the system off (beware, fire-using heroes!). It functions like the Nullify power (see page 94) at rank 5 against fire. A computer-controlled fire prevention system can be programmed to ignore certain sources of fire or the system can be placed on manual control (requiring someone to throw a switch in order to activate it).

GARAGE

A garage houses ground vehicles (see **Vehicles**, page 142) and includes a ramp or other access to move vehicles in and out, facilities for repairing and maintaining vehicles, and a sliding access door.

GYM

A gym consists of weight-training and other exercise machines, space for working out, stretching, and similar exercises, and all the necessary amenities (lockers, showers, etc.). Some HQs may incorporate the gym feature into the combat simulator, for a multi-purpose training room.

HANGAR

A hangar houses air and space vehicles (see **Vehicles**, page 142). It includes a hatch and/or runway for the vehicles to launch and facilities for repairing and maintaining flying vehicles. For some HQs the launch facilities of the hangar may require a long tunnel or other access to the outside.

HOLDING CELLS

These are cells for holding prisoners, usually temporarily, although some headquarters might have more permanent holding facilities. The cells are equipped with Nullify devices (ranked at the campaign's power level) or their basic Toughness is increased by 50%, which option should be agreed upon by both player and GM (both options for two features). Heroes use holding cells to contain captured villains until they can be turned over to the proper authorities while villains use them to keep heroes prisoner until they can dispose of them in their latest deathtrap.

INFIRMARY

An infirmary consists of hospital beds and equipment for the full use of the Medicine skill. An infirmary can provide treatment for a number of characters equal to the base's power level at one time and it can be assumed to have the necessary facilities to handle any unusual physiology of the base's owner(s).

ISOLATED

Headquarters with this feature are situated somewhere out of the way like the Antarctic, the bottom of the ocean, on top of a lonely mountain peak, even in orbit or on the Moon. The base's owner doesn't have to worry about things like door-to-door salesmen or other unwanted visitors but the headquarters is also far from civilization (which can be limiting for heroes unable to travel fast). The headquarters is assumed to provide all the necessary life-support for its location, but it doesn't provide characters with the means to get to the base or travel back. They need the appropriate powers or a vehicle.

LABORATORY

A laboratory is a facility for the use of Knowledge skills in performing scientific tests or experiments. It contains all the necessary scientific equipment, including dedicated computers, if the headquarters doesn't have its own computer system. Characters can use the laboratory to perform research, study unusual phenomena (including many super-powers), and so forth.

LIBRARY

A library allows for use of various Knowledge skills when doing research. A library may consist of printed matter (books and periodicals), microfilm, computer databases, or a combination of all three. A library allows characters to take 20 on most Knowledge skill checks unless the information they're looking for is particularly obscure (in the GM's judgment).

LIVING SPACE

The headquarters includes all the necessary amenities for people to live there full-time. This is usually a number of people equal to the HQ's power level (possibly more, at the GM's discretion). It includes bedrooms or private suites, kitchen facilities, dining area, and common living areas. Characters can live in a headquarters lacking this feature short-term, but they're not likely to be very comfortable.

POOL

The headquarters has a large heated pool, which may be part of a gym area. At the owner's discretion, the pool can provide access to an outside body of water (connected to a lake, river, or even to the ocean), to the base's dock, or both at no additional cost.

POWER

A headquarters can be given any appropriate power as a feature with the Gamemaster's approval. The power cannot have a total cost greater than twice the campaign's power level or a rank greater than the power level. Powers are assumed to affect either the headquarters itself or its occupants, if they do both, they count as two features.

POWER SYSTEM

A power system makes the headquarters completely independent of outside power. It has its own generators (which may be solar, geothermal, nuclear, or anything else the designer wants). They provide for all the base's power needs. The headquarters also has emergency back-up power should the generators fail. This generally lasts for a number of hours equal to the HQ's power level.

SECURITY SYSTEM

Various locks and alarms protect the headquarters from unauthorized access. A Disable Device check (DC 20) overcomes these systems. Each additional feature increases the DC by +5. The security system may be tied into a defense system (if the headquarters is equipped with that feature), so triggering an alarm activates the defense system to disable or restrain the intruder(s).

WORKSHOP

A workshop has all the facilities for use of various Craft skills. It includes tools, workbenches, supplies, and so forth. The Gamemaster may rule certain Craft skills cannot be used in a workshop, or require a workshop of their own (which is an additional feature). For example, a workshop can easily handle woodworking, metalworking, and machining, but might not be suitable for creating magical inventions (see page 132), which require a separate dedicated workshop.

SAMPLE HEADQUARTERS

Gamemasters can use the following sample headquarters as ready-made lairs for supervillains, while players can use them as bases for their heroes.

ABANDONED WAREHOUSE

Size: Medium; *Toughness*: 10; *Features:* Communications, Computer, Concealed, Garage, Gym, Living Space, Power System, Security System. *Cost:* 10 equipment points.

MOON-BASE

Size: Awesome; *Toughness*: 20; *Features:* Combat Simulator, Communications, Computer, Defense System, Fire Prevention System, Gym, Hangar, Holding Cells, Infirmary, Isolated, Laboratory, Living Space, Pool, Power System, Security System (DC 25), Teleport (Affects Others), Workshop. *Cost:* 27 equipment points.

ORBITING SATELLITE

Size: Colossal; *Toughness*: 20; *Features:* Combat Simulator, Communications, Computer, Defense System, Fire Prevention System, Gym, Hangar, Holding Cells, Infirmary, Isolated, Laboratory, Living Space, Power System, Security System, Teleport (Affects Others). *Cost:* 23 equipment points.

SANCTUM SANCTORUM

Size: Medium; *Toughness*: 15; *Features:* Concealed, Laboratory, Library, Living Space, Security System, Workshop. *Cost:* 9 equipment points.

SEA-BASE

Size: Gargantuan; *Toughness*: 15; *Features:* Communications, Computer, Concealed, Dock, Fire Prevention System, Isolated, Living Space, Power System, Security System. *Cost:* 15 equipment points.

SKYSCRAPER (5 FLOORS)

Size: Large; *Toughness*: 10; *Features:* Communications, Computer, Defense System, Fire Prevention System, Gym, Hangar, Infirmary, Laboratory, Library, Living Space, Power System, Security System, Workshop. *Cost:* 16 equipment points.

STATELY MANOR

Size: Huge; *Toughness*: 10; *Features:* Communications, Computer, Concealed, Dock, Garage, Gym, Hangar, Infirmary, Laboratory, Library, Living Space, Power System, Security System, Workshop. *Cost:* 18 equipment points.

UNDERGROUND LAIR

Size: Huge; *Toughness*: 15; *Features:* Communications, Computer, Concealed, Defense System, Garage, Holding Cells, Isolated, Laboratory, Library, Living Space, Power System, Security System. *Cost:* 17 equipment points.

URBAN FORTRESS

Size: Large; *Toughness*: 15; *Features:* Combat Simulator, Communications, Computer, Concealed, Defense System, Fire Prevention System, Garage, Gym, Holding Cells, Infirmary, Living Space, Power System, Security System, Workshop. *Cost:* 18 equipment points.

CONSTRUCTS

Armored robots, humanlike androids, even magically-animated golems or zombies are all examples of *constructs*, non-living things capable of acting on their own to one degree or another, carrying out pre-programmed instructions, or even possessing independent thought.

Since they are capable of action on their own (rather than just improving their owner's abilities), constructs are considered minions rather than devices or equipment and are acquired using the Minions feat (see page 63). Animate Objects (see page 76) creates temporary constructs, while the Summon power (see page 101) can summon them to serve a character.

Constructs are subject to the same power level limits as other characters and the Gamemaster should require constructs controlled by the players to observe these limits.

CONSTRUCT TRAIT COST

Trait	Cost
Ability Score	1 point per +1
Saving Throws	1 point per +1
Attack Bonus	2 points per +1
Defense Bonus	2 points per +1
Skill Ranks	1 point per 4 skill ranks
Feats	1 point per feat
Powers	base cost × rank (see **Chapter 5**)

ABILITY SCORES

Constructs have ability scores like characters do. They lack certain basic abilities, however.

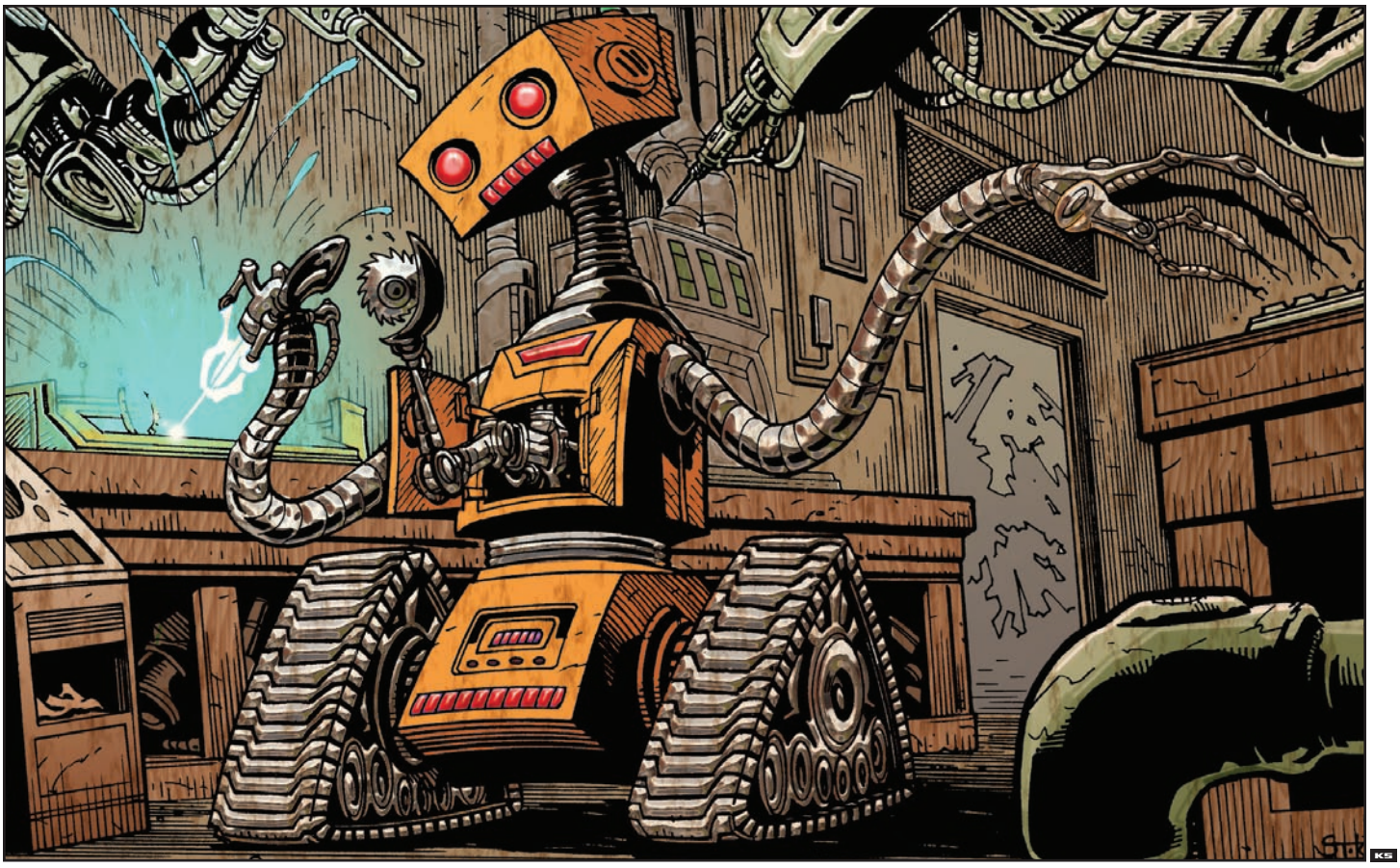
Constructs have no Constitution score, because they are not living beings. Constructs always fail Constitution checks. Constructs do not recover from damage; they must be repaired instead. Constructs are immune to effects requiring Fortitude saving throws unless the effect works on inanimate objects. Constructs also have either no Intelligence and Charisma scores or no Strength and Dexterity scores.

These qualities of constructs: lacking three ability scores (–30 points) and Immunity to effects requiring Fortitude saves (30 points) average out to 0 points.

Constructs without Intelligence and Charisma are automatons, operating on simple instinct or programmed instructions. They are immune to mental effects and interaction skills and automatically fail Intelligence and Charisma checks.

Constructs without Strength and Dexterity scores are immobile intellects, like an artificially intelligent computer or a sentient magic item. They cannot undertake physical actions on their own, although they may be able to control other constructs. They cannot move or exert force, and automatically fail Strength and Dexterity checks.

A construct can buy up one of its nonexistent ability scores from 0 by spending power points; +1 ability score point per power point. This gives the construct the normal use of that ability. Note a construct with Intelligence but no Charisma is intelligent but non-sentient (not self-aware) and a construct needs at least 1 point in both Strength and Dexterity to be able to move and act physically. Constructs cannot buy Constitution, since creatures with Constitution are by definition living beings and not constructs.



TOUGHNESS

Like inanimate objects, constructs have a Toughness score, which measures their ability to resist damage. A construct starts out at Toughness 0 and can increase its score by +1 for 1 power point.

SKILLS

Constructs can have skills just like characters at the same cost (1 power point per 4 skill ranks). However, constructs cannot have skills based on abilities they lack. A construct with no Intelligence cannot have skills like Craft or Knowledge. A construct with no Dexterity cannot have skills like Acrobatics or Stealth, and so forth.

FEATS

Constructs can have feats at the same cost as other characters (1 power point per feat rank). Some feats are less useful or even useless to constructs.

POWERS

Constructs can have various powers, just like characters do. Some powers are less useful or even useless to constructs and the GM has final say as to whether or not a particular power can be assigned to a construct.

SIZE

Constructs larger or smaller than Medium must pay power points for Permanent Growth or Shrinking, as shown on the **Size Table** (see page 34). Larger constructs gain +2 Toughness per increase in size category above Medium (but do not gain the additional Constitution from Growth).

COMMANDING CONSTRUCTS

A construct's owner can give it orders verbally or through any other means the construct understands. Commanding a construct is a move action. Constructs follow orders to the best of their ability. Non-intelligent constructs do exactly as they're told, without creativity or initiative, while intelligent constructs have the ability to interpret and improvise based on their Int score. An owner can also give a construct a series of basic orders for it to fulfill, such as "stay and guard this place and attack anyone who comes here other than me." In the absence of new orders, constructs follow the last order they were given.

DAMAGING AND REPAIRING CONSTRUCTS

Constructs suffer damage like inanimate objects (see **Damaging Objects**, page 166). Constructs do not heal or otherwise recover from damage. Instead, they must be repaired using the Craft skill (see page 45). Repairing the construct requires the same amount of time as a recovery check for its damage condition, and a skill check in place of the recovery check. A failed check means no progress. Attempting repairs without the proper tools is at the usual –4 penalty, and the GM may require special materials or facilities to repair a construct.

A constructs with the Regeneration power are self-repairing and can make recovery checks (see **Regeneration**, page 97).

SAMPLE CONSTRUCTS

For some examples of constructs, **Supporting Cast** and **Monsters** in **Chapter 11**.

CHAPTER 8: COMBAT

BAM! POW! In the struggle for truth and justice, heroes must fight—against hordes of minions, teams of supervillains, powerful masterminds, or rampaging monsters bent on destruction. In superhero battles fists and energy blasts fly. Cars, lampposts, and even entire buildings become weapons. The heroes have to triumph, because they're all that stands between the world and terrible danger.

This chapter details the *Mutants & Masterminds* combat rules, starting with the basics and then looking at some of the more unusual combat strategies heroes can employ.

COMBAT SEQUENCE

Combat in *Mutants & Masterminds* is cyclical. Everybody acts in turn in a regular cycle called a *round*. Generally, combat runs like this:

1. Each combatant starts the battle flat-footed. Once a combatant acts, he or she is no longer flat-footed.
2. The GM determines which characters are aware of their opponents at the start of the battle. If some but not all combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants aware of their opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a standard or move action—not both—during the surprise round. Unaware combatants do not get to act in the surprise round. If no one or everyone starts the battle aware, there is no surprise round.
3. Any remaining combatants roll initiative. All combatants are now ready to begin their first regular round.
4. Combatants act in initiative order, taking their normal allotment of actions.
5. When everyone has had a turn, the combatant with the highest initiative total acts again, and steps 4 and 5 repeat until the combat ends.

COMBAT STATISTICS

Several traits determine how well you do in combat: primarily your attack bonus, defense bonus, damage bonus, and saving throws. This section summarizes these traits and how to use them.

ATTACK

An *attack roll* represents the attempt to strike a target with an attack. When you make an attack roll, roll d20 and add your attack bonus. If your result equals or exceeds the target's Defense, you hit and may deal damage. Various modifiers affect the attack roll, such as a –1 modifier if you are dazzled or a +1 modifier if you are on higher ground than your target. More modifiers are discussed in this chapter.

AUTOMATIC MISSES AND HITS

A natural 1 (the d20 comes up 1) on the attack roll is *always* a miss. A natural 20 (the d20 comes up 20) is *always* a hit, regardless of the opponent's Defense. A natural 20 is also a *threat*—a possible critical hit (see **Critical Hits**, page 152).

ATTACK BONUS

Your attack bonus for an attack is:

Base attack bonus + size modifier + miscellaneous modifiers – range penalty

SIZE MODIFIER

The smaller you are, the bigger other opponents are relative to you. A human is a big target to an ant, just as an elephant is a big target to a human. Since the same size modifier applies to Defense, two opponents of the same size strike each other normally, regardless of size.

SIZE MODIFIERS TO ATTACK BONUS AND DEFENSE

Size	Modifier
Awesome	–12
Colossal	–8
Gargantuan	–4
Huge	–2
Large	–1
Medium	0
Small	+1
Tiny	+2
Diminutive	+4
Fine	+8
Miniscule	+12

MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIERS

The circumstances of your attack may involve a modifier to your attack bonus. Attacking while prone, for example, imposes a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls. See the **Combat Modifiers Table** for a listing of miscellaneous modifiers.

RANGE PENALTY

The range penalty with a ranged attack depends on the attack you're using and the distance to the target. All ranged attacks have a *range increment*. This is typically (power rank × 10 feet). Any attack at a distance up to one range increment carries no penalty for range, so ranged Blast 5 (range increment 50 feet) can strike at enemies up to 50 feet away with no penalty. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty to the attack roll. For example, a character firing the same attack at a target 120 feet away suffers a –4 attack penalty (because 120 feet is at least two range increments, but less than three increments).

DEFENSE

Your *Defense* represents how hard it is for opponents to hit you, the Difficulty Class of an opponent's attack roll. Your Defense is:

10 + defense bonus + size modifier + miscellaneous modifiers

UNDER THE HOOD: SPEEDING UP COMBAT

You can use a number of tricks to make *Mutants & Masterminds* combat run faster.

- **Attack and Damage:** Make the attack roll and Toughness save for an attack at the same time. If the attack misses, ignore the Toughness save, but if it hits, you don't have to make a second roll for damage.
- **Roll Ahead of Time:** Once you know who you are attacking and how, make your attack rolls before it is your turn so you have the results ready when your turn comes around. (Get your GM's okay before you roll ahead of time. Some GMs like to see their players' attack rolls.)
- **Counters:** Use condition counters (like glass beads, poker chips, or playing cards) so players can more easily keep track of their characters' current condition.
- **Concealment Rolls:** If you know the miss chance related to your target's concealment, roll it along with your attack roll. If the concealment roll indicates a miss, ignore the attack roll.
- **Prep Initiative:** Have your GM roll everyone's initiative checks ahead of time and prepare the order of battle. That way when a battle starts you can skip the initiative checks and get right to the action.
- **Pushover Minions:** Use minions the heroes can take out in a single attack. That way, you don't have to bother making Toughness saves for them. A successful attack simply takes out the minion.

DEFENSE BONUS

Your *defense bonus* represents your passive ability to avoid attacks. It is added directly to your Defense in combat. Your *dodge bonus* (equal to half your normal defense bonus) represents your ability to actively avoid attacks. If you can't react to an attack, you can't use your dodge bonus. For example, you lose your dodge bonus if you're bound up in a Snare, or when you're caught flat-footed at the beginning of combat. Most situational bonuses to Defense are dodge bonuses.

SIZE MODIFIER

The bigger a target, the easier it is to hit. The smaller it is, the harder it is to hit. Since this same modifier applies to attack rolls, opponents of the same size have no modifier to hit each other. So an ant (or an ant-sized person) rolls normally to hit another ant.

MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIERS

The circumstances may also apply miscellaneous modifiers to your dodge bonus or Defense. See the **Combat Modifiers Table** for details.

DAMAGE

When you hit with an attack, you may deal damage. Each attack has a *damage bonus*. For melee attacks, the damage bonus is your Strength bonus, plus any modifiers for powers like Strike. For ranged attacks the damage bonus is usually based on the attack's power rank.

Melee Damage Bonus = Strength modifier + weapon damage.
Power Damage Bonus = power rank.

STRENGTH MODIFIER

Your Strength measures how hard you can hit, so your Strength modifier applies when you attack unarmed or with a melee or thrown weapon.

WEAPON DAMAGE

Weapons have a damage modifier, showing how much damage they inflict. Ranged weapons have a fixed damage bonus. Melee and thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength modifier to their damage.

POWER RANK

Your power's rank measures how much damage it inflicts, so it serves as the power's damage bonus. Individual power descriptions provide more information on how much damage a particular power inflicts.

CRITICAL HITS

When you make an attack roll and get a natural 20 (the d20 actually shows 20), you hit regardless of your target's Defense, and you score a *threat*. The hit might be a critical hit (sometimes called a "crit"). To find out whether it's a critical hit, determine if the attack roll total would have normally hit your opponent's Defense. If so, then it is a critical hit. If not, the attack still hits, but as a normal attack, not a critical.

A critical hit increases the attack's damage bonus by 5. A critical hit against a minion allows no saving throw; the minion is automatically knocked out or killed.

INCREASED THREAT RANGE

Characters with the Improved Critical feat (see page 62) can score a threat on a natural result less than 20, although they still automatically hit only on a natural 20. Any attack roll that doesn't result in a hit is not a threat.

SAVING THROWS

When you're subjected to a potentially harmful effect, you get a *saving throw* to avoid or reduce it. Like an attack roll or check, a saving throw is a d20 roll plus a bonus based on an ability score and other modifiers. Your saving throw is:

d20 + base save bonus + ability modifier + miscellaneous modifiers

The Difficulty Class for a save is based on the attack itself. Generally, the DC for a save is 10 + the effect's bonus or rank, except for Toughness saves, which are DC 15 + the attack's damage.

SAVING THROW TYPES

The four different kinds of saving throws are:

- **Toughness:** Your ability to resist physical punishment and direct damage. Apply your Constitution modifier to your Toughness saving throws.
- **Fortitude:** Your ability to resist attacks against your vitality and health such as poison and disease. Apply your Constitution modifier to your Fortitude saving throws.
- **Reflex:** Your ability to avoid harm through reaction time and agility, including dodging explosions and crashes. Apply your Dexterity modifier to Reflex saving throws.
- **Will:** Your resistance to mental influence and domination as well as certain powers. Apply your Wisdom bonus to your Will saving throws.

INITIATIVE

Every round, each combatant gets to do something. The combatants' initiative checks determine the order in which they act, from highest to lowest.

INITIATIVE CHECKS

At the start of a battle, each combatant makes an initiative check. The GM rolls for the villains while the players each roll for their heroes. An initiative check is a Dexterity check, plus modifiers. The GM finds out in what order characters act, counting down from highest total to lowest. Each character acts in turn, with the check applying to all rounds of the combat (unless a character takes an action to change initiative). Usually, the GM writes the names of the characters down in initiative order so he can move quickly from one character to the next each round. If two combatants have the same initiative check result, they act in order of highest Dexterity first. If there is still a tie, roll a die, with the highest roll going first.

Initiative Check = d20 + Dex modifier + miscellaneous modifiers

FLAT-FOOTED

At the start of a battle, before you have had a chance to act (specifically, before your first turn in the initiative order), you are flat-footed. You can't use your dodge bonus while flat-footed. The Uncanny Dodge feat allows you to retain your dodge bonus to Defense while flat-footed (see page 65).

OPPONENT INITIATIVE

Typically, the GM makes a single initiative check for opponents. That way, each player gets a turn each round and the GM also gets one turn. At the GM's option, however, he can make separate initiative checks for different groups of opponents or even for individual foes. For instance, the GM may make one initiative check for a supervillain and another check for all of the villain's minions.

JOINING A FIGHT

If characters enter a fight after it's begun, they roll initiative and act whenever their turn comes up in the existing order.

SURPRISE

When a combat starts, if you are not aware of your enemies but they are aware of you, you're *surprised*. If you know about your opponents but they don't know about you, you surprise them.

DETERMINING AWARENESS

Sometimes all combatants on a side are aware of their enemies; sometimes none are; sometimes only some of them are. Sometimes a few combatants on either side are aware and other combatants are unaware.

The GM determines who is aware of whom at the start of a battle. The GM may call for Notice checks, or other checks to see how aware the characters are of their opponents. Some examples:

- The heroes enter a seedy bar and immediately spot members of a notorious gang. The gang members notice the heroes at the same time. Both sides are aware; neither is surprised. The heroes and the gang-members make initiative checks, and the battle begins.
- The heroes are tracking a mysterious alien shape-shifter, which has fled down a dark alley. They follow, unaware the alien has assumed the form of a garbage can, hidden among several others. When the alien springs out to attack, the heroes are surprised and do not get to act in the surprise round.
- The heroes infiltrate a criminal mastermind's headquarters wearing the uniforms of his soldiers. When they reveal themselves and attack to prevent the mastermind from triggering his doomsday device, they surprise their opponents. The heroes act during the surprise round, but the villains do not.

THE SURPRISE ROUND

If some, but not all, of the combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants aware of their opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a standard or move action, not both. If no one or everyone is surprised, a surprise round doesn't occur.

UNAWARE COMBATANTS

Combatants unaware at the start of battle do not get to act in the surprise round. Unaware combatants are flat-footed because they have not acted yet. Because of this, they lose any dodge bonus to Defense.

ACTIONS

The things characters can do during combat are broken down into *actions*, described in this section.

THE COMBAT ROUND

Each round represents about 6 seconds of time in the game world. In the real world, a round is an opportunity for each character to take an action. Anything a person could reasonably do in 6 seconds, your hero can do in 1 round.

Each round begins with the character with the highest initiative result and then proceeds, in descending order, from there. Each round uses the same initiative order. When a character's turn comes up in the initiative order, that character performs his entire round's worth of actions.

For almost all purposes, there is no relevance to the end of a round or the beginning of a round. The term "round" works like the word "week." A week can mean either a calendar week or a span of time from a day in one week to the same day the next week. In the same way, a round can be a segment of game time starting with the first character to act and ending with the last, but it usually means a span of time from one round to the same initiative number (initiative count) in the next round. Effects lasting a certain number of rounds end just before the same initiative number where they began.

one round = span of time from one initiative count to the same initiative count in the next round

ACTION TYPES

The five types of actions are standard, move, full, free, and reaction. In a normal round, you can perform a standard action and a move action (or two move actions; you can always take a move action in place of a standard action), or you can perform a full action. You can also perform as many free and reactions actions as your GM allows.

In some situations (such as in the surprise round) you may be limited to taking only a standard or move action, not both.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

Free Actions	Standard Actions
Delay	Aid
Drop an Item	Attack
Drop Prone	Begin/Complete Full Action
Speak	Block
Switch Array	Combined Attack
Turn Off Power	Concentrate
Move Actions	Cover
Command	Demoralize
Manipulate an Object	Disarm
Move	Distract
Stand Up	Feint
Full Actions	Grapple
Aim	Overrun
Charge	Ready
Move All Out	Rush
Recover	Startle
Refocus	Taunt
Slam	Total Defense
	Trick
	Trip

STANDARD ACTION

A standard action allows you to do something. You can make an attack, use a skill, feat, or power (unless it requires a full action to perform; see below), or perform other similar actions. During a combat round, you can take a standard action and a move action. You can take the move action before or after, but not during, the standard action.

MOVE ACTION

A move action allows you to move your speed or perform an action taking a similar amount of time, such as climb one-quarter of your speed, draw or stow a weapon or other object, stand up, pick up an object, or perform some equivalent action (see the **Actions in Combat Table**).

You can take a move action in place of a standard action. For example, rather than moving your speed and attacking you can stand up and move your speed (two move actions), draw a weapon and climb one-quarter your speed (two move actions), or pick up an object and stow it in a backpack (two move actions).

If you move no actual distance in a round (usually because you have traded a move action for an equivalent action like standing up), you can take a 5-foot "step" before, during, or after the action. For example, you can stand up (a move action), take a 5-foot step, and attack (a standard action).

FULL ACTION

A full action requires all your attention during a round. The only movement you can take during a full action is a 5-foot step before, during, or after the action. Some full-round actions do not allow you to take a 5-foot step. You can also perform free actions (see below) as the GM allows.

FREE ACTION

Free actions consume very little time and, over the span of the round, their impact is so minor they are considered to take no real time at all. You can perform one or more free actions while taking another action. However, the GM puts reasonable limits on what you can do for free. A good rule of thumb is your Dexterity or Intelligence bonus +1 in free actions per round, with a minimum of one. For instance, dropping an object, dropping to a prone position, speaking a sentence or two, and ceasing to concentrate on maintaining a power are all free actions.

REACTION

A reaction is something that happens in response to something else, like a reflex. Like free actions, reactions take so little time they're considered free. The difference between the two is a free action is a conscious choice made on the character's turn to act. A reaction is a reflex or automatic response that can occur even when it's not your turn to act. Characters can react even while unable to take normal actions, such as while stunned. A saving throw is an example of a reaction, something you instinctively do to avoid danger. Some powers and other traits are usable as reactions.

ACTION DESCRIPTIONS

The most common actions are described here.

AID — STANDARD ACTION

If you are in position to attack an opponent, you can attempt to aid a friend engaged in melee with that opponent as a standard action. Make an attack roll against Defense 10. If you succeed, you don't actually damage the opponent—but your friend gains either a +2 bonus on an attack roll against that opponent or a +2 bonus to Defense against that opponent (your choice) on the friend's next turn. Multiple aid bonuses stack.

AIM — FULL ACTION

By taking a full action to aim and line up an attack you get a bonus to hit when you make the attack. If you're making a melee or unarmed attack, or a ranged attack at melee range, you get a +5 bonus on your attack roll. If you're making a ranged attack from a greater distance, you get a +2 bonus on your attack roll. If you aim to hit an immobile object, you hit automatically with a melee attack and get a +4 bonus on a ranged attack.

However, while aiming you lose your dodge bonus, and if you are struck or distracted in any way before your attack, you have to make a Concentration check to maintain your aim (see **Concentration**, page 44). This tends to make aiming melee attacks—or ranged attacks while adjacent to an enemy—extremely unwise.

Once you aim, your next action must be to make the attack. Taking another standard or move action spoils your aim and you lose the aiming bonus.

ATTACK — STANDARD ACTION

With a standard action, you can make an attack against any opponent within the attack's range.

SHOOTING OR THROWING INTO MELEE

If you make a ranged attack against an opponent engaged in melee with an ally, you take a –4 penalty on your attack roll because you have to aim carefully to avoid hitting your ally. Two characters are engaged in melee if they are opponents and adjacent to one another. (An unconscious or otherwise immobilized character is not considered engaged unless he or she is actually being attacked.)

If the target is two or more size categories larger than any allies in melee, you ignore the –4 penalty.

ATTACKING OBJECTS

Objects are harder or easier to hit depending on several factors:

- *Held Objects:* An object held by a character has a base Defense equal the holder's Defense + 5 + the object's size modifier.
- *Carried or Worn Objects:* Objects carried or worn by a character have a base Defense equal the character's Defense + the object's size modifier.
- *Immobile Objects:* Immobile objects have a Defense of 5 + the object's size modifier. Adjacent attacks get a +4 bonus to hit immobile objects. (If you take a full action to aim, you get an automatic hit with an adjacent attack, or a +5 bonus with a ranged attack.)

BEGIN/COMPLETE FULL ACTION — STANDARD ACTION

This action lets you start a full action (such as those listed on the **Actions in Combat Table**) at the end of your turn, or complete a full action by using a standard action at the beginning of your turn the round after starting the action.

If you start a full action at the end of your turn, the next action you take *must* be to complete it.

BLOCK — STANDARD ACTION

Instead of attacking, you can choose to actively defend yourself against incoming melee attacks for the round. To block an attack, make an attack roll against your opponent's attack roll. If your attack roll is higher, you block or deflect the attack. Each additional attack you block after the first in a round applies a cumulative –2 penalty on your attack roll.

BLOCKING WEAPON ATTACKS UNARMED

The default assumption is characters can block any sort of melee attack, whether armed with a weapon or not. Gamemasters wanting a greater level of realism may restrict unarmed characters from blocking armed attacks (it's more difficult to block a sword blow with your bare hands than it is with a weapon or shield). Characters with a high enough Toughness save (say equal to the weapon's damage bonus) may be able to block weapon attacks unarmed, at the GM's discretion.

BLOCKING RANGED ATTACKS

Characters with the Deflect power (see page 81) can block certain types of ranged attacks, this includes Deflect granted by shields (see page 141). Otherwise, characters cannot block ranged attacks.

CHARGE — FULL ACTION

Charging allows you to move more than your speed and attack as a full action. You must move at least 10 feet and may move up to twice your speed. You must stop as soon as you are within striking range of your target (you can't run past the target and attack from another direction).

During the surprise round you can use the charge action, but you are only allowed to move up to your speed (instead of up to twice your speed). This is also true in other cases where you are limited to a single attack or move action per round.

After moving, you may make a single melee attack. You get a +2 bonus on the attack roll and also take a –2 penalty to your Defense for 1 round (until the beginning of your action the following round).

COMBINED ATTACK — STANDARD ACTION

Multiple attackers can attempt to combine their attacks to overwhelm an opponent's defenses. The attackers must all delay to the same point in the initiative order (that of the slowest character). Each attacker makes a normal attack roll against the target. Take the largest save DC modifier of the attacks that hit, and for each other attack within 5 points of that attack's bonus that hits, add +2. The attacks must all require the same type of saving throw in order to combine, for example attacks doing damage (requiring a Toughness save) can combine, but not with a Mental Blast or a Stun effect, which do not call for Toughness saves.

Although a combined attack is similar to aiding someone (see page 154) it is not the same, and bonuses applying to aid do not apply to combined attacks.

***Example**: Captain Thunder, Lady Liberty, Daedalus, and Johnny Rocket are fighting Mastermind, whose defenses are too powerful for any one of the heroes to overcome. So they decide to combine their attacks against him. They delay until Daedalus' action (the slowest initiative total among them), then each hero makes an attack roll against Mastermind's Defense. They all hit, so the GM looks over their damage bonuses: +13 (Captain Thunder), +11 (Daedalus), +10 (Lady Liberty), and +2 (Johnny Rocket). Johnny's damage bonus is too low to combine with the others, so it is ignored. Daedalus' and Lady Liberty's bonuses are within 5 points of Captain Thunder's, so they each add +2 to his total. Masterminds makes a Toughness save against a combined damage bonus of +17 (13 + 2 + 2) and a second Toughness*

save against Johnny's +2 damage attack. He shrugs off Johnny Rocket's punch, but the combined force of the other heroes' attacks stuns him.

COMMAND — MOVE ACTION

Issuing a command to a minion or a character under the influence of Mind Control requires a move action. If you want to issue different commands to different groups of minions, each one requires a move action (so you can issue two commands per round as a full action).

CONCENTRATE — STANDARD ACTION

Concentrating to maintain a particular power or effect, or focusing intently on a task, count as standard actions, meaning you cannot attack while concentrating, although you can still take move actions and free actions. If anything happens that may disrupt your concentration, you have to make a Concentration check to maintain it. See the Concentration skill, page 44, for details.

COVERING — STANDARD ACTION

Covering is a variation on the Ready action (see page 158). The attacker takes a standard action to use a ranged attack against a valid target within range. Make the attack roll normally, however, the attack does not go off. Instead, the attacker chooses to withhold the attack and "cover" the target. This is like someone with a gun pointing it at a target and shouting "freeze!" If the initial attack roll is successful, the attacker may use the readied attack at any time against the target with the normal result from the initial attack roll. If the initial attack roll was a critical hit, then the covering attack is also a critical hit, if it is made.

The target can escape from being covered by distracting the attacker in some way. Most distractions require a Concentration check by the attacker (see **Concentration**, page 44). If it fails, the covering attack is lost. The target can also make a Bluff or Intimidate check against the attacker to gain a momentary distraction and escape from being covered. An Intimidate check suffers a –2 penalty (since the attacker is clearly in a superior position).

DELAY — FREE ACTION

By choosing to delay, you act at a later point in the initiative order than your rolled initiative. When you delay, you voluntarily reduce your initiative for the rest of the combat. When your new, lower initiative count comes up later in the same round, you can act normally. You can specify this new initiative total or just wait until some time later in the round and act then, fixing your new initiative at that point.

Delaying is useful if you need to see what your friends or enemies are going to do before deciding what to do yourself. The price you pay is lost initiative. You never get back the time you spent waiting to see what was going to happen.

DELAYING LIMITS

The lowest you can voluntarily lower your initiative is –10 minus your initiative bonus. When the initiative count reaches that point, you must act or forfeit any action for the round. For instance, a character with an initiative bonus of 3 could wait until the initiative count reached 0, then wait for it to reach –10, but would have to act on –13 or forfeit any action for the round. This is primarily an issue when multiple characters delay.

MULTIPLE CHARACTERS DELAYING

If multiple characters are delaying, the one with the highest initiative bonus (or higher Dexterity, in case of a tie) has the advantage. If two or more delaying characters want to act on the same initiative count, the one with the highest bonus goes first. If two or more delaying characters are trying to go after each other, the one with the highest initiative bonus gets to go *last*.

You can also Refocus (see page 158) to move to the top of the initiative count.

DEMORALIZE — STANDARD ACTION

You can make an Intimidate check to demoralize an opponent as a standard action. By taking a –5 penalty on the check, you can attempt to demoralize as a move action. See **Intimidate**, page 49, for details.

DISARM — STANDARD ACTION

As a standard action, you may attempt to knock an item such as a weapon or device out of an opponent's hand. Make an attack roll against the defender. If you attempt to disarm with a ranged attack, you are at –4 on your attack roll. If your attack succeeds, make an opposed roll of your attack's damage against the defender's Strength. If you win, the defender is disarmed. If you attempted the disarm action as an unarmed attack, you now have the weapon. Otherwise, the defender drops it. If you make a disarm attempt with a melee weapon and lose, the defender may immediately make an attempt to disarm you as a reaction, without an attack roll.

DISTRACT — STANDARD ACTION

Characters with the Distract feat can make a Bluff or Intimidate check to distract an opponent as a standard action. See **Distract**, page 60, for details.

DROP AN ITEM — FREE ACTION

Dropping a held item is a free action (although dropping or throwing an item with the intention of accurately hitting something is a standard action).

DROP PRONE — FREE ACTION

Dropping to a prone position is a free action, although getting up requires a move action (unless you have the Instant Up feat).

FEINT — STANDARD ACTION

You can make a Bluff check to feint as a standard action. By taking a –5 penalty on the check, you can attempt to feint as a move action. See **Bluff**, page 42, for details.

GRAPPLE — STANDARD ACTION

Grappling is wrestling and struggling hand-to-hand. It's tricky, but it can be useful to pin a foe rather than simply pummeling him unconscious.

GRAPPLE CHECKS

Repeatedly in a grapple, you need to make an opposed grapple check against an opponent. A grapple check is like a melee attack roll. Your attack bonus on a grapple check is:

attack bonus + Strength modifier + Super-Strength modifier + size modifier

SIZE MODIFIER

Your size modifier for a grapple check is +4 for every size category you are above Medium-size or –4 for every size category you are below Medium-size. Like all size modifiers this one cancels out so opponents of the same size grapple each other normally.

To start a grapple, you first need to grab and hold your target. Make a melee attack to grab the target. If you don't hit the target, you fail to start the grapple. Once you hit, you have grabbed your opponent, make an opposed grapple check. If you lose, the target is not grappled. If you succeed, you can apply one of the following effects:

- **Damage:** You deal damage like an unarmed strike.
- **Throw:** You can pick up and throw your opponent like an inanimate object (see **Throwing**, page 36). The throw occurs as a move action as part of the grapple (grabbing, grappling, and throwing an opponent is a full-round action). The distance you can throw an opponent is based on weight like any other object and a throw automatically ends the grapple.
- **Pin:** You hold your opponent immobile for one round. You can't use a weapon on the pinned character or attempt to damage or pin another opponent while pinning the first unless you have the Improved Grapple feat or the Additional Limbs power. When an opponent has pinned you, you are immobile (but not helpless) for one round. You have a –4 Defense modifier and lose your dodge bonus against attacks while pinned.
- **Break:** You can break the hold an opponent has over an ally.
- **Escape:** You can escape the grapple or a pin. If you are grappled and escape, you are no longer grappling and can take whatever movement you get as your move action. If you're pinned and escape, you are still grappling, but no longer pinned. If more than one opponent is grappling or pinning you, your grapple check result has to beat *all* of their checks to escape. You also can make an Escape Artist check (opposed by your opponent's grapple check) to escape.

While you're grappling, your ability to attack others and defend yourself is limited. You lose your dodge bonus to Defense against opponents you aren't grappling. You can still use it against opponents you are grappling.

You can use powers while grappling, subject to the requirements of the grapple. If you use a power requiring a standard action, you forfeit your grapple check that round (meaning you automatically lose the opposed grapple check). This may be worth it if the power helps you get out of the grapple or otherwise deals with your opponent. The GM may require a Concentration check (see page 44) to use some powers while grappled, while other powers (those requiring freedom of movement or the ability to access a device, for example) may not be usable at all, at the GM's discretion.

MULTIPLE GRAPPLERS

Several combatants can be in a single grapple. Up to four can grapple a single opponent of the same size. Opponents one size category smaller than you count for half, opponents one size category larger than you count double, and opponents two or more size categories larger count quadruple. So if you're Medium-sized, eight Small, four Medium, two Large, or a single Huge opponent can grapple you. In the same way, four Small opponents (counting as two opponents) plus one Large opponent (counting as two opponents) can grapple you. Additional grapplers can aid their friends with the aid action, granting a +2 bonus to that character's grapple checks for the round.

MANIPULATE OBJECT — MOVE ACTION

In most cases, moving or manipulating an object is a move action. This includes drawing or holstering a weapon, retrieving or putting away a stored object, picking up an object, moving a heavy object, and opening a door.

MENTAL GRAPPLE — STANDARD ACTION

Characters with the Mind Reading power (see page 93) can grapple an opponent *mentally* rather than physically, a struggle of mind against mind. Mental grappling uses the same system as physical grappling, with the following differences:

- A mental grapple requires a successful use of Mind Reading to establish mental contact. Mental grapples do not require physical contact, but do require a standard action each round, as usual. This action is part of the attacker's maintenance of Mind Reading, so mental grappling is an option even if the attacker's Mind Reading power has a duration of Concentration. If the attacker stops maintaining Mind Reading at any time, the mental grapple ends.
- Mental grapple checks are d20 + the character's Will save or mental power rank (whichever is greater). Size and Strength modifiers do not apply.
- You cannot throw an opponent using a mental grapple.
- Damage inflicted by a mental grapple is based on the attacker's Wisdom bonus rather than Strength bonus. If the attacker has a damaging mental power (like Mental Blast) its damage may substitute for Wisdom bonus.
- Anyone in a mental grapple loses their dodge bonus against all opponents, even the one they are mentally grappling, due to the distraction.
- Anyone involved in a mental grapple must make a Concentration check (DC 20) to use another power or do anything else without first escaping the mental grapple. A character can take a different standard action by forgoing the mental grapple check for that round, but then automatically loses the opposed mental grapple check for the round.
- The winner of a mental grapple can choose to break off mental contact, even if another character established it.

MOVE — MOVE ACTION

The simplest move action is moving your speed. Many nonstandard modes of movement are also covered under this category, including climbing and swimming (up to one-quarter the character's speed), crawling (up to 5 feet), and entering or exiting a vehicle. Various powers grant additional movement abilities, with speed determined by the power's rank.

MOVE ALL OUT — FULL ACTION

You can move all out as a full action. When you do so, you move up to four times your speed in a fairly straight line.

You lose your dodge bonus while moving all out, since you can't easily avoid attacks. However, if you're using a movement power (see **Chapter 5**) you gain a +2 bonus to Defense per rank in that power; so a hero with Flight 5 moving all out gets a +10 Defense bonus for his speed (it's harder to hit a fast-moving target).

You can move all out for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score. After that you must succeed at a Constitution check (DC 10) to continue moving all out. You must check again each round, and the DC increases by +1 for each check. When you fail a check, you become fatigued and must drop to an accelerated or normal pace (see **Fatigue**, page 167).

OVERRUN — STANDARD ACTION

You can attempt an overrun as a standard action following a move action or as part of a charge. With an overrun, you plow past, or over, your opponent (and move through his area) as you move. You can only make one overrun attempt per action.

First, you must move at least 10 feet in a straight line toward your target. The target chooses to avoid or block you. If he avoids you, you keep moving, since you can always move through an area occupied by someone who lets you pass. If he blocks you, make a trip attack against him (see **Trip**, page 159). If you are using a movement power, you gain a +1 bonus per rank on the trip check. If you succeed in tripping your opponent, you can continue your movement as normal.

If you fail and are tripped in return, you fall prone. If you fail but are not tripped, you have to move 5 feet back the way you came, ending your movement there (essentially, you stop directly in front of your opponent). If that space is occupied, you fall prone as well.

READY — STANDARD ACTION

Readying lets you prepare to take an action later, after you would normally act on your initiative, but before your initiative on your next turn. Readying is a standard action, so you can move as well.

You can ready a single standard or move action. To do so, specify the action you will take and the circumstances under which you will take it. Then, any time before your next action, you may take the readied action as a reaction to those circumstances. For the rest of the fight, your initiative result is the count on which you took the readied action.

Your initiative result becomes the count on which you took the readied action. If you come to your next action and have not yet performed your readied action, you don't get to take the readied action (though you can ready the same action again).

REFOCUS — FULL ACTION

Refocus is a full action during which you cannot move. You do nothing that round except refocus your attention and appraise the situation. On the following round, you move up in the initiative order and are positioned as though you rolled a 20 on your initiative check. The usual modifiers to Initiative checks apply to your new initiative total.

RUSH — STANDARD ACTION

You can attempt a rush as a standard action made after a move action, or as part of a charge. (You normally can't make a standard action during a move action; this is an exception.) When you rush, you attempt to push an opponent straight back instead of damaging them.

First, you move adjacent to your target. You and the target make opposed Strength checks, with each rank in Super-Strength providing a +1 bonus and each rank of your movement power (if you are using one) providing a +1 bonus. If you and the target are different sizes, the larger one gets a +4 bonus per difference in size category. The target gets a +4 bonus for having more than two legs or being otherwise exceptionally stable (see **Additional Limbs**, page 75) and may also get a bonus from the Immovable power (see page 89).

If you win the opposed Strength check, you push the opponent back. Read the amount by which you won the check as a rank on the **Time and Value Progression Table**, that's how many feet you push the target back. So winning the check by 7 pushes your opponent back 100 feet, for example. You can't, however, exceed your normal movement speed, so any additional distance is ignored.

If you lose, you move 5 feet back the way you came, ending your movement there (essentially, you stop directly in front of your opponent). If that space is occupied, you also fall prone.

SLAM — FULL ACTION

A slam is similar to a charge (see page 155), except you attempt to use your momentum to slam directly into the target. Your speed improves your damage, but you may suffer damage from the impact as well.

You make a slam attack like a charge: take a full-round action, you must move at least 10 feet in a relatively straight line. You must stop as soon as you are within striking range of your target (you can't move past the target and attack from another direction). You can't move all out for a slam attack.

Make a melee attack against the target. You do not gain the +2 bonus to hit from a charge, but you do suffer the –2 penalty to Defense. Your

damage bonus is +2 for a normal move, +4 for an accelerated move. Use this in place of your normal Strength damage. If you use a movement power, add its rank to your damage bonus, provided you move a minimum distance equal to that rank's speed. So, if you use Flight 5 (speed 250 MPH) to slam, you must move at least 2500 feet or so (a normal move action at that speed) to add it to your damage bonus. Obviously, confined quarters limit the speed you can attain for a slam attack.

You suffer damage equal to half the total damage bonus inflicted on your target (round down). So a slam attack inflicting +13 damage on the target does +6 damage to you. You make a normal Toughness save against this damage, and Impervious Toughness protects against it normally.

The Immovable power (see page 89) reduces the damage inflicted by a slam attack and increases the damage suffered by the attacker.

SPEAK — FREE ACTION

In general, speaking is a free action. Some Gamemasters may limit the amount you can say during your turn, although superheroes and villains can generally say quite a bit in the midst of combat. Issuing orders to followers or minions in combat is a move action.

STAND UP — MOVE ACTION

Standing up from a prone position requires a move action.

STARTLE — STANDARD ACTION

With the Startle feat (see page 64), you can make an Intimidate check to startle an opponent as a standard action. By taking a –5 penalty on the check, you can attempt to startle as a move action.

SWITCH ARRAY — FREE ACTION

You can switch between Alternate Powers in an array, or reallocate points among dynamic Alternate Powers, as a free action once per round (see **Alternate Power**, page 108, for details on how Alternate Powers work).

TAUNT — STANDARD ACTION

With the Taunt feat (see page 64), you can make a Bluff check to demoralize an opponent as a standard action. By taking a –5 penalty on the check, you can attempt to taunt as a move action.

TOTAL DEFENSE — STANDARD ACTION

Instead of attacking, you can use your standard action to avoid attacks that round. You don't get to attack or perform any other standard action, but you get a +4 to your dodge bonus for the round.

TRICK — STANDARD ACTION

You can make a Bluff check (see page 42) to trick an opponent as a standard action. By taking a –5 penalty on the check, you can attempt to trick as a move action.

TRIP — STANDARD ACTION

You can try to trip an opponent as a melee attack. Make a melee attack roll. If the attack succeeds, make a Strength or Dexterity check opposed by the defender's Strength, Dexterity, or Acrobatics check (use whichever ability has the higher modifier in each case). A combatant gets a +4 bonus for each size category exceeding Medium or a –4 penalty for each size category smaller than Medium (these size modifiers cancel out for opponents of the same size). The defender gets a +4 stability bonus on the check if he has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid and a bonus from the Immovable power (see page 89), if he has it. If you win, you trip the defender. If you lose, the defender may react immediately by trying to trip you with no need for an attack roll. If you have the Improved Trip feat (see page 62), the defender doesn't get an opportunity to trip you.

A tripped character is prone, suffering a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls. Prone characters have –4 Defense against attacks from adjacent opponents and +4 Defense against ranged attacks. Standing up from a prone position is a move action. A trip attack may have other effects depending on the situation; for example, tripping an opponent on a narrow ledge or the edge of a cliff may cause the opponent to fall (the GM can allow a DC 15 Reflex save to grab the edge of the precipice at the last moment).

TURN OFF A POWER — FREE ACTION

You can deactivate a power as a free action. However, you can't activate and deactivate the same power in the same turn, the power's activation lasts until your next turn, when you can then deactivate it, if you choose. You can't turn off Permanent powers.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

For actions not covered in any of this material, the GM determines how long the action takes.

- **Skills:** Most uses of skills in a combat situation are standard actions, but some might be move or full actions. The description of a skill provides the time required to use it. See **Chapter 3**.
- **Feats:** Certain feats allow you to take special actions in combat. Other feats are not actions in themselves, but grant a bonus when attempting something you can already do. Some feats aren't meant to be used within the framework of combat. The individual feat descriptions tell you what you need to know about them. See **Chapter 4**.
- **Powers:** The description of a power provides the type of action required to use it. See **Chapter 5**.
- **Recover:** You can spend hero points to use a full action to recover from damage in combat (see **Hero Points**, page 121).

COMBAT MODIFIERS

This section covers various maneuvers and situations affecting combat and how it plays out.

AGGRESSIVE STANCE

You can improve your chances of hitting with an attack by sacrificing your defense. Take up to a –4 penalty on your Defense to gain half that amount (up to +2) on your attack rolls for that round.

AREA ATTACK

Super-attacks sometimes consist of powerful explosions, bursts of energy, or simply throwing really big things at opponents. These *area attacks* cover a much larger area than a normal attack, so they're much harder to avoid. See the **Area** extra, page 111, for more information on creating area attacks.

An area attack automatically hits an area the attacker can accurately target, filling the area with its effect. Targets in the area get a Reflex saving throw against a DC of (10 + attack's rank). If the save is successful, halve the area attack's rank or bonus (rounding any fractions down) before applying it to the target, who then makes the normal saving throw

UNDER THE HOOD: AREA ATTACKS

Area attacks have their advantages and their drawbacks, and may require some Gamemaster management in play.

The primary advantage of area attacks is they essentially always hit, although cover and a successful Reflex save can blunt their effects. Covering a large area with an attack is an almost certain way of hitting a target you can't hit directly, due to the target's high Defense.

The downside of area attacks is they're difficult to use with any precision. The attacker can only limit the affected area so much, and the attack hits everyone and everything in that area. This may include allies, bystanders, or just nearby buildings and property. Heroes fighting in any sort of urban environment should be cautious about using area attacks, and you should feel free to remind them of the potential repercussions of doing so.

Area attacks, particularly ones in crowded or urban areas, offer plenty of opportunities for complications in the adventure (see page 122): an area attack may damage a building's foundation or a bridge's supports, for example; tear up pavement, burst water or gas mains, overturn cars, or shatter windows.

A particular issue is area attacks with the Selective Attack extra (page 113), allowing the attacker to hit only *some* targets in the area. This removes most of the downside of an area attack, although there may still be repercussions for potential targets the attacker can't perceive (and therefore can't exclude). As GM, you should be cautious about allowing players to have Selective Area Attack powers, as they can prove too effective and may dominate the game.

against the attack. Targets with the Evasion feat (see page 60) suffer *no* effect if they make their Reflex save. Targets with Evasion 2 suffer only half effect even if they fail the save, and no effect if they succeed.

> ***Example:*** *White Knight hurls a fireball (an Explosive Blast 10) at Johnny Rocket and a couple AEGIS agents. Johnny has a high Reflex save (+14) and the Evasion feat. He makes a Reflex saving throw against DC 20 (10 + the fireball's rank) and succeeds easily, avoiding any damage (because of his Evasion). The AEGIS agents are not so lucky, their Reflex saves are only +3. One manages to make the save, and makes a Toughness save against DC 20 (15 + half the fireball's normal damage, or 5). The other fails the Reflex save and takes the full brunt of the blast, making a Toughness save against DC 25 (the fireball's full effect).*

If you delay (see page 156) or ready (see page 158) a move action you can try to avoid an area effect entirely. If you move before the attack and have sufficient movement to get out of the area, then you're safe. You must choose how far you move *before* the GM tells you the result of the area attack, so be sure you move far enough!

You can also spend a hero point to gain the Evasion feat for one round, allowing you to suffer no effect from an area attack if you succeed on your Reflex saving throw (see **Hero Points**, page 121).

Area effects which don't normally require an attack roll do not allow for a Reflex save, they simply affect all targets in the specified area.

AUTOFIRE ATTACK

An autofire attack is a volley of multiple shots with a single standard action. To use an autofire attack against a single target, make your attack roll normally. The amount by which your attack roll succeeds applies a bonus to the attack's saving throw DC (see the **Autofire** extra, page 112, for details).

If an Impervious defense (Force Field or Protection, for example) would normally ignore the attack before any increase in the save DC, then the attack has no effect as usual; a volley of multiple shots is no more likely to penetrate an Impervious defense than just one.

MULTIPLE TARGETS

You can use autofire to attack multiple targets at once as a full action by "walking" the autofire attack from target to target. Choose a line of 5-foot squares no greater in number than your attack bonus. You may make attack rolls to hit targets, one target at a time, starting at one end of the line and continuing to the other end. You suffer a penalty to each of your attack rolls equal to the total number of squares. If you miss one target, you may still attempt to hit the others.

COVERING FIRE

An autofire attack can provide cover for an ally. Take a full action and choose an ally in your line of sight, who receives a +4 dodge bonus against enemies in your line of sight and in range of your autofire attack. (You have to be able to shoot at them to get them to keep their heads down or this maneuver won't work.) You cannot lay down covering fire for an ally in melee. Each character after the first who lays down covering fire for the same individual grants an additional +1 dodge bonus. All covering fire attackers receive a free attack if an opponent chooses to ignore the dodge bonus granted to the protected target.

SUPPRESSION FIRE

An autofire attack can lay down a volley to force opponents to seek cover. Take a full-round action and choose an opponent, who receives a –4 penalty to attack rolls and checks for one round while in your line of sight and in range of your attack. An opponent who chooses not to seek cover ignores the attack modifier from by suppression fire but is automatically attacked (a free action for you). You cannot lay down suppression fire on an opponent in melee. Each character after the first who lays down suppression fire for the same target imposes an additional –1 penalty. All suppression fire attackers receive a free attack if the target fails to take cover or otherwise get out of their sight.

CONDITIONS

Generally speaking, any situational modifier created by the attacker's position or tactics applies to the attack roll, while any situational modifier created by the defender's position, state, or tactics applies to the defender's Defense. The GM judges what bonuses and penalties apply, using the **Combat Modifiers Table** as a guideline.

COVER

Taking cover behind a wall, tree, or other obstacle provides a +4 bonus to Defense. Cover is measured relative to the attacker. For example, hiding behind a low wall provides no cover against an opponent hovering above you, but does provide cover against an opponent on the other side of the wall.

COVER AND REFLEX SAVES

Cover grants you a +2 bonus on Reflex saves against attacks originating from a point on the other side of the cover from you.

COVER AND STEALTH CHECKS

You can use cover to make a Stealth check to avoid being seen. Without cover, you need concealment (see Concealment later in this chapter) to make a Stealth check.

ATTACK MODIFIERS

Attacker is...	Melee	Ranged
Dazzled	–1	–1
Entangled	–2	–2
On higher ground	+1	+0
Prone	–4	+0
Shaken	–2	–2
Sickened	–2	–2

TOTAL COVER

If you cannot draw a line between you and a target without intersecting cover, the target has total cover. You can't make an attack against a target with total cover without using a Ricochet attack (see page 110) or an Indirect power (see page 109).

VARYING DEGREES OF COVER

In some cases, cover may provide a greater bonus to Defense and Reflex saves. In such situations the normal cover bonuses to Defense and Reflex saves can be doubled (to +8 and +4, respectively). A creature with this improved cover gains a +10 bonus on Stealth checks.

STRIKING COVER

If it ever becomes important to know whether the cover was actually hit by an incoming attack, the GM should determine if the attack roll would have hit the protected target without the cover. If the attack roll falls within a range low enough to miss the target with cover but high enough to hit the target if there had been no cover, the cover is hit. This can be particularly important to know in cases when a character uses another character as cover.

In such a case, if the cover is struck *and* the attack roll exceeds the Defense of the covering character, the covering character takes the damage intended for the target. If the attack roll is lower than the Defense of the covering character, but higher than the Defense of the covered character, the original target is hit instead. The covering character avoided the attack and didn't provide cover after all! Covering characters can voluntarily lower defense bonus to ensure they provide cover.

CONCEALMENT

Concealment includes circumstances where nothing physically blocks an attack, but something interferes with the attacker's accuracy. Typically, concealment is provided by things like fog, smoke, shadows, darkness, foliage, and so forth.

- **Concealment Miss Chance:** Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a 20% chance (a roll of 17 or higher on d20) the attacker missed because of the concealment. If the attack roll hits, the defender makes a miss chance roll to avoid being struck. Multiple concealment conditions do not stack.
- **Concealment and Stealth Checks:** You can use concealment to make a Stealth check to avoid being seen. Without concealment, you usually need cover to make a Stealth check.
- **Total Concealment:** A target you cannot perceive with any of your accurate senses has total concealment from you. You can't directly attack an opponent with total concealment, though you can attack into the area you think he occupies. A successful attack into an area occupied by a target with total concealment has a 50% miss chance (a d20 roll of 11 or higher).
- **Ignoring Concealment:** Concealment isn't always effective. A shadowy area or darkness doesn't provide concealment against an opponent with darkvision. Smoke provides no concealment against a character with X-ray vision, and so forth. Characters with low-light Vision can see clearly for a greater distance with the same light source than other characters. See **Super-Senses**, page 103, for more information.

DEFENSE MODIFIERS

Defender is...	Melee	Ranged	Dodge Bonus?
Behind cover	+4	+4	Yes
Blinded	–2	–2	No
Concealed	Special	Special	Yes
Dodging	+4	+4	Yes
Entangled	–2	–2	No
Flat-footed	+0	+0	No
Grappling	+0	+0	No
Helpless	–9	–4	No
Kneeling or sitting	–2	+2	Yes
Moving all out	*	*	No*
Pinned	–4	–4	No
Prone	–4	+4	Yes
Stunned	–2	–2	No
Surprised	–2	–2	No

** Moving all out applies a Defense modifier based on speed (see page 157).*

CONCEALMENT

Concealment	Example	Miss Chance
Partial	Fog; moderate darkness; foliage; precipitation	17 or higher
Total	Total darkness; invisibility; attacker blind; dense fog	11 or higher

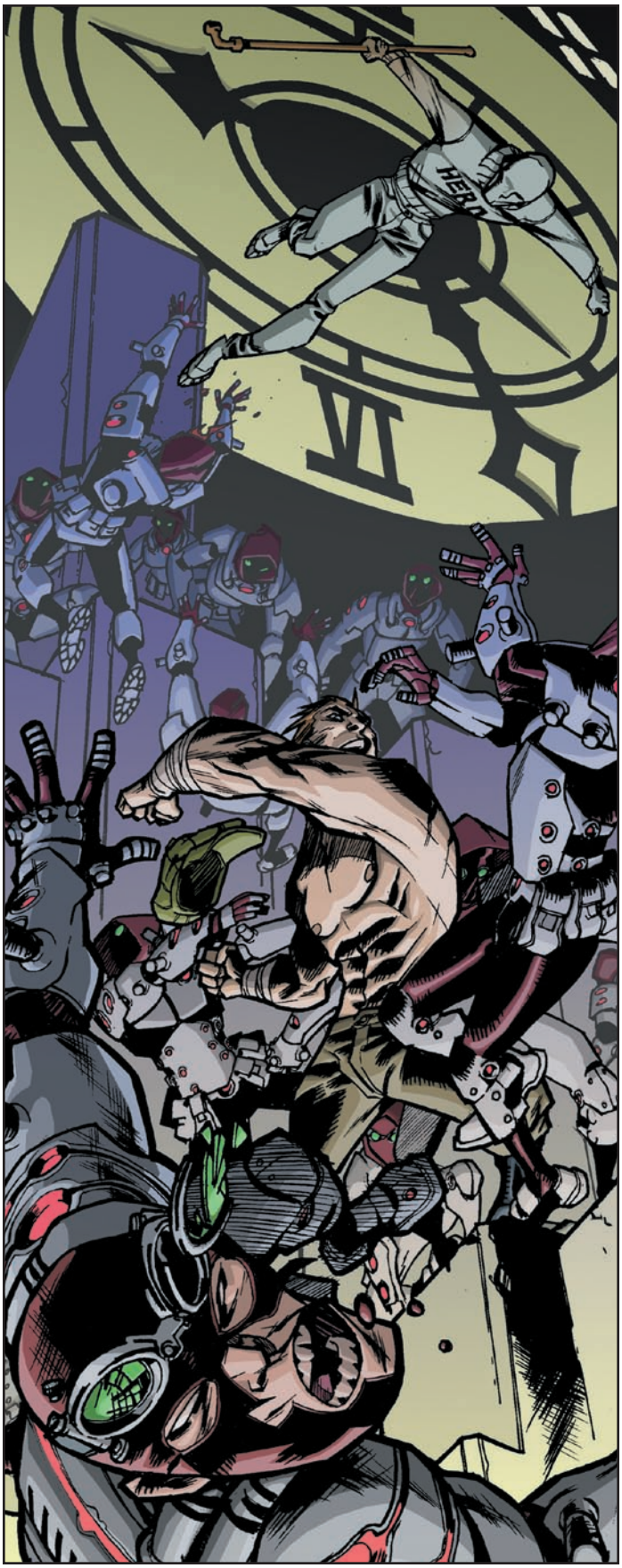
DEFENSIVE STANCE

You improve your defense by sacrificing accuracy. Take a penalty of up to –4 on your attack rolls to gain half that amount (up to +2) as a dodge bonus for that round.

GANGING UP

Typically, up to eight attackers can gang up on an individual target, provided they have room to maneuver. If the defender can fight side by side with allies, back into a corner, fight through a doorway, and so forth, attackers can't gang up as easily.

Picture the eight attackers as evenly spaced out surrounding the defender. The defender can reduce the opportunity for attackers to gang up based on how much of the area around himself he can block off. Backed against a wall, a character only allows five attackers to get at him. Backed into a corner, only three attackers can get at him at a time. If the defender is standing in a doorway, the opponent in front of him can attack normally and one opponent on either side can attack as well, but



the defender benefits from cover (see **Cover**, page 160). If the defender is fighting in a 5-foot-wide corridor, only one attacker can get at him (unless attackers are coming at him from both directions).

The above rules are for Medium and Small characters. Larger characters present room for more attackers to get at them and combatants with ranged weapons can get at defenders more easily.

HELPLESS DEFENDERS

A *helpless* foe—bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise at your mercy—is an easy target. You sometimes can approach a target unawares and treat the opponent as helpless if the GM allows.

REGULAR ATTACK

A helpless character loses any dodge bonus and takes a –9 penalty to Defense against attacks from adjacent opponents, and a –5 penalty to Defense against ranged attacks.

COUP DE GRACE

As a full-round action, you can deliver a *coup de grace* to a helpless opponent adjacent to you. You automatically hit and score a critical hit. If the defender takes damage but is not knocked out or dying, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage bonus) or be knocked out (for a nonlethal attack) or dying (for a lethal attack). You can't deliver a coup de grace against a target immune to critical hits. You can deliver a coup de grace against a target with total concealment, but doing this requires two consecutive full-round actions (one to feel around and accurately perceive the target and another to deliver the coup de grace).

IMPROVISED WEAPONS

Superheroes and villains often use the most unlikely objects as weapons. Use the following guidelines for improvised weapons:

- **Weight:** The object should be no more than a light load for the wielder to use it as a weapon.
- **Damage Bonus:** The damage bonus of an improvised weapon is equal to the wielder's Strength bonus. If the weapon's Toughness exceeds your Strength, you get a damage bonus equal to the difference, up to +2 (like a club). If you inflict damage with an improvised weapon greater than its Toughness, the impact of the attack breaks it. At the GM's option, tougher weapons may have their Toughness reduced by 1 for each successful attack, breaking when their Toughness drops below the wielder's Strength bonus.
- **Area Attacks:** Large weapons area treated as area attacks based on their size modifier (see the **Size** table, page 34). If the weapon attack misses by an amount less than or equal to the object's size modifier, it still hits, but the target can make a Reflex save (DC 10 + damage bonus) to halve the attack's damage.
- **Critical:** Most improvised weapons only score a critical hit on a natural 20.
- **Damage Descriptor:** Usually bludgeoning, although sharp or pointed improvised weapons may inflict lethal slashing or piercing damage at the GM's discretion.
- **Range Increment:** See **Throwing** (page 36) for the distance a character can throw an object. The base range increment is one-fifth the character's maximum throwing distance. Each additional increment is a –2 penalty on the attack roll.

MINIONS

Minions are minor characters subject to special rules in combat, and generally easier to defeat than normal characters. The following rules apply to minions:

- Minions cannot score critical hits against non-minions.
- Non-minions can take 10 on attack rolls against minions (attackers normally cannot take 10 on attack rolls).
- If a minion fails a Toughness saving throw, the minion is knocked unconscious (nonlethal damage) or dying (lethal damage). Attackers can choose a lesser effect, if desired.
- The Impossible Toughness Save rule (see at right) does *not* apply to minions.
- Certain traits (like Takedown Attack) are more effective against minions.

SURPRISE ATTACKS

An attack may come from an unexpected quarter, especially when dealing with super-powered opponents. An attack that catches the target off-guard in some way is called a *surprise attack*.

To make a surprise attack, you must catch your target unawares. You can make a surprise attack in the following situations:

- When you have total concealment from your target or the target otherwise hasn't noticed your presence.
- When you use an interaction skill to throw your target off-balance, such as making a feint using Bluff.
- When your target is stunned.
- When you surprise a target at the beginning of combat.
- When you do something unexpected (in the GM's judgment).

Characters with the Uncanny Dodge feat (see page 65) cannot be surprise-attacked so long as they are capable of taking free actions (not stunned or helpless).

The target of a surprise attack loses any dodge bonus to Defense against the attack and suffers an additional –2 Defense penalty.

DAMAGE

Combat usually results in damage to one or both parties. The potential damage of an attack is represented by its *damage bonus*, with the target's resistance to the damage represented by a *Toughness save*. A failed Toughness save results in some amount of damage.

TOUGHNESS SAVING THROWS

A target hit with a damaging attack makes a Toughness saving throw. The Difficulty Class of a Toughness save is 15 + the attack's damage bonus. So an attack with a damage bonus of +8 has a Toughness save DC of 23 (15 + 8).

Toughness save DC = 15 + attack's damage bonus

The target rolls d20 + Toughness save bonus against the DC. The result of the Toughness save determines what sort of damage the target takes. If the Toughness save succeeds, the target suffers no damage. If the save fails by less than 5, the target is *bruised*. If it fails by 5 or more, the target is both *stunned* for one round and bruised. If it fails by 10 or more, the target is *staggered* and also stunned for one round. If it fails by 15 or more, the target is *unconscious*. Consult the **Toughness Saving Throw Table** for results. See **Damage Conditions** (see page 164) for more on Toughness save results.

Toughness Saving Throw = d20 + Toughness save modifier

TOUGHNESS SAVING THROW

Saving Throw...	Effect
Succeeds	No Effect
Fails	Bruised
Fails by 5 or more	Stunned + Bruised
Fails by 10 or more	Staggered + Stunned
Fails by 15 or more	Unconscious

IMPOSSIBLE TOUGHNESS SAVES

If the DC of a Toughness save is so high the character cannot possibly succeed, even with a 20 on the die roll, the Toughness save is still rolled to determine the effect (the amount the save misses the DC). A natural roll of 20 means the character suffers only the minimal result of failing the save, regardless of the DC. Fate intervenes to spare the character from otherwise certain doom.

PULLING YOUR PUNCH

Attackers can choose to use less than their maximum damage bonus with an attack. The attacker chooses how much of the damage bonus applies before making the attack roll and the target saves against that damage rather than the attack's full damage bonus. Attackers with the Full Power drawback (see page 126) cannot pull punches with that attack or power.

CRITICAL HITS

A critical hit (see **Critical Hits**, page 152) increases an attack's damage bonus by 5. A critical hit against a minion automatically knocks out or kills the minion, no Toughness save allowed.

LETHAL DAMAGE

Most damage in *Mutants & Masterminds* is assumed to be nonlethal. Attacks can also inflict lethal damage, capable of seriously wounding or even killing an opponent. Any damaging attack can inflict lethal damage. The attacker must declare the intention to inflict lethal damage before the attack roll.

Depending on the style of the campaign, declaring a lethal attack may be quite un-heroic (see **Style**, page 186). Generally speaking, heroes rarely, if ever, make lethal attacks, while villains seldom do so, preferring to defeat heroes and stretch out their final moments with some fiendish trap.

Lethal damage is handled the same way as nonlethal damage, except a failed Toughness saving throw applies an additional damage condition: a bruised target is also *injured,* a staggered target is also *disabled*, and an unconscious target is also *dying*.

LETHAL DAMAGE

Toughness Saving Throw...	Effect
Succeeds	No Effect
Fails	Bruised + Injured
Fails by 5 or more	Stunned + Bruised + Injured
Fails by 10 or more	Staggered + Disabled + Stunned
Fails by 15 or more	Unconscious + Dying

TRACKING DAMAGE

When a character suffers damage, mark it on the *damage track* with a slash or check mark (as shown here). Characters can have any number of bruised or injured marks, but suffer only one staggered, unconscious, disabled, or dying condition at a time. If a character suffers an already checked-off condition, move the damage up to the next highest condition, so a staggered character who is staggered again becomes unconscious, and a disabled character who is disabled again becomes dying. See **Damage Conditions** in the following section for more information.

DAMAGE TRACK		
Bruised	**Staggered**	**Unconscious**
	❑	❑
	❑	❑
Injured	**Disabled**	**Dying**

Example: *Nicole is playing Lady Liberty, fighting members of the Power Corps. She's hit by a rank 8 Blast, requiring a Toughness saving throw with a DC of (15 + 8) or 23. Lady Liberty's Toughness save is +10 and Nicole rolls a 10 on the die for a 20 total. Since the save doesn't equal or exceed the DC, Lady Liberty suffers some damage. A 20 doesn't fail by 5 or more, so she takes a bruised result. Nicole puts a mark under the Bruised column of Lady Liberty's damage track.*

DAMAGE TRACK		
Bruised	**Staggered**	**Unconscious**
|	❑	❑
	❑	❑
Injured	**Disabled**	**Dying**

She's struck again by another of the Power Corps, requiring the same Toughness save. This time, she gets a 23. Normally, that would be a successful save, but because of her bruised condition, Lady Liberty is at –1 on Toughness saves against further damage, so she just misses the save, and takes another bruised result, putting a second mark after the first.

DAMAGE TRACK		
Bruised	**Staggered**	**Unconscious**
||	❑	❑
	❑	❑
Injured	**Disabled**	**Dying**

Pressing their advantage, the Power Corps hit the champion of freedom hard. The next round, they score three hits, requiring three Toughness saves, each at –2 for Lady Liberty's current bruised conditions. Nicole rolls totals of 26, 25, and 18 after applying the modifiers. The first two saves result in no damage, but the third fails by 5, so Lady Liberty suffers another bruised result. She's also stunned for one round, until just before the Power Corps' action on the following round.

DAMAGE TRACK		
Bruised	**Staggered**	**Unconscious**
||	❑	❑
	❑	❑
Injured	**Disabled**	**Dying**

This is the opportunity her foe Talona has been waiting for and she leaps out of the shadows of a nearby building to strike with her claws. With Lady Liberty denied her dodge bonus due to the stunned condition, she hits easily for +11 lethal damage (DC 26). Nicole rolls another Toughness save for the beleaguered Lady Liberty, at no penalty for the bruised conditions because this is lethal damage. She gets an 18, which fails by 8, giving another bruised result and stunning her again. Lady Liberty is also injured, since this is a lethal attack, so she marks off an injured condition.

DAMAGE TRACK		
Bruised	**Staggered**	**Unconscious**
|||	❑	❑
|	❑	❑
Injured	**Disabled**	**Dying**

Lady Liberty now has four bruised conditions and one injured condition. She's also stunned until just before Talona's next action. Things are looking bad for the maid of might as her foes close in around her...

DAMAGE CONDITIONS

One or more of the following *damage conditions* apply to a damaged character.

BRUISED

Bruised means the character has been battered and bruised and is in less than top condition. Each bruised condition imposes a –1 penalty on further Toughness saves against nonlethal damage, putting the character closer to being taken out of the fight.

If a Toughness save fails by 5 or more, in addition to the normal effects of the condition, the character is *stunned* for one round: unable to take actions, losing dodge bonus to Defense, and suffering an additional –2 reduction in Defense. This lasts until just before the attacker's turn in the initiative order on the following round.

STAGGERED

A *staggered* character has been badly beaten, barely holding on to consciousness. He can only take a single standard or move action each round (not both).

UNCONSCIOUS

An *unconscious* character is knocked out and helpless. Further damage against an unconscious character is considered lethal.

INJURED

Injured means the character has suffered some minor injury. Each injured condition imposes a –1 penalty on further Toughness saves against lethal damage.

DISABLED

A *disabled* character is conscious and able to act but terribly injured. If a disabled character performs any strenuous action, the character's condition becomes dying on the following round. Strenuous actions include moving all out, attacking, or using any ability requiring physical or mental effort (including most powers).

DYING

A *dying* character is near death. A dying character must make an immediate Fortitude saving throw and an additional save every hour (DC 10 + 1 per previous save). If a save fails, the character dies. If the save succeeds, the character remains dying for another hour. If the save succeeds by 10 or more, or the roll is a natural 20, the character stabilizes; erase the dying condition. The character is now unconscious and disabled (and may recover from both conditions normally).

Another character can stabilize a dying character with a successful use of the Medicine skill (DC 15) or the Healing power (see page 87). The Medicine skill check to stabilize a dying character can be made untrained (as a DC 15 Wisdom check).

DEAD

A *dead* character is, well, dead. Although death is the usually the end, it may not be for superheroes, and it rarely is for supervillains, either. Certain powers, such as Healing and Regeneration, allow dead characters to come back to life, and Gamemasters may also arrange for the return of a dead character as a plot device.

RECOVERY

With rest, characters can make Constitution checks (DC 10) to recover from their damage conditions. The frequency of the checks is based on the severity of the condition. The Regeneration power speeds up a character's recovery checks.

BRUISED

Once per minute of rest (10 rounds), characters can make a Constitution check (DC 10). If successful, they erase one bruised condition. If the check fails, the character can make another in one minute, with a +1 bonus for each failed check. All characters recover at least one bruised condition per 10 minutes. Injured characters must recover from all injuries before they recover from being bruised.

STAGGERED

Once per hour of rest, characters can make a Constitution check (DC 10). If successful, they erase the Staggered damage box. If the check fails, the character can make another in one hour, with a +1 bonus for each failed check. Disabled characters must recover all their disabled boxes before they can recover from being staggered.

UNCONSCIOUS

Once per minute, characters can make a Constitution check (DC 10). If successful, they erase the Unconscious damage box. If the check fails, the character can make another in one minute, with a +1 bonus for each failed check. Dying characters must first stabilize before they can recover from unconsciousness.

INJURED

Once per hour of rest, characters can make a Constitution check (DC 10). If successful, they erase one injured condition. If the check fails, the character can make another in one hour, with a +1 bonus for each failed check. All characters recover at least one injured condition per 10 hours.

DISABLED

Once per day of rest, characters can make a Constitution check (DC 10). If successful, they erase the disabled damage box. If the check fails, the character can make another in one day, with a +1 bonus for each failed check.

> ***Example:*** *After an epic battle with the Star Khan, the Earth hero Daedalus lies dead. Rebels opposed to the Star Khan's tyrannical rule secretly take the body, knowing death is not an end for the eternal inventor. Still, Daedalus has suffered quite a bit of damage. He has the following conditions: bruised (3), injured (3), staggered, disabled, unconscious, and dead.*
>
> *Daedalus' Regeneration allows him to recover from death once each day. A day after his defeat, Daedalus' player makes a DC 10 Constitution check. He chooses to spend a hero point to ensure success (with a minimum roll of 14 for Daedalus: +3 Con bonus and a minimum roll of 11 from the hero point). Now Daedalus is unconscious and disabled.*
>
> *He gets a recovery check in one minute to regain consciousness. The first check rolls a total of 8 and fails, but the second check gets a +1 bonus, rolls a total of 16, and succeeds. Daedalus awakens in two minutes. He's still disabled, staggered, and has his injured and bruised conditions. He has to recover from being disabled before he can make recovery checks for the other conditions.*
>
> *The next day, Daedalus' player makes another recovery check. It fails, so Daedalus waits and rests another day and the player makes another check with a +1 bonus. It succeeds and he eliminates the disabled condition. An hour later, he gets a check to recover from being staggered and succeeds, eliminating that condition and leaving only the bruised and injured conditions. At this point, Daedalus has been out of commission for three days, so his player spends a hero point to recover from all of his bruised and injured conditions at once, and the immortal inventor is ready to face Star Khan again, this time with a plan and the assistance of the rebellion.*

KNOCKBACK

Super-powerful attacks can send opponents flying. A character who is stunned (or worse) by an attack may be knocked back. The distance is based on the power of the attack and the target's mass and durability. Take the attack's damage bonus and subtract half the target's Toughness save bonus (round down). Impervious Toughness save bonus is *not* halved, subtract the full amount instead. Subtract the rank of the target's Immovable power, if any (see page 89). Subtract 4 for each size category larger than Medium (a Huge character subtracts 8, for example). Add 1 for each size category smaller than Medium (a Small character adds 1, for example).

Knockback = attack's damage bonus – one-half Toughness save bonus – modifiers

You can determine most of the modifiers for knockback in advance (adding together the character's Toughness save, size, and Immovable modifiers) and note a single knockback modifier on the character sheet. Then simply compare the attack's damage bonus against the knockback modifier to determine if there's any knockback.

If the result is positive, the target is knocked back. Find the knockback result on the value column of the **Time and Value Progression Table** (see page 70). That's the distance (in feet) the character is knocked back. A result of less than 5 feet means the character falls prone in roughly the same spot (although a short knockback distance may matter if the character is standing on a ledge, for example). So a knockback result of 8, read on the **Time and Value Progression Table**, means the character is knocked back 250 feet.

The character suffers damage equal to the knockback result or the Toughness of any obstacle (such as a wall), whichever is less. The obstacle suffers damage equal to the knockback result (which may damage or break it). If the character breaks through the obstacle, he keeps going the remainder of the knockback distance. If the obstacle is another character, treat the result as a slam attack (see page 158) doing damage equal to the knockback result to both parties. The character ends up prone and must get back up normally.

You can always choose to inflict less than your attack's maximum knockback (just like you can choose to do less than your attack's maximum damage). Targets failing a Toughness save by less than 5 suffer no knockback.

> ***Example:*** *Talos strikes Daedalus with an enchanted bronze fist and stuns him. The immortal inventor may suffer some knockback. Talos' strike has a +13 damage bonus. Daedalus has a total knockback modifier of +6: half his Toughness save of +12 (or +6) and no other modifiers for size or immovability. So the knockback result is 7, sending Daedalus flying 100 feet into a wall. The wall's Toughness is 8, so Daedalus must resist +7 damage (the knockback result, or the lesser of the two values). He does so easily. He's stunned and prone and must spend a move action getting back up as Talos closes in for another attack.*
>
> *Daedalus blasts Talos with his gravitic force beams and scores a critical hit and a stun result! His force beams do +12 damage, +5 for the critical, or +17 total. Talos has a +14 Toughness save, however, all Impervious. He's also Large (a –4 knockback modifier) for a total knockback modifier of –18. Although the mighty blast does some damage to the bronze giant, it doesn't budge him in the slightest.*

ABILITY DAMAGE

Certain powers and effects cause a temporary lose of ability score points. Powers such as Drain (see page 82) specify how quickly characters recover from this loss, usually 1 point per round, modified by things like Slow Fade (see page 110).

Cases where characters lose ability score points due to things like environmental conditions, illness, or similar effects is called *ability damage*. Ability damage is temporary; once the condition causing it is removed, the character recovers lost ability score points at a rate of 1 per day. The Healing power can speed this recovery, as can ranks in Regeneration.

If an ability score is lowered to 0, it is considered debilitated (see page 31).

DAMAGING OBJECTS

Nonliving objects are affected by damage somewhat differently than characters. Each object has a Toughness score representing how well it resists damage. An object's Toughness works like a character's Toughness save bonus. To determine how much damage an object takes from an attack, roll a Toughness save as normal.

SUBSTANCE TOUGHNESS

Substance	Toughness
Paper	0
Soil	0
Glass	1
Ice	1
Rope	1
Wood	3
Stone	5
Iron	8
Steel	10
Titanium	15
Super-Alloys	20+

DAMAGE TO OBJECTS

Objects are only affected by lethal damage. They do not suffer nonlethal damage conditions.

- An "injured" object is damaged and suffers the normal –1 penalty per condition further Toughness saves.
- A "disabled" object is badly damaged. Disabled equipment and devices no longer function, while disabled barriers have holes punched through them, and other disabled objects may be bent, deformed, or otherwise damaged.
- A "dying" object is destroyed. Damaged and disabled objects can be repaired. It's up to the GM whether or not a destroyed object is repairable; if it is, the difficulty of the Craft check is the same as creating an entirely new item.

***Example**: Captain Thunder strikes a wall with a bolt of lightning. The wall has Toughness 10 and the Captain's lightning bolt has a damage bonus of +12. The wall must make a Toughness save (DC 27). The GM rolls an 11 for a total of 21. The wall is damaged, suffering a –1 to saves. The Captain's next lightning bolt strikes and the GM rolls an 8, for an adjusted total of 17. That's 10 less than the DC of 27, so the wall is disabled; the bolt blasts a hole in it.*

The GM may want to simply have objects effectively "take 10" on Toughness saves to simplify matters, as if the object's save result was (10 + Toughness). If the attacker's damage bonus equals the object's Toughness, it's damaged, if it is 5 greater, it's broken, and it it is 10 greater, it is destroyed automatically.

INEFFECTIVE ATTACKS

The GM may decide certain attacks just can't effectively damage certain objects. For example, it's very difficult breaking down an iron door with a knife, or cutting a cable with a club. In these cases the GM may rule an attack inflicts no damage to the object at all (the object effectively has Immunity to that form of damage).

EFFECTIVE ATTACKS

The GM may likewise rule certain attacks are especially effective against some objects. For example, it's easy to light a curtain on fire or rip a piece of cloth. In these cases the GM may increase your damage bonus against the object or simply say the object is automatically destroyed by a successful attack (the object effectively has a Vulnerability to that form of damage).

HEAVY OBJECTS

The Toughness scores given on the **Substance Toughness Table** are for approximately one inch of the material. Heavier objects lower their thresholds on the **Toughness Saving Throw Table** (see page 70) by 1 per increase in thickness on the **Time and Value Progression Table**. So one level of increase means the object is "disabled" if it fails the save by 11 or more and destroyed if it fails by 16 or more. So a foot-thick stone wall has Toughness 8, but it must fail a Toughness save by 13 or more to be disabled, 18 or more to be destroyed. This means heavy objects can generally suffer more hits and heavier damage before they're disabled or destroyed.

DAMAGING DEVICES

Devices have a Toughness of 10 + the device's rank for damage purposes. See **Chapter 7** for more information.

BREAKING OBJECTS

If you want to attack an object that you have in-hand or that no one is preventing you from attacking, such as smashing down a door, bending a metal bar, snapping bonds, or cutting through a wall with a Blast power, you can apply force more effectively. This requires a full-round action. Instead of rolling, assume the object's Toughness save result is equal to (5 + Toughness). Super-Strength adds +1 per rank to your normal Strength bonus for damaging objects in this way (and only in this way). If your damage bonus is equal to the object's Toughness, you break it, 5 or more than the object's Toughness, you destroy it automatically.

FATIGUE

Characters can suffer from *fatigue* as well as damage. This usually results from tasks requiring great effort, such as moving all out, exertion in difficult environments, and extra effort (see page 120). The Fatigue power (see page 85) also causes fatigue. There are two fatigued conditions: fatigued and exhausted.

FATIGUED

Fatigued characters cannot move all out or charge and suffer a –2 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity and a –1 penalty on attack and defense. A fatigued character who does something else or suffers an effect that would normally cause fatigue becomes exhausted.

EXHAUSTED

Exhausted characters are near collapse. They move at half normal speed and suffer a –6 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity and a –3 penalty on attack and defense. An exhausted character suffering another fatigue result falls unconscious (and must recover from it, as well as the fatigue, normally).

REST AND RECOVERY

Every hour of rest, a fatigued or exhausted character makes a Constitution check (DC 10). Success reduces the character's fatigue condition by one level (from exhausted to fatigued, from fatigued to normal). A full ten hours of rest allows any character to completely recover from any fatigue.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Not all of the hazards heroes face come from supervillains. Sometimes the environment itself can be a danger, particularly when villains try to use it to their advantage. Heroes end up in a lot of dangerous places and deal with less than ideal conditions. This section details some of the hazards heroes may face out in the world.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Criminals often lurk in the darkness, and many crimes take place at night. Most cities are lit well enough, but sometimes heroes run into areas where it's difficult to see. Poorly lit areas provide concealment for those in them (see **Concealment**, page 161). Characters with Super-Senses such as darkvision can ignore concealment because of poor lighting.

HEAT AND COLD

Intense heat and cold wear down characters, while prolonged exposure to the elements can be extremely dangerous.

Characters in hot or cold conditions must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 10, +1 per previous check) to avoid suffering 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. Those who have suffered Constitution damage from heat or cold are fatigued. Characters who have lost half or more of their Con score are exhausted, while characters with a Con score of less than

3 are unconscious. Characters with Con 0 are dying. Lost Constitution returns at a rate of 1 point per day.

How often the saving throw is called for depends on the conditions. Once an hour for uncomfortable heat or cold (a hot summer day or cold winter day), once per 10 minutes for intense heat or cold (a blazing desert or arctic conditions), once a minute for extreme heat or cold like the edge of a volcano or an arctic winter storm. Saves are made at the end of each period of exposure. Truly intense heat or cold—such as a blast furnace or touching liquid nitrogen—inflicts direct damage like an attack.

Heavy clothing imposes a –4 penalty on saves vs. heat, but a +4 bonus on saves vs. cold. Heroes with the Survival skill may gain a bonus to their saves against heat and cold (see page 55). Characters with the appropriate Immunity do not need to make Fortitude saves for extreme temperatures.

STARVATION AND THIRST

Heroes can go without water for a day. After this, they need to make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10, +1 per previous save) each hour to avoid suffering 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. Heroes can go without food for three days. After this, they must make a Fortitude save (DC 10, +1 per previous save) each day to avoid suffering 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. Those suffering Constitution damage due to starvation and/or thirst are fatigued and cannot recover until they regain all lost Constitution. Characters who have lost half or more of their Con score are exhausted, while those with a Con score of less than 3 are unconscious. Characters with Con 0 are dying. Lost Constitution returns at a rate of 1 point per day. The character cannot recover until he gets water or food. Heroes with Immunity to Starvation can go an unlimited time without food or water.

SUFFOCATION

Characters can hold their breath for one round per point of Constitution—twice that if they can prepare for one round by taking a deep breath (as a full-round action). After that time they must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10) to continue holding their breath. The save must be repeated each round, with the DC increasing by +1 for each previous success. Failure on the Fortitude save means the character becomes unconscious. On the following round the character is dying. A dying character cannot stabilize until able to breathe again, and loses a point of Constitution per round until dead (at Con 0). Lost Constitution returns at a rate of 1 point per day. If the GM wants an additional amount of realism, the character also suffers a point of permanent Int loss for every 2 points of Con lost, since oxygen starvation causes brain damage.

FALLING

Characters may suffer damage from falls of 10 feet or more. Characters with the Acrobatics skill can fall greater distances without risk of damage (see **Acrobatics**, page 40). Falls have a damage bonus of +1 per 10 feet fallen. So the Toughness save against a fall of 50 feet would be DC 20 (15 + 1 per 10 feet fallen). The maximum damage bonus of a fall is +20 (at 200 feet) for a DC of 35. After that point the character reaches terminal velocity and doesn't fall any faster. Falling into or onto a dangerous surface may cause additional damage, at the GM's discretion.

Catching a falling person or object requires a Dexterity check (DC 5). Taking 10 on the check ensures success for most characters. If you successfully catch a falling object, subtract your Strength bonus (if any) from the falling damage. Both you and the object suffer any remaining falling damage. So if a character with Strength 22 (a +6 bonus) catches someone falling 120 feet (a +12 damage bonus), subtract 6 from 12, and both characters suffer +6 damage. If the catcher is using a power—such as Flight or Telekinesis—to catch the falling object, the power's rank can be substituted for Strength bonus at the GM's discretion.

POISON

A deadly toxin introduced through a scratch, or even in the air, may be able to fell the strongest hero. Poisons generally have one of several effects: Blast, Drain, Fatigue, Nauseate, and Paralyze among them. Some poisons may have multiple linked effects (see **Linked**, page 112). A poison effect has the Poison modifier (see page 113).

Heroes with the Immunity to Poison feat are completely unaffected by poisons. A Medicine skill check can substitute for a saving throw against poison if the skill check result is higher.

DISEASE

When heroes come into contact with a disease they must make a Fortitude saving throw against 10 + the disease's rank to avoid becoming infected. The method of infection depends on the disease: some are airborne while others require physical contact. Diseases generally have one of several effects: Blast, Drain, Fatigue, Nauseate, and Paralyze among them. Some diseases may have multiple linked effects (see **Linked**, page 112). A disease effect has the Disease modifier (see page 112).

Heroes with Immunity to Disease automatically succeed on saving throws against disease. A Medicine skill check can substitute for a saving throw against disease.

RADIATION

Radiation in the comic books often causes mutations or triggers latent powers in those exposed to it rather than simply causing radiation sickness. Exposure to radiation (especially exotic or alien radiation) may be an opportunity for a complication (see **Complications**, page 122).

Otherwise the Gamemaster can treat radiation exposure like a disease. The victim makes an initial Fortitude saving throw against (DC 10 + radiation's intensity rank) to avoid initial ability score damage and an additional save each day to avoid further damage. At the GM's discretion, radiation exposure can lead to other effects, such as damage to a hero's power ranks (causing a temporary decrease in powers).

GRAVITY

The force gravity exerts on a person determines their ability to perform certain actions. In addition, gravity affects the amount of damage a character takes from falling. Gravity may vary considerably from one environment to the next. For ease of play these rules present four simplified gravity environments: normal gravity, low gravity, high gravity, and zero gravity (0 G). The following sections summarize the game effects for each type of environment.

NORMAL GRAVITY

"Normal gravity" equates to gravity on Earth. Environments with normal gravity impose no special modifiers on a character's ability scores, attack rolls, or skill checks. Likewise, normal gravity does not modify a creature's speed, carrying capacity, or the amount of damage it takes from a fall.

LOW-GRAVITY

In a low-gravity environment, the pull of gravity is significantly less than we experience on Earth. Although an object's mass doesn't change, it becomes effectively lighter. This means creatures bounce when they walk. It becomes easier to move and lift heavy objects as well as perform Strength-related tasks. In addition, creatures take less damage from falling.

- **Speed:** A creature's speed increases by +5 feet in a low-gravity environment. This bonus applies to all of the creature's modes of movement.
- **Carrying Capacity:** A creature's normal carrying capacity is doubled in a low-gravity environment.
- **Movement:** Creatures in a low-gravity environment gain a +10 bonus on Climb checks and an effective +20 Strength for jumping.
- **Attack Roll Penalty:** Creatures take a –2 penalty on attack rolls in a low-gravity environment unless they are native to that environment or have the Environmental Adaptation feat.
- **Damage from Falling:** Creatures do not fall as quickly in a low-gravity environment as they do in a normal- or high-gravity environment. Falling damage is halved.
- **Long-Term Effects:** Long-term exposure to low-gravity conditions can cause serious problems when returning to normal gravity. A creature that spends 120 hours or more in a low-gravity environment takes 2 points of temporary Strength damage upon returning to normal gravity, which recovers at a rate of 1 point per day.

HIGH-GRAVITY

In a high-gravity environment, the pull of gravity is significantly greater than we experience on Earth. Although an object's mass doesn't change, it becomes effectively heavier. It becomes harder to move and carry heavy objects as well as perform Strength-related tasks. In addition, creatures take more damage from falling. Even the simple task of walking or lifting one's arms feels more laborious.

- **Speed:** A creature's speed decreases by –5 feet (to a minimum of 0 feet) in a high-gravity environment. This penalty applies to all of the creature's modes of movement.
- **Carrying Capacity:** A creature's normal carrying capacity is halved in a high-gravity environment.
- **Movement:** Creatures in a high-gravity environment take a –10 penalty on Climb skill checks and suffer a –10 penalty to Strength for jumping.
- **Attack Roll Penalty:** Creatures take a –2 penalty on attack rolls in a high-gravity environment unless they are native to that environment or have the Environmental Adaptation feat.
- **Damage from Falling:** Creatures fall more quickly in a high-gravity environment than they do in a normal- or low-gravity environment. Falling damage is increased 50% in a high-gravity environment.
- **Long-Term Effects:** Long-term exposure to high-gravity conditions can cause serious problems when returning to normal gravity. A creature that spends 120 hours or more in a heavy-gravity environment takes 2 points of temporary Dexterity damage upon returning to normal gravity, which recovers at a rate of 1 point per day.

ZERO GRAVITY

Creatures in a zero gravity environment can move enormously heavy objects. As movement in zero gravity requires only the ability to grab onto or push away from larger objects, climbing and jumping no longer apply.

Most creatures find zero gravity environments disorienting, taking penalties on their attack rolls and suffering the effects of Space Adaptation Syndrome (space sickness). In addition, creatures in zero gravity are easier to rush than in other gravity environments.

WEIGHT VS. MASS

While an object in zero gravity loses weight, it does not lose mass or momentum. Thus, while a character could push a 10-ton piece of equipment around in space, albeit slowly, getting it to stop is a bit more difficult. If a character were to come between that piece of equipment and a solid object, that character would be crushed as if he were in full gravity—just more slowly.

For simplicity, assume Strength used to lift or move an object in zero gravity gains a bonus to carrying capacity. However, stopping an object already in motion does not receive this same bonus (use the character's normal carrying capacity).

- **Space Adaptation Syndrome:** A creature exposed to weightlessness must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid the effects of space sickness. Those who fail the save are shaken, and those who fail the save by 5 or more are also nauseated. The effects persist for 8 hours. A new save is required every 8 hours the creature remains in a zero-g environment. Creatures with the Environmental Adaptation feat do not suffer the effects of space sickness.
- **Speed:** While in a zero-gravity environment, a creature gains a "flying" speed equal to its base land speed, or it retains its normal flying speed (whichever is greater). However, this "flying" movement is limited to straight lines only; a creature can change course only by pushing away from larger objects.
- **Carrying Capacity:** A creature's normal carrying capacity increases by 10 times in a zero gravity environment.
- **Attack Roll Penalty:** Creatures take a –4 penalty on attack rolls and skill checks while operating in a zero-gravity environment unless they are native to that environment or have the Environmental Adaptation feat.
- **Modified Rush Rules:** A creature affected by a rush attack is pushed back 10 feet, plus 10 feet for every 5 points by which its opponent's Strength check result exceeds its own.
- **Long-Term Effects:** Long-term exposure to zero gravity conditions can cause serious problems when returning to normal gravity. A creature that spends 120 hours or more in a zero gravity environment takes 4 points of temporary Strength damage upon returning to normal gravity, which recovers at a rate of 1 point per day.

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS

As with variants in gravity, a change in atmospheric conditions can cause problems for characters. Unfortunately, not every planet has the same atmospheric density or chemical composition as Earth, meaning worlds otherwise hospitable to human life may not be ideal for humans born and raised on Earth. Various atmospheric conditions (and their effects) are presented here.

CORROSIVE ATMOSPHERE

Some atmospheres (breathable or not) contain corrosive chemicals and gases. Corrosive atmospheres slowly eat away at foreign equipment and can cause significant equipment failure. The corrosion can be particularly troublesome in atmospheres that demand special survival gear, as any breach in a protective environmental suit renders it useless. Unprotected equipment exposed to a corrosive atmosphere loses 1 point of Toughness per hour of exposure. Creatures not wearing protective gear in a corrosive atmosphere suffer +1 lethal damage with the Poison modifier (see page 113) per round of exposure.

THIN ATMOSPHERE

Planets with thin atmospheres have less oxygen than the standard Earth atmosphere. Many thin atmospheres are the equivalent of being at a high elevation on Earth, such as on top of a mountain or in the upper atmosphere. When dealing with thin atmosphere conditions, the character must make a Fortitude save to see if he suffers any ill effects. Being under such conditions can be disorienting and can cause a character to become sluggish, slowly whittling the character down as the brain is deprived of normal levels of oxygen.

THICK ATMOSPHERE

Thick atmospheres are those containing a more dense concentration of certain elements, like nitrogen, oxygen, or even carbon dioxide, than the standard Earth atmosphere. These dense atmospheres sometimes contain a different balance of elements, while others simply contain a higher number of gas particles in each breath. Regardless of the form, a thick atmosphere can be just as dangerous as a thin atmosphere over a long period of time. Though atmospheres that are slightly thicker than normal do not have as significant an effect as slightly thinner atmospheres, remaining in a thicker atmosphere causes the same drain on the body.

TOXIC ATMOSPHERE

Some atmospheres (breathable or not) contain toxic gases that are debilitating or lethal to some or all forms of life. The atmosphere is treated as always containing a type of inhaled poison (see **Poison**, page 168).

VACUUM

The primary hazards of the vacuum of space are lack of air and exposure to unfiltered ionizing radiation.

On the third round of exposure to vacuum, a creature must succeed on a Constitution check (DC 20) each round or suffer from aeroembolism ("the bends"). A failed save means excruciating pain as small air bubbles form in the creature's bloodstream; the creature is considered stunned and remains so until returned to normal atmospheric pressure. A failure by 5 or more also causes unconsciousness.

The real danger of vacuum comes from suffocation, though holding one's breath in vacuum damages the lungs. A character who attempts to hold his breath must make a Constitution check (DC 15) every round; the DC increases by 1 each round, and on a successful check the character takes 1 point of Constitution damage (from the pressure on the linings of his lungs). If the check fails, or when the character simply stops holding his breath, he begins to suffocate. In the next round, he becomes disabled and unconscious. The following round, he's dying. On the third round, he dies.

Unfiltered radiation bombards any character trapped in the vacuum of space without protective gear. A creature exposed to this ionizing radiation suffers from the effects of radiation exposure (see **Radiation**, page 168).

CONDITION SUMMARY

This section describes the different adverse conditions that can affect characters. If multiple conditions apply to a character, apply all of their effects. If effects conflict, apply the most severe.

- **Ability Damaged:** The character has temporarily lost 1 or more ability score points. Lost ability score points return at a rate of 1 per day, or according to the effect which lowered the score (usually 1 per round for trait effect powers like Drain).
- **Blinded:** The character cannot see at all, and thus everything has total visual concealment from him. He has a 50% chance to miss in combat, loses his dodge bonus to Defense, and suffers an additional –2 modifier to Defense. He moves at half speed and suffers a –4 penalty on most Strength

and Dexterity-based skill checks. He cannot make Notice (spot) skill checks or perform any other activity (such as reading) requiring vision.

- **Bruised:** The character has suffered some minor damage. Each bruised condition imposes a –1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further nonlethal damage.
- **Dazed:** A dazed character can take no actions, but retains dodge bonus to Defense.
- **Dead:** The character is dead. A dead body generally decays, but effects allowing a character to come back from death restore the body to full health or to its condition immediately prior to death. Either way, characters who have come back from the dead needn't worry about rigor mortis, decomposition, and other similar sorts of unpleasantness.
- **Deafened:** A deafened character cannot hear and suffers a –4 penalty to initiative checks. He cannot make Notice (listen) checks.
- **Debilitated:** The character has one or more ability scores lowered to 0. A character with Strength 0 falls prone and is helpless. A character with Dexterity 0 is paralyzed. A character with Constitution 0 is dying. A character with Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma 0 is unconscious.
- **Disabled:** A disabled character is conscious and able to act but badly injured. He can take only a single attack or move action each round, and if he performs any strenuous action, his condition changes to dying after the completing the action. Strenuous actions include moving all out, attacking, or using any ability requiring physical exertion or mental concentration (including any power requiring a standard action).
- **Dying:** A dying character is unconscious and near death. Upon gaining this condition the character must immediately make a Fortitude save (DC 10). If the save fails, the character dies. Dying characters make this save each hour thereafter, with a cumulative +1 to the DC for every hour they remain dying. If the save succeeds by 10 or more or the roll is a natural 20, the character automatically stabilizes and becomes unconscious and disabled (and may recover from both conditions normally). Another character can stabilize a dying character with a successful Medicine check (DC 15) or through the use of a power like Healing (see page 87).
- **Entangled:** An entangled character suffers a –2 penalty to attack rolls, a –2 penalty to Defense, and a –4 penalty to effective Dexterity. If the bonds are anchored to an immobile object, the entangled character cannot move. Otherwise, he can move at half speed, but can't move all out or charge. An already entangled character who is entangled again becomes helpless.
- **Exhausted:** Exhausted characters are near collapse. They move at half normal speed and suffer a –6 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity and a –3 penalty on attack and defense. An exhausted character suffering another fatigue result falls unconscious (and must recover from it normally).
- **Fascinated:** Entranced by an effect. A fascinated character stands or sits, taking no actions other than to pay attention to the fascinating effect, for as long as the effect lasts. The character takes a –4 penalty on checks made as reactions, such as Notice checks. Any potential threat allows the fascinated character a new saving throw or resistance check to overcome the fascination. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, using an offensive power, or aiming an attack at the fascinated character, automatically breaks the fascination. An ally can shake a fascinated character free of the effect with an aid action.
- **Fatigued:** Fatigued characters cannot move all out or charge and suffer a –2 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity and a –1 penalty on attack and defense. A fatigued character who does something else that would normally cause fatigue becomes exhausted.
- **Flat-Footed:** A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not yet reacting to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his dodge bonus to Defense.
- **Frightened:** A frightened character tries to flee from the source of the fear as quickly as possible. If unable to flee, the character is shaken.
- **Grappled:** Engaged in wrestling or some other form of hand-to-hand struggle with one or more attackers. A grappled character cannot move or take any action more complicated than making a barehanded attack, using a small weapon or a power, or attempting to break free from the grapple. In addition, grappled characters lose any dodge bonus against opponents they aren't grappling.
- **Helpless:** Sleeping, bound, paralyzed or unconscious characters are helpless. Enemies can make advantageous attacks against helpless characters, or even deliver a coup de grace. A melee attack against a helpless character is at a +4 bonus on the attack roll (equivalent to attacking a prone target). A helpless character loses any dodge bonus and takes a –9 penalty to Defense against attacks from adjacent opponents, and a –5 penalty to Defense against ranged attacks.
- **Incorporeal:** Having no physical body. Incorporeal characters are immune to attacks from corporeal sources. They can be harmed only by other incorporeal beings or attacks with the Affects Incorporeal modifier (see page 111). Mental and sensory effects work normally on incorporeal beings.
- **Injured:** The character has suffered minor damage. Each injured condition imposes a –1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further lethal damage.
- **Invisible:** Virtually undetectable. Invisible characters gain a +2 bonus to hit defenders unaware of them, and such defenders lose their dodge bonus to Defense. Attacks against invisible characters have a 50% miss chance.
- **Nauseated:** Nauseated characters can only take a single move action each round, meaning they are unable to attack (or take other standard actions) or move all out (or take other full-round actions).
- **Normal:** The character is unharmed and unaffected by other conditions, acting normally.
- **Panicked:** A panicked character flees as fast as possible or cowers, dazed, if unable to get away. A panicked character defends normally but cannot attack.
- **Paralyzed:** A paralyzed character stands rigid and helpless, unable to move or act physically. He has effective Strength and Dexterity scores of 0 but may take purely mental actions (including using powers that do not require a physical action or attack roll). A paralyzed character's Defense score is 5, the same as an inanimate object.
- **Pinned:** Held immobile (but not helpless) in a grapple. Pinned characters lose their dodge bonus and suffer a –4 penalty to Defense.
- **Prone:** The character is lying on the ground. He suffers a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls. Opponents receive a +4 bonus on melee attacks against him but a –4 penalty on ranged attacks. Standing up is a move action.
- **Shaken:** A shaken character has a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and checks.
- **Sickened:** A sickened character has a –2 penalty on attack rolls and checks.
- **Slowed:** A slowed character can only take a standard or move action each round (not both). The character takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls, Defense, and Reflex saves. A slowed character moves at half normal speed.
- **Stable:** A stable character is no longer dying, but is still unconscious and disabled and must recover from those conditions normally.
- **Staggered:** A staggered character can take a single move or standard action each round, not both. Any further damage to a staggered character shifts the character's condition to unconscious.
- **Stunned:** The character loses any dodge bonus to Defense, takes a –2 modifier to Defense, and cannot take actions other than reactions.
- **Unconscious:** Knocked out and helpless.

CHAPTER 9: GAMEMASTERING

One player takes responsibility for running a *Mutants & Masterminds* game. The Gamemaster creates the adventure, runs the players through it, takes on the roles of the various other characters the players encounter, and handles any questions about the rules as they arise. While Gamemastering is a big responsibility, it's not as hard as it might seem, and providing a fun and entertaining game for your friends can be quite rewarding.

This chapter looks at the three main responsibilities of the Gamemaster: running the game, creating adventures, and portraying the world where the adventures take place.

RUNNING THE GAME

While the players are responsible for keeping track of their characters and deciding on their actions, the Gamemaster is responsible for everything else that happens in the game. A good GM tries to make sure the game runs as smoothly as possible and is enjoyable for all of the players. Many components go into creating a good *Mutants & Masterminds* series. The following sections give you the basics, but experience is the best tool to help you become a better Gamemaster.

THE ESSENTIALS OF MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS

The essence of the *Mutants & Masterminds* game system is actually quite simple. The vast majority of the rules in this book expand upon the core mechanics of the system, providing special-case rules or situational modifiers. So long as you understand the essentials of the game, you can handle just about any situation that comes up.

Those interested in playing in a loose and casual style should focus on these fundamentals of the game and not worry about the special-case rules or more detailed guidelines. If you come up with an unexpected situation, just choose an appropriate type of check, a Difficulty Class, and make a roll to see if the character succeeds or not! It's that simple.

MODIFIERS

Every trait in *Mutants & Masterminds*—ability scores, skills, powers, and so forth—has an associated *modifier*, a value telling you how strong (or weak) that trait is. Modifiers tend to run from –5 (very weak) all the way up to +30 (incredibly strong) or more. You can rate virtually any trait by its associated modifier.

DIFFICULTY CLASSES

Every task—from making an attack to avoiding harm to figuring out a gadget—has a *Difficulty Class* or *DC*, a value that tells you how difficult that task is to perform. DCs range from 0 (automatic, so easy it's not worth rolling) to 40 (nearly impossible).

CHECKS

Actions in *Mutants & Masterminds* are resolved through *checks*, a roll of a 20-sided die, plus a modifier. If the total of the check equals or exceeds the Difficulty Class, the action is a success. If it doesn't, then it's a failure. Beneficial conditions apply a +2 bonus on the check, adverse conditions impose a –2 penalty. This is true whether you're trying to use a skill, make an attack, avoid harm (with a saving throw), or use a power.

SAVING THROWS

Avoiding an effect is a saving throw, with a Difficulty Class of 10 + the effect's modifier or rank. A successful save means you avoid the effect, a failed save means you suffer some (or all) of the effect.

THAT'S IT!

That's the core of *Mutants & Masterminds:* roll d20 + modifiers vs. the Difficulty Class. If you understand that, you can do pretty much anything in the game. The rest is just detail. When in doubt, or whenever you want to speed the game along, just have a player make an appropriate check against a DC based on how difficult the task is and you can't really go wrong.

MODIFYING THE ROLL OR THE DIFFICULTY

There are two ways of making a task easier or harder: modify the character's die roll or modify the task's DC. Generally speaking, circumstances that positively or negatively affect a character's performance, like having just the right tools for the job or being forced to improvise, apply a modifier to the die roll. Circumstances that make the task easier or harder to accomplish—like a favorable or unfavorable environment, or a particularly demanding task—modify the Difficulty Class. If a condition applies to the character, like knowledge, health, equipment, preparedness, etc. it's usually a dice modifier. If a condition applies to the environment or to the task itself, it's usually a DC modifier. It doesn't have to be too fine a line, since modifying the die roll or the DC amounts to the same thing in the end—the task is easier or harder to accomplish.

In either case (modifying the die roll or the DC), you don't need to inform the player. In fact, most of the time you *shouldn't* inform the player, since it keeps the character's chances of success a secret and makes the task that much more dramatic and interesting. If the player asks you may offer a general idea of how difficult the task is, based on what the character would know. Usually an answer like "it's fairly easy for you" or "you think it will be quite difficult" is sufficient.

CIRCUMSTANCE MODIFIERS

A good rule of thumb is favorable circumstances grant a +2 bonus on a check (or a –2 modifier to the DC), while unfavorable circumstances impose a –2 penalty on the check (or a +2 modifier to the DC). This allows you to quickly assess the conditions in the adventure and assign an appropriate modifier a check without having to consult a lot of charts and tables.

TAKING 10 AND 20

Keep in mind opportunities for characters to take 10 and take 20 on their checks (see **Checks Without Rolls**, page 10). Characters can take 10 on a roll any time they're not rushed, threatened, or distracted. Characters can take 20 under the same circumstances so long as there's no penalty for failing the roll. This means you can dispense with rolls for most routine

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ASSIGNING DIFFICULTIES

Mutants & Masterminds adventures can be broken down into a series of tasks the heroes must perform, from piecing together clues about a villain's latest scheme to blasting said villain through a wall and disarming his doomsday device in the nick of time. It's up to the Gamemaster to assign the difficulty of these and numerous other tasks in the game and to determine the outcome of the heroes' efforts. Combat has detailed rules described in **Chapter 8**, while skills and powers are covered in **Chapter 3** and **Chapter 5**, respectively. This section offers some general guidelines on assigning the difficulty of a task, based on the information from those chapters.

tasks the characters encounter. If a character wants to disable a device, for example, and his Disable Device bonus plus 10 is equal to or greater than the DC, don't bother having the player roll. The character just succeeds, so long as there's no great urgency. If the device in question is a nuclear bomb and it's counting down to detonation, however, the associated stress and risk means the character can't take 10.

When coming up with Difficulty Classes for actions, keep the take 10 and take 20 rules in mind. If the DC is low enough that *anyone* can take 10 and succeed, then it may be too low, or the action may be too trivial to worry about, unless the situation is tense and dramatic.

THE 50/50 RULE

Another good guideline to keep in mind is the chance of an average character (with a modifier of +0) succeeding at an average task (DC 10) is 50%. So any time you have to have an average character do something, or want to set a difficulty you feel is average for a particular character, aim for about a 50% chance of success. If you want to know what bonus is required to have a 50% chance of succeeding at a particular task, just subtract 10 from the DC. So a DC 25 action (a formidable task) requires a bonus of +15 in order to have a 50% chance of success.

Keep in mind that a 50/50 chance on a task allows a character to take 10 and automatically succeed at that task under routine conditions. This is intentional; the average character only really fails at an average task when hurried or under stress, unable to take 10 in order to succeed. A 50/50 chance also allows a player to spend a hero point to automatically succeed, since a hero point adds +10 to the die roll.

DIFFICULTY CLASS EXAMPLES

Difficulty	DC	Example	Modifier Needed for 50/50
Very easy	0	Notice something large in plain sight	None (automatic)
Easy	5	Climb a knotted rope	–5 (Str 1)
Average	10	Hear a group walking 30 feet away	+0 (Wis 10)
Tough	15	Disarm an explosive	+5 (Disable Device)
Challenging	20	Walk a tightrope	+10 (Acrobatics)
Formidable	25	Break into a secure computer system	+15 (Computers)
Heroic	30	Overcome a sophisticated security system	+20 (Disable Device)
Super-Heroic	35	Bluff your way past very wary guards	+25 (Bluff)
Nearly Impossible	40	Open an impossibly complex lock in 1 round	+30 (Disable Device)

SECRET CHECKS

Sometimes it's a good idea to make checks secretly, so the players don't necessarily know the result. This is usually the case for any sort of check where the characters don't immediately know whether they've succeeded or failed. For example, Notice checks usually should be made secretly. If the check succeeds, the character notices something. If it fails, then the player doesn't know whether it's because the character failed to notice something or there wasn't anything there to notice in the first place. The same is true for checks involving powers like Mind Reading or Precognition, and certain interaction checks, since the player doesn't necessarily know the target's initial attitude or exactly how much it has improved.

One easy way of making secret checks is to make a list of random d20 rolls in advance. When there's a need for a secret check during the game, mark off one of the rolls from your list and use that for the check result.

ALTERING THE OUTCOME OF DIE ROLLS

On occasion the outcome of a particular die roll may seriously impact the game. For example, the heroes are walking into a trap and none of them make the necessary check to notice the danger in time. Or a hero gets in a lucky shot and the villain rolls a 1 on his Toughness saving throw resulting in a quick defeat. What do you do?

In some cases, you can just go with the outcome the dice give you. If none of the heroes spot the trap, have it go off. Odds are the heroes will only end up captured and will have the opportunity to escape and thwart the villain later on in the adventure. Even if the results of the die roll are unexpected, so long as they don't spoil the fun of the adventure, feel free to go with them. Unexpected twists and turns can be fun, not only for the players, but also for you when you run the game. Award the players a hero point for the setback, and continue on with the game.

On the other hand, some die rolls result in anticlimactic or just plain dumb outcomes. In these cases, feel free to change things a little to make the outcome more interesting or more in line with how the game should go. In the above example, you might decide that the villain is only stunned rather than being knocked out, giving the heroes the upper hand, but not ending the climatic encounter prematurely.

Isn't this cheating? Well, yes, in a manner of speaking it is, but it's "cheating" in order to make the game more interesting and fun for everyone involved. So long as you don't alter the outcome of die rolls unfairly or maliciously and you do it to help ensure the game is fun, interesting, and challenging, you shouldn't have a problem. Beside, the players don't have to *know* you change the occasional die roll. That's one of the reasons it's a good idea for Gamemasters to roll their dice out of sight of the players and then announce the results.

FAKING IT

Sometimes you'll run into a situation in the game the rules don't cover, or that you're not sure how to handle. In these cases, feel free to just fake it. Come up with a roll or rolls you feel suits the situation and go with it, so you can keep the game moving rather than getting bogged down in page flipping and rules arguments. One of the great things about the *Mutants & Masterminds* system is pretty much everything can be resolved with a simple action check. So when all else fails, just have a player make a check with the most appropriate trait (ability, skill, or power). If the check beats your estimation of the Difficulty Class, it's a success. Otherwise, it's a failure.

You also can fake it when dealing with certain trivial situations in the game. If there's an important piece of information you want the players to know, don't bother seeing if they succeed at a Search check. You can pretend to make the checks, then ignore the results and tell the players what their heroes find. Likewise, if a 10th-level hero is going to take out a 1st-level minion, you don't *have* to make all the rolls. Just ask the player to describe how the hero defeats the hapless thug.

INTERACTION

There's more to superhero adventures than just slugfests and trading energy blasts. Characters also interact in various ways. Villains threaten and give long-winded speeches about their brilliant master plans. Heroes make wisecracks or offer stirring speeches about heroism and duty. Heroes often must interact with the public and the media, or with authorities or government officials. Heroes also interact with each other, which can sometimes lead to conflict before they agree to cooperate.

Generally, the Gamemaster determines the attitude of any NPC the heroes encounter during the game. The heroes can then try to influence the non-player character's attitude using Charisma and various related skills (such as Diplomacy or Intimidation). The **Interaction Table** shows the effects of character attitudes and the difficulty class of attempting to change an NPC's attitude with a Charisma or skill check. Note that a particularly bad Interaction roll can actually make an NPC's attitude *worse*. For example, a result of less than 5 makes an unfriendly character turn hostile. In general, a hero can attempt to influence another character only once (see **Chapter 3** for details on retrying interaction skills).

While heroes can use their Charisma and skills to influence NPC attitudes and NPCs can do the same to other NPCs, note that heroes generally cannot affect the attitudes of other heroes, nor can NPCs modify their attitudes. The players choose the attitudes of their heroes and when they change. Only powers like Emotion Control and Mind Control can influence a hero's attitude.

MAINTAINING GAME BALANCE

Part of the Gamemaster's job is to make sure the game is fair and balanced, so everyone can have a good time and all the heroes have an equal chance of doing some fun and exciting things in the course of the adventure. It can be tricky sometimes, but *Mutants & Masterminds* gives you some tools for balancing the traits of the heroes and handling problems that may come up.

RULES ISSUES & HOUSE RULES

While this book does its best to present a complete and balanced game system for superhero roleplaying, no one game system is perfectly suited to every gaming group's needs and tastes, and *Mutants & Masterminds* is no exception. Sooner or later, issues may arise over particular rules and how they are applied in your game. In some cases, it may be an unexpected situation not covered by the existing rules, and requiring you to extrapolate and come up with a ruling. In other situations, a particular rule may be problematic, making the game less fun for everyone because it doesn't suit your style of play.

In all situations, remember Rule Number One (see page 7). *If a rule doesn't suit your gaming group, then by all means, change it!* A corollary of Rule Number One: *the Gamemaster overrules the rules.* That is, if you decide to make up a particular "house rule" about how something works in your game, or to interpret something from the rulebook in a particular way, then that's the way it works in your game. Players should be respectful of the Gamemaster's job to set up and regulate the rules of the game for everyone's enjoyment. Any disputes should be discussed with an eye toward finding a solution everyone finds satisfactory, rather than trying to stick to the exact letter of the rules. The spirit of *Mutants & Masterminds* is to have fun. As long as you focus on that, you can't be far off.

INTERACTION

Attitude	Means	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to hurt or avoid you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't much care	Act as socially expected
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to help you	Protect, back up, heal, aid
Fanatic	Will do anything for you	Fight to the death under overwhelming odds

ATTITUDE

Initial Attitude	New Attitude					
	Hostile	Unfrien.	Indiff.	Friendly	Helpful	Fanatic
Hostile	19 or less	20	25	35	45	150
Unfriendly	4 or less	5	15	25	35	120
Indifferent	—	0 or less	1	15	25	90
Friendly	—	—	0 or less	1	15	60
Helpful	—	—	—	0 or less	1	50

UNBALANCED HEROES

The power level limits built into the rules help ensure *Mutants & Masterminds* characters of the same power level are at least in the same general ballpark in terms of overall combat effectiveness. Still, there may be times when a particular combination of powers and abilities makes a character too powerful when compared to the other heroes or to the villains in your campaign.

When this happens, talk to the player and ask him or her to change the character's traits to something more balanced and better suited to the campaign. If necessary, explain that the character makes things less fun for everyone as-is and changing the character will make the game better for everyone. Suggest some possible changes to make the character balance out better.

SAYING NO TO YOUR PLAYERS

A big part of maintaining game balance is the ability to say "no" to your players and to set some guidelines for characters and stick to them. Some of those guidelines are already in place: the limits imposed by power level. They help ensure players can't just put all their power points into a single overwhelming combat trait (like a +30 attack bonus, or something similar).

Even with those limits in place, there may be times when a player comes up with a character concept or trait that isn't suited for the game and can be unbalancing. For example, it can be hard to run mysteries around a hero with a lot of ranks of Mind Reading. If you plan to have mystery stories, you may want to consider limiting Mind Reading, Postcognition, and similar powers, or finding innovative ways for villains to get around those powers. If you're running a four-color game in which lethal attacks are rare and a player wants to run a blood-thirsty vigilante hero, you may just have to say no and ask the player to come up with another idea.

Having standards for your series and sticking to them can save you a lot of trouble in the long run by heading off problems before they happen.

SAYING YES TO YOUR PLAYERS

Many roleplaying games (even this one) spend a lot of time telling you how to say "no" to your players: how to tell them a power they want is unbalanced, how to tell them the character they have in mind doesn't fit into the group, and so forth. Some might get the idea that it's the Gamemaster's job just to say "no" and frustrate the players. Nothing could be further from the truth! True, sometimes you must be firm and say "no" to something for the betterment of the series and to safeguard everyone's enjoyment, but a Gamemaster who also learns to say "yes" to the players can ensure everyone has fun.

Players are a cunning lot, so it's a virtual certainty that, sooner or later, they will come up with something for their heroes to do that's not covered in the rules. It may be a particularly innovative maneuver, a new use for a skill or power, using the environment to their advantage in some way, or something you never would have considered before. When this happens, take a moment and ask yourself: "Would it be fun if what the player is proposing happened?" A good way to think about it is, if you saw something similar in a comic book or a superhero cartoon or movie, would it be cool? If the answer is "yes" then you probably should let the player try it.

Gamemasters have three major tools to help them say "yes" to their players:

- **Bonuses and Penalties:** Remember the GM's rule of thumb: if something generally aids or makes a task easier for a character, it's worth a +2 bonus. If it makes the task harder or hinders the character, it's worth a –2 penalty. This can allow you to assign modifiers for almost any situation on the fly, without having to look things up and slow down the game while puzzling out all the pluses and minuses. Just evaluate the overall situation and decide if the conditions are beneficial, neutral, or detrimental, and assign a +2, +0, or –2.
- **Extra Effort:** When players want their characters to be able to pull off something outlandish, rather than saying "no" let them try but make them pay for it buy saying it counts as extra effort (see page 120). Extra effort already allows players to pull off all kinds of stunts, so there's no reason you can't expand the list when they come up with other ones. This works particularly well with innovative uses of powers. Since extra effort allows a character to temporarily use an existing power for an Alternate Power feat, it can cover a lot of ground.
- **Hero Points:** Like extra effort, hero points allow characters to pull off amazing stunts. If a player wants to do something that isn't normally a part of the character's abilities, require a hero point to make the attempt. The hero point doesn't do anything but let the character try something outlandish, and players won't be able to pull off such stunts all the time because they have a limited number of hero points to spend. Still, it allows for those amazing, one-of-a-kind stunts that happen in the comic books.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Some staples of the comics, while enjoyable in the stories themselves, don't translate as well to the medium of roleplaying games. You might want to take these potential pitfalls into account when planning your adventures.

DEFEAT AND CAPTURE

Heroes in the comics are frequently defeated early on in a story. The typical structure is: the heroes encounter the villain, suffer a defeat or reversal, and then come back from defeat to overcome the villain. In longer stories there may be several reversals: the villain beats the heroes and escapes, then beats the heroes and puts them in a deathtrap, which they must escape to make their final confrontation with the bad guy.

Defeat in the comics isn't a serious problem, since it usually just results in the heroes facing another obstacle, like a deathtrap. *Mutants & Masterminds* tries to encourage this kind of narrative structure by awarding hero points for defeats, capture, and similar setbacks suffered by the heroes. Essentially, the more the heroes struggle early on, the more resources they have to overcome the villain later in the adventure.

Some players, however, don't care for the idea of defeat, even if there *is* some kind of reward for it. This may come from other RPGs, where defeat has much more serious consequences, up to and including the death of the heroes! It can also come from associating any kind of defeat or setback with "losing the game." These players may overreact to potential defeats in the game.

The best way of handling this is to discuss it with your players. Point out that an early defeat by the villain is not necessarily a "defeat," but a challenge, and that they earn hero points for those encounters, leading up to the point where they can use them against the villain. If this doesn't address the issue, you may need to give the heroes setbacks other than defeats.

ESCAPING VILLAINS

Often, in the comics, the villain gets away. Usually it is during the initial encounters of a story: the heroes run into the villain, who escapes for the next encounter. In the comic books, it's easy for a writer to engineer the villain's escape. In a game, you may have to contend with players unwilling to let the villain go, so long as there's *any* chance of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. These players will try anything and everything before they give up, which can cause problems for the story and spoil the game for others. The main ways of dealing with this issue are: providing the villain with an effective escape route, and proper application of hero point awards.

In the first case, make sure your villain has at least a reasonable chance of escape. It's not enough to simply say "... and the villain makes his escape." At least try and provide the players with a plausible explanation. Perhaps the villain has some kind of planned escape route: a secret tunnel, a hidden door, a pre-programmed illusion, or a teleportation device, for example. The villain might use a distraction to provide the time needed to escape, such as threatening innocent citizens, triggering some sort of disaster, a smokescreen or darkness field, or a clever bluff or some sort. If you need to, you can make the villain's escape plan something the heroes *can't* thwart, but beware of unexpected cunning from your players. Just because *you* think the villain's escape plan is foolproof doesn't mean a player won't come up with a way to foil it!

The second element is that heroes get hero points when the villain escapes, which they can use to try and make sure the capture sticks next time. Like defeats (previously), these bonus hero points encourage players to "play along" with the style of the genre. Think of it as a kind of "get out of jail free" card: you get to have the villain get away, but when you do the players get a hero point.

GUEST HEROES

Comic books sometimes have "guest stars" in them and some guest heroes may be more popular than the book's main character! In an RPG, however, the "guest stars" are usually non-player characters run by the GM, so it's not a good idea to let them dominate the action. This just makes the players feel upstaged and superfluous.

That's not to say you can't have guest heroes show up in your adven-

tures. The trick is to make sure they don't upstage the heroes. The only exception is when you *want* the players to dislike the "guests" as much as possible! For example, if you have a story wherein mind-controlled heroes try to upstage the player characters, then go right ahead and have the NPCs steal their thunder. You can be sure the players won't like them one bit!

The rest of the time, it's best if guest heroes play supporting roles. Have them be the ones defeated and captured by the villains, for example, and allow the player characters to rescue them (also dealing with the issue of captures, previously). Have NPCs come to the heroes for aid or advice. Retiring heroes can pass on the mantle to a younger generation, while younger, less experienced heroes can look to the player characters for inspiration and guidance.

Another option is to allow the players to run the guest stars instead of, or in addition to, their regular characters. As long as you're not upstaging the *players*, it's okay to allow them to upstage their own characters! For example, you can allow the players to run members of another hero team, meeting their regular characters as NPCs, or you can have two teams band together, mixing and matching characters from each and having each player run a regular hero and a guest hero.

LETHALITY

Comics have different levels of lethality and the use of lethal attacks in combat (see **Style**, page 186). It's important to make clear to your players which style your game follows, just so there's no misunderstanding. A hero who refuses to kill under any circumstances might be an interesting oddity in a dark and gritty campaign full of militaristic super-agents, but a cold-blooded vigilante in a four-color world of merciful, law-abiding heroes can quickly become a problem (especially when the heroes feel honor-bound to see their teammate answer for his crimes). So it's best to be sure everyone is on the same page.

LONER HEROES

Another common element in the comics is the loner character: dressed in black, often trained in stealth, and preferring to work alone. That's all well and good in a solo story, but difficult to include in a team of superheroes. Even worse is a *team* of loners, none of whom get along! You can accommodate *some* loner characters by giving them opportunities to show off their skills and requiring a minimum level of cooperation and willingness to work within the team. You're better off discouraging entire groups of loners right from the beginning, since odds are they won't work together for very long.

MAKING MISTAKES

Even Gamemasters are only human. Sooner or later, you'll make a mistake, whether it's forgetting a particular rule or overlooking something about a character or an element of the story. Don't worry, it happens, and it doesn't mean your game is ruined!

The best way to handle a mistake is to own up to it. Tell your players you made a mistake and need to make a change in order to keep the game balanced, fair, and fun. For example, if you allow a new power into the game and it turns out it's much more powerful and useful than you

thought, and it's ruining everyone else's fun, that's a mistake. Tell your players you made a mistake letting that power into the game and you have to change the way it works in order to make the game fun and fair for everyone.

Be reasonable and straightforward in handling your mistakes and your players are much more likely to be cooperative and understanding about them.

AWARDING HERO POINTS

An important part of the Gamemaster's job is handing out hero points to the players, which influences the flow of the adventure and helps the heroes to accomplish important tasks later on. Essentially, you decide how easy or difficult a time the heroes have by how many hero points you hand out. The key difference is the players have discretionary power over when and how they spend their hero points. So you're not necessarily handing them an easy win, you're just giving them resources they can use to overcome challenges in the adventure.

As GM, you have discretionary power over handing out hero points. The Hero Points section (see page 121) provides guidelines, but how often opportunities to earn hero points crop up is largely up to you. Giving out more hero points encourages players to spend them and makes for a more action-oriented and four-color game. Handling out fewer hero points encourages players to save them until they really need them, most likely for the climactic encounter of the adventure.

A good guideline for awarding hero points is at least one per encounter in the adventure leading up to the final encounter. For more difficult adventures, you can award more hero points by creating more setbacks for the heroes. You should usually try to limit hero points from complications to one per encounter as well, and try to give the heroes' complications "equal time" in the adventure (or, if not in that one adventure, over the course of two or three adventures).

AWARDING POWER POINTS

The Gamemaster awards heroes power points at the end of each adventure. This represents the experience and confidence the heroes have gained, along with other factors contributing to an increase in their abilities, skills, and powers.

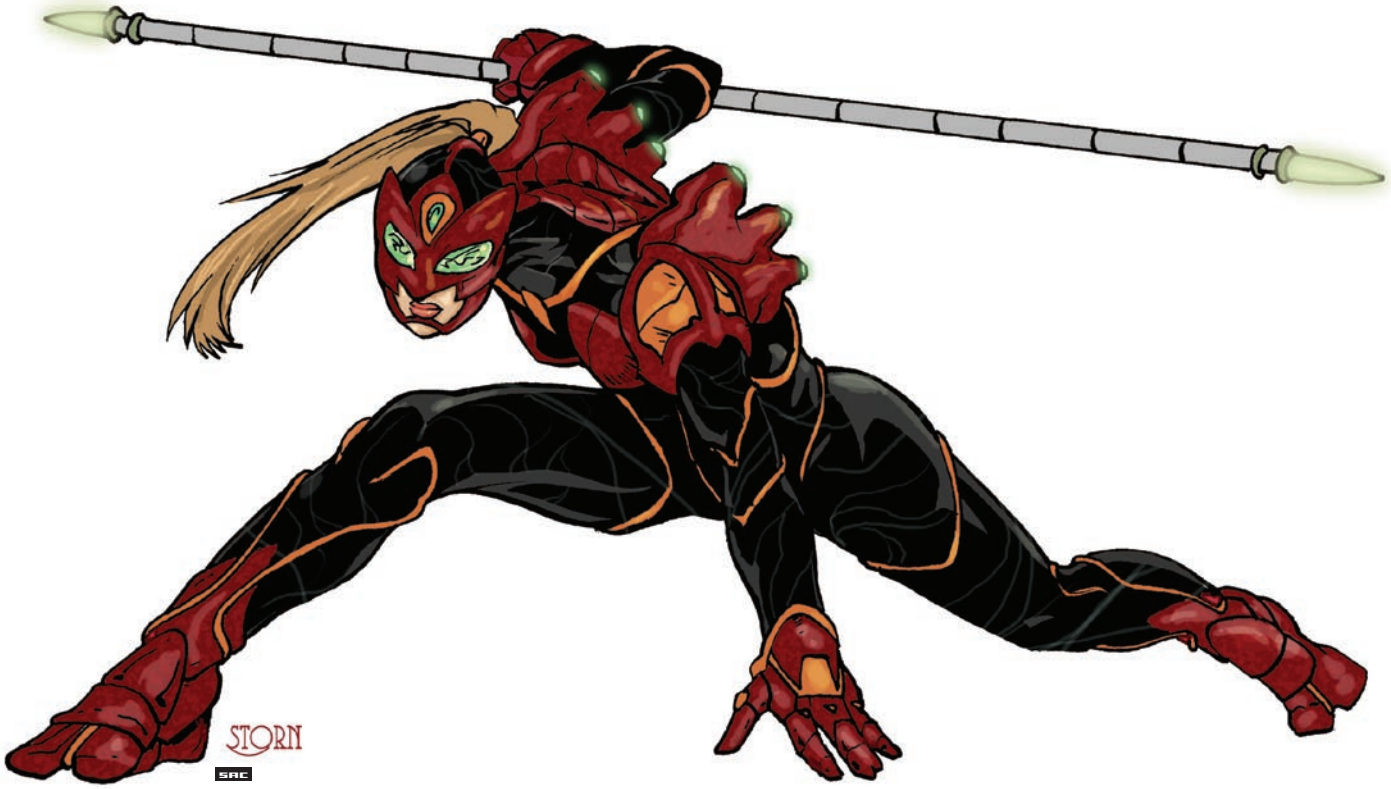
Generally, heroes each receive 1 power point for a successfully completed adventure, lasting for one game session. If the heroes overcame especially powerful foes or difficult challenges, the GM can increase the power point award to 2 points. For adventures lasting more than one game session, the heroes should get 1 power point per session, plus a possible bonus of 1 or 2 power points at the end if they did particularly well.

Gamemasters may vary this rate of advancement by awarding more power points per adventure, allowing heroes to increase in power faster, which may suit certain styles of game play. The Gamemaster also may choose not to award a power point for an adventure in which the heroes did especially poorly, such as failing to defeat a villain's major scheme or allowing many innocent people to suffer harm they could have prevented.

Players can spend their heroes' awarded power points between adventures to improve the heroes' traits, limited only by the campaign's power level. They also can choose to save up unspent power points, waiting until the campaign's power level increases, in order to spend them to improve a trait already at its maximum rating or rank.

INCREASING POWER LEVEL

As heroes earn power points through adventuring and spend them to improve their traits, they will eventually run into the limits imposed by the campaign's power level (see **Power Level** in **Chapter 1** for details). For a while, this can be a good thing, since the power level limits encourage heroes to diversify and acquire new skills, feats, and powers rather than simply pumping points into their existing traits to increase them to unwieldy levels. However, sooner or later, you're going to want to raise the



campaign's power level, giving the heroes a bit more room for advancement and spending their earned power points.

A good guideline is to follow the starting power point totals when it comes to power level: when the heroes accumulate an additional 15 power points from the start of the campaign or the last time the power level was raised, it's probably time to raise the power level by +1. So a power level 10 campaign starts out with 150-point heroes. When they have earned another 15 power points (bringing their total up to 165), the GM should consider raising the campaign's power level to 11, allowing the heroes to spend some of those power points to increase traits like attack and defense bonus, damage and saving throws, which are currently at the maximum limit.

When you increase the campaign's power level, you should also re-evaluate the capabilities of the villains and other challenges the heroes face. While NPCs don't earn additional power points, and aren't even subject to the same power level limits as the heroes, you should feel free to improve the traits of some non-player characters in the campaign to keep pace with the heroes, ensuring those antagonists remain a suitable challenge. It's also fine to have others lag behind, as the heroes outstrip some of their old foes, who no longer represent the kind of threat they did before, plus you can always introduce new villains and challenges suited to the campaign's power level as things progress.

OTHER REWARDS

Although good deeds are usually their own reward, heroes do sometimes receive other rewards in addition to power points. The Gamemaster should feel free to award any of the following to heroes according to the adventure and the needs of the series.

MONEY

There may be rewards for the capture of certain wanted super-criminals and grateful governments or corporations might choose to reward helpful heroes with money. Heroes often use these rewards to help fund their own efforts (paying for their equipment, headquarters, etc.) or else donate it to charity. Other heroes are more mercenary and may even require a paying client before they'll use their powers to help anyone. Altruistic heroes tend to look down on such opportunists, but the mercenaries counter that they're risking their lives, why shouldn't they get paid for it?

Sometimes the monetary rewards of heroism come in the form of ongoing support from a wealthy patron, trust fund, corporation, or government agency. All can offer financial backing to a hero or team of heroes and provide them with the resources they need.

Heroes who come into a sudden windfall can invest some earned power points acquiring Wealth (see page 132) to represent their increased resources, if that optional system is in use. Otherwise the GM can simply award the heroes with an appropriate amount of money or access to a wealthy patron (although access may come with some strings attached).

EQUIPMENT

Heroes who overcome a supervillain may be able to keep some of the villain's equipment. The authorities may want to impound super-devices as evidence or to have them examined by "top men," but they may allow heroes to keep them in some cases (particularly if the heroes don't tell anyone about them). Generally any device a player intends to become a regular part of a hero's abilities should be paid for using earned power points. The GM may require the hero to have enough power points set aside for the device or that all of the hero's earned power points go toward "paying off" the device's cost. A one-time use of a captured device may be allowed by having the player spend a hero point.

Heroes also may receive equipment from grateful inventors, businesses, or the government, much like monetary rewards. A patron could provide a team of heroes with a headquarters, vehicles, and other equipment. Again, the GM decides what things require power point expenditure and which are free — at least in terms of point cost.

FAME

Once you've saved the world a few times, people start to remember your name. Superheroes often become famous and Gamemasters can reward the heroes with increased fame and popularity. As the heroes become better known for their heroism and good deeds, the authorities become more cooperative, people start recognizing them everywhere, and fan mail starts arriving by the truckload.

Of course, fame has its drawbacks, which include persistent fans, greater public scrutiny, and things like constant offers for product endorsements and such. Famous heroes are more likely to be targeted by supervillains looking to make a name for themselves or novice heroes wanting to join an established group. While the heroes are most trusted by the authorities, they're also more likely to be called upon in times of need.

On the other hand, heroes may also become infamous for their deeds, particularly if they're known to be ruthless or mercenary. Infamy may dog heroes with bad publicity, whether or not they're actually guilty of anything. After enough "Threat or Menace?" editorials, people start to wonder if the hero really is a good guy. Reversals in reputation and sudden infamy make good complications (see page 122).

HONORS

In addition to fame and fortune, heroes may receive the gratitude of the people they help. They get awards from civic groups and organizations like the police and fire departments. The mayor gives them the key to the city or arranges for a parade in their honor (or both). The governor or President honors them on national television. Monuments may be erected in their honor and charitable institutions founded or dedicated in their names. A hero team's trophy room can contain various plaques, medals, and other accolades. An awards ceremony makes a good ending to an adventure or, perhaps, the beginning of one. After all, what villain can resist so public a target as a hated enemy receiving an award?

CREATING ADVENTURES

An adventure is a single story in an ongoing campaign or series. Think of an adventure as a single comic book story. Sometimes the adventure stands alone, with a clear beginning, middle, and end all in the same issue (or game session). Other times the adventure is part of a "story arc" or "mini-series" spanning several issues before the entire story is wrapped up. Your *Mutants & Masterminds* adventures can be the same way. A related sequence of adventures makes up a campaign (or series), just like a number of comic book issues makes up a series.

Creating a *Mutants & Masterminds* adventure is a fairly simple process. First, define the threat around which the adventure revolves. Then outline the overall plot, and describe the encounters the heroes are likely to have during the adventure. You'll also want to make sure you have statistics and character sheets for important supporting characters and villains.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

There are a number of things to consider when you begin planning your adventure, including the plot threads from previous adventures, complications, and the themes and events of past adventures.

ONE HUNDRED ADVENTURE IDEAS

Stuck for an idea or just not sure what to do for your next adventure? Look over this list and pick something that sounds interesting or roll 2d20, ignoring the "tens" digit, to generate a number between 1 and 100 (treating a roll of two zeroes as "100"). Instant adventure idea!

1. An asteroid, meteor, or comet is on a collision course with the Earth.
2. An intelligent super-virus begins taking over the minds of people exposed to it.
3. The heroes' archenemies band together to take out their foes by trading opponents.
4. Atlantis invades the surface world because of pollution of the oceans and underwater weapons testing.
5. A super-villain attempts to trigger a nuclear war.
6. A vigilante is assassinating criminals in the city and the heroes must enforce the law.
7. Criminals have stolen advanced weapon prototypes they are using to commit robberies.
8. A "monster" threatening the city turns out to be a confused alien infant.
9. An omnipotent entity comes to Earth looking to have some fun "playing" with a group of heroes.
10. A fire rages through the city, threatening lives and property.
11. Mercenary villains are hired to capture or kill the heroes.
12. A tidal wave or tsunami threatens a costal area.
13. A villain transforms people in the city into creatures (demons, zombies, plants, etc.) under the villain's control.
14. A vampire is on the loose, feeding on innocent victims in the city at night.
15. A would-be sorcerer botches a spell, opening a gate to a demonic netherworld.
16. Cultists are kidnapping people to use as sacrifices to their evil god(s).
17. Villains commit crimes posing as the heroes to blacken their good names.
18. Shapeshifting aliens infiltrate the government and law enforcement and outlaw the heroes.
19. A villain attempts to use mass mind-control to take over a city, country, or the world.
20. A rampaging monster is let loose on the unsuspecting city.
21. An earthquake strikes a major city, causing numerous disasters and opportunities for looters.
22. Another team of heroes has gone missing.
23. Aliens invade the Earth. The "aliens" might also be from another dimension, demons, mutant monsters, etc.
24. A scientific accident creates giant insects that swarm through the city.
25. A villain captures the heroes in order to "play" against them in a life-or-death game.
26. The rightful ruler of an alien empire comes to Earth seeking help to reclaim her throne.
27. An alien warrior arrives looking for a worthy opponent to challenge him.
28. A villain attempts to steal all of the heroes' powers for himself.
29. The heroes are kidnapped to become gladiators in an alien arena.
30. A mythic god starts a modern cult of worshippers, but isn't exactly what he seems.
31. An accident sends the heroes to a parallel Earth where good is evil and vice versa.
32. A villain attempts to melt the polar ice caps to flood the entire world.
33. A murderous spirit goes on a killing spree, possessing innocent host bodies.
34. A hero is infected with lycanthropy, slowly transforming into a were-creature.
35. A villain steals a powerful weapon and attempts to blackmail the government with it.
36. A secret and corrupt government black-ops organization tries to co-opt or eliminate the heroes.
37. A new crime lord begins consolidating power in the city.
38. Assassination attempts are made against government or public figures.

FABULOUS FIRST ISSUES

If this is your first *Mutants & Masterminds* adventure, you need to consider a few things, including how to get the heroes together as a team. They may already be a team when the adventure begins, or circumstances in the adventure might bring them together.

The key things for a first adventure are to introduce the players to the setting and the major supporting characters. So the first adventure should be typical of the sort of adventures you plan to run. Give the players a feel for how things work in the world so they can get into character and into the setting. So, for example, if you're running a four-color game where character death is a rarity, it's probably not a good idea to make the first villain a murderous madman who kills with impunity. Likewise, if you're aiming for a gritty paramilitary style game, you probably don't want your first adventure to be filled with wacky humor and Silver Age puns.

If this is your first adventure, you should also decide if the heroes are already together as a team or if they will have the opportunity to form a team during the adventure. Both approaches have their good points. Starting things with the team already assembled allows you to skip some exposition and get right into the action. It also avoids the problem of the heroes *not* getting together, which can happen. Allowing the players to roleplay the formation of the team, on the other hand, can be fun, and lets the players to better define the nature of their team.

WHEN LAST WE LEFT OUR HEROES...

If the adventure is *not* the first in your series, then the first thing to do is look over your last few adventures. Are there any dangling plot threads left over from those stories, ones the players might be interested in following?

Sometimes these dangling threads are placed deliberately, to give the players things to wonder about and look forward to in future adventures. In other cases, they crop up because certain things just didn't get resolved in a previous adventure, and players might be wondering when (and if) they will be. As a general rule, try and leave a few plot threads open at any given time. They don't always have to be the same

ONE HUNDRED ADVENTURE IDEAS

39. A villain steals the components necessary for a procedure or ritual intended to vastly increase his powers.
40. A super-human with out of control powers steals the components necessary for a cure.
41. Villains abduct the heroes' loved ones in an attempt to blackmail them or lure them into a trap.
42. The heroes are trapped in their own headquarters, which is counting down to self-destruction.
43. The heroes are pulled into a dream world where their deepest fears and desires come to life.
44. A strange meteorite causes mutations and unusual phenomena.
45. An ancient alien "world killer" weapon is headed for Earth.
46. A powerful hero turns to evil for no apparent reason. Is he an imposter, possessed, or something else?
47. Alien bounty hunters come to Earth looking to collect a price on a hero's head.
48. A mythic figure challenges a hero to a contest of skill or ability to prove who is better.
49. The heroes need to find a particular rare device or item to save a friend's life.
50. The heroes discover a lost or hidden civilization isolated from the rest of the world.
51. Subterranean creatures "steal" buildings by pulling them down into the Earth.
52. New super-villains are actually aliens trying to get the supplies they need to repair their crashed starship.
53. The entire population of a small town has mysteriously vanished without a trace.
54. A young and powerful superhuman needs guidance in the responsibilities of great power.
55. A major new rock star is mentally influencing fans through hypnotic music.
56. A villain blackmails the heroes into assembling the scattered parts of a powerful device or key.
57. An innocent man on death row appeals to the heroes as his last hope.
58. Someone is sabotaging various high-tech companies without setting off any of their security.
59. Archeologists inadvertently unleash a terrible force from the past during a dig.
60. A popular new nightclub in town is a front for criminal activity.
61. A psychotic killer leaves taunting clues for the heroes and the police.
62. Thieves hijack a shipment of valuables (gold, cash, jewels, etc.).
63. Terrorists seize control of a site with numerous hostages and begin issuing demands.
64. A ceremony to publicly honor the heroes is disrupted by super-villains.
65. A deceased hero (or villain!) leaves an unusual bequest to someone in his will.
66. On Halloween night the city is threatened by a plague of ghosts, zombies, or other monsters.
67. Someone conducts a media smear campaign against the heroes.
68. The heroes are invited to participate in a sporting event or competition for charity.
69. A hero's powers begin to go out of control.
70. Villains kidnap an important person for ransom, perhaps even a hero in his secret identity!
71. The heroes forget their super-heroic identities for some reason.
72. Everyone in the city suddenly develops super-powers while the super-powered people lose theirs.
73. The heroes are asked to help safeguard an important diplomatic meeting threatened by terrorists.
74. Super-villains hold up a bank or attempt a robbery.
75. A villain tries to steal all the parts of an ancient map to a hidden treasure.
76. An object on display in a museum turns out to be a powerful mystic artifact.
77. A scientific experiment causes time to behave strangely, perhaps mixing the past, present, and future.
78. A hurricane, tornado, or other severe weather threatens.
79. Animals of all kinds suddenly turn against humanity.
80. Damage to a tanker threatens to spill oil or chemicals into the ocean.
81. A new designer drug on the streets gives addicts temporary super-powers.
82. Two warring alien races want to use Earth as a battlefield for their conflict.
83. A traveling circus or carnival is actually a cover for a criminal organization.
84. A villain places an indestructible force field around a city to turn it into a personal fiefdom.
85. An accident involving mutagens alters a hero's powers.
86. A villain brings cartoon, movie, or literary characters to life.
87. New threats are actually the mental projections of a young mutant unable to control her powers.
88. Supervillains seize control of a small, isolated nation and the heroes are asked to oust them.
89. An accident splits the heroes into good and evil twins.
90. A villain poses as a hero to infiltrate the heroes' team.
91. A hero's actions or legal rights are called into question.
92. A villain kidnaps an NPC hero as the final component of a fiendish device.
93. A villain suddenly seems to turn over a new leaf. Is it real or a scam?
94. The heroes are shrunk down to miniature size right before they have to deal with another crisis.
95. Super eco-terrorists are threatening targets and the heroes have to defend them.
96. An omnipotent being pits the heroes against their archenemies to determine whether good or evil is superior.
97. A cosmic crisis threatens to destroy the entire fabric of reality.
98. The heroes are displaced in time and have to get back home without changing history.
99. A villain asks for the heroes' aid against another, more dangerous, villain.
100. A super-villain assembles an army of villains to conquer the Earth.

ones. You can wrap up certain plots while opening up new ones to keep the series moving along and maintain player interest. In fact, it's best if you occasionally tie up existing plot threads before starting new ones, providing some closure and keeping things from getting stale.

A CHANGE OF PACE

When you start creating an adventure, look over your notes from your last few adventures (if you've had a last few). Take a look at any trends in the adventures' threats, villains, and so forth and decide if you need a change of pace. Running the same sort of adventure time after time can make your game predictable and dull. Sometime you need to shake things up a bit and give the players something new to sink their teeth into.

Have your last few adventures all been crime-fighting? How about sending the heroes to another planet or dimension for an adventure or two? After a few adventures of fighting off an alien invasion, give the heroes a vacation on a tropical island where there's a sinister Voodoo cult, or to a mountain ski lodge haunted by a ghost. Try an adventure where the heroes are in their secret identities the whole time, or without their powers. Maybe an accident causes the heroes minds to switch bodies, or gives them different powers. The possibilities are endless. Just make sure your "change of pace" adventures are really a change of pace and not just random wackiness (unless that's what your game is all about).

DEFINING THE THREAT

Mutants & Masterminds adventures usually focus on a particular threat or challenge. It might be anything from an alien invasion to a super-villain looking to conquer the world to something as simple as the heroes cracking down on a crime wave in the city or attending a parade in their honor. When the threat presents itself, the heroes must figure out how to overcome it.

If you need ideas for possible threats, look no further than your local comic shop or supermarket spinner rack, filled with inspirational comic books. You also can get ideas from television, movies, and even the news and major world events. If you're stuck for an idea, take a look at the list of **One Hundred Adventure Ideas** (see page 180).

The threat in a *Mutants & Masterminds* adventure is often a villain with a plot the heroes must thwart. Take a look at **Chapter 11** for ideas on creating your own villains, along with some ready-made archetypes.

OUTLINING THE PLOT

Once you have an idea for a threat in mind, give some thought to how it will manifest itself. Outline a series of events that will take place. This gives you the overall plot of your adventure, a sort of roadmap you can follow while you're running the game to know what is likely to happen next. For example, you decide the threat in your adventure involves the crew of an alien ship stranded on Earth. Unable to speak any Earth languages and mistrustful of humans, the aliens need to acquire some advanced technology to repair their ship. They begin to track down and steal the things they need, using their own advanced technology and alien powers to overcome security and the conventional authorities. After they've made four thefts, they make the repairs to their ship and leave for home, smugly satisfied that humanity was no match for them.

Now, that's what would happen if the heroes *weren't* around. Odds are the players aren't going to just allow the aliens to get away with their crimes. Perhaps the heroes are called in after the first robbery to begin an investigation, or maybe they are called in *during* the first robbery, giving them a chance to encounter the aliens and learn something about them (and probably fight them). The heroes can then begin investigating, trying to piece together who the aliens are, what they want, and what they'll do next. They might figure things out and set a trap at one of the potential targets. They might try to track the aliens back to their hidden ship, or capture one of them for interrogation. The aliens may come back for a captured crewmember, and so forth. Exactly how things end up depends on what the players choose to do.

Try to focus your plot on the actions of the antagonists, letting the heroes react to things as they happen. It's hard to base the plot on what the heroes will do because you don't always know what that is. By focusing on the villains' actions, you give the heroes the freedom to do whatever they want in response, and you can change the villains' plans accordingly.

ENCOUNTERS

Your plot outline gives you a number of potential *encounters* the heroes may have during the adventure. An encounter is a single challenge, interaction, or activity, such as a fight with the villain, the investigation of a crime scene, a chase through the city, and so forth. Using your outline, you can get a good idea of the possible encounters during your adventure. In the previous example, the heroes may have encounters with the aliens at any of their four robbery sites. They also may investigate those sites and encounter the aliens at the crash site of their ship.

Outline the possible encounters and take note of the important details in each one. For example, if the heroes encounter the aliens during one of their robberies, you'll want to know where the robbery takes place, what the place looks like, what time of day it is, and if anything in the environment could affect the outcome of the encounter. If the aliens steal radioactive isotopes from a nuclear power plant, a fight might risk damaging the reactor, causing a meltdown (a possible complication). That's a different encounter than if the aliens steal parts from a high-tech robotics factory, where the fight could involve a robot assembly line (which offers the characters big, heavy things to chuck at each other).

The typical arrangement of encounters in the classic comic book story is: the heroes are alerted to the threat. They take action, but suffer a setback. They try to deal with the threat, facing various challenges along the way. Eventually, they overcome these challenges, face the threat directly, and overcome it. The difficulty and number of challenges in the middle determines how long the story is, from a single quick game session to an entire campaign (with each challenge in the middle being an entire adventure of its own).

The early encounters in the adventure serve a few purposes. First, they introduce the players to the threat and allow them to find out more about it. If it's a new villain, for example, the heroes learn the villain's name, powers, agenda, and so forth. If it's an existing villain, they find out the villain's current plan (and perhaps how the villain escaped from prison or survived certain death from a previous story). If it's a disaster, they see the first signs and get expert advice on what's likely to happen, and so forth.

Initial encounters also provide opportunities for the heroes to earn hero points. This means the early encounters in the adventure don't have to go well for the heroes. In fact, it's better for them in the long run if they *don't* go well. The more setbacks the heroes face early on, the more hero points they earn for use later in the adventure. In the classic comics story, the heroes encounter the threat and suffer defeat of some sort. The villain may get away, their powers may prove inadequate to deal with the problem, their plan may not work, and so forth. The heroes then regroup, come up with a new plan, and try again.

Of course, not every encounter has to end in defeat for the heroes, otherwise the players may get frustrated. Keep in mind you can also put the heroes up against minions and minor challenges for them to overcome on the way to the big finale. You can award hero points for setbacks, too, to give the players a sense of accomplishment along the way so their problems don't seem quite as bad.

THE GRAND FINALE

Then there's the big finish to the adventure, the grand finale. This is when the heroes finally confront the major threat of the adventure and have a real chance to deal with it. It may be a final showdown with the big villain, stopping the villain's plans at the last moment, averting disaster, or confronting an alien invasion fleet on the edge of space. Whatever the case, it's when events in the adventure come to a climax and it's time for the heroes to step up and save the day.

The finale is the big payoff of the adventure, what the players have been working towards, so you need to make it as exciting and fun as possible. That means the finale should be challenging; encouraging the players to spend all the heroes points they've racked up during the adventure (remember, they can't save them and spend them later!). On the other hand, the finale shouldn't be so tough the heroes can't win, or the adventure just ends in frustration. It's best if things end in a decisive win for the heroes, although sometimes their victory may be a pyrrhic one.

THE WRAP-UP

The wrap-up or epilogue is where you finish up anything after the climax of the adventure. It's where the heroes haul the villains off to jail, find out any remaining information, resolve the adventure's mysteries, and so forth. There may still be some dangling threads left over at the end of the adventure (see **When Last We Left Our Heroes...**, on the previous page) but generally things should be tied up and resolved by the end.

You can play out the wrap-up, allowing the players to describe what their heroes are doing, or just sum things up for them. For example, "After you capture Atom Smasher and shut down the runaway reactor, the authorities move in to take the supervillain into custody and repair the damage to the nuclear plant. The city is safe once again."

CHAPTER 10: WORLD-BUILDING

Creating a universe, now that's some serious power! It's the power you have as a Gamemaster, since you can create the entire universe in which your players' heroes adventure. As we've already seen, *Mutants & Masterminds* adventures can happen in a particular city or they can take heroes to distant locales, the far reaches of space, alien worlds, even other dimensions and times! You get to come up with all of that stuff, letting your imagination run wild. A finely crafted setting gives you limitless resources for adventures.

SETTING

The setting is where and when the campaign takes place. Is it a version of the modern-day world, a medieval fantasy world, the far future solar system, or even an imaginary world completely different from Earth? Each of the following settings has its positives and negatives, and each is suited to particular types of campaigns.

MODERN

Most of the time, superhero adventures are set in a version of our modern world, the only (or at least major) difference being that there are superheroes and villains. There are the same nations, states, cities, and major personalities found in our world. History is probably mostly the same, too. Superheroes may have fought against the Nazis in World War II, but the Allies still won the war around the same time, for example.

This approach is the easiest one by far, since there isn't as much to make up. You don't have to explain to your players where New York City is, for example, and you can get most of your information from guidebooks, encyclopedias, and the Internet. All you need to do is come up with what's different about your world compared to the real world (apart from people with super-powers, of course).

If your *Mutants & Masterminds* game is set in the modern-day world, you may want to choose a particular city or area as the heroes' home base. Most hero teams are associated with a city or cities where they maintain their headquarters, even a truly global team needs somewhere to call home, although their headquarters might well be in orbit or on the Moon (see **Headquarters**, page 145, for more about such things).

You can choose to base the heroes in a real world city, such as New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris, or Hong Kong, or you can create a fictional city for the heroes to live and adventure in. Real world cities offer the benefit of easy to access information. It's not hard finding things like maps and guides to San Francisco, for example. You can play around with the city's features to fit the style and history of your campaign, like turning Alcatraz Island into a hero team's headquarters (or a super-prison for holding villains). Just be sure to let your players know about any major changes you decide to make to the world that they know, so they're not relying on inaccurate information.

A fun option can be to use your home city (or one nearby) as the setting for your campaign. It offers a familiar setting along with the fun of having superheroes and villains battle in the streets of your hometown! You can use local landmarks in your adventures and local personalities and events to inspire you. Maybe the heroes are all students at your local high school or college in their secret identities, or maybe they work for a local company. For that matter, maybe the heroes are versions of your players with super-powers!

Many comic book heroes live in fictional cities, places that don't exist in the real world but are often remarkably similar to various real world cities. A fictional city requires more work but offers more flexibility since you can create exactly the kind of place you want for your campaign, making sure the city has whatever features you want. You can even mix-and-match features and landmarks from different cities to create a "composite" fictional city. The *Freedom City* sourcebook from Green Ronin Publishing provides a complete fictional superhero city for Gamemasters looking for such a setting, or an example of how to create one.

Of course, there are far more settings than just modern-day Earth. Generally, other *Mutants & Masterminds* settings are either in Earth's past or future, or other worlds altogether.

HISTORICAL

The Golden Age of comics began in the late 1930s and *Mutants & Masterminds* can easily be set any time in the past sixty years or so. Players can take the roles of "mystery men" from the pulp adventure stories of the 1930s or the first superheroes, fighting against the forces of the Axis in World War II. They can be government agents or patriotic heroes during the Cold War with Russia, or counter-culture rebels during the 1960s.

But nothing says you can't go even farther back in history if you want. Comic books have told stories about heroes from nearly every time period. There's the American Civil War and Revolutionary War. The Wild West offers cowboy heroes, Indian mystics, and steam-tech weird science. On the gas-lit streets of Victorian London, heroes can rub shoulders with the likes of Sherlock Holmes and face opponents like Professor Moriarty, Jack the Ripper, Captain Nemo, the Invisible Man, and the sinister Dr. Fu Manchu. Medieval heroes like the knights of King Arthur's court or Charlemagne's paladins can face evil wizards, goblins, and monsters. You can go all the way back to the mythic ages of ancient Greece and Egypt with gods and heroes as potential characters, or Chinese epics with heroes able to leap on clouds and fight with superhuman skill.

Historical settings can be novel and exotic, but the further you get from the modern day the less things are like a superhero comic book and more like a mythological adventure story. That's fine if it's what you and your players want and you're willing to do a bit more research. You also can have the best of both worlds by setting your campaign in the present

FREEDOM CITY

"But what if I don't *want* to create a whole universe?" No problem! Just check out the *Freedom City* sourcebook from Green Ronin Publishing. It provides a complete fictional city setting for your *Mutants & Masterminds* adventures complete with a huge cast of supporting characters, NPC heroes, and villains. The book details plenty of locations and also describes some of the world (and the universe) beyond Freedom City. You can use the setting as-is, modify it to suit your needs, or simply use it as an example of how to create your own unique superhero world.

day and having the heroes visit any or all of these different settings via time or dimensional travel, or perhaps in a dream world or virtual reality. Placing modern-day heroes in a different setting for an adventure or two can be a fun change of pace, particularly if the heroes have different abilities in the new setting.

FUTURISTIC

More than a few comic books speculate about what the future will be like. There are science fiction comics aplenty, along with superhero stories set at different points in Earth's future. You can choose a near-future setting or something quite different from the modern-day world.

A near future setting may be quite similar to the modern-day, with the addition of some new technology and some new problems that come with it. For example there may be flying cars, cybernetic modification (a new source for super-powers), and advances in computer technology along with increases in crime and urban decay. Heroes can stalk the streets of dark, towering cities trying to protect the innocent where a corrupt legal system has failed. On the other hand, the near future might be more pleasant and the heroes are trying to defend humanity's accomplishments from those who would destroy them.

Some future comic stores are set following a terrible catastrophe that has all but destroyed civilization. In a setting like this the heroes may be the last survivors of ordinary humanity, or they may be super-powered mutants, trained super-soldiers (perhaps intended as weapons in the Last War), or even cyborgs or alien visitors. Their adventures tend to revolve around protecting pockets of civilization from marauding mutants and keeping ambitious warlords from conquering the world or destroying innocent people.

Far future settings usually feature faster-than-light space travel, allowing heroes to visit (or come from) any of dozens or even hundreds of different worlds. A team of heroes can band together from diverse worlds to protect the Galactic Federation from hostile alien invaders while also dealing with disasters, space pirates, and criminal cartels. Or a group of heroes can explore the unknown reaches of space on board a starship, encountering would-be conquerors, despots, raiders, and other villains they must defeat along the way.

OTHERWORLDLY

Finally, you can set your *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign on a world other than Earth. The nature of the world depends on the type of campaign you want to run. Generally if you want a modern-day setting there's little reason *not* to use Earth, since it's familiar ground and can save you a lot of work. So most otherworldly settings tend to be different from the modern world, either fantasy or science fiction settings for superhero adventures.

UNDER THE HOOD: USING EXISTING SETTINGS

There are already a number of superhero worlds out there. The major comic book publishers have been creating them for more than sixty years, and superhero roleplaying games have been around for more than twenty years, leaving a legacy of various settings behind. Rather than making up an entirely new campaign universe for your game, you can choose an existing superhero setting and use it, or take pieces of different superhero settings that you like and combine them to create your ideal campaign world. Existing settings may be more familiar to some players and make it easier for them to get into the game, although you may have trouble if your players happen to know more about the setting than you do, or if you want to change things around.

OTHER WORLDS

Even if you decide you want a particular sort of campaign world for your *Mutants & Masterminds* game, that doesn't mean you won't be able to use all of the other ideas in this chapter. The comics are filled with all sorts of other worlds for heroes to visit and adventure in. There are alien worlds, some of them quite Earth-like (perhaps with analogs to periods in Earth's history like ancient Rome or the Wild West). There are "lost worlds," hidden places on Earth (or within it) that contain primeval dinosaur jungles, lost civilizations, and fantasy worlds. Finally, there is a potential infinity of parallel Earths, where history may have unfolded differently than in your campaign world, allowing you to have heroes visit worlds with entirely different premises, perhaps even your favorite comic book or fictional settings.

STYLE

The Gamemaster chooses the style of game to present, preferably based on input from the players about what sort of game interests them. Just as superhero comics themselves span the stylistic gamut from "gee whiz" adventure to intricately plotted, bloody morality plays, so can a *Mutants & Masterminds* series vary in tone. Once a style of play is established, it's up to the GM to maintain it. That means creating adventures and encounters suited to that style of play and encouraging the players to get into the style's mindset and run their characters accordingly. Some possible play styles include:

FOUR-COLOR

"Four-color" style is named for the time when comic books were printed by mixing four colors (red, blue, yellow, and black) in various proportions. It represents a fairly simple time, when the divisions between good and evil were clearly defined. Four-color comic book stories tend to be full of fantastic characters and ideas. Heroes might face an alien invasion from another dimension one adventure and explore a lost world full of dinosaurs and cavemen the next. Realism isn't as important as telling a fun and exciting story.

On the other hand, the four-color comics were often inconsistent and sometimes veered off into the extremely fantastic or even silly (with heroes able to push planets out of their orbits or extinguish suns). *Mutants & Masterminds* GMs may want to rein-in some of the wilder elements of the four-color comics in their games. Or they may not, letting the players go wild and even having heroes higher than 20th level to allow for the tremendous powers seen in the Silver Age comics of the 1950s and '60s.

The four-color style is simple and straightforward. The heroes are the good guys and the villains are usually bad through and through (with a few misunderstood souls in need of help). Problem solving is a matter of either combat or clever thinking, and roleplaying is an opportunity for players to deliver moralistic speeches and clever catchphrases or exchange witty banter with the villains and each other.

GRIM AND GRITTY

In recent years, superhero comics have incorporated a greater degree of realism. This often results in a darker, more violent tone, where heroes become vigilantes fighting against crazed criminals. Super-powers in this style are treated with more of a nod toward real-world physics; a punch from a man strong enough to lift a tank should splatter a normal human being rather than merely stunning him. Grim and gritty heroes often have and use lethal attacks like claws, blades, guns, and so forth and combat tends to be bloody with a high body count.

The grim and gritty style allows players considerable freedom, since the heroes could, and often do, use any means available to accomplish their goals. On the other hand, it's often difficult to distinguish the heroes from the villains in this play style, since both use similar cynical or even bloodthirsty methods. The authorities are less likely to trust grim and gritty heroes, unless they happen to be working as a "black ops" or enforcement arm of a government agency. Even then there's considerable distrust of anyone in a costume or displaying superhuman powers, since bystanders often take the brunt of conflict between heroes and their opponents.

The grim and gritty style presents opportunities for greater depth and realism. The dividing line between heroes and villains is blurred, and may be nonexistent. The players have greater responsibility for deciding their characters' actions and may have a greater impact on the world. Heroes are often faced with moral dilemmas and conflicts, such as supporting a corrupt government that provides order and stability against the rebels who would bring it down, or going outside the law to deal with villains the justice system can't reach.

SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN

Your game's style may be somewhere in between the two extremes. You may go for a mostly four-color style with a slightly more modern "edge" to it, a realistic style that doesn't get quite so grim but holds on to some four-color values, or any other combo you can imagine. Comic books have experimented with a lot of different styles over the years and you can draw upon all of them for your own game, or create your own unique style.

Whatever you choose, try to make the style of your game clear to the players so they know what to expect in advance and can create heroes suited to the game. A grim vigilante who kills opponents in cold blood may not be suited to a mostly four-color game. Likewise, a heroic Boy Scout may look ridiculous in a game of grim and gritty realism. If you feel a particular player's hero concept isn't suited for your game's style, you're better off telling that player in advance and asking for a different character than having trouble later on when the player isn't enjoying the game.

HIGH AND LOW LETHALITY

Mutants & Masterminds is set up so attacks generally do nonlethal damage, which never seriously hurts characters. Even the most powerful nonlethal attack can't do anything more than knock you out, so heroes and villains can pound on each other all day long without any serious effects. The occasional lethal attack seems that much more dangerous by comparison, although many heroes have high enough Fortitude and Toughness save values to avoid the worst effects of lethal attacks.

Some games, however, particularly those with a more grim and gritty style, may call for a different approach. In these games, lethal attacks are the norm and the default is to have all super-powers do lethal damage. Characters are much more likely to end up disabled or even dead in combat, and a high Toughness saving throw is vital to help characters survive. Minions don't get knocked out. They die by the dozens in various spectacular ways. Effects like Healing and Regenerate become very important for keeping heroes alive in high-lethality games.

On the other side of the coin is the low-lethality series in which characters almost never suffer serious injury and nobody really dies. In this case the lethal attack option (see page 163) isn't available. Therefore the worst that can happen in combat is getting knocked unconscious. This may strain some players' suspension of disbelief, however, and make certain types of characters inappropriate for the game.

Like style of play, the Gamemaster should explain to players in advance if a series is high or low lethality so they know what to expect and can create their heroes accordingly.

HIGH AND LOW REALISM

Readers will note that the rules in *Mutants & Masterminds* reflect the "reality" of the world of the comic books, not the real world (where people can't fly under their own power or bend steel in their bare hands). For example, is it realistic that someone able to bench press a tank doesn't put his fist right through normal people when he hits them? Is it realistic that a man (no matter how strong) can pick up a building without it collapsing under its own weight? Of course not, but that's the way it works in the comics. The same is true of many other super-powers that violate physical laws as we know them. The goal of *Mutants & Masterminds* isn't to rigorously simulate the real effects of super-human strength or heat beams capable of melting steel, it's to simulate how these things work for comic book superheroes.

If you're looking to inject more realism into your *Mutants & Masterminds* game, however, keep the following tips in mind:

MODIFY POWERS

You can require that certain super-powers, like Super-Strength, work more realistically than they do in the current rules. For example, you may say that Super-Strength always does lethal damage when used in combat, and that characters must have a certain amount of leverage to use their strength. A super-strong character can't stop a car without damaging it, or pick up a structure without having it collapse under its own weight. Other powers can be modified in a similar way, or eliminated altogether.

LIMIT EXTRA EFFORT

You may limit or reduce the effects of extra effort (see page 120), saying that characters cannot use it to gain extras or power feats, for example, or that it cannot increase effective power ranks. You also may reduce extra effort, saying that it only adds one or two ranks to a power, and so forth.

LIMIT HERO POINTS

Limiting the number and use of Hero Points adds greater realism to the game and forces heroes to rely more on their traits and the whims of fate (as represented by the die roll). You can award fewer hero points or limit players to only having so many at once. You also can change the things hero points can do. Eliminating the ability to overcome fatigue makes extra effort that much more costly. Eliminating the ability to recover or overcome injury makes combat faster and tougher while eliminating the ability to avoid death makes it far more likely for characters to die during the game. Eliminating hero points altogether gives the game a more realistic and less comic book feel.

SLOW RECOVERY

Characters in *Mutants & Masterminds* recover from damage and injury fairly quickly. In a more realistic game, characters may recover slower, say an hour for bruised, a day for injured, 20 minutes for unconscious and a week for disabled. This means injuries put characters out of action for longer and players will likely go to greater lengths to avoid them.

GENRE

Mutants & Masterminds campaigns are naturally influenced by the genre of the comic books. The comics have several distinct "ages" or genres to them you can use as a basis for your *Mutants & Masterminds* game. Note that while the different ages discussed below are based on the superhero comic books, they're not necessarily exact matches for the terms used by comic book historians. For one thing, there's no general agreement on

things like the exact beginning or end of an age, or even what some ages should be called. However, they're similar enough to provide a framework to capture the genre of a particular era.

GOLDEN AGE

The Golden Age of comics, and the modern superhero comic book, began in the late 1930s with the publication of the first comic books featuring heroes in colorful costumes fighting crime. These "super heroes" (as they quickly became known) were a great hit with comics' mostly young audience, and publishers quickly began turning out new titles, new stories, and new heroes to meet the demand. The first comic book stories were simplistic by modern standards, but also featured heroes with a surprisingly aggressive vigilante attitude. Golden Age heroes who willingly killed their foes, for example, might surprise fans familiar with the more "polished" heroes of the Silver Age.

During World War II, many comics told stories of heroes off to fight the Axis. Looking for things to do while deployed in the European and Pacific Theatres, many soldiers took up reading comic books, and the demand skyrocketed. Comics brought to post-war Japan by U.S. soldiers sparked the Japanese *manga* and *anime* industries. The Golden Age was the beginning of it all, the appearance of a new medium and new kind of mythology, the super-hero, or the so-called "mystery man." (The first super-*woman* appeared in 1941, with DC Comics' creation of Wonder Woman.)

PULP HEROES

Some of the ancestors of the Golden Age comics were the pulp magazines of the 1920s and '30s, particularly pulp adventure stories featuring heroes with more-than-human abilities. Pulp heroes had many of the trappings of superheroes: unusual powers, code-names, masks, secret hideouts, and a bizarre rogues gallery of enemies. They helped inspire early comic book writers (many of whom also wrote for the pulps).

MYSTERY MEN

The heroes of the Golden Age are often known as "mystery men" because they were originally shadowy vigilantes rather than the brightly clad heroes that appeared later. Certainly, the first costumed heroes to appear in public were mysterious; no one knew who they were, where they came from, or what they could do. Some believed stories about their superhuman powers were just exaggerations; in some cases, they were right! Many Golden Age heroes used gadgetry and outright trickery to convince people they had strange powers. Generally, in the pre-war years of the Golden Age, heroes are mysterious and not entirely trusted by the authorities, who don't yet know what to make of them. By the start of World War II, the mystery men have begun to more closely resemble modern superheroes.

Golden Age heroes fall into certain broad categories. GMs may want to guide players to choose these types of heroes and use them as archetypes for Golden Age NPCs.

Avengers are crime-fighters at heart, two-fisted foes of injustice. They're often motivated by a desire for vengeance because of the loss of a loved one or some other wrong done to them. Others are bored playboys who find purpose in their costumed identities. However, they choose the high road and try to bring criminals to justice. Avengers typically operate at night, and rely on their fists and their athletic skills—sometimes along with a small array of gadgets—to get the job done.

Adventurers are explorers, scientists, and scholars by nature. They usually gain their powers from an encounter with unusual forces in some distant, exotic land. Adventurers tend to be intelligent and knowledgeable, although some are a little more shady and skilled in acquiring "antiquities" primarily by stealth. Adventurers are well traveled. Their abilities range from athletics and some skill in combat supplemented by their knowledge and experience to unusual abilities or devices they've picked up in their travels.

Patriots are firm believers in their nation. Usually, they're average ordinary folk gifted with extraordinary abilities by fortunate circumstance (whether by accident or design). Patriots tend to be either extremely humble or more than a little loud-mouthed when it comes to their country being the best in the world. Either way, their dedication can't be questioned; they love their country and there's nothing they wouldn't do for it. Patriots tend to go in for costumes showing their patriotism (based on their homeland's flag, for example).

Gimmicks have a particular unique device, trick, or even origin that makes them what they are. Most gimmicks tend to be fairly ordinary apart from the one thing that gives them their powers. For example, a gimmick might be a blue-collar workman who found a magic lamp, or an ordinary kid able to transform into a powerful adult hero. Gimmicks tend to have a strong theme and stick with it, like the heroine who can see in the dark, with gadgets for blacking out an area so she has the advantage.

Godlike heroes possess tremendous power, usually magical or cosmic in nature. They may operate under certain restrictions that keep them from exercising their power freely, otherwise they tend to overshadow their mortal allies. Often godlike heroes have greater concerns than mere mortals. They may deal with equally godlike foes while their fellow heroes tackle the more mundane problems. Generally, godlike heroes are best kept as NPCs in a Golden Age game, unless all of the heroes are equally powerful (and face equally cosmic challenges). They're often treated as plot devices (see page 130) and possess X-traits (see page 211).

WORLD WAR II

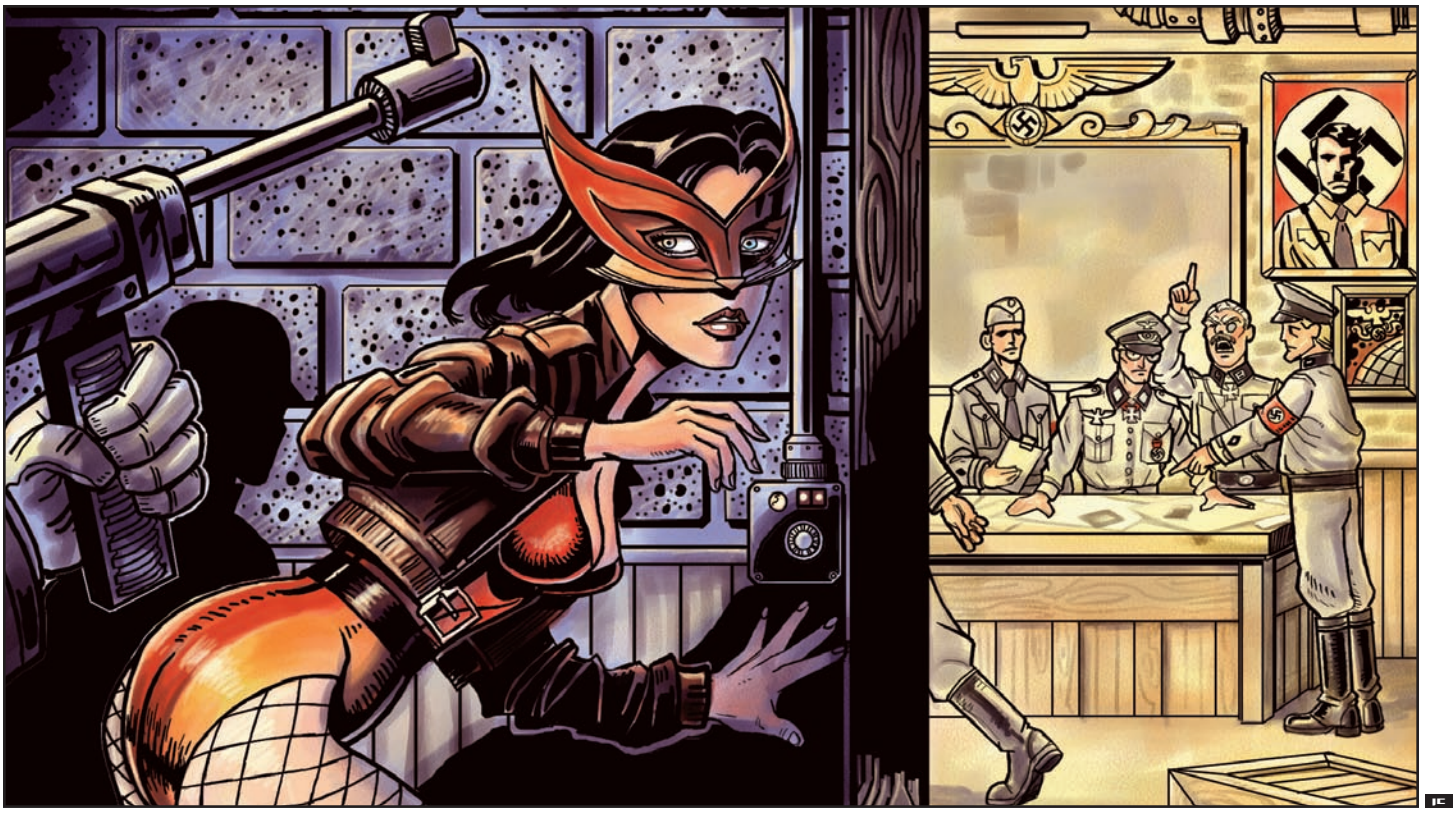
The central and defining event of the Golden Age of comics is the Second World War. Even before America's entry into the war, comic book heroes were fighting fascists and fifth columnists. Following the declaration of

THE COMICS CODE

In 1954, psychiatrist Dr. Frederic Wertham published his book *Seduction of the Innocent*, in which he claimed reading comic books had a detrimental effect on America's youth. Hearings in the U.S. Senate scrutinized the "questionable" content of comics and threatened to shut down the entire industry.

Taking preemptive action, the major publishers proposed and adopted their own code for regulating the content of comic books. Among other things, the new Comics Code Authority banned any sort of explicit violence, sex, gore, or other "mature" content. It generally sanitized the contents of comic books, and nearly wiped out the industry (or saved it, depending on your point of view). Many publishers went out of business and entire genres of comics, especially horror and crime comics, ceased publication altogether.

Ironically, the Comics Code caused the remaining publishers to turn back to superheroes, since it was easiest for them to fit into the restrictions of the Code. These guidelines were the source of much of the innocence and lightheartedness of the Silver Age.



war, their prime adversaries were Nazi and Japanese super-soldiers (as well as the aforementioned fifth-columnists and saboteurs).

The presence of super-powered champions on both the Axis and Allied sides of the war usually accounts for the fact that the war follows much the same course as in our world. The usual assumption is Allied and Axis super-soldiers counter each other, so the war follows pretty close to the same course. You can always change this assumption in your own world, creating an alternate history (see page 204) or coming up with some other reason why superheroes don't change the course of the war.

The span from the beginning to the end of World War II (usually starting around the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entry into the war) is an excellent period for a Golden Age *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign.

THE SUPER-GAP

In the real world, superhero comics went into a decline after World War II, with things like monster, horror, and pirate comics becoming more popular. Many comic book universes choose to explain the general lack of superhero adventures in the 1950s as a reaction to the "Red Scare." For example, superheroes and masked vigilantes are often persecuted during the 1950s, accused of being communist sympathizers. This leads many of them to retire or go into hiding, or to go outside the law altogether.

You can come up with your own explanations for a "gap" in superhuman activity during this time. Perhaps an invasion of shape-shifting aliens leads to mistrust of superheroes, or even results in the deaths of many heroes and villains before the aliens are themselves defeated. Golden Age heroes may choose to retire and fade into obscurity over time. The cosmic tides allowing super-powers to exist may wax and wane in a twenty-year cycle, peaking in 1940, dropping off by 1950, only to peak again in 1960, and so forth. Generally, the mid- to late-1950s are regarded as the end of the Golden Age and the start of something new.

SILVER AGE

The Silver Age of comic books began with the "second generation" of superheroes from 1959 to 1963 or so. Silver Age comics tended to feature more powerful heroes than their Golden Age predecessors (with the exception of a few godlike Golden Age characters). Silver Age comics also had a decidedly science fiction bent to them, with more aliens, fantastic technology, and scientific origins, especially involving atomic energy and related mutations. Many classic comic book characters first appeared in the Silver Age, or settled into their now-familiar forms and mythologies during this time.

LIGHTHEARTEDNESS

The Silver Age comics are characterized by a certain lighthearted tone and innocent sense of fun. The heroes are not the grim and angry avengers of the early and war-era Golden Age, but shining examples of the best in humanity. The Silver Age sees the development of things like heroic codes against killing and support for the law, justice, and American values. In part this is due to the Comics Code (see **The Comics Code** sidebar), which prohibits some of the darker elements of older comics. In the Silver Age, heroes are heroes, villains are villains, and that's all there is to it.

Silver Age comics also don't take themselves too seriously. They're not satires—although they are often campy—but they don't focus on the realism of a world of costumed heroes and villains. Generally, the consequences of super-powers are cheerfully ignored to make for better stories. Nobody wonders how a hero can pick up a battleship, he just does it! The same is true for any of a number of other elements. Collateral damage is mysteriously cleaned up in between issues (or panels, for that matter!). Captured villains go to jail, without any concern for lengthy trials or legal entanglements. There are no questions about why a genius inventor doesn't develop Teflon or a cure for cancer rather than super-science "vita-

rays" or rocket ships. In general, the watchword of the Silver Age is "don't worry about it!" If it's fun and works as part of the story, go ahead and use it and don't worry about the consequences or implications for the larger world.

THE COLD WAR

During the decades of the Silver Age, the Cold War was in full swing, and in full evidence in the pages of the comics. Nazi villains from the Golden Age were replaced with Communist villains from the Soviet Union or the People' Republic of China (less often from Latin America or other parts of Asia like Vietnam or Cambodia).

Communist villains (communists were *never* heroes) were just as much caricatures as the fascists of the 1940s. They were either mindlessly loyal to the State, even brainwashed by their Party handlers, or thoroughly corrupt and willing to serve the Communist Party so long as it furthered their own ends. Communist emblems like the red star (or the Chinese yellow stars on a red field) and the Russian hammer and sickle were all but required for the costumes of Red villains.

As the Silver Age progressed, attitudes toward communist characters (or at least those from communist nations) softened somewhat, although they remained stereotypical. Some characters chose to defect to the West, rejecting communism and showing their heroic side. Their former "comrades" from home typically hunted them for their betrayal.

THE ATOMIC AGE

The Silver Age is also the beginning of the atomic age, with the proliferation of both nuclear power and nuclear weapons. The looming specter of the Bomb during the Cold War only increased the mystique of "atomic power," which became the origin for many Silver Age characters. Uncontrolled exposure to radiation—whether cosmic rays, gamma bombs, or bites from radioactive animals—figured into many origins. Comics also speculated that rising levels of background radiation (due to atomic tests and such) were causing widespread genetic mutations, leading to a new generation of super-powered mutants.

In many ways, these "children of the atom" embodied fears about nuclear power. They also served as proxies for the social upheavals of the 1960s and '70s, especially the civil rights movement. They were the strange children their parents couldn't understand. People hated and feared them for being who and what they were. Yet some mutants took the high road, using their powers to protect a world that wanted to destroy them. This analogy appealed to many comic readers (often alienated teenagers themselves), leading to the popularity of mutant heroes. The **Mutation** origin (see page 197) has more information on incorporating this theme into your campaign.

SECOND-GENERATION SUPERS

The heroes of the Silver Age made up a new generation of superheroes, often following in the footsteps of their Golden Age predecessors. Some comic publishers created updated versions of their Golden Age characters for an all-new comic book audience, while other Silver Age heroes were completely new. The explosion in comic publishing in the 1960s certainly meant there were more of them than the handful of surviving heroes from the Golden Age.

Like the postwar generation of the time, Silver Age heroes often held different attitudes from the previous generation. Their Golden Age mentors, if they showed up at all, were often seen as "old fashioned." Golden Age heroes who made the transition to the Silver Age sometimes felt they belonged to a bygone era, and wondered what they had to offer this new generation.

You can incorporate these elements into your campaign in two ways. First, you can create Golden Age heroes for the new generation to follow, perhaps even having some of them take up the mantles (and names) of their predecessors, just as many Silver Age heroes did in the comics. Second, you can provide opportunities for the heroes to interact with the previous generation, perhaps emphasizing the "generation gap" in terms of attitudes. This is especially effective if one of the player's heroes was around during the Golden Age and is now adjusting (or not!) to a new generation.

FANTASTIC FRONTIERS

More so than the Golden Age, the Silver Age of comics is one of *wonder*. In the era when humanity first went into space and reached for the Moon, the comics featured an endless array of lost worlds, hidden cities, fantastic dimensions, alien planets, and cosmic forces. Many Silver Age heroes are explorers by nature, blazing trails into new frontiers. These exotic places often hold danger, for the heroes and the world.

Lost Worlds include isolated plateaus where dinosaurs still roam (and maybe hunt primitive tribes of humans). Living examples of dead civilizations like ancient Greeks, Romans, Aztecs, or Mayans may still exist, and could have technology (or magic) in advance of their ancestors, or even the modern world.

Hidden Civilizations are sources of heroes and villains. Cities hidden in isolated places like the Himalayas, Antarctica, or the bottom of the ocean are home to offshoots of the human race. Sunken cities like Atlantis and Lemuria are common in the comics, inhabited by aquatic or mer-people. Perhaps legendary cities like Shangri-La, El Dorado, Lyonesse, and Brigadoon exist in one form or another. You can decide just how well hidden these civilizations are, what the inhabitants are like, and what adventure possibilities they offer.

Fantastic Dimensions range from abstract places like the astral plane and the dimension of darkness (or similar conceptual dimensions) to parallel Earths where history took a different course. Heroes can use Dimensional Movement (see page 102) to reach these dimensions, while their inhabitants might do the same to reach Earth.

Alien Worlds are numerous and diverse in most comic book universes. They're home to alien civilizations, many of them humanoid and possessed of technology advanced enough to reach Earth. Alien races can be peaceful and uninterested in a cosmic backwater like our planet, but many more are would-be invaders. The **Alien** origin (see page 194) has some additional ideas on using aliens in your campaign.

GOING APE!

Julius Schwartz, an editor at DC Comics for decades, first noticed that comics sold better with an ape or gorilla on the cover (especially an ape talking or engaged in some other human behavior). So much better, in fact, that DC instituted an editorial policy limiting the number of apes on the covers of their books each month! The popularity of primates led to a number of Silver Age simian characters. They include heroes and villains, as well as sidekicks and supporting characters. Most Silver Age ape characters retain their simian physical traits, but have human level (or greater!) intellect. To include such a character in your own campaign, start with the ape stats (see page 229), increase the character's mental abilities, and add any other appropriate traits (skills, feats, powers, or equipment). Also the **Sinister Simian** archetype (see page 223) is a ready-to-use ape villain.

GLOATING

Oh, how Silver Age villains love to gloat! Gamemasters who want to encourage the Silver Age tradition of villainous gloating (or "monologuing") can use the following guidelines:

A hero can make a Bluff skill check against the result of a villain's resistance check (Bluff, Sense Motive, or Will save, whichever is best) to encourage the villain to waste time gloating, giving the hero an opportunity to do something. This works like the Fascinate feat (see page 61), except the hero doesn't need to do anything to maintain it. Each round, make a new skill check or Will save for the villain, if it fails, the villain goes on gloating. Generally, any attack or other action from the hero directly affecting the villain ends the villain's gloating. Players can (and often should) spend hero points on the Bluff check to encourage villains to gloat.

BRONZE AGE

The Bronze Age of comics follows on the tail end of the Silver Age, sometime in the 1970s and into the 1980s. It's characterized by an increasing sophistication in terms of characterization and story, particularly a willingness to tackle more complex and mature issues skirting the limits of the Comics Code. Bronze Age comics also feature particular fads and social trends of the time.

HUMAN HEROES

The heroes of the Bronze Age have feet of clay. While many Silver Age heroes were given foibles, they truly come to the fore in the Bronze Age. Rather than just heroes who bicker amongst themselves, for example, there are heroes dealing with serious problems like alcoholism, drug use, and racism. Heroes are portrayed as *people*, who sometimes make mistakes or have flaws they need to overcome.

This creates plenty of opportunities for complications in Bronze Age style games (see **Complications**, page 122). Heroes can have martial and relationship problems, dark personal secrets, struggles between their heroic and super identities, and battles between conscience and duty. A particular issue for patriotic heroes in the Bronze Age is increasing cynicism toward patriotism and national loyalty in general.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Bronze Age comics began to deal with some of the issues forbidden by the Comics Code by handling them in what was considered a helpful way, offering positive role-models for young readers. For example, the comics addressed the issue of drug abuse by clearly portraying it as something bad. So long as it wasn't glorified, the Code didn't pose any problems (particularly since it was largely self-enforced anyway).

The major social issues of the 1970s and '80s all showed up in the comics to one degree or another. Among the most popular were:

- **Women's Rights:** Feminist heroines and empowered women became more common in the Bronze Age. Female heroes made it clear they weren't going to serve solely as "secretaries" to hero teams and they were just as capable as any male hero, if not more so. Female *villains* often had enough of male-domination and were prepared to serve it up in spades. Stories ranged from serious issues of discrimination to campy "battles of the sexes" where empowered heroines who'd had enough fought it out with their male counterparts (usually under some sort of villainous influence).
- **Black Power:** Minority heroes—notably black heroes—become more common in the Bronze Age, although it was all but required for such heroes to have the word "Black" in their names. Such heroes were often angry crusaders for equal rights as well as justice for all.
- **Substance Abuse:** Drug and alcohol abuse, previously forbidden by the Comics Code, became issues in the Bronze Age. Heroes fell victim to the "demon in a bottle," and were forced to deal with the consequences, or discovered their young wards were addicts, much as unsuspecting

parents were forced to deal with children on drugs. In later years, the "War on Drugs" became a common theme, and drug-dealers common foes for street-level heroes. Some heroes even *gained* their powers from accidents involving designer drugs, echoing some of the deliberate "super-serum" heroes of the Golden Age, some of whom discovered they had a drug problem stemming from the source of their powers.

- **Youth Empowerment:** From the flower children of the 1960s to the "Me Generation" of the 1980s, the Bronze Age of comics featured more young people who weren't just loyal sidekicks of older mentors, but full-fledged heroes in their own right. Often, the younger generation had a new way of doing things, and they were looking for independence from their elders.
- **Multinationalism:** Following the trends of minority-rights, comics in the later years of the Bronze Age began to introduce more heroes and villains from nations outside North America. Often they were simply guest-stars, but some comics included regular foreign characters, with different cultural backgrounds. Comics also took place outside of North American cities and went to other places on Earth.

FADS AND FASHIONS

Bronze Age comics gleefully incorporated fads and fashion-trends of the day, even more than Golden and Silver Age comics. So characters based on things like disco, breakdancing, skateboarding, roller-blading, video games, heavy metal music, and similar trends were common (albeit mostly short-lived). Gamemasters looking to capture the feel of the Bronze Age should consider some of the fads and fashions of the time and base some non-player characters on them, encouraging players to do the same.

IRON AGE

The Iron Age or "Dark Age" of comics began sometime in the 1980s. It's characterized by a shift away from the bright colors and simple themes of the Silver Age toward more mature, often violent and explicit, stories and characters. In particular, the Iron Age features a rise in vigilante heroes far more willing (if not eager) to kill their opponents. It finds echoes in Hollywood action-adventure films featuring exaggerated gunplay, violence, and sexuality.

SHADES OF GRAY

A key element of the Iron Age is the often morally ambiguous nature of heroes and villains. Sometimes it's difficult to draw a clear line between the two. For example, in the Silver Age, a hero whose family is murdered devotes himself to bringing criminals to justice, and is sworn never to kill, since that makes him no better than the scum he fights. In the Iron Age, the same origin creates a vigilante hero who swears to wreck bloody vengeance against all criminals. He does what the law cannot, because the system is flawed and corrupt, gunning down criminals and fighting villains to the death.

The moral ambiguity of the Iron Age extends beyond just violence. It touches upon other issues like drug use, sexuality, personal problems, and heroes making money off their powers. Some Iron Age heroes are mercenaries, doing their job for pay. Others are ruthless businesspeople, cashing in on their costumed identities with licensing deals and personal appearances. An Iron Age setting should reflect these more complex and adult issues.

BLACK OPS

Many Iron Age characters and stories adopted a paramilitary style. Instead of superheroes, characters were "special operatives" often working for a government, corporation, or organization. Elements of the espionage and action-adventure genres seeped into the comics. Code-names were used as much for secrecy and covert operations as for splashing across the headlines. Costumes tended to be less flashy, more body armor and camouflage, military-style jumpsuits. Characters often adopted military attitudes, ranks, and backgrounds.

Iron Age villains also took on a more practical and political tone. Terrorists of various stripes became common, along with gangsters and druglords (reflecting the 1980s "War on Drugs"). Villains were more likely to be found in boardrooms than secret volcano lairs, and they controlled international networks of influence. Solo Iron Age villains were often psychotic serial killers and similar monsters.

GUNS, GUNS, GUNS!

Iron Age heroes like guns, and lots of them. Even some heroes who didn't particularly *need* guns carried and used them. These were real guns, too, not Silver Age "blasters," guns loaded with "mercy bullets," or similar science-fiction weapons, but guns firing live ammo (preferably armor-piercing and at full-auto).

In addition to guns, other lethal weapons are common, including swords, knives, and various martial arts weapons, especially shuriken, sais, katana, and nunchaku. Some characters have high-tech or magical versions of these weapons, but more often they are simply mundane tools of bloody violence wielded by expert hands.

LEATHER & LATEX

Just as guns became fashion accessories for the well-dressed hero or villain, costumes in the Iron Age took on a more "mature" appearance. Tight-fitting leather, with as many straps and buckles as possible, or form-fitting latex or spandex became common. Various sorts of body armor showed up (to protect against all those guns) and costumes had a paramilitary style to them: jumpsuits, bandoliers, web-belts, combat boots, and so forth, were common elements. Sunglasses, goggles, and helmets often replaced masks, and heroes as well as villains sport tattoos, piercings, and other body-art.

NINJA!

The Iron Age of comics saw a fascination with martial arts, ninja in particular: dark clad assassins wielding almost mystical powers of stealth. Rogue ninjas became vigilante heroes while villains often sent ninja minions or lieutenants against the heroes. A common archetype was the westerner trained in the secret ninja arts (who then almost always turns against ninja tradition to become a hero). Rivalries between student and teacher or former fellow students provided conflict for heroes and villains. Any Iron Age team worth its salt had at least one ninja-like member (if not several). For ninja minions see the ninja minion in **Chapter 11**.

LONE WOLVES

The heroes of the Iron Age were often solo acts, lone avengers on a personal quest. Since most *Mutants & Masterminds* games are group experiences, you may need to play down this aspect of the Iron Age. Fortunately, Iron Age heroes *did* occasionally band together into teams, albeit more loosely organized than the superhero teams of the Silver Age. Iron Age teams were often modeled on police or military special operations units rather than a crime-fighting "league." Team members still occasionally struck out on their own, especially when dealing with personal matters they preferred to keep to themselves.

REALISTIC POWERS

Super-powers in the Iron Age were often treated more realistically than before. Writers sought to power-down many characters and offer at least somewhat reasonable explanations for the fantastic powers of others. More importantly, they explored many of the consequences of such powers, beyond using them to fight crime and injustice. What did it really *mean* to be a god among mortals, an alien among humans?

Generally, the realistic implications of powers made them more lethal. After all, strength sufficient to lift tons should easily smash flesh and bone. Laser beams able to melt steel inflict horrible burns, and so forth. Gamemasters looking to capture an Iron Age feel should ratchet up the realism and lethality of the campaign in general (see page 187).

A NEW GENERATION

Part of the Iron Age revolution in comic books was the appearance of new publishers (and characters) for the first time in decades. Often, these new publishers were creating their own superhero "universes," independent from established superhero mythologies. That meant their new heroes were the first of their kind in their respective worlds. There was no back-story, no previous generations of heroes or villains (or, if there was, it simply wasn't mentioned or important). One very effective means of divorcing an Iron Age genre setting from the rest is to simply start off that way from the very first appearance of super-powers in the world, creating a setting that never had a Golden or Silver Age for comparison.

MODERN AGE

The modern (or "post-modern" according to some) era of comics isn't definitively named, largely because, as the saying goes, once an age is named, it's usually over. It is sometimes referred to as the "Platinum Age," "Electrum Age," or the "Retro" genre. It harkens back to the Gold and Silver Ages of comics, but tempered with modern sensibilities and a measure of wonder and nostalgia regarding previous ages. In many respects, the Modern Age seeks to recapture the experiences of comic creators raised on Silver Age comics, and runs counter to the cynicism of the Iron Age (which sought to break established molds and take comics in different directions). Much of the advice in the **Silver Age** section applies to the Modern Age as well, with a few notable differences.

SENSE OF HISTORY

Modern Age comics draw upon a long history of comic book publishing, and the previous ages, especially the Silver Age. The Modern Age has a sense of tradition and familiarity; superheroes aren't something new, but have been around for a long time. The rich background and history of the setting is a source of inspiration for stories about the present.

This sense of history is harder to achieve in your own *Mutants & Masterminds* setting, unless you happen to have a setting the players have been enjoying for years (which is certainly possible). Fortunately, there are some things you can do to achieve the same sense of history in your own campaign.

The first is to give the campaign a rich and detailed history. It's more difficult to run a Modern Age campaign in a setting where superhumans have only just appeared, for example. There's no historical context for them. The more context you provide, the more alive the setting becomes. Be careful not to overwhelm the players with too much information right off, but create the history and use it as a source of ideas for adventures in the present day.

One particularly good use of a heroic history is the "legacy character," a hero or villain based on a previous character in the setting. For example, a modern-day hero might be the second or third in a line of heroes with the same name (and perhaps similar powers and costumes). Heroic (and villainous) identities are passed on across generations, creating characters with built-in histories, enemies, and story hooks.

You can also create a sense of familiarity in your campaign by playing off many of the standard comic book archetypes. Create characters in your campaign's history that are familiar in style, if not identical, to published comic book characters. Perhaps a well-known hero is a strange visitor from another world, or there is a dark avenger active in the Golden or Silver Age (perhaps with a modern heir). Model hero teams on existing ones from the comics, and they'll seem familiar to the players, even if they have totally different characters. Set most of these characters in the past, and you give the setting context while allowing the players to take things in new directions in the present. You can even take the Golden and Silver

Ages of published comics and use them as the history and backdrop of your campaign, creating a totally new and different Modern Age based on them.

SENSE OF WONDER

Many Modern Age comics tried to restore the "sense of wonder" found in the Silver Age, although a trifle more serious. They went in the opposite direction of the Iron Age's realism and tried to restore lost worlds, fantasy settings, alien cities, talking apes, and so forth, just updated to a modern context.

Essentially, you can take the elements of the Silver Age (see page 189) and include them in your Modern Age campaign. Just emphasize some of the fantastic elements. Whereas a lost city or a planet-sized spaceship was nothing unusual in the Silver Age, stress how amazing it is to characters in the Modern Age. They encounter the impossible on a regular basis, but it's no less amazing because of that. Some Modern Age comics try to provide consistent explanations for why the universe is so fantastic, but you don't necessarily have to—not knowing why can be simply part of the wonder and mystery of it all.

SENSE OF PURPOSE

Modern Age comics go beyond some of the simple themes of the Silver Age. While they're not as gritty as the Iron Age, they're also more mature and sophisticated. So modern-day issues show up and characters are better rounded and less stereotypical. Modern Age stories deal with social issues, politics, terrorism, poverty, and the like alongside alien invasions, world-conquering supervillains, and magical menaces from beyond.

While heroes often adhere to a more Silver Age code of ethics, there are reasons for them to do so; it's a choice rather than simply the way things are. In some ways, this can make Modern Age characters even more heroic (or villainous) than their Silver Age counterparts. They're not blindly following an ideology; they're making conscious decisions about right and wrong.

Watch out for moral discussions and debates starting to dominate your game. There's no problem with them if your group enjoys roleplaying them in character, but they can sometimes become heated, or simply dull and repetitive. The occasion moral dilemma or debate can add flavor to the game, but don't neglect opportunities to include clear-cut situations where the heroes can act decisively without any concern.

ORIGINS

What is the origin of superhumans and their powers? In most comic books, it's more accurate to say, "What are the origins of super-powers?" There are usually several, creating worlds where mutants, aliens, robots, sorcerers, and gods may all be members of the same team. This section looks at the various superhuman origins and how to use them in your *Mutants & Masterminds* campaigns.

ALIENS

A wide variety of aliens are common in the comic books, ranging from humanoid aliens virtually indistinguishable from humans to extremely strange alien life (since comic artists aren't limited in their "special effects" budget). Aliens may not be carbon-based or even organic life: silicon-based, amorphous, or even crystalline or energy beings show up.

Most comic book universes have numerous alien races, often with very advanced technology and civilizations. These aliens have some sort of contact with Earth, although it's usually sporadic. Militaristic alien civilizations seek to conquer Earth while more benign ones usually have some policy of non-interference regarding worlds as "primitive" as Earth.

Aliens in the comics often have super-powers, but not the same variety of powers found among Earth superhumans. Instead, aliens tend to have racial abilities, making them superhuman compared to Earthlings, but not unusual for members of their race. For example, aliens from a heavy-gravity world might have superhuman strength while a race from a planet with unusually strong magnetic fields might have magnetic control powers. Sometimes an alien mutation shows up, with powers outside the racial norm, but they appear less frequently among aliens than among humans (see **Mutation**, page 197).

STRANGE VISITORS

Alien superheroes and villains are fairly common. When creating an alien character, give some thought to the character's race and home world. Is the character the last survivor of a dead race, an exile from home, or simply an explorer or visitor from another world? Other members of the character's race may be potential allies, antagonists, or supporting characters. Also decide if the character's powers are typical for that alien race or unusual in some way.

ALIEN TECHNOLOGY

Many alien races, at least ones with the ability to reach Earth, have technology in advance of our own. Typical comic book alien technology includes things like faster-than-light travel, beam or blaster weapons, force fields, robots, and possibly things like matter transporters, teleportation, and anti-gravity. Pretty much any super-science technology can show up in the hands (or claws, or pseudopods) of aliens (see **Super-Science**, page 199). Advanced technology may actually be the source of an alien character's powers.

Of course, aliens are not limited solely to technology. Some alien races also use magic, although oftentimes alien "magic" is just technology so advanced it is practically the same thing. Alien magicians may be sinister or benign, and magic in alien societies may be secretive (as it usually is on Earth) or more overt.

ALIENS AMONG US

A common comic book theme involves shape-shifting or mind-controlling aliens infiltrating and influencing human society. (This was particularly common during the Communist scares of the Cold War era.) You may wish to introduce a race of alien shape-changers, mind-controlling slugs, or disembodied "psychic parasites," as adversaries for the heroes. Such foes stir up fear and mistrust by imitating or co-opting authority figures or other heroes. They may also set off a wave of xenophobia among humans, perhaps in addition to (or substituting for) a fear of mutants and mutation (see **Mutation**, page 197).

THE PROGENITORS

Many comics include the idea of ancient alien races visiting Earth in the distant past (often based on the "ancient astronaut" theories of aliens interacting with civilizations like the Egyptians and the Mayans). These "Progenitors" may be a single race or many different races over the millennia. They influence human evolution and development in different ways, providing technology, performing genetic modifications, even interbreeding with Earth creatures. Alien intervention is one means of explaining the development of superhumans on Earth. It may also explain various mythological or historical oddities.

COSMIC POWER

Aliens may include various "cosmic" beings, forces of great age and power in the universe, essentially alien gods (see **Gods** on the next page). These beings often draw upon "the power cosmic," also known as the power

primordial, primal power, cosmic energy, and so forth. This cosmic power may be the source for various super-powers, giving them the "cosmic" descriptor. In the comics, cosmic power ranges in versatility from a form of energy control to a force limited solely by the imagination of its wielder (see **Cosmic Energy Control**, page 80).

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

- An alien police officer sent to track down a criminal hiding out on Earth. After apprehending his quarry, the officer might be assigned to safeguard Earth full-time. Alternately, the officer might be killed, passing on his uniform and weapons (and perhaps even powers) to a worthy human.
- The last survivor of an alien race finds a new home on Earth and tries to blend in with humanity, while using the powers granted by Earth's environment to fight crime.
- Aliens abduct an otherwise ordinary human and use advanced technology to give their subject super-powers. They may intend the subject to become one of Earth's protectors or the aliens might have a more sinister purpose in mind. Perhaps they're simply curious and testing the limits of human potential.
- An alien energy being merges with a human host to experience corporeal life, granting its host various powers while in turn learning about human compassion and goodness.
- An alien-human hybrid develops unexpected powers and abilities, and becomes the target of a secretive government agency dealing with alien influences.

GODS

Superheroes are like modern gods or mythic heroes in many ways. So it's not surprising some mythological gods also *become* superheroes. Gods in the comic books—at least those who become superheroes—tend to be as powerful as other superheroes, perhaps at the high end of the power scale, but still peers to superhuman heroes. Godly villains or elder gods less involved in human affairs may be more powerful, achieving even cosmic levels of power.

In most settings, different pantheons of mythic deities co-exist. Such pantheons rarely have little to do with human worship any longer, usually by mutual agreement (also possibly related to the rise of monotheism in Western culture). The occasional godly hero or villain is the exception to the rule of divine non-interference.

Gods may visit Earth in physical form. They're often very much like humans with extraordinary powers. In other cases, gods invest their power in particular mortals. A god may take a mortal host, possibly transforming the host into a semblance of the god's own form. Gods also grant mortals super-powers, although this falls more under the category of magical origins (see **Magic**, page 196).

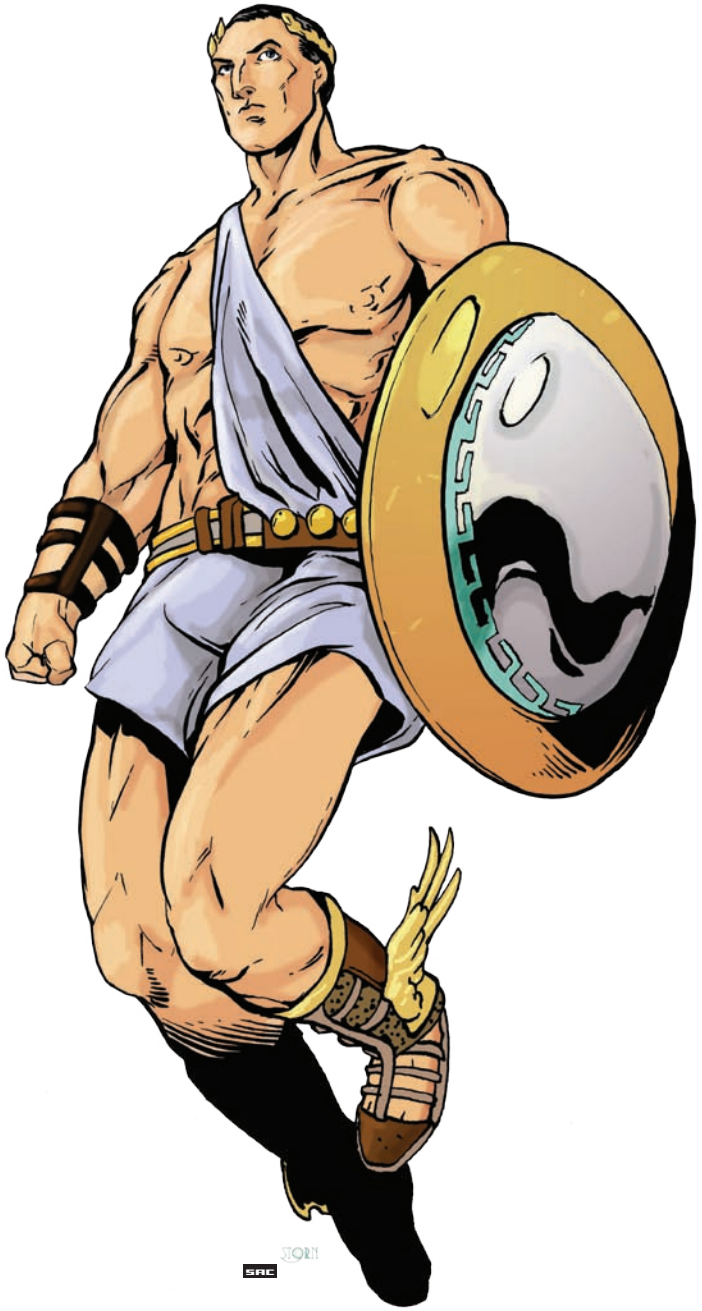
Gods typically have super-human abilities, including immortality. They may be truly unkillable or merely long-lived. The average god is more physically capable than a human, and some specific gods have tremendous abilities (such as heroic gods associated with great Strength or deities with super-human Wisdom and Charisma). Magical powers associated with the god's portfolio or area of influence are also common. For example, a storm god usually has weather control powers, a sun god wields light or fire powers, and so forth.

ONE TRUE GOD?

The comics tend to be (deliberately) vague about the theological implications of mythological gods co-existing, and of the existence or nature of the Judeo-Christian God. Generally, the question of contradictory creation myths and similar things is simply ignored, or treated with some vague hand waving about how the cosmos actually came into being in many ways (that is, all mythologies are true, even the contradictory ones). The creator God (associated with the Judeo-Christian Jehovah) is a distant, largely uninvolved and unknowable figure, although He may have various angels, saints, and other agents, usually on par with the power of other mythic gods.

HEAVEN, HELL, AND BEYOND

The existence of a god or gods also implies the existence of various mythic dimensions, including (but not limited to) Heaven, Hell, Asgard, Olympus, Heliopolis, Nirvana, the Dreamtime, and so forth. These and many other celestial (and infernal) dimensions may exist in the campaign setting, opening up literal new worlds of adventure for heroes.



While the comics don't usually bother with a comprehensive or cohesive cosmology for all the various other dimensions, the Gamemaster is free to invent one, if desired. The dimensions or planes inhabited by the gods (and other mystical or divine beings) may relate to each other in a particular way. For example, perhaps Heaven lies "above" Earth in the cosmic scheme of things, with Hell "below" and the other godly dimensions arrayed in a ring or wheel "around" the Earth's plane. A particular arrangement of divine planes may result in more or less access to Earth for certain divine powers.

Visiting the home dimensions of the gods requires the Dimensional Movement effect (see page 102). The same is true for gods intending to visit Earth and return home, making it a common effect for godly characters.

CHARIOTS OF THE GODS

The gods might actually not be "gods" as such. In some settings aliens or other types of superhumans are mistaken for gods and may actually be the sources of historical myths about the gods. Such beings can exist even in settings with real gods; some myths reflect the reality of the gods, while others are cases of divine mistaken identity. The real gods may not look kindly on these divine imposters, or they may not care about them.

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

- A heroic god comes to Earth to defend humanity. Most people believe the "god" is simply another superhuman who has adopted a mythological motif. The god's ancient enemies may also come to Earth to become supervillains.
- A mythological god mates with a mortal with their half-divine offspring as a new hero. The hero has only a portion of godly power, which may be better suited to some settings.
- The divine spirit or essence of a god possesses a mortal host.
- One or more gods invest a mortal with portions of their power to create a superhuman champion.
- A guardian angel volunteers to accept mortality and life on Earth in order to actively defend humanity from the forces of evil.

MAGIC & MYSTICISM

Magic is a real and active force in most comic book universes, although it may operate behind the scenes. The average person probably doesn't believe in magic as such, attributing the abilities of sorcerers and wizards to more "mundane" super-powers, the same with magical creatures and dimensions. Even in a world with caped people who fly and bend steel in their bare hands, magic is a strange and barely understood force.

Magic tends to produce three types of super-powered characters: magicians, the magically empowered, and magical creatures.

MAGICIANS

Magicians—also known as sorcerers, mages, wizards, witches, and so forth—are people (not necessarily human) who have learned to harness and control magical forces, allowing them to cast various sorts of spells. In most settings, the ability to use magic is a learned ability, although not everyone has the will, talent, or dedication to learn it. Indeed, magicians tend to be a rare and select group, although there are often many minor dabblers and adepts compared to true masters of the mystic arts.

Magicians are a secretive lot, for the most part. They deal with forces and beings few others understand, so they tend to keep to themselves, even as members of a team. The control and discipline magical training

requires may make them seem distant, even cold, and villainous magicians tend to have tremendous egos.

Comic book magicians may cast spells by invoking names and entities of power (often alliterative ones, like the "Mystic Mists of Malador" or the "Silent Serpents of Set"). Players should feel free to come up with suitably atmospheric spells and incantations for their characters, and GMs should reward players who belt out spells with aplomb by giving them minor bonuses to attack rolls, power checks, or saving throws involving those spells. Note many magicians are deprived of their powers if they cannot speak or gesture to cast their spells, a drawback for the Magic power.

MAGICALLY EMPOWERED

Magic can also be a source of superhuman origins, much like the fruits of science (see **Mutation** on the next page). Simply substitute "ancient artifact" or "magical spell" for "chemical spill" or "radiation leak" and you've got an origin! The primary differences for magically empowered characters are their style and power descriptors.

Someone or something may deliberately endow a character with magical powers. A deity is one example (see **Gods**, page 195). Others include ancient wizards, witches, angels, demons, spirits, and other magical entities, along with sentient magic items. A classical example is the ancient Greek hero Achilles. His mother dipped him in the waters of the underworld to make him invulnerable, but since she held him by his heel, it becomes his only weak spot. Magical empowerment may be intended as a curse rather than a gift. Examples include the curse of lycanthropy (turning someone into a werewolf or similar creature) or transforming someone into an undead creature. See the following sections for more on such magical beings.

Characters empowered by magic have traits and powers much like any other, except their powers typically have a magic or mystic descriptor applied to them.

JUST LIKE MAGIC

One option for a campaign setting is to assume *all* super-powers are actually magical in nature, even those with other apparent causes, like accidents of birth or science. Essentially, the forces of magic bend or ignore scientific laws, much like most comic book super-powers. So when a child is born a "mutant" with the potential for superhuman powers, it's not because of some genetic anomaly, but the position of the stars, the force of fate, or some other mystic tide in the universe. Likewise, magic allows otherwise ordinary people to not only survive otherwise fatal accidents, but to transform into something more than human. They may think it was radiation or toxic waste, but it was actually magic! This approach has the advantage of being unified and simple. It also explains away all the improbabilities by chalking them up to magical forces. However, it can create a certain feeling of sameness in the campaign, and may affect the use of some powers if every character has a "magic" descriptor.

CREATURES OF MAGIC

All the various creatures of myth and legend show up in the comics in various forms, particularly classics like werewolves, vampires, zombies, mummies, demons, elementals, spirits, and golems (animated statues). Any or all of these can become heroes, villains, or minions of either. Heroes and villains are often unique examples of their kind, particularly because they possess free will and determination, which many otherwise mindless magical beings do not.

A common origin in the comics is for an ordinary person to merge with a magical creature in some way. For example, the character might be possessed by a demon or spirit (or even an angel or god). Conversely, a human spirit might "possess" the unliving body of a zombie, elemental, or golem, combining human free will and intelligence with mystic power.

MAGICAL DEVICES

Magical devices, ranging from enchanted rings to magic swords, often show up as sources of power. A magical device may be the sole source of a character's super-powers, or merely a supplement to other inherent powers. Magicians often have one or two magical devices at their disposal, and fantasy warriors might have an enchanted weapon or armor.

Magical devices make useful story hooks, since villains may be out to steal them, either to gain their power for themselves or simply deprive the heroes of them. Perhaps a villain has a matching device, and wants to combine the two of them for greater power. You can even create a team of heroes (or villains) where each member has a magical device from a combined set, like magical gemstones, weapons, or suits of armor.

MYSTIC DIMENSIONS

The existence of magic implies other dimensions beyond Earth. The homes of the various gods and divine powers are one example (see **Gods**, page 195) but there are an almost infinite number of other dimensions. Usually, the inhabitants of these other dimensions are potential threats to Earth, so portals to them are carefully guarded. The rulers of mystic dimensions (nearly always their most powerful magicians) may have designs on Earth.

SLEIGHT OF MIND

In some settings, the common belief that magic is nothing more than other superhuman powers clothed in a cloak of mysticism and misunderstanding is actually true. Supposed "sorcerers" and "witches" are superhumans who consider their powers "magical," even though they are not. Some may be deluded while others are charlatans. Of course, superhuman powers still exist, and some characters may still need ritualistic actions like "casting spells" in order to use them. So these powers are *effectively* still magic, even if they aren't "real" magic. The prime difference is in the background of the setting and in the descriptors applied to "magical" powers.

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

- A student of a master of the mystic arts, trained to assume the aged master's mantle and continue guarding humanity against forces lurking beyond this dimension.
- A hereditary witch, gifted with great magical talent, but also faced with ancient enemies, and perhaps even family members who do not choose to use their gifts responsibly.
- An archeologist who discovered an ancient magical talisman, gaining super-powers from it.
- A golem created as a protector for a repressed people. Having outlived its creator, it seeks to continue and expand its duty as a guardian while learning more of what it means to be human.
- A former criminal bonded with a demonic spirit, creating a new entity with a mission to hunt and punish the guilty.

MUTATION

Mutation, in one form or another, is probably the most common origin for superhumans in the comics. Technically, a "mutant" is a creature genetically different from parent creatures, but the term "mutation" in the comic books usually means any sort of change induced by outside forces. Some settings differentiate between *mutants*, born with at least the potential for superhuman abilities, and *mutates* (sometimes called "altered" or

"enhanced" humans), otherwise normal humans exposed to forces which change them in some way.

ACCIDENTAL MUTATION

Accidental mutation is perhaps the most common origin story in the comics. Essentially, an ordinary person is accidentally exposed to some catalyst, which changes the character into a super-being. The catalyst can be almost anything, although certain eras of comics tended towards certain catalysts. In the Golden Age of the 1940s and '50s, chemical catalysts were the most common: secret potions, "wonder vitamins," experimental acids, "hard water," and so forth. In the Silver Age of the 1960s and '70s radiation was the catalyst for nearly all super-powers, from atomic bomb tests to strange isotopes, glowing meteorites, or even the radioactive blood or venom of certain animals. In more recent years technology like genetic engineering, recombinant DNA, and even nanotechnology have become catalysts for mutations.

Of course, accidental mutations aren't limited to scientific catalysts. They also result from uncontrolled exposure to magic, strange inter-dimensional forces, or completely unexplained phenomena. Sometimes the "triggering" of innate genetic mutations (see below) is mistaken for accidental mutation, particularly in times of stress where another catalyst is present.

Accidental mutations are nearly always impossible (or at least extremely dangerous) to duplicate. They often happen in batches; with multiple people mutated by the same event or catalyst. This can provide a common origin for a team or a hero/villain pair. If the catalyst affects a large enough group, it can even be the origin for *every* superhuman in the world!

GENETIC MUTATION

Genetic mutation refers to pre-natal changes, resulting in people born with the potential for super-powers. Such mutations are usually attributed to things like rising background radiation, chemicals in the environment, and so forth, although they can just as easily come from things like proximity to a powerful source of magic or genetic tinkering performed by aliens.

Genetic mutations are typically what most comic books mean by the term "mutant." They usually go through a "cuckoo" stage, where they seem like ordinary people, until something triggers their latent mutations. Most often the changes brought on by puberty do this, although it may be some other form of stress. A rare few mutants are born with obvious physical mutations, making it even harder for them to find acceptance in human society. Stories tend to stress the uncontrolled nature of newly activated mutant powers. A newly "awakened" mutant may have the Uncontrolled flaw (see page 115) on his powers.

MUTANT HYSTERIA

More than any other origin, mutation, particularly genetic mutants, tend to frighten ordinary people. The possibility of *anyone* being a latent mutant, combined with the idea of mutants as a "Homo superior" evolution of humanity, destined to make normal *Homo sapiens* extinct, is enough to stir up fear and paranoia against them. In some settings, the same feelings may be directed against all superhumans (particularly if all superhumans are mutants), in other settings, they may be reserved solely for mutants, who are easily categorized as a separate "race" with designs on humanity's future. Other settings may treat mutants as no different than any other superhuman origin, provoking no more or less prejudice.

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

- A teenager discovers a newfound "gift" or "talent," which is initially confusing and frightening, and may be as much as curse as a gift.
- An otherwise ordinary person is exposed to a mutagen and gains superhuman powers. Was it an accident or a staged experiment? Can the mutagen give similar powers to others?
- An astronaut is bombarded by strange radiation, or exposed to the power of an alien artifact. Perhaps the entire crew is exposed, each acquiring different powers.
- An extended family of mutants, with a history stretching back for generations, has hidden from ordinary humanity. Now the latest generation has decided it's time to "go public" with their abilities (if not their entire family history).
- A mutant "preview" of humanity's future, born with the capabilities of a human 10,000 years (or more) in the future. Is the next stage in human evolution humanity's protector or conqueror?

PSIONICS

The term *psi* or *psionic* refers to powers of the mind, such as telepathy or telekinesis. In the comics, it's often broadly used to refer to any super-power originating from the mind. Psionics can be a somewhat vague category, which has its advantages and drawbacks.

Some settings feature low-level psionic powers, often called "psychic" abilities. They tend to be subtle and not entirely reliable. Comic book superheroes have psionic powers with much wider scope and greater power level.

The exact origin of psionic powers is often unclear. Sometimes it may be genetic mutation (see **Mutation**, immediately preceeding this section) but it's just as often unknown. The potential for psi-powers may be latent in all humanity, perhaps even in all thinking creatures, as part of the interaction between consciousness and the physical universe. In some settings, psi powers (or the potential for them) are detectable, trainable, and even reproducible to some degree. In others, "the talent" is entirely random and unpredictable.

While the terms "psionic" and "mental power" are often used interchangeably, they are actually two distinct categories. While psionic powers are all mental in nature, mental effects like Mind Reading (see page 93) are not necessarily psionic. They might just as easily exist through magic, divine power, or super-science.

ALL IN YOUR MIND

It's quite possible *all* super-powers are ultimately psionic! Since psi is such a broad category and virtually any super-power can be rationalized as a function of the user's mind, will, or imagination, psionics are sometimes used as a catch-all explanation for super-powers, especially in settings featuring a single, unified origin for superhumans (see **One Origin**, page 201). Characters may believe their powers are actually magic or reliant on super-science gadgets, and effectively they might be. After all, if a character has to speak spells or use a device to make things happen, then those powers are functionally the same as magic and super-science. The only difference is the real power source (and therefore descriptor) is psionic.

MIND SCARE

Powers Mind Reading, Mind Control, and ESP have frightening potential for abuse. Some settings may feature restrictive laws about violating the privacy of others and reading thoughts without consent. They may also see some prejudice toward mind-readers and clairvoyants, out of fear of what they could do. If technology for defeating ESP and Mind Reading exists, odds are people like government officials and law-enforcement will use it. The GM may also want to address the legality of information obtained through mind reading. See **Chapter 11** for more on this and related issues.

In a more four-color campaign, the GM can largely ignore these issues, especially if ESP and Mind Reading are relatively rare effects.

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

- A famous debunker of "psychic phenomena" who is secretly a powerful psychic investigating fraud and misuse of psionic powers.
- A powerful psionic mind trapped in a crippled or otherwise weakened body, possibly paraplegic, blind, even totally paralyzed or comatose.
- A teenager whose newly awakened psionic powers (usually physical powers like telekinesis or pyrokinesis) sometimes get out of control.
- The representative of a hidden society of enlightened humans with psionic powers, hoping to teach ordinary humanity the qualities of peace, reason, and mental empowerment.
- A psionic with mental powers disguised as physical abilities: telekinesis for "super-strength" and an invisible force field, levitation for flight, ESP for "X-ray vision," and so forth.

SUPER-SCIENCE

The line between science fiction and comic books has been blurry since the very beginning. Many early science fiction writers also wrote comic books, and superhero comics have always included science fiction elements, although they became especially prevalent in the Silver Age of comics. Many comic book heroes (and especially villains) feature science and technology far beyond the understanding of ordinary people.

THEY CALLED ME MAD!

A common element of super-science in the comics is the "mad scientist" or "lone inventor." Essentially, some genius discovers or invents something so far beyond conventional science the scientific community is either unable or unwilling to acknowledge it. The inventor's theories are dismissed, applications for grants denied, and even experimental results are rejected as falsified or otherwise "impossible." This usually results in one of two outcomes: either the scientist swears vengeance and turns to a life of crime, or else he is forced to continue his work in isolation, without the usual safeguards and oversight, resulting in some sort of accident. In the first case, the inventor becomes a super-villain, in the second, the experiment ends in the origin of a new super-being of some kind.

But *why* does the scientific community reject the fruits of super-science? The reason in the comic books is simple: to keep the world portrayed in the stories as close to our own world as possible. If the inventions of super-scientists were commonly available, the comic book world wouldn't resemble ours for very long. So writers either come up with reasons why such advanced technology doesn't proliferate, or they simply gloss it over and assume it doesn't. You can do the same in your own campaign setting, although you may want to decide the reason super-science remains limited. The most common explanations include the following:

- Super-technology is too far beyond the understanding of most people. It takes years to figure out how to replicate it. It may also require rare components or processes, so in the end it's just not economically viable. Extremely wealthy governments, corporations, and individuals might have super-technology, but it isn't mass-produced.
- Governments and corporations deliberately suppress some technology, either because it's potentially hazardous or it could be economically ruinous. Oil companies, for example, might pay a great deal to keep a cheap, clean alternative energy source off the market. The same is true of computer manufacturers and cutting edge new chips, and so forth.
- Super-technology depends on some innate or subconscious power of its inventor. It's not like normal technology, it's more an extension of the inventor's own powers. So it cannot be replicated and may not

even work at all outside of its creator's possession. This explains both the uniqueness of super-technology "inventions" and why the scientific community rejects them: they really *are* impossible ideas that shouldn't work, except somehow they do!

- Some outside force is retarding technological progress, save for a few especially brilliant minds able to overcome its resistance. It might be the work of aliens, interdimensional beings, gods, time travelers, or any number of other things. The scientific community truly is blind to the genius of its most exceptional members, but through no fault of their own.

INTENTIONAL MUTATION

Experimental procedures can grant super-powers to ordinary test subjects. Usually, there's some reason why the procedure or treatment cannot be easily replicated. It may be a one-time success, or the secret may die with the scientist (killed following the initial success). The process may be dangerous, resulting in death or hideous mutations most of the time. It might be extremely expensive, requiring staggering amounts of time, money, or both. There may be side effects, such as experimental subjects going mad, continuing to mutate, or simply "burning out" and dying after a while.

The less powerful the outcome of the process, the more likely it can be replicated. Villains in the comics often have the capability to create low-powered "super-soldiers" or minions, and the government might have a similar process. Such characters are usually below the setting's normal power level, suffer from serious side effects, or both.

Many intentional mutations are inventors who used themselves as experimental subjects, having no others available. This is particularly common for villains, either seeking great power or the victims of such experiments gone horribly awry.

Other intentional mutations are experimental subjects. Some may be volunteers, others victims experimented on against their will or without their knowledge or consent. Such characters are often bitter and vengeful toward the people responsible for their mutation.

GADGETS AND GEAR

Otherwise "ordinary" characters may derive their powers from technological gadgets and equipment. A character with a ray gun, an anti-gravity belt, and a force field projector can have the same capabilities as another with innate powers of flight, invulnerability, and energy projection, for example. The prime difference is characters can be separated from their gadgets, which may also malfunction or otherwise not work properly (see **Device**, page 81, for more information).

SERUMS AND SUPER-PILLS

Exotic chemicals and pharmaceuticals sometimes grant super-powers, usually temporary, although they may be permanent (which becomes more of a case of induced mutation, above). Characters dependent on a drug or serum for their powers may have a power loss complication (when they are deprived on the power's catalyst) and may have other modifiers applied to their powers.

BATTLESUITS AND IRON MEN

One of the more common super-science devices is the battlesuit, also known as power-armor. It's a suit of high-tech armor equipped with technology providing a range of super-powers, including (but not limited to) super-strength, flight, offensive weaponry, enhanced senses, and a range of Protection and Immunity effects (particularly life support). The wearer of a battlesuit may be its inventor or simply chosen to pilot it (particu-

larly if the suit originates with the military, a government agency, or a corporation). A battlesuit might even have *multiple* wearers. If the suit is sufficiently bulky and concealing, most people wouldn't know. Some battlesuit wearers have teams of supporting NPCs providing assistance via remote communication.

A variation on the battlesuit is the *mecha*, essentially a humanoid tank, inspired by the giant robots of Japanese *anime*. Mecha have abilities similar to battlesuits, although the GM may permit a mecha to be treated as a vehicle, so long as it's subject to the same rules as vehicles (see page 142). A mecha functioning as smoothly as a giant-sized character should be acquired as a device or even powers with a Power Loss drawback (when the hero is denied access to the mecha).

MAN AND MACHINE

Technology may actually be integrated or implanted into living creatures, creating *cyborgs*, part flesh and part machine. Cyborg powers are like those of any other character, they simply have a technological descriptor rather than mutation, alien, or the like. A cyborg may have complications or drawbacks based on the need for regular maintenance or even the Power Loss drawback, if there are ways to damage or disable the cyborg's machine parts.

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

- A brilliant inventor develops a high-tech suit for peaceful exploration (of space or the ocean, for example). When the military attempts to turn it into a weapon, the inventor steals the plans and the prototype and uses it to fight crime.
- An injured soldier receives bionic implants and replacement organs, creating a "super-soldier" either working for the military or serving as a government agent.
- A young genius has a talent for building useful gadgets out of any collection of spare parts, using them to become a superhero.
- A scientist invents a life-like, intelligent android, gifted with abilities beyond those of humans. When criminals kill its creator, the android embarks on a quest for justice and understanding the nature of humanity.
- A secret government agency trains superheroes and equips them each with devices giving them superhuman powers.

TRAINING

While some superhumans are born and others have powers thrust upon them by circumstance, a few are self-made. Rigorous training and unshakable dedication can go a long way in the comic books, taking otherwise ordinary people beyond the limits of what most consider possible.

Training generally hones and improves a character's innate potential, granting increased ability scores, skills, feats, and sometimes other effects that can be explained as learned abilities. Sometimes training awakens other latent powers, like mutant, magical, or psionic abilities (see above). Characters may also supplement physical and mental training with various technological devices (see **Super-Science**, earlier in this section).

MORE HUMAN THAN HUMAN

It's up to the Gamemaster to define the limits of training as a power source. Generally, the more realistic the setting, the more limited training becomes. In four-color comics, otherwise normal human beings train to superhuman levels of competence. While high ability scores are considered "superhuman" they're still available through training, if the GM sees fit. Other effects are left to GM interpretation. Usually any effect suitable as a feat (even a feat with multiple levels) is suitable as a training effect.

ESOTERIC SECRETS

While training can and does develop things like psychic abilities and esoteric martial arts, these effects usually require additional descriptors, such as "psychic" or "chi," to properly define them. As always, the GM decides which descriptors are appropriate for a particular effect.

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

- A foundling left at the doorstep of an isolated monastery in Asia, raised by the monks there and trained in every aspect of physical and mental discipline, perfect in mind and body as well as being taught a rigorous moral code and a duty to justice.
- The child of a Westerner and one of the last scions of a fabled Japanese ninja clan. Trained in the secret arts of invisibility, stealth, and assassination, but choosing to use them to bring down the clan and all it represents.
- Student and disciple of a renowned martial arts master whose previous student used his training for evil.
- A former Olympic athlete who lost friends and family to terrorism and undertook a rigorous program of training to fight such criminals and become an international agent of peace.
- Coming from a long line of police officers, a youngster trains to become the world's greatest detective and law-enforcer, working to reform a corrupt police department from both the inside and the outside.

ONE ORIGIN OR MANY?

One of the first things to consider about superhuman origins is which one(s) to have in your campaign. Is there a single source of super-powers or many? Which origins are more common if there's more than one and are any origins prohibited or restricted in some way?

ONE ORIGIN

There may be only one source of super-powers available in your campaign setting, although people may not necessarily know the true source's nature. For example all superhumans might be genetic mutants, psionics, or magical in nature.

A unified origin provides a degree of predictability to the setting. It is also more plausible, better suited for more realistic campaign settings. On the other hand, a single origin limits or prohibits certain character types. It may create a certain sameness among the superhuman characters in the campaign.

A single origin also limits the descriptors applied to super-powers (see **Power Descriptors**, page 66). Keep in mind this may affect how some descriptor-based effects work. For example, having an effect work against only one descriptor (such as "psionic powers") doesn't qualify as a flaw if every effect in the setting has that descriptor.

MULTIPLE ORIGINS

You may allow more than one origin in the campaign, but set specific limits in terms of suitable powers, effects, and modifiers for any given origin. For example, in a campaign about super-powered mutants in the near future, you decide to allow the mutation and super-science origins, along with the alien origin (although the existence of aliens is not widely known). You might also limit super-science powers, disallowing effects like Dimensional Movement and Mind Reading, for example, although they are available to the other power sources.

Multiple origins allow for some variety in the campaign, but also require more work on the Gamemaster's part to define and limit the options

available for each power source. You may want to do this on a character-by-character basis or just establish guidelines for the entire campaign.

ANY ORIGIN

Finally, a campaign may allow any origin for super-powers. This is the case with most comic book superhero settings: anything goes. This approach gives the players the widest range of options, but also tends to make for the most complex sort of campaign setting. Nearly anything is possible in a world where aliens, gods, magic, mutants, super-science, and psionic powers co-exist!

COSMOLOGY

Once you have tackled Earth, there's the rest of the universe to consider! Superhero comics rarely confine themselves to one world, and there's no reason you have to, either. Give some thought to the cosmology of your setting, of the infinite possibilities of worlds beyond Earth, and the adventures waiting there.

SPACE AND ALIENS

Is there alien life in your setting? If not, then you're overlooking a *lot* of potential stories and origins. Aliens of all kinds are common in the comics, and alien worlds make great settings for adventures, either for a change of pace or an entire series. Some of the typical aliens include the following (see the **Alien** origin on page 194 for more).

HUMANOIDS

Aliens in the comics are often humanoid, if not completely human looking. The common differences are things like skin color, pointed or otherwise odd-shaped ears, unusual hair color (or complete baldness), and so forth. This allows many "strange visitors" to pass for human on Earth without being immediately picked out as extraterrestrials. Among mutants, androids, and other strange earthly superhumans, aliens don't necessarily stand out!

Humanoid alien races—at least the ones capable of visiting Earth—tend to be more advanced than humanity, often *much* more. Even if aliens don't have powers of their own, their technology can more than make up for it.

INVADERS

Aliens rarely "come in peace." Alien invaders are by far more common. (The peaceful aliens tend to bypass Earth altogether.) Invading aliens tend to be far less powerful than individual superheroes, but there are usually a *lot* of them, along with their aforementioned advanced technology. Sometimes the invaders are a smaller group of more powerful aliens, or even one or two *really* powerful aliens (see **Monsters**, in the following section).

Typically, the invaders have some sort of advantage at the beginning, whether a special power, advanced technology, overwhelming numbers, or some combination of the three. Powers include things like shapeshifting aliens able to blend into the human population, a "silent invasion" of seizing control of governments from within, or things like mind control, or perhaps the power to possess Earth's superhuman defenders! Fortunately, the invaders usually have a weakness as well. It may be sunlight, fire, rare minerals, spam e-mails, or even common bacteria, but once the heroes figure it out, they've got a weapon to turn the tide.

MONSTERS

Alien worlds are sources of various monsters in the comics, from the giant, rampaging types capable of flattening cities to cunning hunters lurking in the shadows. Virtually every type of alien monster has shown up at some point. Alien monsters are like homegrown menaces, except sometimes they turn out to be something other than what they appear. The classic example is the alien "monster" that's actually a child or infant of its species; it doesn't intend harm, but it doesn't know any better! Similar examples include abandoned alien war-machines, genetic experiments from long-dead worlds, and alien parents come looking for those rambunctious youngsters.

COSMIC BEINGS

The remaining aliens in the comic books are "cosmic" beings, so powerful and advanced even the most powerful of Earth's superhumans pale by comparison. These entities may embody primal forces of the cosmos, or represent races of aliens so ancient they arose in the first epoch of the universe (or even before!). They may exist to maintain certain cosmic principles, or simply for mysterious purposes known only to them. Cosmic beings may have defined traits in some high-powered *Mutants & Masterminds* games, but usually they function best as plot devices (see page 130).

PARALLEL EARTHS

A common element of comic book universes—or, more properly, "multiverses"—is the existence of parallel dimensions. The Earth the heroes inhabit is but one of an infinity of Earths, each in a different parallel dimension, each with its own heroes and villains, and often unique twists on history and cosmology. Dimensional travel (intentional or accidental) allows heroes to visit these other Earths, which may be designated by numbers (Earth-1, Earth-221, etc.), letters (Earth-A, Earth-B, etc.), or some other naming scheme (alpha, beta, gamma, etc., for example). Likewise, people from parallel worlds may visit the heroes' Earth for various reasons. A few particular types of parallel Earths are common:

- **Disaster-World:** The world was all but destroyed by disaster, perhaps one the heroes prevented on their world, or perhaps one that has yet to happen back home!
- **Evil-World:** On this world good is evil and vice versa, so there are evil versions of the heroes, but also likely good versions of some or all of their enemies, and so forth.

- **Golden-World:** Superhumans have been around on this Earth longer, or it is otherwise more like the "Golden Age" of comics than the heroes' Earth (see page 188).
- **Nazi-World:** The Axis won World War II and now rules the world. Parallel versions of the heroes may be freedom fighters or Nazi super-soldiers!
- **Normal-World:** This is a parallel world where there are no super-powers! Essentially, Normal-Earth is like our world: no costumed heroes or villains, no aliens, no super-science or other comic book elements to it at all.

OTHER DIMENSIONS

Any number of other dimensions may exist in a *Mutants & Masterminds* setting. The following are just a sample of the possibilities. Existing dimensions should be reachable via Dimensional Movement (see page 102).

- **Astral Plane:** The astral plane is usually a psychedelic dimension of abstract forms, located adjacent to the physical world. It's where psychics and magicians in astral form duke it out in mental struggles, and may be the source of certain psychic or spiritual phenomena. The astral plane is accessible to those with the Astral Form power (see page 77) in addition to Dimensional Movement, and visitors often go there solely in spiritual form, leaving their physical bodies behind.
- **Dream Dimension:** Potentially connected to the astral plane, the dream dimension is the realm of the unconscious or sleeping mind. It is the source of dreams, or perhaps created by them. In some settings the dream dimension has a ruler or overseer. In others it has none. It is usually inhabited by the various figments of the imagination, which are effectively "real" there. The dream dimension is well suited for fantastic adventures in various dreamscapes, where nearly anything can happen.
- **Magical Dimensions:** Many dimensions in the comics are magical, realms where the laws of magic, rather than the laws of nature, hold sway. They may feature islands of matter floating in an endless void, great cosmic trees or ladders, and fantasy worlds inhabited by human as well as non-human races. Magical dimensions are often ruled by their most powerful wizard or sorcerer (with high ranks in the Magic power, see. page 91). These mighty spellcasters may have designs on other dimensions, including Earth's.
- **Mythic Dimensions:** Mythic dimensions include all the various realms of mythology and religion: Heaven and Hell, the homes of the gods like Asgard and Mount Olympus, and the various afterlives of the dead like Tartarus, Gehanna, and Hel. Any or all of these may be real places in the vastness of the multiverse. Mythic dimensions are sources of heroes and villains drawn from human mythology: gods, demigods, angels, demons, and so forth (see **Gods**, page 195).
- **Power Dimensions:** Some comic book dimensions exist simply as manifestations or sources of a particular power. For example, there may be a "dark dimension" filled with nothing but an infinity of inky black force, which certain superhumans tap into to produce darkness-based effects. Another dimension could contain nothing but proto-matter which powers like Create Object or Growth draw upon for their effects. Teleporters might actually move through a "pocket" dimension on their way from point A to point B, while other dimensions serve as "pockets" for storing weapons and other devices. Power dimensions are rarely places to visit, although they can provide story hooks and ideas, and a visit to one can be a change-of-pace adventure, especially if the power dimension isn't entirely what the heroes expected.

HISTORY

The history of your setting provides a context for the present-day. Is there a long history of costumed heroes and villains, with the player characters as the next generation, or are they the first superhumans the world has ever seen? How has the presence of super-powers changed things, if it has changed them at all?

EMERGENCE OF SUPERHUMANS

The first, and most likely, thing to affect history in the setting is the presence of superhumans. Have they always been around, or are they a fairly recent innovation? If people with super-powers have existed for a while, then how long, and what effect has their presence had on history?

PREHISTORY

In most comic book universes, super-powers of one sort or another have been around from the very beginning, even before recorded human history. Of course, most of these super-beings are known in the modern world only as legends or myths, and their existence throughout history hasn't changed things much from the world we know.

A common prehistoric source for superhumans is a mythic civilization like Atlantis, Lemuria, or Mu (or all of them and then some, in many worlds). These fantastic places may possess super-science, magical power, or any number of other origins. Remnants of their civilizations often still exist in the modern world, usually as sunken cities or underground domains (see **Fantastic Frontiers**, page 190). You can run a prehistoric *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign set in an earlier age of the world, or just make it a place for modern heroes to visit via time or dimensional travel.

ANCIENT HISTORY

Superhumans in the ancient world tend to be rare, except as myths or legends. Either they were mistakenly identified as gods or wizards, or they actually *were* gods and wizards (see **Gods**, page 195, and **Magic**, page 196). So it's possible the mythic gods and heroes of the ancient world were really powerful superhumans and the legends of their deeds were retellings of actual events. Imagine a mythic *Mutants & Masterminds* game based around the voyage of the Argonauts, for example, or the Knights of the Round Table, each possessed of a particular mystical power.

As with prehistoric superhumans, ancient history is often a source of modern origins: from actual survivors of the ancient world (immortal or cast into the future in suspended animation) to modern inheritors of ancient mantles of power.

RECENT HISTORY

Established comic book settings usually place the major emergence of superhumans around the same time as the appearance of superhero comics as a genre: in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the "Golden Age" of comics (see **Golden Age**, page 188). This is when superhumans go from mythic heroes and mysterious forces to costumed champions of truth and justice with super-criminals as their foes.

Some settings start back as early as the Victorian era and the Wild West in America (the late 1800s) or the "pulp" era of early "mystery men" and masked adventurers (in the 1920s and '30s). The first true modern "superheroes," however, don't show up until the Golden Age.

Did your setting progress through Golden, Silver, and Iron Ages to the modern day? Maybe superhumans didn't appear until the Silver or Iron Age and there were no earlier ages. On the other hand, maybe the Golden or Silver Age never ended and are still going on in the modern day. It's easy to imagine a modern setting with a Golden Age aesthetic, looking something like visions of the future from the 1939 World's Fair, for example.

EMERGING POWERS

The easiest sort of setting is an "emerging powers" world, where super-powers are something fairly recent and new. The heroes and their contemporaries are either the very first super-beings in the world, or among the first. This means the setting can be exactly the same as the real world up until the point where superhumans first appear.

The primary advantage of an emerging powers campaign is familiarity; you don't need to describe the real world to your players and you don't have to make up any alternate history or back-story. Such a setting also offers lots of opportunities for the player characters to be the first at things: the first public superhumans, the first super-team, the first to visit Mars or another dimension, and so forth. They're the stars of the story, perhaps even the only superheroes in the world at all!

The main drawback to an emerging powers setting is the lack of context. If super-powers are new to the world, then society has to adapt, and quickly. There are no laws dealing with superhumans or their powers, no prisons for holding super-criminals, no established relationships between super-teams and law enforcement (in fact, no established super-teams at all!). In being first, the heroes have their work cut out for them when it comes to blazing new trails.

ALTERNATE HISTORY

Established comic book universes assume history in their world is essentially as we know it in ours. The same things happened at the same times and events unfolded in basically the same way. The history of superhumans is an "add-on," often a "secret" history, with little overall effect on the modern world. So, even though there was a real Atlantis, and a real Camelot (complete with true wizards and magical knights), even though superhumans fought on both sides of World War II, the modern world is pretty much the same as the one outside our windows.

The reason for this is obviously because the real world is familiar to readers of the comics, and it's far easier for comic book creators to use it as the "default" setting for their stories. The same is true of your *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign: it's easier to assume things are the same as the real world except for the existence of superheroes and villains.

Of course, this doesn't *have* to be the case. You can have some fun playing around with the idea of how the presence of superhumans could have *changed* history as we know it, creating an alternate world for your setting. The changes can be small ones or large ones. What if superheroes prevented the assassinations of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King? What if Atlantis openly sided with the Nazis during World War II? What if scientific geniuses created new technologies years before they were invented in the real world? The possibilities are endless.

Generally, it's best to choose just one or two points of divergence to start your alternate history, then follow things from there. The more changes you make, the less familiar the final result will be.

TIME TRAVEL

Time travel (usually via the Temporal Movement power, see page 102) is an extremely potent ability. It can cause all sorts of problems if unrestricted, so Gamemasters are advised against allowing player characters to have it. It's up to the GM to decide if time travel is even possible in the setting and, if so, how temporal mechanics work. The main options are as follows:

- **Immutable Time:** History cannot be changed, so any attempt to do so automatically fails. Either travelers into the past become intangible wraiths, able to observe but not interfere, or any actions they take are somehow prevented from altering history (the gun used to shoot at a historical figure jams, someone jostles or distracts the shooter at a critical moment, etc.). This option preserves history but also rules out the possibility of history-altering villains and the need to protect the past from them.

- **Mutable Time:** History can be changed, although it might be easy or difficult to do so. Everyone and everything existing "after" the change remains unaware anything is different. To them things are as they have "always" been. Characters involved in the change remember the original timeline, and so might characters with temporal powers of their own. This allows villains (and even heroes) to attempt to change the past, and means the future is not necessarily fixed.
- **Alternate Timelines:** Any attempt to change the past creates an alternate timeline instead. The original timeline remains unchanged while the alternate goes off on its own path. This allows for the changing of history without it having an impact on the present (although heroes may still want to prevent a time-traveling villain from their world from conquering an alternate Earth in the past). It also means the future is not fixed, since knowledge of the future may cause the present to split off into an alternate with a different future.

In general, time travel is best used as a plot-device and a power in the hands of certain villains, allowing them to try to trap heroes in the past or travel into the past to plunder it or change history to suit their whims. An alternate history can make for a fun place for the heroes to visit for an adventure or two. Time travel also may be suitable for a team of heroes that travels through time as well as space thwarting the forces of evil. Perhaps the team is assembled from the greatest heroic figures in history, including the future!

SOCIETY

Consider what impact (if any) the existence of superhumans has had on society in your setting. Four-color superhero settings tend to have fewer societal changes, while gritty or realistic settings have the most changes, based on the power and prevalence of superhumans. The more powerful they are and the longer they've been around, the more society has had to adapt to their presence.

TECHNOLOGY

Superhumans have the potential to change the kind of technology available in a setting, especially if super-genius inventors patent and market their ideas. This can also affect the sort of devices available to characters as equipment.

Give some thought as to whether or not you want your setting to have more advanced technology and, if so, how prevalent it is. Keep in mind most superhero settings have super-science, but it stays in the realm of devices rather than equipment, available only to heroes, villains, and some supporting characters like government agencies, major corporations, and villain organizations. See **Chapter 7** for more information on technological devices and equipment in general.

POLITICS

What are the political issues surrounding superhumans? How do nations and governments deal with the presence of people with powers? For that matter, how do the new "super-powers" in the world deal with the old national "super-powers"? Some potential political issues include:

POLITICAL INFLUENCE

A popular superhero can exert considerable political influence by supporting a particular cause or candidate (much like any celebrity). In some settings, heroes may be active in politics, while in others a more "hands off" approach is considered best, and politically active heroes are frowned upon.

Super-powers can exert more direct political influence. Mind control is the most common scare, but individuals with superhuman levels of Charisma and influence skills can be just as effective, if not more, since there's no evidence of direct mental manipulation. A "super-demagogue" might sweep a popular election into office, with the heroes the only ones resistant to his power and aware of his true intentions.

SUPER-MILITARY

Superhumans are potent military assets; some have the power of an entire battalion of soldiers! In some settings, there is a strong motivation to recruit superhumans into the military, from national armies to international peacekeeping forces and mercenary companies. A gritty world might make super-powers the "next wave" in modern warfare, making conventional forces almost obsolete.

In more four-color settings, military super-soldiers are nearly always top-secret "special ops" or otherwise covert, super mercenaries are seen as dubious at best, practically super-criminals at worst. True heroes, while they support their nation, do not want to be seen as a military asset, and refuse to be made into one. Some settings may ban the military use of superhumans, although enforcing that ban is usually up to other superhumans (like an international police or peace-keeping force).

SUPER-RIGHTS

The issue of whether or not superhumans are due the same rights as everyone else is a potential political football (see **Law** in the following section). Some politicians may try using issues surrounding superhumans to their advantage. For example, in a setting where mutants are misunderstood and feared, there are certain to be politicians capitalizing on that fear to further their agendas (and perhaps some fighting for mutants' rights as well). Different issues may also apply to different origins (see **Origins**, page 194), with some types accepted and others mistrusted or even outright hated or feared.

LAW

How has the law changed to deal with the existence of superhumans, costumed vigilantes, and super-criminals? Just as in the real world, legal issues can be complex, and Gamemasters should consider what (if any) legal adaptations would enhance the setting.

VIGILANTISM AND SANCTION

In the four-color comics, superheroes can generally make "citizens arrests" of super-criminals without any problems. Some heroes are particularly endorsed or supported by the local authorities (officially or unofficially), while others are simply tolerated. Where the authorities draw the line between "helpful citizen" and "dangerous vigilante" depends heavily on the style and tone of the setting. In some, only vigilantes using lethal force or other illegal methods earn official condemnation. In others, anyone putting on a costume or mask to fight crime (whether they have powers or not), is breaking the law and is in just as much trouble with the authorities as the criminals themselves!

LEGAL RIGHTS

Are superhumans legally "human" and entitled to the same rights as everyone else? This may vary, depending on the setting and the type of superhuman. While otherwise normal humans granted powers by accident of birth or twist of fate may be seen as legally human, what about aliens, robots, androids, spirits, the undead, and the myriad other beings inhabiting the comics? Some of these may have no legal existence whatsoever, while others may even be considered the "property" of their creator (such as in the case of a robot or other construct). The four-color comics tend to gloss over these issues, except for the occasional story about the legal rights of an unusual being, but it may be a major issue in another sort of campaign.

MASKS AND SECRET IDENTITIES

Does the law recognize the right of superheroes (or villains, for that matter) to wear masks and conceal their identities? The American justice system, for example, says a defendant has the right to face his accuser, and allowing the accuser to wear a mask might violate that right. If the law bends the rules to allow masked heroes to testify in criminal cases, what about other situations? If a costumed criminal is arrested, can the police unmask him immediately? This might not seem important to the heroes, until *they* get arrested for something!

There's also the issue of legally proving your identity when you wear a mask or costume, especially when it's a mask or costume *anyone* could wear. Can costumed heroes receive checks or contracts under their "super" name? Can others use or license their image without their permission?

MENTAL AND SENSORY POWERS

Some mental and sensory powers raise legal concerns. Is evidence gathered by reading a person's mind admissible in court? What about the power to sense when someone is lying? Is it illegal to read someone's mind without their permission, or to use abilities like ESP or Enhanced Senses to spy on somebody without their knowledge? If so, how do you prove someone has done these things? If someone senses via one of these abilities that someone else is *intending* to commit a crime, what (if anything) can they do? Is criminal intent illegal and at what point can the authorities intervene?

Again, four-color settings tend to ignore these problems. Responsible superhumans don't use their powers to invade others' privacy, and evidence gathered using them is usually inadmissible in court. More realistic settings may deal with some of the consequences of these and other powers, ranging from legally banning them to using them to set up a "thought police" to enforce draconian laws.

INCARCERATION

Once you have a super-criminal in custody, what do you do? Keeping people with powers imprisoned may be a simple or very difficult issue. The main problem is retraining the criminal's powers to ensure he *stays* in prison.

In four-color settings, prisons usually have various technological options like power dampeners to block most criminals' powers. Other settings might not have such options, in which case, holding super-powered prisoners becomes more problematic. Measures like super-alloy cells and shackles may be used alongside drugs, punitive countermeasures (like taser collars or explosive armbands), and guards armed with powerful weapons. In extreme cases, criminals may be put into drug-induced comas, virtual realities, or suspended animation, or simply executed because there's no effective way to imprison them at all.

WHAT ARE THEY CALLED?

In *Mutants & Masterminds* the generic terms "superhuman" and "super" are used to refer to people with powers. However, that isn't necessarily what everyone in the setting calls them. Some worlds have their own unique names for superhumans, creating a distinct feel and style to the setting. Possibilities include the following:

aberrants, aces, alphas, angels, avatars, awakened, capes, chosen, deltas, deviants, elites, exarchs, extraordinaries, freaks, gammas, geeks, gene-freaks, gifted, godlings, *Homo Superior*, hyper-humans, incredibles, inhumans, inspired, marvels, masks, metas, metahumans, mutants, nephilim, novas, omegas, paragons, paranormals, post-humans, powers, psis, psions, psychics, psykes, seraphim, specials, stalwarts, superlatives, supernaturals, superiors, talents, *übermenschen,* ultras, unnaturals, unusuals.

GMs should feel free to come up with any naming scheme that suits the setting and style of the series.

POPULAR CULTURE

Unless their very existence is hidden, superhumans are virtually certain to become instant celebrities and the focus of much popular attention. Consider the effects, if any, of superheroes and villains on popular culture and day-to-day life in your setting.

COMIC BOOKS

Comic books, the source of the modern superhero, may benefit or suffer from the existence of *real* superheroes. In some settings, comic books might become a dead medium. After all, who wants to read about fictional superheroes when there are real people with super powers on the news every night? On the other hand, superhero comics might undergo a boom in popularity, as a fascination with all things superhuman grips the public. Publishers might stick with pre-existing characters or embrace a new trend in 'reality comics," telling fictionalized accounts of real superhero adventures. This is the case in many comic book universes, with the publisher "retelling" the heroes' stories (often with some unwelcome "artistic license"). You can have some fun with heroes visiting a comic book publisher, or doing comic stories within stories. Maybe the fictional comic book heroes in your setting are actually *real* on some parallel world where the player characters are the "fictional characters"!

ENTERTAINMENT

Superhumans are likely to influence other popular forms of entertainment. Television is certain to devote shows to them, especially "reality" shows for fans eager for anything and everything about their idols. Publishers provide books and magazines about superheroes (and perhaps villains). They may be specialty channels or publications devoted solely to the super-powered set.

Super-powers may also provide their own entertainment. In some settings, superhuman actors can do amazing stunts and special effects. Super-artists can use their powers to enhance their performances, although this can lead to problems like mind-controlling musicians. Some superhumans may not *want* to use their powers as heroes and villains, preferring to make a fortune in entertainment!

FASHION

While comic book heroes and villains usually don't have much fashion sense, some settings may feature their influence in popular fashion trends. Spandex and similar skin-tight materials are sure to become popular (perhaps whether people can pull them off or not). Capes or cloaks could be a common fashion accessory, along with swash-topped boots and various sorts of gloves. If "super-fashion" is prevalent enough, it may be hard to tell the super-powered from the normal population!

RELIGION

Superhumans, especially those with mystic or divine origins, raise any number of religious issues. Settings may include actual angels and demons, witches and sorcerers, and even true gods walking among mortals. Even completely "mundane" superhumans may find themselves the focus of cults or religious beliefs. Four-color comics tend to skirt around religious issues, usually claiming all religions are at least somewhat correct, and making the most omnipotent divine powers largely aloof and distant.

More realistic settings might tackle these issues head-on, with new religious sects springing up in response to superhumans, super-powered cult

leaders, and so forth. Perhaps a particular religion has it right and there is actual proof! Of course, it may be more interesting if the "proof" is debatable, allowing for further conflict between believers and non-believers.

ORGANIZATIONS

Various organizations play roles in the campaign setting. The Gamemaster may want to include some or all of the types of organizations in this section, or at least take them into consideration when creating the setting.

AGENCY

The agency is ostensibly a force for good, or at least law and order. It's usually a governmental agency, ranging from a national government to an international peacekeeping force. In more realistic settings, the agency is often based on such real-world organizations as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Interpol, or the Office of Homeland Security. Four-color agencies tend to be fantastic super-spy organizations, often with high-tech gadgetry and perhaps even their own cadres of power-armor troops or super-powered agents.

Agencies in the comics primarily exist to deal with super-powered threats, beyond the capabilities of the regular authorities. They may also have various mundane police or law enforcement powers, depending on the agency's charter and mission. Agencies are often prone to getting bogged down in bureaucracy and they're sometimes vulnerable to corruption and takeover from within, some of the things that make superheroes more reliable in general.

CONSPIRACY

The conspiracy's goal is control, over organizations, nations, economies, even the world. Conspiracies are by their nature secret. They may masquerade as other organizations or agencies, or exist within them, unnoticed until it is too late. A conspiracy often takes over other organizations from behind the scenes, pulling the strings in accord with its own agenda. In a world of super-powers, conspiracies can be frighteningly effective, using things like mind control, shapeshifting, and telepathy to carry out their plans. Uncovering and then overcoming a conspiracy can be the focus of an entire *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign.

CULT

A cult or secret society is similar to a conspiracy in many ways, the prime difference being that a conspiracy is focused solely on power and control while a cult has its own philosophical or religious agenda. For example, a conspiracy might seek to control the world's governments from behind the scenes, a cult seeks to do the same in order to impose its religious beliefs or to further some philosophical goal. Cults in the comics are nearly always mystical in nature, and often high-ranking cult members possess magical powers of some kind. The cult may worship powerful extradimensional entities, or serve entirely at the will of a powerful guru or demagogue. Cult members are often fanatical in their devotion to the cause, and cult agents may have a means of self-destructing, both to ensure they are not captured and to try and take as many of their enemies as they can with them when they die.

INSTITUTE

The institute is devoted to learning and knowledge. This is usually scientific knowledge, although it can also be occult or arcane knowledge in some cases. It may be a branch of a college or university, a research corporation, an independent think-tank, or a division of a government agency (see **Agency**, previously). In the comics, the institute is often devoted to studying unusual phenomena involving superhumans and their powers. It may focus on a particular origin — such as a Psionics Studies Institute, an Arcane College, or an Extraterrestrial Intelligence Project — or it may try to cover them all.

An institute is a source for experts to advise the heroes on tricky technical questions, to study their powers, and to provide them with the occasional experimental device. It's also a source for new superhumans and potential disasters, both the results of either deliberate experiments or accidents. In some settings, the institute takes on a more sinister tone, usually as part of an agency or conspiracy devoted to controlling superhumans and performing unethical experiments to learn more about them.

ORGANIZATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Comic book organizations, especially agencies and conspiracies, tend toward acronyms for names: that is, names where each letter of the name stands for a word in a phrase, such as SHADOW: the Secret Hierarchy of Agents for Domination Over the World, or AEGIS: the American Elite Government Intervention Service. You might want to think of suitable acronyms for organizations in your own setting, since they provide an element of the comic book feel.

SPACE PATROL

Many comic book settings feature one or more interstellar (even intergalactic) organizations devoted to maintaining law and order, essentially a kind of interstellar "police force." This "space patrol" is often empowered by a higher authority, either an interstellar government or a highly advanced and powerful alien race or being. Typically, officers of the space patrol possess special devices granting them the power necessary to enforce the law throughout the cosmos. The patrol may be made up of representatives of numerous alien races from across space, or only a few, depending on its origin. Its officers might even be artificial beings created by the patrol's founders, such as android, or cyborgs created by transplanting the brains or minds of living creatures into powerful artificial bodies.

A particularly common element of a space patrol in the comics is a patrol officer assigned to Earth, who takes on the role of a superhero there (and may or may not reveal affiliation with the patrol, or even its existence). Another is the rogue patrol officer, exiled from the organization for misdeeds, who has become a powerful super-criminal and nemesis of the patrol and its officers.

SYNDICATE

Where a conspiracy seeks power and a cult tries to further an ideology, a syndicate wants one thing: profit. A syndicate is a criminal organization devoted to generating wealth, by whatever means it can. Real world syndicates include organized crime factions like the Mafia, the Japanese Yakuza, Chinese Triads, drug cartels, the Russian *Mafiya*, and so forth. Comic book settings often have fictional equivalents of these various organizations, as well as world-spanning criminal syndicates beyond their wildest dreams, such as a "World Crime League" or a "Megasyndicate" of international criminals.

Four-color comic book syndicates tend to be sanitized versions of the real thing, often with different names because the comics code (see page 188) forbade portraying real life organized crime. So there are stereotypical gangsters in pinstripe suits with Tommy guns and slick Japanese mobsters in dark business attire, wearing sunglasses and commanding ninja henchmen.

Realistic syndicates get more into the grit and grime of organized criminal activity, particularly issues like drugs, vice, influence peddling, and assassination for hire. Taking down a powerful criminal syndicate can become the focus of an entire campaign, especially an Iron Age campaign involving grim and gritty costumed vigilantes (see the **Genre** and **Style** sections of this chapter for more information).

CHAPTER 11: FRIENDS & FOES

Although the heroes are the focus of any *Mutants & Masterminds* game, they are still just a few of the many characters involved in the stories of their adventures. Heroes need villains to fight, innocent people to protect, and their own support system of family, friends, and colleagues. This chapter discusses all of these various friends and foes, along with other characters (and creatures) Gamemasters may wish to use when creating their *Mutants & Masterminds* adventures.

VILLAINS

A key element to a good *Mutants & Masterminds* adventure is a fun, interesting villain. Villains are one of the driving forces of the game because it's their evil schemes and plans that the heroes must thwart.

You can create super-villains using the same rules for creating heroes in **Chapter 1** through **Chapter 7** of this book. Villains generally follow the same rules as heroes. In fact, the public sometimes wonders if there's much difference between the costumed weirdoes on either side of the law.

VILLAIN MOTIVATIONS

What turns someone to a life of villainy? Where is the line drawn between the heroes and those they fight against? A villain's motivation has a big impact on the sort of plots the villain is likely to be involved in; a villain interested in destroying the world isn't likely to worry about a little collateral damage (since it soon won't matter). A villain primarily interested in profit isn't going to do things for free without a good reason, and so forth.

Here are some major motivations for villains. You're not limited to these. Feel free to expand upon them and come up with your own.

CONQUEST

Ruling the world (or at least a substantial portion of it) is a favorite goal of super-villains, and they're always coming up with new schemes for conquest. Some villains are subtle, conquering through influence, blackmail, and behind-the-scenes manipulation while others use outright force and threats to bully others into obedience. Villains often try to seize control of military might that gives them the leverage they need to enforce their rule. Most would-be conquerors actually believe the world would be better off under their guidance, and can't understand why everyone else can't see it.

DESTRUCTION

Some villains simply want to destroy things. In fact, some villains want to destroy *everything*. They range from near-mindless engines of destruction rampaging through a city to nihilists that will stop at nothing less than the total elimination of the universe (or all life in it, which amounts to much the same thing). There may be a reason for the villain's destructiveness, such as a desire to replace organic life with machines or to create a gift to appease Death, but oftentimes destruction is its own reward for villains.

GREED

Wealth motivates many villains. They want money, and lots of it. Usually they try to get it by stealing or by blackmailing people or entire nations into giving it to them. Greedy villains are typically thieves and mercenaries, but some are cunning master-villains who plot to increase their often already sizeable fortunes.

MADNESS

Some villains are just plain crazy. There's no real rhyme or reason to what they do, although it may make a twisted kind of sense once you understand their own point of view. Insane villains are among the least predictable and the most dangerous, although the turns of their madness are usually dictated by the style of the game (see page 186). Four-color crazies are usually zany and even comical, while grim & gritty villains are truly insane, embodiments of the dark side of the human psyche.

PEACE

Some "villains" actually want nothing more than to be left alone, or to find a place where they are accepted. They are often monstrous outcasts from normal society, driven into destruction rages by the rejection and ridicule they experience.

POWER

A taste of power often leaves people hungry for more, and some villains will do anything to get that power. They may want power for another purpose (like conquest) or simply for its own sake. These villains seek out forbidden secrets, advanced technology, mystical artifacts, energy sources, and anything else that can grant them the power they crave.

REVENGE

These villains feel they were slighted, by a particular person, organization, or by the world, and now it's payback time. Often the reason the villain wants revenge is tied up in the origin of his or her powers (which may have left the villain freakish or scarred physically and/or mentally). After being thwarted by heroes numerous times, villains often develop revenge motivations against those heroes.

SADISM

The villain simply enjoys inflicting pain and misery on others. Sadistic villains range from psychotic serial killers to living embodiments of misery, despair, and evil (including mystical creatures like demons).

THRILLS

Some villains are simply in it for the fun or the challenge of committing crimes, matching wits with super-heroes, and getting away with it. Some thrill-seekers are daring thieves or hunters after the most dangerous sort of prey. Others are tremendously powerful, but bored and looking for distractions and amusement, or they have a death wish and can't help risking themselves in dangerous situations.

WHY THE VILLAIN GETS AWAY

In the comics, villains often escape to fight another day. This ranges from the villain getting away during an early encounter in the story to the villain escaping from prison or certain death to crop up again in a future story. It's an unusual element of superhero gaming, because in other genres (such as fantasy or modern action-adventure), the villains often end up dead or otherwise out of the game for good by the end of the story. This is also true of more realistic super-powered settings, but the closer you get to traditional four-color, the more likely villains are around to stay.

First off, it's important for players to understand this. The villain getting away is a *temporary* setback, not a serious or permanent loss for the heroes. In many campaigns, prisons will seem like revolving doors. This is as it should be, and players should see this as an opportunity for their heroes to have adventures, not a nuisance. If they don't, then you may need to talk to the players about it or adjust things in your campaign.

Second, make use of the guidelines for awarding hero points (see page 178) to help encourage the proper attitude toward last-minute villain escapes. When the bad guy arranges a distraction or otherwise slips through the heroes' grasp in the early encounters of an adventure, the heroes earn points they can use to improve their changes in the future. This helps to take some of the sting out of these setbacks, and encourages players to look forward to their next encounter.

Third, when villains escape "off stage" the heroes *don't* earn hero points, it's just part of the nature of the game and the genre. So if the heroes hear a particular villain has broken out of jail at the start of an adventure, they don't get a hero point for that, unless they were actually at the jail and had a chance to prevent the breakout, but the villain escaped anyway.

Keep in mind although the villain's escape can be something of a foregone conclusion it doesn't mean you shouldn't at least *try* to make it plausible! Players are less likely to be frustrated with a villain who uses clever tactics and planning to escape them than one who escapes purely by GM-fiat. Also keep in mind the villain doesn't *always* escape, sooner or later, the heroes have to have a shot at winning.

PLOT DEVICE CHARACTERS: COSMIC IMP

Whether a rogue genie, god of mischief, or trickster from another dimension, the Cosmic Imp is a serious hassle for heroes. This is primarily because he is usually a plot device character with *all* X-traits (see page 211). Thus a Cosmic Imp has no game stats, but is able to do *anything* the Gamemaster can dream up, with any effect or rank required. The bothersome Imp is obviously a problem for the heroes to solve with something other than the direct application of force. Fortunately, Cosmic Imps prefer to toy with heroes, playing complex games. If the heroes can find some way of beating the Imp at his own game, they can get rid of him, for a little while, at least.

HOW THE VILLAIN LOSES

Sooner or later, the villain in a superhero story loses. Oftentimes, the heroes simply confront villains and beat them into submission in a dramatic fight. This is typical of superhero RPGs especially. However, it's not the only way villains are defeated, and you may want to consider some other possibilities for victory in your own *Mutants & Masterminds* game. Letting the heroes defeat villains in other ways encourages creativity, while *not* letting heroes defeat villains simply by fighting them forces the players to get creative!

The first and most important guideline to keep in mind is there should *always* be a way to defeat the villain, even if it's not obvious or easy, and there should be a means for the heroes to discover it (because if they can't then there effectively isn't any way to defeat that villain). Completely unbeatable villains make for a dull and frustrating game, and players aren't likely to put up with it for long.

Defeating the villain doesn't have to be easy, in fact it should be challenging. Often in the comics a villain's defeat relies on a particular weakness or vulnerability and once the heroes figure that out, their victory is assured. You can use similar "victory conditions" to provide structure and goals in your adventures. For example, perhaps the heroes face off against a colossal robot war-machine. Its armor allows it to shrug off their most powerful attacks, and its weapons array is capable of taking out the heroes one at a time. However, consulting with the robot's designers, the heroes learn there is an emergency shutdown switch, or a vulnerable mechanism, if only they can get at it. Likewise, a villain empowered by a magical ritual may be strong enough to defeat the heroes single-handedly, but if the heroes find a way to reverse the ritual, or to use the rare magical element it requires against the villain, they can still win.

Not every villain needs an "Achilles' heel," some might be taken down in a dramatic fight, but keep other options in mind so not every villain in your game is just a target for the heroes to beat on. Sometimes victories requiring original thought, planning, and roleplaying can be more satisfying than ones relying solely on a roll of the die.

PLAYING VILLAINS

In an offbeat campaign, the players might take the roles of the *villains* rather than the heroes! They may be villains trying to reform and become

heroes or out-and-out bad guys committing crimes and trying to conquer the world.

Playing villains is much like playing heroes in terms of game mechanics. The characters may have "villain points" rather than hero points, and you can choose to award them differently. For example, characters might get villain points for coming up with fiendish plans, pulling off minor crimes, defeating heroes and putting them in deathtraps, and so forth, all the things villains do to lead up to the climax of their master-plan (where they'll hopefully have accumulated enough villain points to help them succeed!). In terms of traits, villains have the same ones as heroes, used in the same ways.

The key differences are in the types of adventures in the game and the place of villains in the setting. Villains by their nature tend to be more proactive. Heroes usually try to maintain the status quo, they only take action when something threatens the peace and stability of the world. Villains, on the other hand, try to upset the status quo, whether it's committing robbery or trying to seize control of the world using mind-control rays. So in a villain game, it's up to the players to come up with the fiendish plans, and up to the GM to run the heroes trying to thwart them.

The other issue is how likely the NPC heroes are to actually thwart the plans of player character villains. Normally in superhero stories, the villain loses in the end, but a campaign where the player characters lose at the end of every adventure isn't going to be very enjoyable. So there need to be some provision for the villains to actually *win*. That may also make the campaign short-lived, since if the villains win, there may soon be no heroes left to oppose them!

One option to consider for a villain campaign is a setting where the "super-villains" face opposition other than traditional heroes. Perhaps there are *no* heroes in the world, only villains, and the opposition is the normal authorities and rival villains. Maybe something happened to all of the heroes, leaving only the villains to run rampant, at least until the threat that eliminated the heroes starts coming after *them* as well. Then the villains may need to band together for mutual protection. Perhaps some of them even discover they have the potential to be heroes after all!

PLOT DEVICE CHARACTERS

Just as it's easier to treat some powers and items as plot devices, it's simpler to consider some villains and other challenges plot devices rather than restricting them to the same standards as other characters in the game. In particular, some villains may have powers, abilities, or other traits far in excess of those allowed to player character heroes, since there's less need to balance a villain's capabilities against those of the heroes, so long as the villain provides a suitable and interesting challenge.

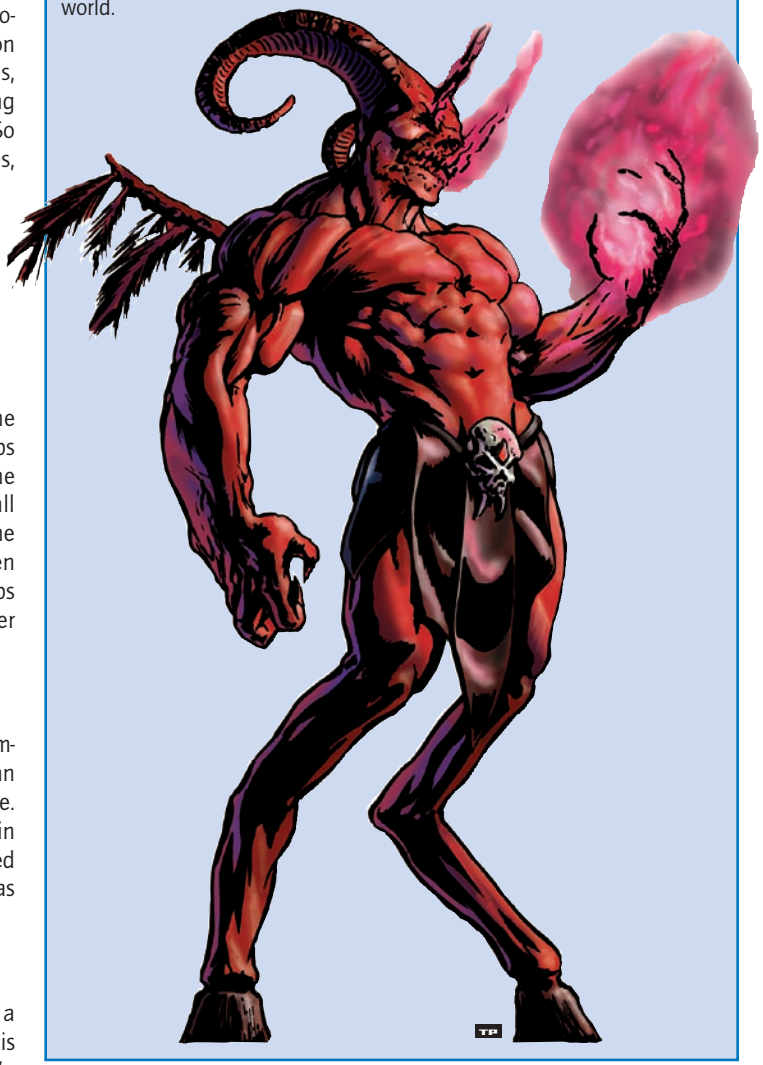
X-TRAITS

Some characters in *Mutants & Masterminds* source material are given a trait rating of "X" rather than an assigned value. In mathematics, X is often used to designate an unknown variable. In *Mutants & Masterminds*, it means the trait in question is as high as the Gamemaster wishes or the adventure or situation requires. Essentially, a score of X in a trait means it is effectively unlimited in game terms, a plot device.

Such "X-traits" are available only to characters under the control of the GM, for obvious reasons. Such power in the hands of the player characters would quickly make the game unplayable, as there would be nothing left to challenge them. The GM *may*, if desired, place an X-trait in the players' hands temporarily as part of a story, but this is entirely at the Gamemaster's discretion. There is no point-cost for an X-trait, since characters can never purchase one with power points. Some examples of plot device characters with X-traits are given in the sidebars nearby.

PLOT DEVICE CHARACTERS: THE DEVIL

Well, maybe not *the* Devil, but often *a* devil, at least, or an equivalent god or cosmic force of evil. The Devil is also often a plot device character with virtually unlimited powers. However, such fiends are usually limited by a few rules. In particular, they cannot usurp control of a person's mind or soul without their consent, and they usually cannot read a person's mind without permission either. Naturally, the Devil tries to trick victims into selling their souls or surrendering control to him. Devils powerful enough to be plot device characters rarely intervene directly, indeed, they may be unable to do so, working only through dupes and minions in the physical world.



VILLAIN ARCHETYPES

Just like heroes, villains in the comics tend to follow certain archetypes established over the years. This section looks at some of the archetypal bad guys and how you can use them in your *Mutants & Masterminds* games.

HERO ARCHETYPES AS VILLAINS

Naturally, any of the hero archetypes in **Chapter 1** are suitable for use as villains, too. Just give the character a suitably villainous motivation, name, and style, and you're ready to go.

ARMORED MEGLOMANIAC — POWER LEVEL 15

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+12	+1	+2	+14	+7	+7
34/12	12	14	38	24	24

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+17/+2*	+9	+8	+13

*without battlesuit

Skills: Computers 16 (+30), Craft (electronic) 16 (+30), Disable Device 16 (+30), Diplomacy 8 (+15), Drive 5 (+6), Gather Information 4 (+11), Intimidate 8 (+15), Investigate 4 (+16), Knowledge (technology) 16 (+30), Knowledge (one other) 12 (+24), Notice 8 (+15), Pilot 5 (+6), Search 6 (+18), Sense Motive 8 (+15)

Feats: Assessment, Equipment 20, Improvised Tools, Inventor, Master Plan, Second Chance (interaction resistance), Skill Mastery (Computers, Craft (electronic), Disable Device, Investigate), Takedown Attack

Powers: Device 24 (battlesuit, 120 points)
Battlesuit: **Blast 15**, **Enhanced Strength 22**, **Force Field 10** (*Extras:* Continuous, Impervious), **Immunity 9** (life support), **Protection 5**, **Super-Senses 13** (blindsight [radar, extended x2], darkvision, direction sense, distance sense, infravision, radio, time sense), **Super-Strength 5** (*Heavy Load:* 50 tons)
Equipment: Give the villain up to 100 points in equipment, particularly headquarters and vehicles (see **Chapter 7**).

Combat: Attack +15, Damage +13 (unarmed), +15 (blasters), Defense +13, Initiative +1

Abilities 64 + Skills 33 (132 ranks) + Feats 27 + Powers 96 + Combat 56 + Saves 20 = 296 PP

THE ARMORED MEGLOMANIC

The Armored Megalomaniac is a master-villain, typically a brilliant scientist or scholar of some sort, whose intellectual power is augmented by a suit of armor. Take a look at the **Battlesuit** section of **Chapter 7** for some ideas on modifying the megalomaniac's armor. Armored megalomaniacs tend to have extensive headquarters; some are even rulers of their own small nation! This gives them considerable resources for their various world-conquering schemes.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The megalomaniac's armor is magical rather than technological in nature; change blindsight to mental, and radio to mental awareness, drop Computers skill, change Craft and Knowledge skills to chemical and arcane lore, change Inventor feat to Ritualist. The megalomaniac is immortal; add Immunity (aging) and possibly Regeneration (Resurrection) and other suitable Immunities.

THIS WORLD IS MINE!

The Megalomaniac discovers or invents a means of extending a powerful Mind Control over the entire world. He starts out by testing it in the city where the heroes operate, giving them some forewarning of his dire plan. Then he needs to acquire a stronger power source to operate the effect over a larger area. Once that's accomplished (perhaps with the aid of some villainous minions), the Megalomaniac will rule the entire world! The heroes can try to prevent activation of the Mind Controller, or become rebels in the world ruled by a supervillain as they try to find a means of defeating it.

SUPREME POWER

The Armored Megalomaniac comes up with a scheme for attaining near-limitless power: obtaining a cosmic artifact, a powerful spell, draining off the powers of a cosmic entity, and so forth. The heroes either need to prevent this from happening, or find some means to thwart a foe now far more powerful than they can take on directly.

THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY

The Megalomaniac comes to the heroes with an offer of an alliance! Apparently, there's a far more dire threat to the world, and the supervillain can't rule a world that's been destroyed or conquered by someone

THE BRAIN IN A JAR

The Brain in a Jar is a truly "cerebral" villain: a disembodied brain kept in a container and sustained by life-support equipment. The Brain is primarily a plotting villain, operating through minions and underlings. However, most Brains also possess various mental powers, ranging from psionic abilities like telepathy and telekinesis to the power to influence electronics over a network or mystical powers, possibly including Possession. The Brain may exult in its current "evolved" state or seek to acquire a new body, perhaps targeting one of the heroes for this "honor"!

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The brain belongs to some infamous villain from the past (Hitler, Stalin, Mordred, etc.). The "brain" is actually a disembodied intellect, such as an artificial intelligence, a digitized personality, or a spirit lacking a physical body, in which case the "life support" device is some other equipment allowing it to function. Alternately, the brain might be an entire severed head kept alive in a similar manner.

BODY SNATCHER

The Brain decides it needs a body to match its magnificent mind, so it comes up with a scheme to kidnap the ideal victim and transplant itself into his or her body. Perhaps the intended victim is a friend or loved one of one of the heroes, or even one of the heroes themselves! Alternately, the Brain could attempt to construct an ideal body for itself, stealing the necessary parts and technical information to do so.

ALL IN YOUR MIND

The Brain uses its psionic powers to trap the heroes in a "mindscape" of its making, where its power reigns supreme. Can the heroes navigate their way through the darkness recesses of the collective unconscious to find their way back to their waking selves before it's too late? What traits can they depend on in the mindscape and how can they tell what's real and what isn't?

ALL YOUR BRAINS BELONG TO US

Psychically gifted people are mysteriously disappearing and the heroes are asked to investigate. Perhaps one of the victims is a friend or fellow hero. It turns out the Brain is arranging the kidnappings in order to hook the victims up to create a powerful "psychic network" it controls, vastly enhancing its own psionic powers. For a grotesque variant, maybe the brains of the victims have been removed in order to add them to the "network," leaving the heroes with the dilemma of what to do with them after the Brain is defeated.

BRAIN IN A JAR — POWER LEVEL 14

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
—	—	+0	+11	+7	+2
—	—	10	32	24	14

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+15	+4	+0	+11

Skills: Concentration 12 (+19), Diplomacy 8 (+10), Gather Information 8 (+10), Intimidate 8 (+10), Investigate 8 (+19), Knowledge (choose one) 16 (+27), Knowledge (one other) 16 (+27), Notice 8 (+15), Sense Motive 16 (+23).

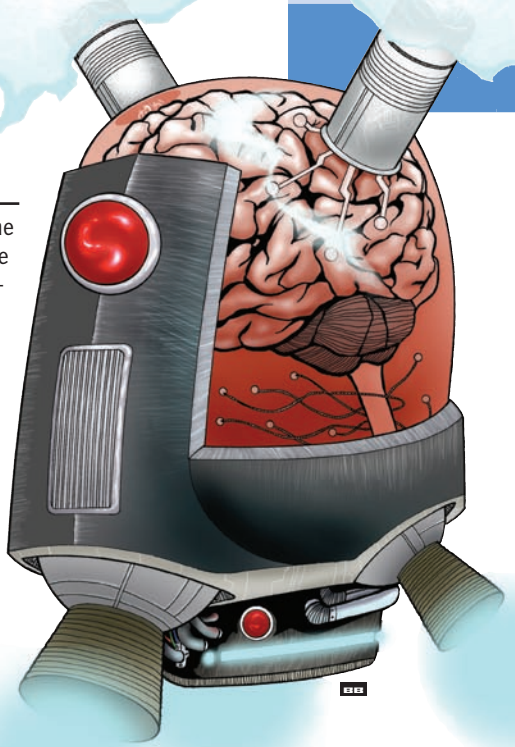
Feats: Connected, Eidetic Memory, Second Chance (mental power saves)

Powers: **Device 6** (support tank, hard to lose), **ESP 10** (sight, hearing, and mental senses). **Super-Senses 5** (Danger Sense, Mental Awareness [Ranged, Extended x2]), **Telepathy 14** (*Power Feats:* Alternate Powers—**Illusion 8** [all senses; *Flaws:* Phantasms], **Mental Blast 7**, **Mind Control 14**)
Support Tank: **Immunity 9** (life support), **Protection 15** (Impervious 6)

Combat: Attack +0, Damage +7 (mental blast), Defense –5, Initiative +11 (Int-based).

Drawbacks: Disability (disembodied brain, very common, major, –5 points)

Abilities 20 + Skills 25 (100 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 100 + Combat 0 + Saves 12 – Drawbacks 5 = 155 PP



"THE BODY IS IRRELEVANT WHEN I HAVE THE UNLEASHED POWER OF THE MIND!"

CORRUPT SORCERER — POWER LEVEL 14

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
−1	+0	+0	+2	+7	+2
8	11	10	15	24	14

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+18/+0*	+6	+6	+15

*without Force Field

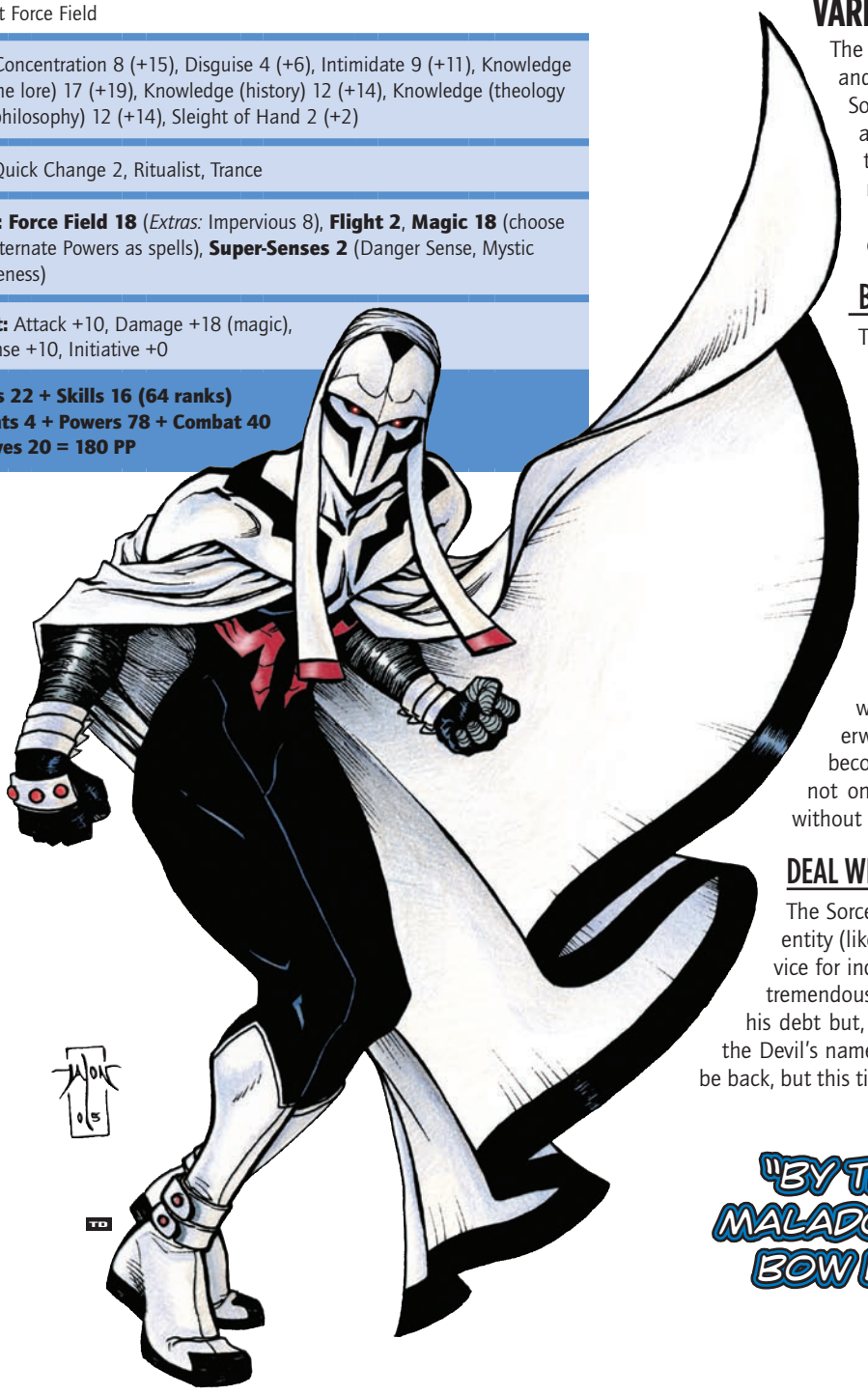
Skills: Concentration 8 (+15), Disguise 4 (+6), Intimidate 9 (+11), Knowledge (arcane lore) 17 (+19), Knowledge (history) 12 (+14), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 12 (+14), Sleight of Hand 2 (+2)

Feats: Quick Change 2, Ritualist, Trance

Powers: Force Field 18 (*Extras:* Impervious 8), **Flight 2**, **Magic 18** (choose 10 Alternate Powers as spells), **Super-Senses 2** (Danger Sense, Mystic Awareness)

Combat: Attack +10, Damage +18 (magic), Defense +10, Initiative +0

Abilities 22 + Skills 16 (64 ranks) + Feats 4 + Powers 78 + Combat 40 + Saves 20 = 180 PP



CORRUPT SORCERER

The mystical arts offer the temptation of power, and some fall victim to the temptation to misuse their abilities for evil. The Corrupt Sorcerer is much like the Mystic (see page 20) but willing to deal with evil forces in exchange for power. Some Corrupt Sorcerers are ancient menaces, their lives unnaturally sustained by their sinister arts. Others are more contemporary, but no less powerful or dangerous, having bargained with powers beyond human ken for mystical secrets no mortal was meant to wield.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The sorcerer is undead; remove Constitution score and add Immunity 30 (Fortitude). The Corrupt Sorcerer and the Vampire Lord archetypes make a particularly good combination. Other variations include the seductive sorceress (add 8-12 ranks of Bluff and the Fascinate feat) and the demonic force, wielding infernal mystical powers (replace Magic with Hellfire Control)

BURNT OFFERINGS

The Sorcerer, following an ancient magical ritual, obtains several sacrificial victims. Properly performed, the ritual will give the Sorcerer tremendous mystic power, perhaps even power enough to re-create reality! The heroes have to protect the remaining sacrifices and stop the Sorcerer from completing the ritual before it's too late.

HELL ON EARTH

Using powerful magic, the Sorcerer seizes control of a building, city block, or even an entire city, sealing it off from the outside world and transforming it into hellish netherworld, the innocent people trapped within becoming twisted demonic servants. The heroes not only have to overcome the Sorcerer but do so without hurting the innocents under his domination.

DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

The Sorcerer makes a deal with a vastly power infernal entity (like the **Devil** archetype), trading everlasting service for increased power. If the heroes can overcome the tremendously powerful Sorcerer, then the Devil will call in his debt but, otherwise, the Sorcerer will rule the world in the Devil's name! Of course, even in defeat, the Sorcerer may be back, but this time as a herald of the Devil's arrival on Earth...

"BY THE MISTS OF MALADOR, YOU SHALL BOW BEFORE ME!"

EVIL ROBOT

A common theme in the Silver Age comics is technology run amok, when advanced intended to improve the human condition turn against humanity. The Evil Robot is one such, an artificial intelligence lacking in morality, coldly devoted to the domination or extermination of humanity. Some Evil Robots are alien in origin, but most come from well-intentioned human experimentation gone awry. Evil Robots typically have formidable physical and intellectual capabilities and an array of technological weapons and devices at their command.

EVIL ROBOT — POWER LEVEL 13

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+13	+2	—	+10	+6	+1
36	14	—	30	22	12

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+16	—	+4	+10

Skills: Computers 16 (+26), Craft (electronic) 14 (+24), Disable Device 14 (+24), Knowledge (physical sciences) 14 (+24), Knowledge (technology) 14 (+24)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Inventor, Master Plan, Power Attack, Precise Shot

Powers: Blast 15, **Immunity 30** (Fortitude), **Protection 16** (*Extras:* Impervious 8), **Super-Strength 8** (*Heavy Load:* 400 tons)

Combat: Attack +11, Damage +13 (unarmed), +15 (energy blast), Defense +10, Initiative +2

Abilities 54 + Skills 18 (72 ranks) + Feats 5 + Powers 100 + Combat 42 + Saves 6 = 225 PP

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The Evil Robot is a mystical construct, such as a golem (see page 234), gone bad; change technological skills to magical ones or eliminate them. The robot has an array of weapons; add Alternate Powers to the Blast power, such as Fatigue, Nauseate, Snare, and Stun. The robot has systems programmed to reconstruct it in the event of its destruction; add Regeneration (Resurrection) to powers.

REPLACEMENT PARTS

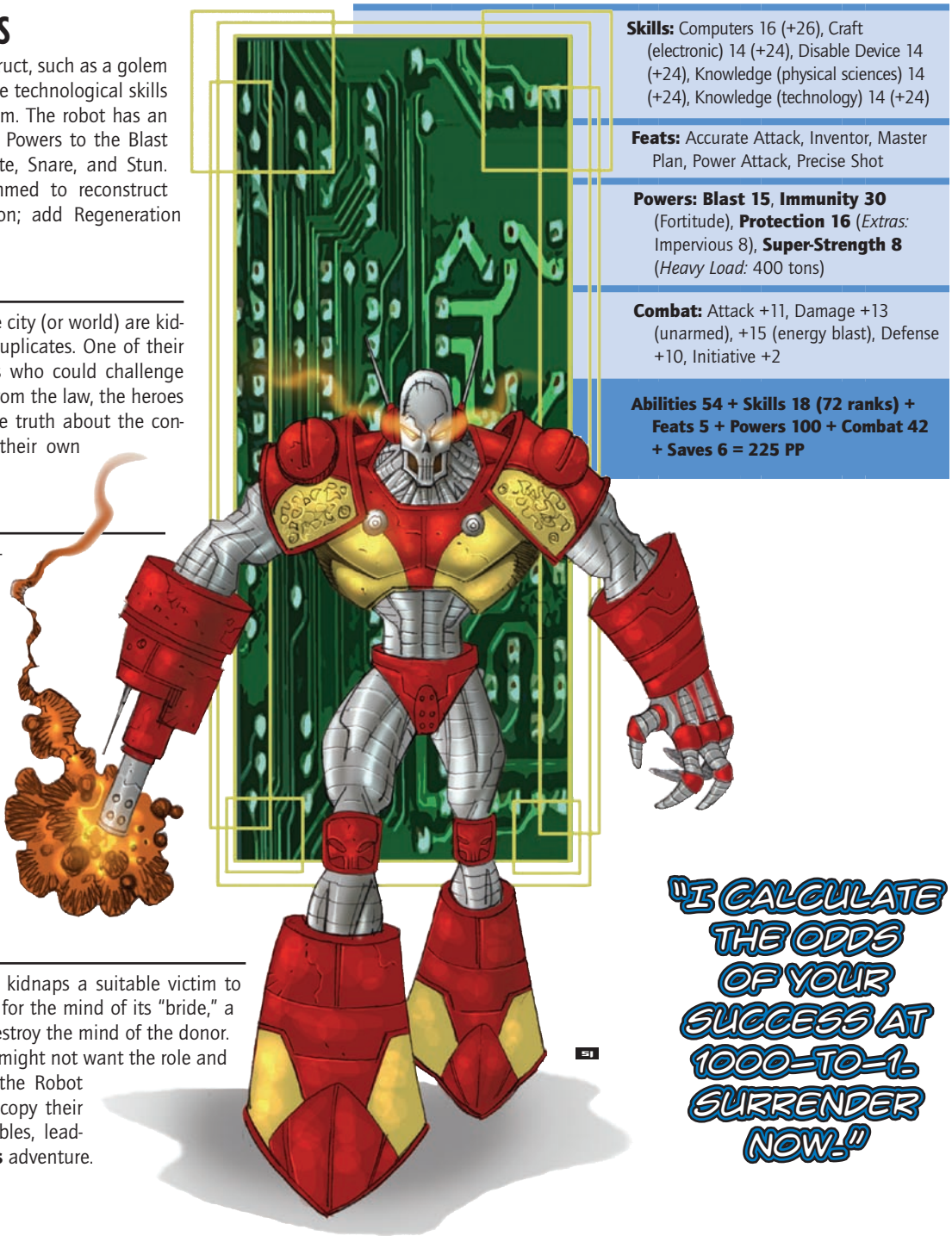
Influential people throughout the city (or world) are kidnapped and replaced by robot duplicates. One of their first acts is to target the heroes who could challenge their creator. Declared fugitives from the law, the heroes have to find a way to expose the truth about the conspiracy, and perhaps overcome their own robotic doubles!

TARGETED FOR TERMINATION

The Evil Robot targets an apparently insignificant person for death. Fortunate circumstances (such as the nearby presence of the heroes) save the target from the initial attack. The heroes have to protect the Robot's target and uncover the truth: the Robot is in communication with its future-self, which has told it the target will somehow lead to the defeat of the Robot's plans in the future. By changing the past, it will ensure its eventual domination of the world!

COLD STEEL BRIDE

The Robot desires a "mate" and kidnaps a suitable victim to act as the neurological template for the mind of its "bride," a process that will unfortunately destroy the mind of the donor. Of course, the Robot's new mate might not want the role and turn on its creator. Alternately, the Robot might be kidnapping people to copy their brain patterns into android doubles, leading into the **Replacement Parts** adventure.



HULKING BRUTE — POWER LEVEL 13

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+18	+1	+17	−2	+0	−1
46	12	44	6	10	8

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+17	+17	+2	+5

Skills: Intimidate 14 (+13), Notice 2 (+2)

Feats: Endurance, Improved Pin

Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Immunity 12** (cold and heat damage, disease and poison), **Impervious Toughness 12**, **Leaping 12**, **Super-Strength 10** (*Heavy Load:* 6,400 tons; *Power Feats:* Shockwave)

Combat: Attack +7 (includes −1 due to size), Damage +18 (unarmed), Defense +8 (includes −1 due to size), Initiative +1

Abilities 54 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) + Feats 2 + Powers 70 + Combat 34 + Saves 6 = 170

HULKING BRUTE

The Hulking Brute is almost more of a monster (see page 233) than a villain, a mindless engine of destruction best suited as a pawn or henchmen for more intelligent villains. The Hulking Brute is tremendously strong and tough, a living tank. Brutes are also often tragic figures, victims of scientific experimentation or mysterious accident, cursed with their current condition and seeking only peace and understanding. Heroes may be able to overcome some Brutes through compassion rather than combat.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The Brute's Strength and Super-Strength start out at lower levels, but it has Boost to increase them under particular circumstances, such as when angry or hurt. The Brute has other Immunities (particularly suffocation and pressure). The Brute is driven to some particular goal: finding someone, eliminating an annoyance, getting something it needs, etc.

RAMPAGE!

Something *really* sets the Brute off and he goes on a rampage through the city, smashing and destroying everything that gets in his way. The heroes have to find some way of stopping his rampage before the city is leveled. Possible causes of the Brute's rampage could be some painful reminder of his former existence, a failed attempt by someone else to capture or control the Brute, or perhaps even some deliberate stimulus (like a high-pitched sound) used to trigger the Brute's rampage and provide a distraction for the heroes while the *real* villain is at work elsewhere!

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

The Brute finds a kind and caring person able to reach its buried humanity. Unfortunately, everyone else wants to keep the Brute away from this person, which only leads to trouble when the Brute decides to kidnap its "friend" and go far away, where no one else can ever bother them. Things get even more complicated if the Brute's "friend" doesn't share the same feelings, or happens to be related to one of the heroes in some way. Perhaps the Brute's "friend" is actually manipulating him and using him to commit crimes!

THE JUGGERNAUT

Another villain (the Brain in a Jar or Puppeteer are good choices) discovers a means of "luring" the Brute to him. Once the villain's hook is baited, the Hulking Brute becomes an unstoppable juggernaut of destruction, zeroing in on the villain's location and headed unerringly toward him. Eventually, the Brute will reach the villain (who is likely imprisoned) and free him, unless the heroes can find some means to prevent it from happening.

KUNG FU KILLER

Whether a rogue ninja, master of unarmed combat, or a peerless mercenary soldier, the Kung Fu Killer is often an agent of a master villain or organization (see page 207) used to remove obstacles. Usually, this includes the heroes. Kung Fu Killers are built for combat, and may be capable of taking on superhuman foes with the right planning and tactics. They're often coldly professional, claiming there's nothing personal in their missions of mayhem. It's just their duty to their employer.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The Kung Fu Killer has a secret martial arts technique or attack; choose an appropriate power such as Drain, Fatigue, Nauseate, or Stun. The Killer has special stealth techniques like the Hide in Plain Sight feat, or the Concealment or Super-Movement powers. The Kung Fu Killer is a zombie or revenant; eliminate Con score and add Immunity 30 (Fortitude).

MY KUNG FU IS SUPERIOR!

The Killer sets out to prove he's the superior fighter compared to one or even all of the heroes. He may try to take out and capture the heroes one-by-one, or kidnap their friends and loved ones to force the heroes into a confrontation on his terms. If the Killer has some history with one or more of the heroes, then the confrontation is likely to be more personal than just proving who's kung fu is greater.

SECRETS OF SHINOBI

An antique dealer is murdered and a rare Japanese painting stolen. The centuries-old ink painting contains secret instructions for locating scrolls detailing forbidden martial arts techniques of the ninja: powers of invisibility, supreme stealth, and the ability to kill with only a touch. If the Kung Fu Killer finds them, his powers will increase greatly and there may be no stopping him!

GATHERING OF CHAMPIONS

The Kung Fu Killer plans to attend a secret gathering of the greatest unarmed fighters in the world, to take part in a tournament to determine who is the greatest of them all. The winner is rumored to receive a prize greater than any can imagine. Will the heroes enter the tournament to prevent the Killer from winning? Who is the mysterious benefactor behind it all and what is the true prize at the end?

"YOU SEEM LIKE A WORTHY TEST OF MY SKILLS. SHALL WE BEGIN?"

KUNG FU KILLER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+6	+3	+0	+2	+0
18	22	16	10	15	10

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+7/+3*	+8	+13	+14

*Flat-footed

Skills: Acrobatics 10 (+16), Concentration 10 (+12), Escape Artist 10 (+15), Intimidate 10 (+10), Notice 8 (+10), Search 6 (+6), Sense Motive 8 (+10), Stealth 10 (+16)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Acrobatic Bluff, Assessment, Blind-Fight, Chokehold, Critical Strike, Defensive Attack, Defensive Roll 4, Elusive Target, Grappling Finesse, Improved Defense, Improved Disarm, Improved Grab, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative 2, Improved Sunder, Improved Throw, Improved Trip, Instant Up, Power Attack, Prone Fighting, Redirect, Stunning Attack, Takedown Attack 2, Trance, Uncanny Dodge

Combat: Attack +16, Damage +4 (unarmed), Defense +13, Initiative +14

Abilities 31 + Skills 18 (72 ranks) + Feats 31 + Combat 58 + Saves 16 = 154 PP

MAD SCIENTIST — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
−1	+0	+0	+10	+3	+1
9	11	10	30	16	12

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+0*	+2	+4	+11

*or by device

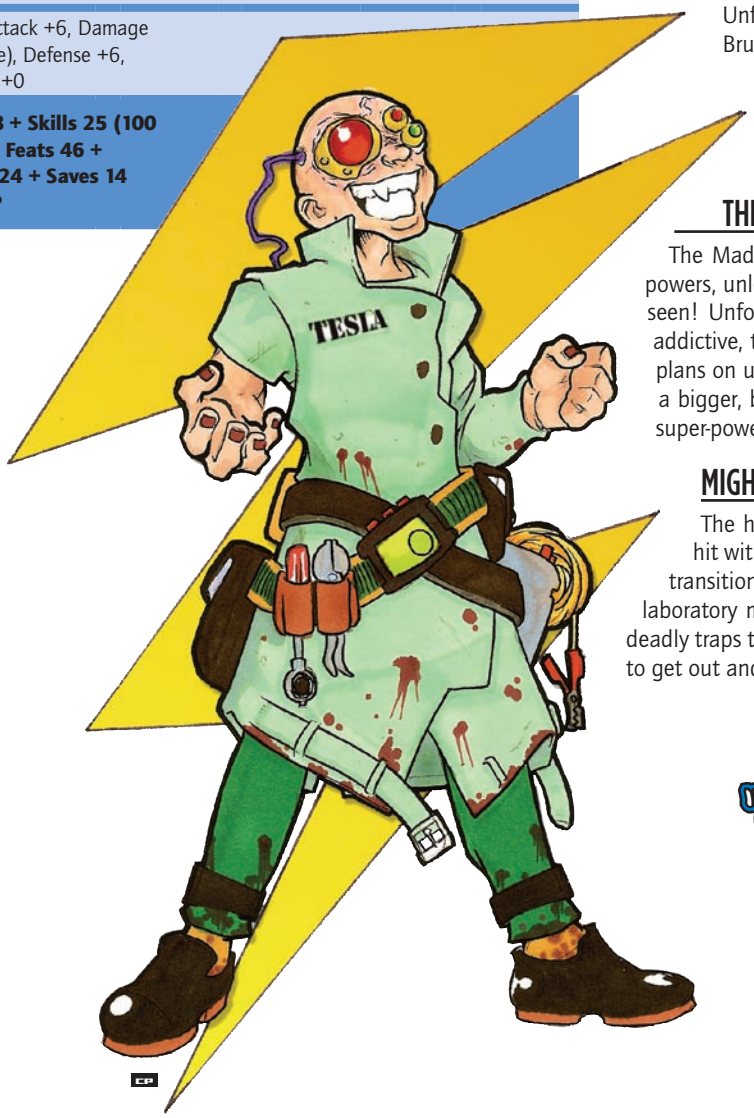
Skills: Computers 8 (+18), Craft (chemical) 12 (+22), Craft (electronic) 12 (+22), Craft (mechanical) 12 (+22), Disable Device 12 (+22), Knowledge (behavioral sciences) 8 (+18), Knowledge (physical sciences) 14 (+24), Knowledge (technology) 14 (+24), Profession (scientist) 8 (+11)

Feats: Equipment 20, Inventor, Master Plan, Minions 20, Second Chance 3 (chemical, electronic, and mechanical Craft checks), Skill Mastery (Craft [chemical, electronic, and mechanical], Disable Device)

Equipment: Give the villain up to 100 points in equipment, particularly headquarters and vehicles (see **Chapter 7**)

Combat: Attack +6, Damage (by device), Defense +6, Initiative +0

Abilities 28 + Skills 25 (100 ranks) + Feats 46 + Combat 24 + Saves 14 = 137 PP



MAD SCIENTIST

The Mad Scientist is a classic villain archetype, isolated by a combination of brilliance, arrogance, and madness, and driven to prove something by hatching schemes for conquest and plunder. Some mad scientists are driven by a desire for revenge against a society that mocked and rejected the fruits of their genius. Others want to carry out experiments no ethical society could condone, arrogantly disdainful of the "lesser" intellects surrounding them. A few are motivated by sheer lust for power or knowledge, no matter the consequences. Mad Scientists tend to have formidable intellectual abilities but rely heavily on devices, equipment, and minions for physical matters.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

Apply different Equipment and Minions options, or redistribute ranks between them for Mad Scientists with more Equipment or more Minions. See the various creature archetypes for examples of suitable Mad Scientist minions.

IT'S ALIVE!

The Mad Scientist's efforts to create new life are a success! Unfortunately, the new creation is an Evil Robot, Hulking Brute, Colossal Robot, Monstrous Insect, or some other dangerous creature that gets loose and begins rampaging through (or toward) the city. The Mad Scientist may know the secret of defeating the creature, if the heroes can catch him and get it out of him in time.

THE SUPERVILLAIN FACTORY

The Mad Scientist has invented a device that gives people superpowers, unleashing a crime-wave the likes of which the city has never seen! Unfortunately for the subjects, the device's effects are highly addictive, temporary, and, worst of all, ultimately fatal. The Scientist plans on using the ill-gotten gains from the new crime wave to build a bigger, better, and longer-lasting version of the device to create a super-powered army, unless the heroes put a stop to it.

MIGHTY MITES

The heroes confront the Mad Scientist's latest scheme and get hit with his new shrink-ray, reducing them to just an inch tall! The transition stuns the heroes and they wake up trapped like rats in a laboratory maze, which includes mutant super-rats to hunt them and deadly traps to test their abilities. Can they run the maze or figure a way to get out and regain their former stature?

"HAHAHA THEY CALLED ME MAD! BUT I WILL SHOW THEM ALL!"

MASTER OF DISGUISE

The Master of Disguise is a specialist in deception, able to appear as anyone, or perhaps anything! The Morph power is essential, along with the Bluff and Disguise skills. The Master of Disguise could be a spy or assassin for hire, or a master villain using deception and various guises to sow dissent, confusion, and trouble.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

While the typical Master of Disguise is fairly low-powered, you can create a far more formidable version by applying ranks in Mimic or Shapeshift, allowing the villain to copy others' skills and powers in addition to their appearance. The character's power(s) could come from a Device; substitute the Device power with the appropriate traits. The villain's powers might be dependent on a serum or other source; add the Power Loss drawback, if that source becomes unavailable.

THREAT OR MENACE?

The Master of Disguise sets about ruining a hero's reputation by pretending to be the hero and committing crimes and other dastardly deeds in public. When the authorities go after or arrest the hero, the villain is then free to pursue his real plans unimpeded. Another master villain might hire the Master of Disguise to do this job as well to provide a suitable distraction from the villain's schemes.

OPERATION INFILTRATION

The Master of Disguise assumes a cover identity to get close to one (or more) of the heroes, obtain their trust, and then learn as much as possible about their secrets, either for blackmail or to turn over to an employer. Will the hero uncover the deception before it's too late and, if not, what will the hero do to prevent any secrets from falling into the wrong hands?

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The Master of Disguise assumes a hero's secret identity to carry out a caper, not knowing that person is actually a superhero! Now the hero has to clear his own name without giving away his secret or getting his real identity in any worse trouble. On the other hand, perhaps the Master of Disguise does know the hero's secret identity, or at least suspects, and is trying to get the hero to tip his hand.

MASTRE OF DISGUISE — POWER LEVEL 6

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+5	+2	+2	+2	+6
14	20	14	14	14	22

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+4/+2*	+5	+10	+10

*Flat-footed

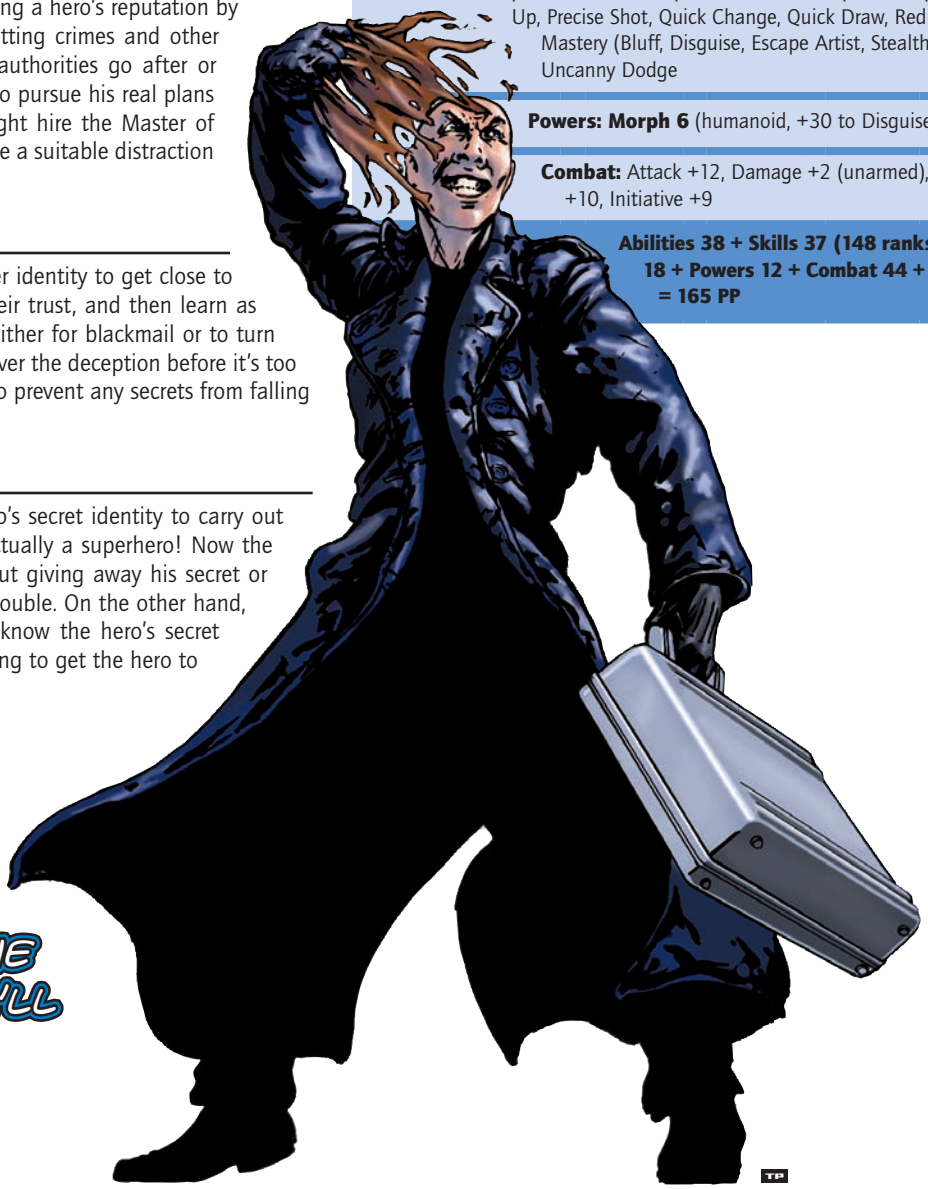
Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+13), Bluff 12 (+18), Concentration 8 (+10), Disguise 12 (+18/+48), Escape Artist 10 (+15), Gather Information 10 (+16), Intimidate 8 (+14), Investigate 12 (+14), Knowledge (current events) 8 (+10), Knowledge (streetwise) 8 (+10), Notice 12 (+14), Search 12 (+14), Sense Motive 12 (+14), Stealth 16 (+21)

Feats: Ambidexterity, Defensive Roll 2, Elusive Target, Evasion 2, Grappling Finesse, Improved Defense, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Instant Up, Precise Shot, Quick Change, Quick Draw, Redirect, Skill Mastery (Bluff, Disguise, Escape Artist, Stealth), Taunt, Uncanny Dodge

Powers: Morph 6 (humanoid, +30 to Disguise)

Combat: Attack +12, Damage +2 (unarmed), Defense +10, Initiative +9

Abilities 38 + Skills 37 (148 ranks) + Feats 18 + Powers 12 + Combat 44 + Saves 16 = 165 PP



MASTER OF ENERGY — POWER LEVEL 15 - 200 PP

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+1	+3	+5	+3	+0
10	12	16	20	16	18

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+18/+3*	+8	+8	+10

*without Force Field

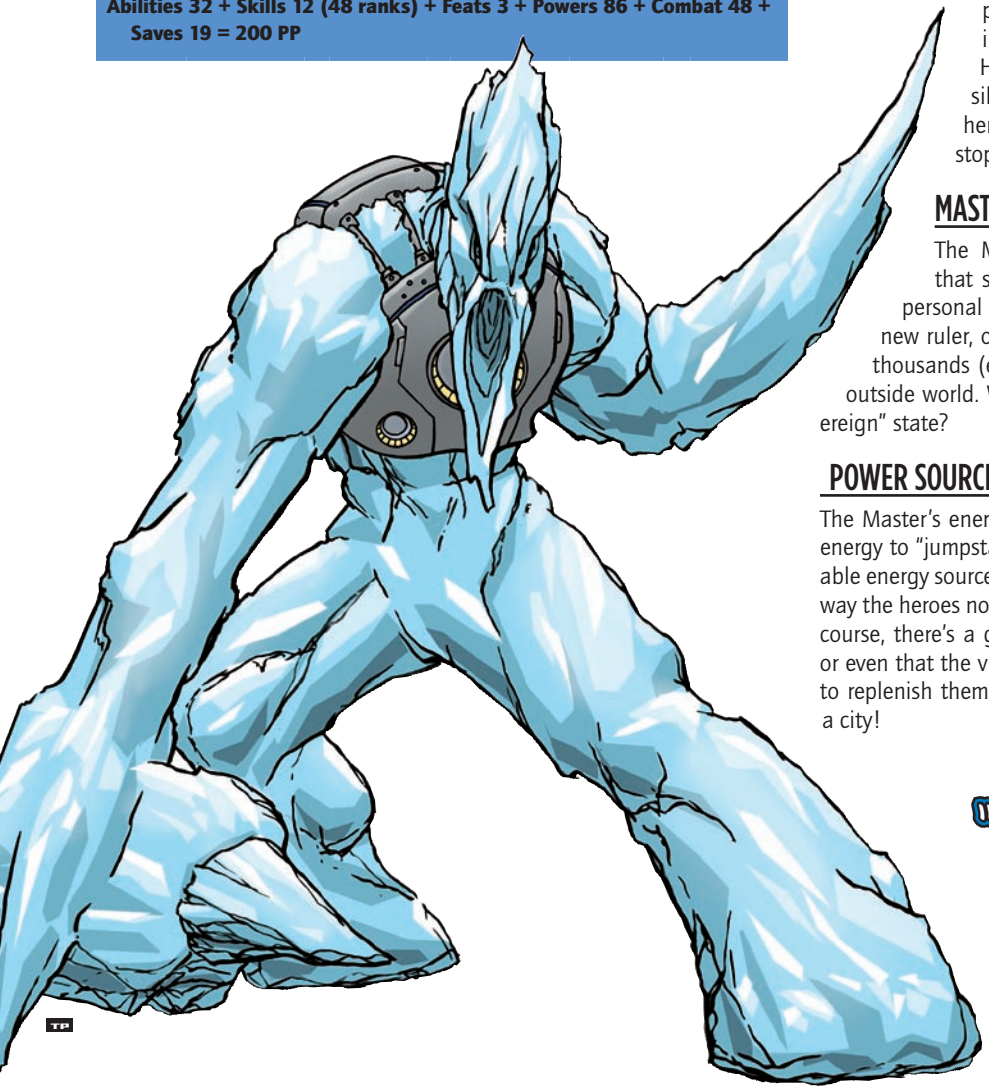
Skills: Concentration 12 (+15), Intimidate 10 (+14), Knowledge (physical sciences) 8 (+13), Notice 8 (+11), Sense Motive 10 (+13)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Power Attack, Precise Shot

Powers: Energy Control 18 (choose a suitable power from **Chapter 5**, along with five power feats), **Flight 10**, **Force Field 15** (*Extras:* Impervious 10)

Combat: Attack +12, Damage +18 (blast), Defense +12, Initiative +1

Abilities 32 + Skills 12 (48 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 86 + Combat 48 + Saves 19 = 200 PP



MASTER OF ENERGY

The Master of Energy is a powerful example of one of the various Control powers given in **Chapter 5**, essentially the Energy Controller archetype (see page 18) on steroids. The villain may be the virtual embodiment of that energy or force, either in a metaphorical or literal sense. Examples range from the mutant Master of Magnetism to a deity or spirit wielding powers of Cold, Fire, or Weather Control. The Master of Energy typically has high ranks in the associated power and numerous Alternate Powers.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The Master commands multiple forms of energy (as Alternate Powers), such as the four elements (air, earth, fire, water) or the forces of the electromagnetic spectrum (such as light, magnetism, electricity, and radiation). Add more power feats—particularly Alternate Powers—for a villain with greater breadth. Combine the Master of Energy powers with the Armored Megalomaniac archetype for a truly powerful master-villain!

APOCALYPSE NOW

The Master has figured out a way to trigger a world-wide catastrophe using his mastery of energy: a new ice-age, melting the polar ice-caps, reversing Earth's magnetic poles, degrading the ozone layer, or even altering the planet's orbit! However, the Master needs both time and resources (possibly enhancing equipment) to accomplish this, giving the heroes an opportunity to learn of the plan and perhaps stop it in time.

MASTER OF ALL HE SURVEYS

The Master of Energy creates a nigh-impenetrable barrier that seals off a city or similar area, which he claims as his personal fiefdom. The inhabitants must swear allegiance to their new ruler, or suffer the consequences, while the Master now holds thousands (even millions) of hostages from the perspective of the outside world. Will world leaders be forced to recognize this new "sovereign" state?

POWER SOURCE

The Master's energy powers are fading. They require a massive influx of energy to "jumpstart" them once more. So the villain begins stealing suitable energy sources or the technology necessary to create them. Along the way the heroes notice the villain's powers becoming erratic or unstable. Of course, there's a good chance a new power source could be dangerous, or even that the villain's powers might go out of control; a failed attempt to replenish them could result in an explosion powerful enough to level a city!

"YOU CANNOT FIGHT ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL FORCES OF NATURE!"

PUPPETEER

The Puppeteer is a manipulator of the first order. The typical Puppeteer has Mind Control powers of some sort (see page 92), often far-reaching and lasting (with a Continuous duration, allowing the Puppeteer to brainwash or mentally-condition thralls). Other Puppeteers are more subtle, manipulating people through a web of influence, contacts, blackmail, and extortion.

Physically, Puppeteers are little threat, but heroes rarely confront them directly, dealing instead with their various pawns and schemes. A Puppeteer may even maintain the guise of an ordinary citizen or even a hero to throw off suspicion.

Although Mind Control is a formidable power in and of itself, a Puppeteer backed into a corner may also use extra effort to develop other power stunts, perhaps including a devastating Area Mental Blast or an Illusion sufficient to fool the heroes and provide an escape route.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The Puppeteer's Mind Control is infectious; add the Contagious extra. The Puppeteer's Mind Control is dependent on pheremones or sounds (Sense Dependent), or physical contact (Touch Range). Perhaps the Puppeteer is actually an infectious virus or meme (idea), using Contagious Possession rather than Mind Control.

ONLY A DREAM

The heroes have strange dreams about secretly committing crimes, but they become nightmares when they learn the authorities are investigating a number of "unsolved" crimes that match their dreams exactly. It turns out the heroes are "sleepwalking" under the control of a sinister Puppeteer who can only control people in the sleep. What do the heroes do when the authorities question them and, once they've figured things out, how long can they stay awake?

PAWNS OF THE PUPPETEER

Another hero team has walked into a trap and is now in the thrall of the Puppeteer, who is using them as pawns to try and capture and control other heroes. Soon, he will have a super-powered army at his command! The players' heroes not only need to defeat their former friends, but do so without harming them or falling victim to the puppeteer's influence.

PULLING THE STRINGS

The heroes become aware of a shadowy government conspiracy aimed at seizing control of the entire nation from behind the scenes, and eventually extending their influence to the entire world. There are indications a villainous Puppeteer is behind it all, but the heroes have no evidence, and no way of knowing how far the conspiracy extends. There's no one they can trust, and it looks like the Puppeteer has noticed their investigation....

PUPPETEER — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
−1	+0	+0	+3	+5	+7
8	10	10	16	20	24

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+0	+2	+4	+12

Skills: Bluff 4 (+11), Diplomacy 6 (+13), Gather Information 6 (+13), Intimidate 4 (+11), Knowledge (behavioral sciences) 8 (+11), Notice 4 (+9), Sense Motive 8 (+13)

Feats: Master Plan

Powers: Mind Control 10 (*Extras:* Continuous; *Power Feats:* Mental Link, Mind Blank, Subtle)

Combat: Attack +2, Damage +0 (unarmed), Defense +3, Initiative +0

Abilities 28 + Skills 10 (40 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 43 + Combat 10 + Saves 13 = 105 PP

SAVAGE MAN-BEAST — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+6	+4	+6	−2	+4	+1
22	19	22	7	18	13

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+8/+6*	+10	+10	+8

*Flat-footed

Skills: Acrobatics 10 (+14), Climb 8 (+14), Intimidate 12 (+13), Notice 10 (+14), Search 12 (+10), Sense Motive 8 (+12), Stealth 12 (+16)

Feats: Acrobatic Bluff, All-out Attack, Animal Empathy, Defensive Roll 2, Endurance, Evasion, Fearless, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Rage, Sneak Attack, Startle, Uncanny Dodge

Powers: Leaping 2, **Strike 2** (*Power Feats:* Mighty), **Super-Senses 5** (danger sense, darkvision, scent, ultra-hearing)

Combat: Attack +10, Damage +8 (strike), +10 (raging strike), Defense +12, Initiative +8

Drawback: Involuntary Transformation (common, no resistance, –5)

Abilities 41 + Skills 18 (72 ranks) + Feats 14 + Powers 10 + Combat 44 + Saves 14 – Drawbacks 5 = 136 PP

SAVAGE MAN-BEAST

Like the Hulking Brute, the Savage Man-Beast is often a tragic figure, a hybrid of man and raging beast. Some are the creation of scientific experimentation gone wrong while others are the victims of mystical curses (such as the curse of lycanthropy that creates werewolves). Some Man-Beasts revel in their condition and the power it brings, while others desperately seek a cure to restore them to normal, often willing to do whatever it takes to achieve it.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The traits in this archetype reflect typical animalistic powers, for specific types of Man-Beasts, add other powers and feats, such as Blindsight and Flight (bat), Slithering and Improved Pin (snake), Immunity (drowning) and Swimming (shark), and so forth. See the animal archetypes beginning on page 229 for ideas. The Man-Beast might be able to control mundane animals (the Animal Control power, see page 76).

TO TAME THE SAVAGE BEAST

Driven by unconscious impulses it does not fully understand, the Man-Beast seeks out the various elements of a cure: stealing supplies, rare drugs or chemicals, technical equipment, or mystic components. The creature's human self struggles to turn these into a cure in scant moments of lucidity between transformations. If unable to do so alone, the Man-Beast might even need to kidnap an expert to create the cure, becoming increasingly desperate the longer things go.

BEAST KINGDOM

In this adventure, the Man-Beast is stealing supplies, but not in search of a cure. Instead, it plans to replicate the circumstances of its own creation on a citywide scale, turning *everyone* into animalistic creatures under its domination! The transformative agent might be airborne, introduced into the water, or something similar. For a twist, maybe the Beast-Man's human self thinks he is searching for a cure, while his beast-self is actually plotting something else.

THE HUNT

Responding to a call for help from an isolated research lab, the heroes find many of the staff dead and one missing. Isolation protocols seal off the lab, trapping the heroes inside with the Savage Man-Beast stalking the corridors and air-ducts. Perhaps the lab's security measures or some of the experiments going on there affect the heroes' powers in various ways for added tension.

SINISTER SIMIAN

As apes are common characters in the comics (see **Going Ape!**, page 190), so are simian super-criminals. The Sinister Simian is just that, an intelligent (usually *very* intelligent) ape with criminal designs. The combination of intellect, super-science, and simian physical traits makes for a formidable, if unusual, supervillain. Divide the villain's Device points up into suitable devices, including weapons.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

Some Sinister Simians have innate powers other than just their intellect, ranging from mental powers to mystical abilities (perhaps associated with some mythological ape god or spirit) to more traditional super-powers. The Simian might have the ability to assume human form (Morph), either a human who turns into a super-simian or an ape able to disguise itself as a human. If it lacks powers in human form, this is the Normal Identity drawback.

GOING APE!

The Simian has developed a "devolution effect" for transforming humans into apes and unleashes it on the city, creating panic and mayhem as people undergo the transformation. A random factor causes some subjects to transform faster than others, and the heroes have to race to find a cure before even they are overcome by their primitive ape-like drives and succumb to the Simian's influence.

ANIMAL KINGDOM

The Simian develops a means of communicating with and influencing animals, and begins inciting an "animal uprising" against humanity. Throughout the city birds, rats, house pets, horses, all manner of animals begin turning aggressive and violent, and the problem seems to be spreading. Can the heroes contain the problem and convince the city's animal population that humans are not their enemies?

KING SIMIAN

A new device allows the Sinister Simian to grow to colossal size, granting brawn to equal his brains. The heroes have to corral the towering ape, leading to a confrontation high atop one of the city's tallest buildings, with superheroes buzzing around, and perhaps a fair hostage held in the colossal ape's grasp.

SINISTER SIMIAN — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+5	+2	+2	+7	+4	+3
21	15	14	24	18	17

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+5	+8	+8	+8

Skills: Acrobatics 5 (+7), Climb 13 (+18), Craft (electronic) 8 (+15), Craft (mechanical) 8 (+15), Intimidate 6 (+9), Knowledge (physical sciences) 8 (+15), Knowledge (technology) 8 (+15), Notice 8 (+12), Sense Motive 8 (+12)

Feats: Acrobatic Bluff, Improved Pin, Power Attack, Stunning Attack, Takedown Attack

Powers: **Device 10** (easy to lose), **Growth 4** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 3**, **Super-Senses 2** (low-light vision, scent)

Combat: Attack +8 (includes –1 due to size, Damage +5 (unarmed or by device), Defense +8 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +2

Abilities 37 + Skills 18 (72 ranks) + Feats 5 + Powers 48 + Combat 36 + Saves 16 = 160 PP

"EVOLUTION HAS DEALT A NEW HAND. YOU LOSE!"

ULTIMATE MIMIC — POWER LEVEL 15 - 280 PP

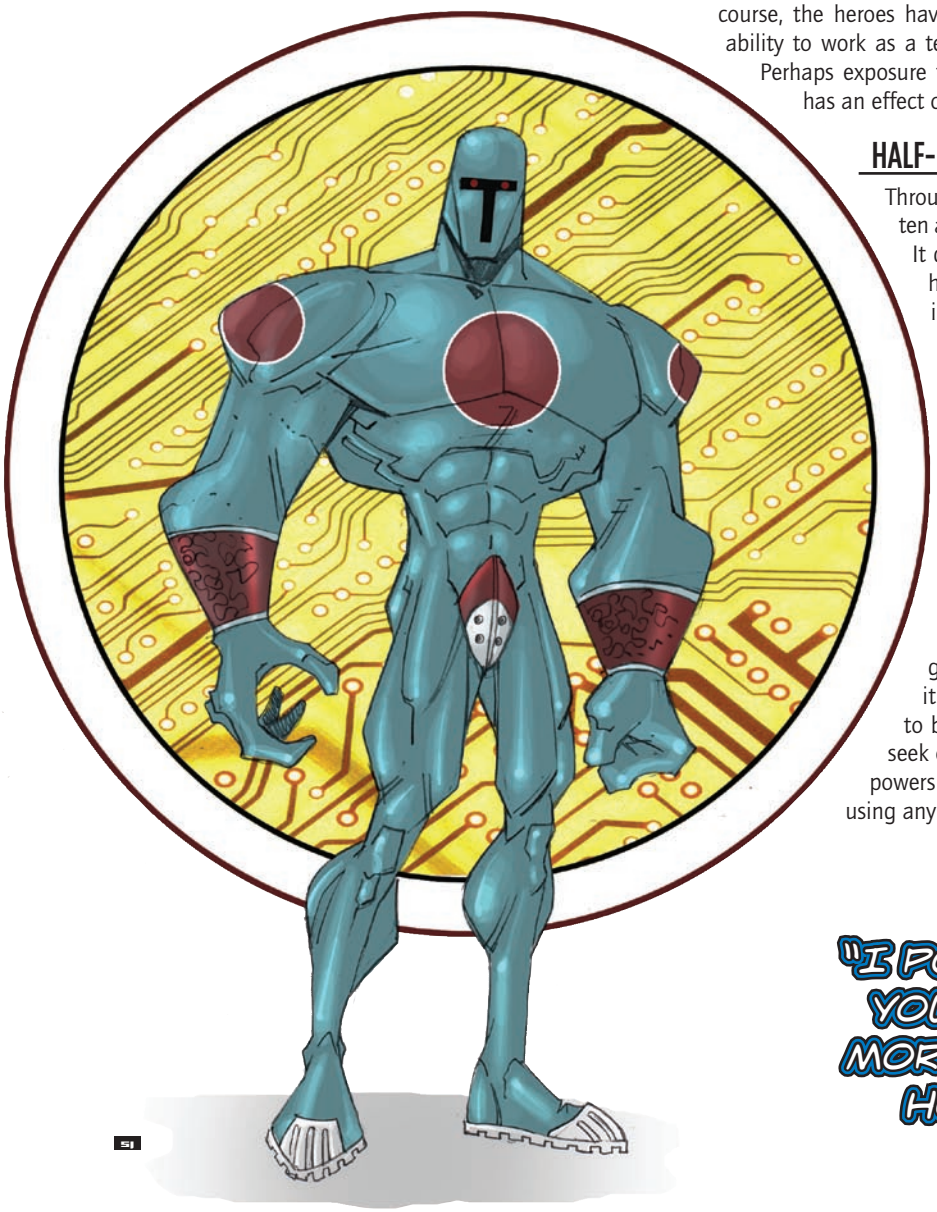
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
10	10	10	10	10	10

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+0	+10	+5	+5

Powers: Mimic 20 (all traits at once; *Extras:* Continuous, Extra Subjects x 2 [5], Perception, Stacking)

Combat: Attack +10, Damage +0 (unarmed), Defense +10, Initiative +0

Abilities 0 + Skills 0 (0 ranks) + Feats 0+ Powers 220 + Combat 40 + Saves 20 = 280 PP



ULTIMATE MIMIC

The Ultimate Mimic is just that, a villain capable of mimicking *everything* about a subject. Often, the Ultimate Mimic is a plot device character with a Mimic rank of X: able to duplicate every trait of every character it encounters (see **Plot Device Characters**, page 211). Other Ultimate Mimics are a bit more limited, but their power remains extensive.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

The most common sorts of Ultimate Mimics are either artificial beings (androids or replicants) or aliens able to take on other forms and abilities, but many other types are possible.

PERFECT WEAPON

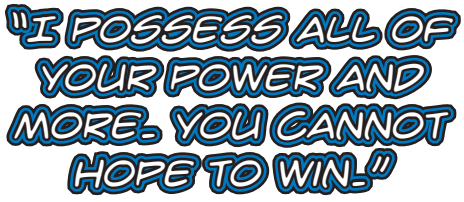
Another villain (like the Armored Megalomaniac or Mad Scientist) unleashed the Ultimate Mimic on the heroes as the "perfect weapon," able to duplicate all of their abilities and defeat any one of them. Of course, the heroes have to take advantage of their numbers and their ability to work as a team to overcome the Mimic's innate advantages. Perhaps exposure to the genuinely good nature of the heroes also has an effect on the Mimic's developing personality.

HALF-LIFE

Through copying the traits of others, the Mimic has gotten a taste of what normal life is like and it wants more. It decides to replace a particular hero and take over his or her life, perhaps not understanding the moral implications (or simply not caring about them). The hero has to deal with the would-be doppelganger while safeguarding friends and loved ones (and possible a secret identity as well).

CRITICAL MASS

The Ultimate Mimic absorbs or duplicates so many powers that a synergistic effect takes place, increasing its power exponentially and allowing it to "evolve" into an even more powerful, cosmic-level being. However, the newborn "godling" is confused, uncertain, and in need of guidance. Can the heroes provide it with the help it needs before more sinister influences can attempt to bend it to their wills? As a variation, a Mimic may seek out conflict with super-beings in order to add their powers to its "portfolio." Can the heroes defeat it *without* using any of their powers?



VAMPIRE LORD

The vampire is a common villain in folk legend. Comic book vampires tend to focus less on the horror aspects of the legend and treat them more as another kind of super-human. The Vampire Lord is a powerful example of the type, and may even be based on an existing vampire from legend, such as Count Dracula, Elizabeth Bathory (the "Blood Countess" of Hungary), or the Nosferatu from the film of the same name. Vampire Lords have an array of mystic powers and minions at their command, but also a number of distinct vulnerabilities.

VARIATIONS AND CAPERS

More powerful vampires have greater and more varied powers. They may have higher Strength scores, and even Super-Strength, Mind Control (dependent on sight) rather than Fascinate, and Magic or Weather Control. Some vampires may have the Ritualist feat, allowing them to perform magical rituals (a good intermediate step before full-blown Magic power).

ETERNAL NIGHT

A Vampire Lord and its followers, including a dark mystic cult, have discovered an ancient ritual to blot out the sun and plunge the world into eternal night! They need only gather the remaining elements of the ritual and perform it during an upcoming lunar eclipse, extending the eclipse's shadow everywhere and allowing vampires to move and act freely. The heroes have to figure out the vampire's plan and stop it before it is too late and darkness falls forever!

THE NIGHT SHIFT

A Vampire Lord has come to the city and begun secretly creating vampiric thralls and lesser vampires among the city's nocturnal street culture: prostitutes, gang members, club-goers, even police officers. When a friend of the heroes runs afoul of the vampire or its minions, the heroes discover evidence of a vampiric plague spreading in the city's underground. They must hunt down and destroy the Vampire Lord in order to restore things to normal.

BRIDE OF THE VAMPIRE

The Vampire Lord fixates on a super-heroine (possibly a player character) and decides she must become his vampire-bride. He secretly begins visiting her, entrancing her with his powers and feeding on her blood to begin the process of transforming her into a vampire. The heroes learn their friend is mysteriously ill and observe symptoms consistent with a vampire-attack, but she is evasive and refuses their help. Can they save her from eternal unlife as the bride of the vampire?

VAMPIRE LORD — POWER LEVEL 8 - 145 PP

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+6	+3	—	+1	+3	+2
22	17	—	12	16	15

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+7/+0*	—	+6	+6

*against blessed, silver, or magical weapons

Skills: Bluff 4 (+6), Diplomacy 12 (+14), Gather Information 4 (+6), Intimidate 8 (+11), Knowledge (arcane lore) 4 (+5), Notice 8 (+11), Search 6 (+7), Sense Motive 6 (+9), Stealth 8 (+11)

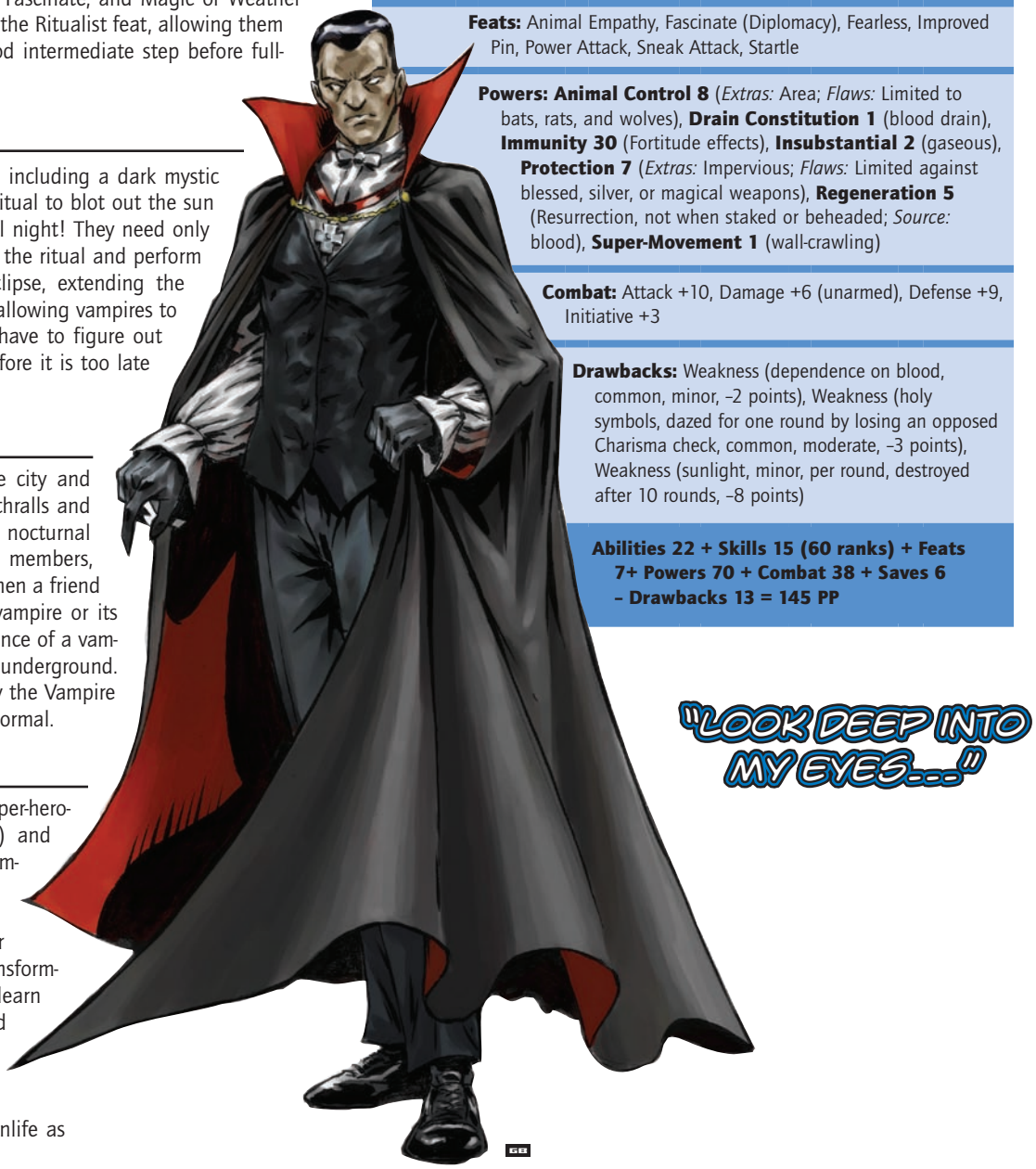
Feats: Animal Empathy, Fascinate (Diplomacy), Fearless, Improved Pin, Power Attack, Sneak Attack, Startle

Powers: **Animal Control 8** (*Extras:* Area; *Flaws:* Limited to bats, rats, and wolves), **Drain Constitution 1** (blood drain), **Immunity 30** (Fortitude effects), **Insubstantial 2** (gaseous), **Protection 7** (*Extras:* Impervious; *Flaws:* Limited against blessed, silver, or magical weapons), **Regeneration 5** (Resurrection, not when staked or beheaded; *Source:* blood), **Super-Movement 1** (wall-crawling)

Combat: Attack +10, Damage +6 (unarmed), Defense +9, Initiative +3

Drawbacks: Weakness (dependence on blood, common, minor, –2 points), Weakness (holy symbols, dazed for one round by losing an opposed Charisma check, common, moderate, –3 points), Weakness (sunlight, minor, per round, destroyed after 10 rounds, –8 points)

Abilities 22 + Skills 15 (60 ranks) + Feats 7+ Powers 70 + Combat 38 + Saves 6 – Drawbacks 13 = 145 PP



SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Although comic book stories are about the struggles between heroes and villains, they feature many important supporting characters, from a hero's loved ones and co-workers to petty criminals, legal and political authorities, and countless innocent citizens in need of a hero's aid. Gamemasters should give some thought to the supporting cast of a series, starting with any responsibilities the heroes might have and working out to other people they're likely to meet in the performance of their duties.

SUPPORTING CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

This section provides a number of archetypes for the typical supporting characters in a superhero setting. Gamemasters should feel free to modify these archetypes as needed to suit the particular character and adventure. Many of these archetypes are also suitable for use as minions, whether henchmen of a criminal masterminds or cannon fodder brushed aside by villains before they take on the heroes.

ASSASSIN — POWER LEVEL 5

Str 10	Dex 16	Con 10	Int 12	Wis 13	Cha 14

Skills: Bluff 6 (+8), Climb 4 (+4), Computers 6 (+7), Craft (chemical) 6 (+7), Disguise 8 (+10), Notice 6 (+7), Search 4 (+5), Stealth 8 (+11)

Feats: Attack Focus (ranged) 3, Defensive Roll 4, Equipment 2, Improved Aim, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Equipment: rifle (+4 damage)

Combat: Attack +3 (+6 ranged), Damage +0 (unarmed), +4 (rifle), Defense +5, Initiative +7

Saving Throws: Toughness +5 (+1 flat-footed), Fortitude +1, Reflex +6, Will +2

Abilities 15 + Skills 12 (48 ranks) + Feats 12 + Combat 16 + Saves 5 = 60

Assassins are common hirelings for villains and crime lords, used to eliminate their enemies. They're not usually told much, so they cannot compromise their employer's plans if they're captured. This archetype is a fairly run-of-the-mill assassin; world-class assassins are villains in their own right.

BUTLER — POWER LEVEL 1

Str 9	Dex 10	Con 10	Int 12	Wis 15	Cha 12

Skills: Diplomacy 2 (+3), Knowledge (history) 2 (+3), Medicine 2 (+4), Notice 4 (+6), Profession (butler) 8 (+10), Sense Motive 2 (+4)

Combat: Attack +1, Damage –1 (unarmed), Defense +1, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +1, Reflex +1, Will +4

Abilities 8 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 0 + Combat 4 + Saves 4 = 21

The stoic and efficient butler is a staple character in the comics, often the gentleman's gentleman to a wealthy hero or the caretaker of the headquarters of a hero team.

BYSTANDER — POWER LEVEL 0

Str 10	Dex 10	Con 10	Int 10	Wis 10	Cha 10

Skills: Knowledge (current events) 2 (+2), Knowledge (popular culture) 2 (+2), Profession 4 (+4)

Combat: Attack +0, Damage +0 (unarmed), Defense +0, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +0, Reflex +0, Will +0

Abilities 0 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 0 + Combat 0 + Saves 0 = 2

A bystander is a typical person-off-the-street, the sort likely to be endangered by any number of super-powered clashes in a populated area, or held hostage by a villain looking for bargaining chips.

CRIME LORD — POWER LEVEL 4

Str 9	Dex 12	Con 10	Int 14	Wis 13	Cha 16

Skills: Bluff 8 (+11), Computers 4 (+6), Diplomacy 10 (+13), Gather Information 10 (+13), Knowledge (streetwise) 8 (+10), Intimidate 8 (+11), Search 4 (+6), Sense Motive 4 (+6), Stealth 8 (+9)

Feats: Attack Focus (ranged) 3, Equipment 2

Combat: Attack +2 (+5 ranged), Damage +0 (unarmed), +3 (pistol), Defense +4, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +3, Reflex +6, Will +7

Abilities 15 + Skills 16 (64 ranks) + Feats 5 + Combat 12 + Saves 14 = 62

A crime lord is the mastermind behind a syndicate or criminal empire. Crime Lords tend to work in the background, behind the scenes, carefully concealing any evidence connecting them to their criminal enterprises.

CRIMINAL — POWER LEVEL 1

Str 11	Dex 14	Con 10	Int 13	Wis 10	Cha 12

Skills: Acrobatics 4 (+6), Computers 2 (+3), Craft (chemical) 4 (+5), Disable Device 8 (+9), Drive 4 (+6), Knowledge (current events) 2 (+3), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+5), Stealth 6 (+8), Search 2 (+3), Sleight of Hand 4 (+6)

Feats: Equipment 2

Equipment: pistol (+3 damage)

Combat: Attack +1, Damage +0 (unarmed or by Equipment), Defense +2, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +0, Reflex +3, Will +0

Abilities 10 + Skills 10 (40 ranks) + Feats 2 + Combat 6 + Saves 2 = 30

This archetype covers run-of-the-mill career criminals. Gamemasters can customize it to suit particular types of criminals by moving around skill ranks.

CULTIST — POWER LEVEL 2

Str 12	Dex 10	Con 15	Int 8	Wis 10	Cha 8

Skills: Climb 2 (+3), Drive 4 (+4), Intimidate 4 (+3), Knowledge (arcane lore) 4 (+3), Knowledge (popular culture) 2 (+1), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+3), Profession 4 (+4)

Feats: Equipment 3

Equipment: pistol (+3 damage), sword or axe (+3 damage), dark robes.

Combat: Attack +2, Damage +2 (punch), +3 (pistol), Defense +2, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +0, Will +2

Abilities 3 + Skills 6 (24 ranks) + Feats 3 + Combat 8 + Saves 4 = 24

Cultists are members of secret and often mystical cults, typically minions of a mystic villain (like the Corrupt Sorcerer, see page 214). Some cultists may even possess minor powers granted by their master, the Magic power, or the Ritualist feat, allowing them to perform arcane rituals.

FIREFIGHTER — POWER LEVEL 2

Str 14	Dex 12	Con 14	Int 10	Wis 11	Cha 10

Skills: Climb 4 (+6), Drive 4 (+5), Medicine 4 (+4), Notice 4 (+4), Profession (firefighter) 4 (+4)

Feats: Equipment 2

Equipment: fire axe, turnout coat, gas mask, walkie-talkie

Combat: Attack +2, Damage +2 (unarmed or by Equipment), Defense +2, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +1, Will +2

Abilities 11 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 2 + Combat 8 + Saves 4 = 30

Firefighters deal with uncontrolled fires in both urban and wilderness areas. They also provide emergency support for police and paramedics.

GANG LEADER — POWER LEVEL 4

Str 12	Dex 13	Con 12	Int 10	Wis 10	Cha 15

Skills: Bluff 4 (+6), Climb 4 (+5), Drive 2 (+3), Intimidate 4 (+6), Knowledge (current events) 4 (+4), Knowledge (streetwise) 6 (+6)

Feats: Equipment 2

Equipment: leather jacket (+1 Toughness), pistol (+3 damage), cell phone

Combat: Attack +4, Damage +1 (unarmed), +3 (pistol), Defense +3, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +5 (+4 without jacket), Fortitude +5, Reflex +4, Will +2

Abilities 12 + Skills 6 (24 ranks) + Feats 2 + Combat 14 + Saves 12 = 46

This archetype represents the leader of a small criminal gang. Leaders of larger gangs tend to have more skill ranks (particularly in Bluff and Knowledge) and may also have ranks in Diplomacy and Profession. See the **Crime Lord** archetype for a high-level criminal leader.

GOVERNMENT AGENT — POWER LEVEL 3

Str 10	Dex 12	Con 13	Int 15	Wis 14	Cha 10

Skills: Computers 2 (+4), Diplomacy 3 (+3), Drive 4 (+5), Gather Information 4 (+4), Intimidate 4 (+4), Investigate 6 (+8), Knowledge (behavior sciences) 3 (+5), Knowledge (civics) 2 (+4), Knowledge (current events) 2 (+4), Knowledge (streetwise) 2 (+4), Notice 4 (+6), Profession (government agent) 3 (+5), Search 5 (+7)

Feats: Defensive Roll, Equipment 2

Equipment: pistol (+3 damage), handcuffs, camera, cell phone, notebook computer

Combat: Attack +3, Damage +0 (unarmed), +3 (pistol), Defense +4, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +2 (+1 flat-footed), Fortitude +4, Reflex +1, Will +6

Abilities 14 + Skills 11 (44 ranks) Feats 3 + Combat 14 + Saves 7 = 49

Government agents include members of organizations like the FBI, CIA, DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency), and so forth.

KID — POWER LEVEL 0

Str 6	Dex 11	Con 10	Int 10	Wis 10	Cha 8

Skills: Knowledge (popular culture) 2 (+2) and one of Bluff, Climb, Notice, or another suitable skill at 2 ranks.

Combat: Attack +0, Damage –2 (unarmed), Defense +0, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness –1, Fortitude +0, Reflex +0, Will +0

Drawbacks: Disability (–1 Toughness, uncommon, minor)

Abilities –5 + Skills 1 (4 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 0 + Combat 0 + Saves 0 – Drawbacks 1 = –5

This is a typical kid between eight and twelve years old or so. Teenagers have somewhat higher ability scores (reaching adult levels in the late teens).

NINJA — POWER LEVEL 3

Str 12	Dex 15	Con 12	Int 10	Wis 12	Cha 8

Skills: Acrobatics 6 (+8), Bluff 4 (+3), Climb 4 (+6), Disable Device 4 (+4), Escape Artist 4 (+6), Intimidate 4 (+3), Language (Japanese), Notice 2 (+3), Search 4 (+4), Sleight of Hand 3 (+5), Stealth 8 (+10)

Feats: Equipment 2

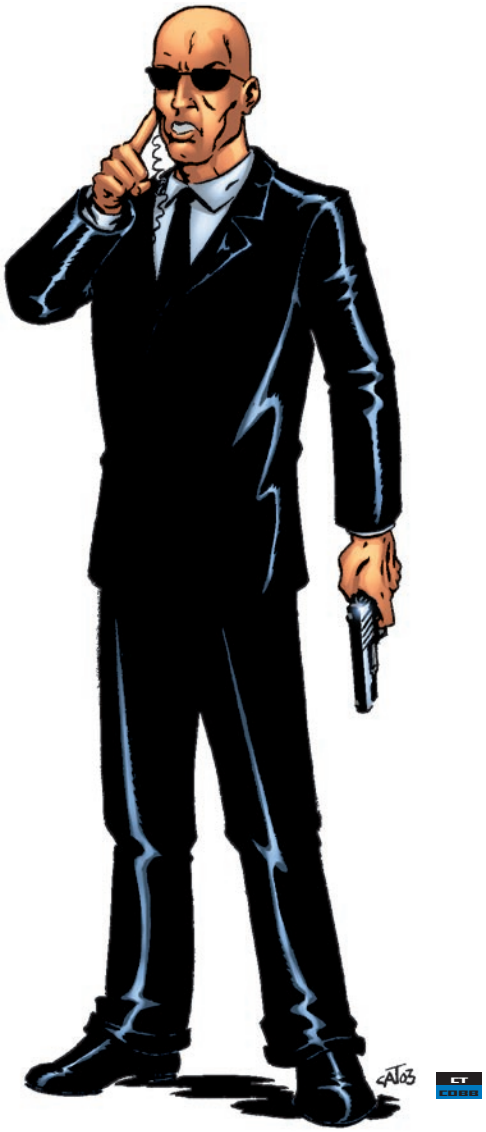
Equipment: climbing gear, black camo suit, sword (+3 damage), shuriken (+1 autofire damage)

Combat: Attack +3, Damage +1 (unarmed or shuriken), +3 (sword), Defense +4, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +1

Abilities 9 + Skills 11 (44 ranks) + Feats 2 + Powers 0 + Combat 14 + Saves 5 = 41

Ninja—dark clad stealthy assassins—are a staple of the comic books, especially as members of sinister cults and agents of Asian masterminds. More capable ninja are often villains in their own right, with high skill ranks, numerous feats, and often special mystical powers (see the **Kung Fu Killer** archetype, page 217, for a sample character, including suggested variations).



POLICE CHIEF — POWER LEVEL 3

Str 12	Dex 15	Con 12	Int 10	Wis 12	Cha 8

Skills: Climb 2 (+2), Drive 4 (+4), Intimidate 4 (+6), Investigate 6 (+7), Knowledge (current events) 4 (+5), Knowledge (streetwise) 6 (+7), Medicine 2 (+4), Notice 6 (+8), Profession (police officer) 6 (+8), Sense Motive 8 (+10)

Feats: Connected, Equipment 2

Equipment: pistol (+3 damage), handcuffs

Combat: Attack +3, Damage +0 (unarmed), +3 (pistol), Defense +4, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +4, Reflex +3, Will +6

Abilities 13 + Skills 12 (48 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 0 + Combat 14 + Saves 12 = 54

The police chief can be a hero's greatest ally, or worst enemy, for vigilantes who flout the law. Police chiefs may be dedicated public servants or corrupt politicians on the take, depending on the location and the style of the campaign.

POLICE OFFICER — POWER LEVEL 3

Str 14	Dex 12	Con 13	Int 10	Wis 12	Cha 10

Skills: Climb 2 (+4), Drive 2 (+3), Intimidate 2 (+2), Investigate 2 (+2), Knowledge (current events) 2 (+2), Knowledge (streetwise) 2 (+2), Medicine 2 (+3), Notice 4 (+5), Profession (police officer) 4 (+5), Sense Motive 4 (+5), Swim 2 (+4)

Feats: Equipment 3

Equipment: concealable vest (+3 Toughness), pistol (+3 damage), tonfa (+1 damage), handcuffs

Combat: Attack +3, Damage +2 (unarmed), +3 (pistol), Defense +2, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +4 (+1 without vest), Fortitude +3, Reflex +1, Will +3

Abilities 11 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 0 + Combat 10 + Saves 4 = 35

This archetype focuses primarily on uniformed beat cops. Detectives, undercover, and plainclothes officers have more ranks in Investigate and often in other social skills like Diplomacy and Intimidate. For more combat oriented police, see the SWAT Officer archetype.

POLITICIAN — POWER LEVEL 0

Str 9	Dex 10	Con 10	Int 14	Wis 13	Cha 14

Skills: Bluff 4 (+6), Computers 2 (+4), Craft (writing) 4 (+6), Diplomacy 5 (+7), Knowledge (business) 4 (+6), Knowledge (history) 4 (+6), Knowledge (popular culture) 4 (+6), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 4 (+6), Profession (politician) 5 (+6)

Feats: Connected

Combat: Attack +0, Damage –1 (unarmed), Defense +0, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +0, Reflex +2, Will +2

Abilities 10 + Skills 9 (36 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 0 + Combat 0 + Saves 3 = 23

Politicians, ranging from the mayor and city council to senators, congressmen, and Presidents and Prime Ministers deal with heroes and villains. Superheroes may receive support from some politicians, condemnation from others. A politician can make a hero's job a lot easier, or a lot harder.

REPORTER — POWER LEVEL 0

Str 9	Dex 10	Con 10	Int 12	Wis 14	Cha 11

Skills: Bluff 4 (+4), Craft (writing) 4 (+5), Diplomacy 4 (+4), Gather Information 6 (+6), Investigate 4 (+5), Knowledge (current events) 6 (+7), Knowledge (streetwise) 2 (+3), Notice 4 (+6), Profession (reporter) 4 (+6), Search 5 (+6), Sense Motive 5 (+7)

Feats: Equipment 1

Equipment: digital recorder, camera

Combat: Attack +0, Damage –1 (unarmed), Defense +0, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +0, Reflex +1, Will +3

Abilities 6 + Skills 12 (48 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 0 + Combat 0 + Saves 2 = 21

Superheroes are big news, so they're sure to run into reporters. Just as they report heroes' successes, they also point out their mistakes.

SCIENTIST — POWER LEVEL 0

Str 14	Dex 12	Con 13	Int 10	Wis 12	Cha 10

Skills: Computers 6 (+8) Craft (chemical, electronic, or mechanical) 6 (+8), Knowledge (life or physical sciences) 8 (+10), Profession (scientist) 4 (+5)

Combat: Attack +0, Damage –1 (unarmed), Defense +0, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness –1, Fortitude +0, Reflex +0, Will +3

Abilities 4 + Skills 6 (24 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 0 + Combat 0 + Saves 3 = 13

Scientists are sources of advice, assistance, and trouble in superhero stories. On the one hand, they provide helpful insights for heroes faced with a scientific puzzle. On the other, scientific experiments are known to get out of hand, causing any number of problems.

SOLDIER — POWER LEVEL 5

Str 13	Dex 12	Con 13	Int 10	Wis 10	Cha 10

Skills: Climb 4 (+5), Intimidate 2 (+2), Knowledge (tactics) 4 (+4), Notice 2 (+2), Profession (soldier) 4 (+4)

Feats: Equipment 4

Equipment: assault rifle (+5 damage), grenades, body armor (+4 Toughness)

Combat: Attack +5, Damage +1 (unarmed), +5 (rifle), Defense +5, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +5 (+1 without body armor), Fortitude +4, Reflex +1, Will +1

Abilities 7 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) Feats 4 + Powers 0 + Combat 20 + Saves 4 = 39

This archetype covers the typical infantryman or enlisted soldier. Specialists and officers have appropriate additional training (and skills).

SWAT OFFICER — POWER LEVEL 6

Str 13	Dex 14	Con 14	Int 10	Wis 12	Cha 10

Skills: Intimidate 5 (+5), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+4), Knowledge (tactics) 5 (+5), Notice 2 (+3), Professional (police officer) 4 (+5), Stealth 4 (+6)

Feats: Equipment 4

Equipment: submachine gun (+4 damage), riot armor (+4 Toughness)

Combat: Attack +6, Damage +1 (unarmed), +4 (gun), Defense +6, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +6 (+2 without riot armor), Fortitude +6, Reflex +6, Will +3

Abilities 11 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 0 + Combat 10 + Saves 4 = 35

SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) squads are made up of police officers with special training in squad-level tactics and weapon-use. They deal with serious criminal threats, including super-powered criminals.

TERRORIST — POWER LEVEL 4

Str 12	Dex 11	Con 13	Int 12	Wis 10	Cha 13

Skills: Bluff 4 (+5), Computers 4 (+5), Craft (chemical) 6 (+7), Craft (electronic) 6 (+7), Craft (mechanical) 4 (+5), Disguise 2 (+3), Drive 4 (+4), Gather Information 1 (+2), Intimidate 2 (+3), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 3 (+4), Pilot 4 (+4), Professional 4 (+4), Search 4 (+5)

Feats: Equipment 3

Equipment: 15 points of equipment

Combat: Attack +4, Damage +1 (unarmed), +4 (gun), Defense +4, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +3, Will +3

Abilities 11 + Skills 12 (48 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 0 + Combat 16 + Saves 10 = 52

This archetype represents a terrorist cell-leader or mastermind (followers are more likely cultists or thugs). More capable terrorist leaders are supervillains in their own right, often possessing advanced equipment or powers.

THUG — POWER LEVEL 2

Str 14	Dex 12	Con 15	Int 10	Wis 10	Cha 8

Skills: Craft (mechanical) 4 (+4), Drive 4 (+5), Intimidate 4 (+3), Knowledge (popular culture) 2 (+2), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+4), Profession 4 (+4), Swim 2 (+4)

Feats: Equipment 2

Equipment: Leather jacket (+1 Toughness), pistol (+3 damage), cell phone.

Combat: Attack +2, Damage +2 (punch), +3 (pistol), Defense +2, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +1, Will +0

Abilities 9 + Skills 6 (24 ranks) + Feats 2 + Powers 0 + Combat 8 + Saves 2 = 27

Thugs are typical street muscle working for gangsters or minor villains. This archetype also works for gang members, as well as professional hired muscle like security guards and rent-a-cops.

CREATURES

Some of the "supporting cast" or even "villains" of a *Mutants & Masterminds* adventure aren't people but various sorts of creatures, ranging from ordinary animals to fantastic monsters. This section provides a selection of creatures you can use in your own adventures and as models for building your own creatures using the traits described in the other chapters of this book.

ANIMALS

Animals in the comics are companions, minions, and occasionally foes for the heroes. The archetypes here also provide some inspiration for heroes and villains with animal-like powers and abilities.

All animals have certain traits in common. Animals have an Intelligence score of 1 or 2 (anything with Int 3 or more isn't a normal animal). All animals also have the physical drawbacks mute (very common, moderate, 4 points) and no hands (very common, moderate, 4 points).

Aquatic animals are adapted for life underwater and do not suffer penalties for being underwater, but have no land movement and usually cannot survive out of water for long. These traits essentially balance out and are not given in the animals' game statistics.

GIANT ANIMALS

A staple of the comics is an otherwise ordinary animal grown to gigantic size. For this, simply apply ranks of Growth (see page 87) to any of the animal archetypes here. If the animal is naturally giant-sized, make its Growth Innate. Otherwise you can just make it Permanent, allowing heroes the opportunity to find a way to Nullify it. You can do the same thing with other effects to give animals powers, from flying monkeys to apes with super-strength or magnetic control.

APE — POWER LEVEL 5 / MINION RANK 3

Str 21	Dex 15	Con 14	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 7

Skills: Climb 13 (+18), Notice 7 (+8)

Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), Protection 3, **Super-Senses 2** (low-light vision, scent)

Combat: Attack +2 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +5 (unarmed), Defense +4 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +5, Fortitude +6, Reflex +6, Will +2

Abilities –1 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 18 + Combat 16 + Saves 9 – Drawbacks 4 = 44

Apes are a staple of many comic books (see **Going Ape!** on page 190). The statistics here are suitable for most adult apes and gorillas, about 8 feet tall and weighing some 600 pounds. Apes lack the No Hands drawback of other animals (and can be quite dexterous).

BAT — POWER LEVEL 0 / MINION RANK 1

Str 1	Dex 15	Con 10	Int 2	Wis 14	Cha 4

Skills: Notice 7 (+9), Stealth 4 (+6)

Powers: Shrinking 12 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Super-Senses 4** (auditory blindsight)

Combat: Attack +4 (due to size), Damage —, Defense +6 (includes +4 due to size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness –2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +2

Abilities –5 + Skills 3 (11 ranks) + Powers 17 + Combat 4 + Saves 2 – Drawbacks 8 = 13

Bats are nocturnal flying mammals (and the inspiration for the occasional superhero origin). The statistics here are for small, insectivorous bats.

BEAR — POWER LEVEL 6 / MINION RANK 4

Str 27	Dex 13	Con 19	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 6

Skills: Climb 10 (+18), Notice 5 (+6)

Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 2**, **Super-Senses 2** (low-light vision, scent)

Combat: Attack +3 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +8 (unarmed), Defense +5 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +6, Fortitude +9, Reflex +6, Will +3

Abilities 7 + Skills 4 (15 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 17 + Combat 20 + Saves 12 – Drawbacks 8 = 52

Bears stand nearly 12 feet tall on their hind legs and weigh in at 1,200 pounds. These statistics suffice for most species of bear. Polar bears have +2 Strength and Environmental Adaptation (cold).

CAT — POWER LEVEL 0 / MINION RANK 1

Str 3	Dex 15	Con 10	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 7

Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+10), Climb 9 (+5), Notice 3 (+4), Stealth 8 (+10)

Powers: Shrinking 8 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Super-Senses 1** (low-light vision),

Combat: Attack +4 (includes +2 due to size), Damage –4 (unarmed), Defense +4 (includes +2 due to size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness –4, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +1

Abilities –3 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 10 + Combat 8 + Saves 0 – Drawbacks 8 = 14Saves 2 = 27

These statistics are for the common housecat. See the Lion archetype for bigger cats.

CROCODILE — POWER LEVEL 7 / MINION RANK 5

Str 27	Dex 12	Con 19	Int 1	Wis 12	Cha 2

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 3 (+4)

Feats: Environmental Adaptation (water), Improved Swim

Powers: Growth 8 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 3**, **Super-Senses 1** (low-light vision), **Swimming 1**

Combat: Attack +4 (includes –2 due to size), Damage +8 (unarmed), Defense +6 (includes –2 due to size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +7, Fortitude +9, Reflex +6, Will +3

Abilities –11 + Skills 2 (7 ranks) + Feats 2 + Powers 30 + Combat 28 + Saves 12 – Drawbacks 8 = 55

The crocodile described here is up to 20 feet long, with powerful, toothed jaws. These statistics also work for huge alligators, including ones sometimes encountered in city sewers in the comic books.

DOG — POWER LEVEL 2 / MINION RANK 2

Str 15	Dex 15	Con 15	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 6

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Survival 0 (+1), Swim 2 (+4)

Powers: Super-Senses 3 (scent, track, ultra-hearing)

Combat: Attack +3, Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +3, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +5, Reflex +5, Will +1

Abilities 5 + Skills 2 (6 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 3 + Combat 12 + Saves 6 – Drawbacks 8 = 20

A medium-sized domestic dog is shown here, which includes typical guard and police dogs.

DOLPHIN — POWER LEVEL 3 / MINION RANK 2

Str 11	Dex 17	Con 13	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 6

Skills: Notice 8 (+9), Swim 8 (+8)

Powers: Strike 1 (*Power Feats:* Mighty), **Super-Senses 5** (auditory blindsight, low-light vision), **Swimming 3**

Combat: Attack +4, Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +4, Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +4, Reflex +6, Will +1

Abilities 1 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 10 + Combat 16 + Saves 6 – Drawbacks 8 = 29

This archetype represents porpoises as well as various types of dolphins, both common minions of sea-faring heroes (oceanic villains tend to favor sharks instead).

ELEPHANT					POWER LEVEL 9 / MINION RANK 5
Str 30	**Dex 10**	**Con 21**	**Int 2**	**Wis 13**	**Cha 7**
Skills: Notice 8 (+9)					
Feats: Endurance					
Power: Additional Limbs 1 (trunk), **Growth 8** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 4**, **Strike 1** (*Power Feats:* Mighty)					
Combat: Attack +6 (includes –2 due to size), Damage +10 (trample or gore), Defense +0 (includes –2 due to size), Initiative +0					
Saving Throws: Toughness +9, Fortitude +12, Reflex +5, Will +6					
Abilities –1 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 32 + Combat 20 + Saves 17 – Drawbacks 8 = 63					

This archetype represents the African elephant. Indian elephants aren't quite as strong (Str 28) but a bit easier to train (Wis 15). The archetype also suits mammoths and mastodons (which have Environmental Adaptation (cold)).

HAWK					POWER LEVEL 4 / MINION RANK 3
Str 6	**Dex 17**	**Con 10**	**Int 2**	**Wis 14**	**Cha 6**
Skills: Notice 4 (+6)					
Powers: Flight 2, **Shrinking 8** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Super-Senses 2** (extended vision, low-light vision)					
Combat: Attack +7 (includes +2 due to size), Damage +1 (talons), Defense +7 (includes +2 due to size), Initiative +3					
Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +2					
Abilities 3 + Skills 1 (4 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 15 + Combat 20 + Saves 4 – Drawbacks 8 = 35					

This avian archetype covers hawks, eagles, falcoms and other similar birds of prey.

HERD ANIMAL					POWER LEVEL 3 / MINION RANK 2
Str 18	**Dex 10**	**Con 16**	**Int 2**	**Wis 11**	**Cha 4**
Skills: Notice 4 (+4)					
Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Speed 1**					
Combat: Attack +2 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +4 (unarmed), Defense +3 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +1					
Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +7, Reflex +4, Will +1					
Abilities –11 + Skills 1 (4 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 14 + Combat 14 + Saves 9 – Drawbacks 8 = 19					

Herd animals include cows, bison, and buffalo, typically 5 to 6 feet tall at the shoulder, weighing 1,500 to 2,400 pounds. They're usually fairly placid unless threatened.

HORSE					POWER LEVEL 3 / MINION RANK 2
Str 13	**Dex 13**	**Con 15**	**Int 2**	**Wis 12**	**Cha 6**
Skills: Notice 4 (+5)					
Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 1**, **Speed 1**, **Super-Senses 2** (extended vision, low-light vision)					
Combat: Attack +3 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +2 (unarmed), Defense +3 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +1					
Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +6, Reflex +4, Will +2					
Abilities –7 + Skills 1 (4 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 17 + Combat 16 + Saves 8 – Drawbacks 8 = 27					

These statistics represent wild horses, quarter horse, Arabians, and similar breeds. Heavier workhorses like Clydesdales have higher Strength scores (up to 17 or so).

LION					POWER LEVEL 6 / MINION RANK 4
Str 21	**Dex 17**	**Con 15**	**Int 2**	**Wis 12**	**Cha 6**
Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 8 (+11)					
Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), Protection 4, **Super-Senses 2** (low-light vision, scent)					
Combat: Attack +6 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +5 (claws), Defense +5 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +3					
Saving Throws: Toughness +6, Fortitude +6, Reflex +7, Will +2					
Abilities 1 + Skills 3 (12 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 19 + Combat 26 + Saves 9 – Drawbacks 8 = 50					

Lions include tigers and other great cats, common minions of some master villains.

MONKEY					POWER LEVEL 1 / MINION RANK 2
Str 3	**Dex 15**	**Con 10**	**Int 2**	**Wis 12**	**Cha 5**
Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+10), Climb 17 (+13), Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 11 (+13)					
Powers: Additional Limbs 1 (tail), **Shrinking 8** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent)					
Combat: Attack +6 (includes +2 due to size), Damage –3 (unarmed), Defense +4 (includes +2 due to size), Initiative +2					
Saving Throws: Toughness –1, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +1					
Abilities –5 + Skills 10 (40 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 10 + Combat 12 + Saves 3 – Drawbacks 4 = 26					

These statistics represent small, tailed monkeys like capuchin and spider monkeys. Although not as common as apes, monkeys frequently show up in the comics. Monkeys lack the No Hands drawback of other animals (and can be quite dexterous).

OWL					POWER LEVEL 2 / MINION RANK 3
Str 6	**Dex 17**	**Con 10**	**Int 2**	**Wis 14**	**Cha 4**
Skills: Notice 11 (+13), Stealth 17 (+20)					
Powers: Flight 1, Shrinking 8 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), Super-Senses 1 (low-light vision)					
Combat: Attack +7 (includes +2 due to size), Damage –1 (unarmed), Defense +7 (includes +2 due to size), Initiative +3					
Saving Throws: Toughness –2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +2					
Abilities 1 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 11 + Combat 20 + Saves 3 – Drawbacks 8 = 34					

The owl statistics can represent any nocturnal bird of prey 1 to 2 feet long with a wingspan up to 6 feet, including barn owls, snowy owls, and similar birds.

RAT — POWER LEVEL 0 / MINION RANK 2

Str 2	Dex 15	Con 10	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 2

Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+10), Climb 16 (+12), Stealth 8 (+10), Swim 12 (+8)

Powers: Shrinking 8 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Super-Senses 2** (low-light vision, scent),

Combat: Attack +6 (includes +2 due to size), Damage –4 (unarmed), Defense +4 (includes +2 due to size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness –5, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +1

Abilities –9 + Skills 11 (44 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 11 + Combat 12 + Saves –1 – Drawbacks 8 = 16

These rodents range in length from 6 inches to a 1 foot long. Rats are typically found in swarms and are often minions of supernatural or urban villains.

SHARK — POWER LEVEL 5 / MINION RANK 2

Str 13	Dex 15	Con 13	Int 1	Wis 12	Cha 2

Skills: Notice 6 (+7), Swim 8 (+9)

Powers: Protection 3, **Strike 1** (*Power Feats:* Mighty), **Super-Senses 2** (low-light vision, scent), **Swimming 2**

Combat: Attack +4, Damage +6 (bite), Defense +5, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +4, Reflex +5, Will +2

Abilities –4 + Skills 4 (14 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 9 + Combat 18 + Saves 7 – Drawbacks 8 = 26

These statistics represent a medium-sized shark like a hammerhead or a mako. For larger sharks, increase the animal's size category (up to Huge or greater for prehistoric megalodons and monstrous sharks).

SNAKE (CONSTRICTOR) — POWER LEVEL 4 / MINION RANK 3

Str 17	Dex 17	Con 13	Int 1	Wis 12	Cha 2

Skills: Climb 11 (+14), Notice 8 (+9), Stealth 8 (+11), Swim 8 (+11)

Feats: Improved Grab

Powers: Protection 2, **Super-Movement 1** (slithering), **Super-Senses 2** (infravision, scent)

Combat: Attack +5, Damage +3 (constriction), Defense +5, Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +4, Reflex +6, Will +2

Abilities 2 + Skills 9 (35 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 6 + Combat 20 + Saves 7 – Drawbacks 8 = 37

Thiese statistics represent a large constrictor snake like a boa, python, or anaconda.

SNAKE (VIPER) — POWER LEVEL 4 / MINION RANK 3

Str 6	Dex 17	Con 11	Int 1	Wis 12	Cha 2

Skills: Climb 14 (+12), Notice 7 (+8), Stealth 9 (+12), Swim 13 (+11)

Powers: Drain Constitution 4 (DC 14 Fortitude save; *Extras:* Poison), **Shrinking 8** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Super-Movement 1** (slithering), **Super-Senses 2** (infravision, scent)

Combat: Attack +7 (includes +2 due to size), Damage –2 (unarmed), Defense +7 (includes +2 due to size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness –2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +1

Abilities –3 + Skills 11 (43 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 21 + Combat 20 + Saves 2 – Drawbacks 8 = 43

These statistics represent small, poisonous snakes: asps, vipers, cobras, rattlesnakes, and so forth. The GM should feel free to vary poison effects as desired to suit the particular breed of snake.

SQUID, GIANT — POWER LEVEL 8 / MINION RANK 5

Str 26	Dex 17	Con 13	Int 1	Wis 12	Cha 2

Skills: Notice 8 (+9), Swim 12 (+12)

Feats: Diehard, Endurance

Powers: Additional Limbs 4 (10 tentacles), **Growth 8** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Obscure 4** (sight, 20 ft. radius; *Flaws:* Limited to underwater), **Protection 10**, **Swimming 3**

Combat: Attack +6 (includes –2 due to size), Damage +8 (unarmed), Defense +2 (includes –2 due to size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +11, Fortitude +9, Reflex +10, Will +5

Abilities –13 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 2 + Powers 46 + Combat 24 + Saves 19 – Drawbacks 8 = 75

Giant squids are popular minions for sea-faring heroes and villains, usable for attacking ships and underwater foes. The archetype can represent a giant octopus or similar creatures.

WHALE — POWER LEVEL 10 / MINION RANK 6

Str 35	Dex 13	Con 25	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 6

Skills: Notice 12 (+13), Swim 8 (+8)

Feats: Endurance

Powers: Growth 12 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 1**, **Super-Senses 5** (auditory blindsight, low-light vision), **Swimming 2**

Combat: Attack +5 (includes –4 due to size), Damage +12 (unarmed), Defense +2 (includes –4 due to size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +8, Fortitude +14, Reflex +9, Will +5

Abilities –3 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 45 + Combat 30 + Saves 19 – Drawbacks 8 = 89

Whales range in size from 30 to 60 feet long, including species such as grays, humpbacks, and right whales. Some are more agressive than others, such as the killer whale

WOLF — POWER LEVEL 3 / MINION RANK 2

Str 13	Dex 15	Con 15	Int 2	Wis 12	Cha 6

Skills: Notice 2 (+3), Stealth 2 (+4), Survival 0 (+1)

Feats: Improved Trip

Powers: Super-Senses 3 (low-light vision, scent, track)

Combat: Attack +3, Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +4, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +1, Will +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +5, Reflex +5, Will +1

Wolves are similar to dogs, and typically live and hunt in packs in wilderness areas. Adults average 3 feet at the shoulder and weigh 200 to 250 pounds.

MONSTERS

Comic book monsters may be creatures out of legend, the spawn of scientific experiments gone wrong, aliens, beings from other dimensions, or anything else the GM wishes. Presented here is a sampling of monsters, suitable for use in adventures and as inspiration for similar creatures.

Monsters often appear in *Mutants & Masterminds* adventures as minions of one sort or another, although not all monster minions are subject to the minion rules (see the Heroic extra on page 101). In addition to their total point value, the monsters here are assigned a rank to show the power or feat rank required to purchase that creature as a minion.

ANIMATED TREE — POWER LEVEL 6 / MINION RANK 2

Str 24	Dex 10	Con 20	Int –	Wis 10	Cha –

Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Immunity 2** (poison, suffocation), **Protection 1**

Combat: Attack +4 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +7 (unarmed), Defense –1 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +6, Fortitude +6, Reflex +0, Will –

Abilities –8 + Skills 0 + Feats 0 + Powers 16 + Combat 10 + Saves 1 = 19

Characters might animate trees using the Animate Objects power (possibly as an Alternate Power of Plant Control). These stats represent a full-grown tree around 16 feet tall, able to uproot itself and move about and use its branches as limbs.

DEMON, IMP — POWER LEVEL 5 / MINION RANK 6

Str 16	Dex 12	Con 16	Int 8	Wis 12	Cha 8

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Sense Motive 4 (+5)

Powers: Flight 2, **Immunity 23** (acid, aging, cold, disease, electricity, fire, poison), **Shrinking 4** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Strike 2** (*Power Feats:* Mighty)

Combat: Attack +6 (includes +1 due to size), Damage +5 (claws), Defense +7 (includes +1 due to size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +3, Reflex +5, Will +5

Drawbacks: Power Loss (Flight, if wings are immobilized, –2 points)

Abilities 16 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 37 + Combat 22 + Saves 8 – Drawbacks 2 = 83

These are small demonic creatures, usually with bat-like wings, forked tails, and horns. Sorcerers commonly summon imps as spies and minions.

DEMON, WARRIOR — POWER LEVEL 7 / MINION RANK 6

Str 22	Dex 12	Con 20	Int 8	Wis 12	Cha 10

Skills: Intimidate 4 (+4), Notice 4 (+5)

Powers: Immunity 23 (acid, aging, cold, disease, electricity, fire, poison), **Protection 2**, **Strike 1** (*Power Feats:* Mighty)

Combat: Attack +5, Damage +7 (claws), Defense +5, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +7, Fortitude +7, Reflex +4, Will +4

Abilities 24 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 27 + Combat 20 + Saves 8 = 81

Warrior demons tend to be human-sized, with powerful builds and tough (often scaly or bony) hides. They have horns, claws, and a vicious temperament. Evil sorcerers summon them as minions and foot soldiers.

DRAGON — POWER LEVEL 15 / MINION RANK 11

Str 42	Dex 10	Con 31	Int 6	Wis 12	Cha 8

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Sense Motive 4 (+5)

Powers: Blast 12 (fire), **Flight 3**, **Growth 16** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 8** (*Extras:* Impervious)

Combat: Attack +6 (includes –8 due to size), Damage +16 (claws), Defense +4 (includes –8 due to size), Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +18, Fortitude +12, Reflex +2, Will +8

Drawbacks: Power Loss (Flight, if wings are immobilized, –2 points)

Abilities 1 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 95 + Combat 52 + Saves 11 – Drawbacks –2 = 159

The dragon described here is a fairly unintelligent monster. Some fantasy dragons, however, are highly intelligent. To create these creatures, increase the dragon archetype's mental abilities, provide it with the necessary skills, particularly Knowledge (arcane lore), and any appropriate powers. Many intelligent dragons are sorcerers (see the **Magic** power, page 91).

GARGOYLE — POWER LEVEL 4 / MINION RANK 4

Str 15	Dex 14	Con 18	Int 6	Wis 11	Cha 7

Skills: Notice 4 (+4), Stealth 4 (+6)

Powers: Flight 1, **Immunity 9** (life support), **Protection 2** (*Extras:* Impervious)

Combat: Attack +4, Damage +4 (claws), Defense +2, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +6, Fortitude +5, Reflex +6, Will +4

Drawbacks: Power Loss (Flight, if wings are immobilized, –1 point)

Abilities 11 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 14 + Combat 12 + Saves 9 – Drawbacks –1 = 47

Gargoyles are demonic-looking creatures of stone. Gargoyles may be animated from pre-existing statues on the spur of the moment, or stone-like creatures that simply look like medieval gargoyles (and may even be the inspiration for them).

GIANT OOZE — POWER LEVEL 10 / MINION RANK 3

Str 34	Dex 1	Con 22	Int –	Wis 1	Cha 1

Feats: Improved Grab, Improved Pin

Powers: Strike 5 (acid; *Extras:* Aura), **Growth 12** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Insubstantial 5** (liquid; *Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 4**

Combat: Attack +4 (includes –4 due to size), Damage +12, Defense –4 (includes –4 due to size), Initiative –5

Saving Throws: Toughness +10, Fortitude +6, Reflex –4, Will –4

Abilities –37 + Skills 0 + Feats 2 + Powers 57 + Combat 16 + Saves 2 = 40

Whether it is a giant mutated amoeba, a slime creature from another dimension, or an alien monster, giant oozes are common foes for heroes and make good rampaging monsters.

GOLEM, CLAY — POWER LEVEL 8 / MINION RANK 5

Str 25	Dex 9	Con –	Int –	Wis 11	Cha –

Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Immunity 40** (Fortitude effects, magic), **Incurable** (unarmed damage), **Protection 10** (*Extras:* Impervious 5)

Combat: Attack +7 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +8 (unarmed), Defense +3 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative –1

Saving Throws: Toughness +12 (+2 from size included), Fortitude —, Reflex +2, Will —

Abilities –23 + Skills 0 + Feats 0 + Powers 69 + Combat 24 + Saves 3 = 73

A clay golem is a large humanoid construct shaped from clay and given life by magic.

GOLEM, FLESH — POWER LEVEL 6 / MINION RANK 4

Str 21	Dex 9	Con —	Int —	Wis 11	Cha —

Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Immunity 40** (Fortitude effects, magic), **Protection 6**

Combat: Attack +5 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +6 (unarmed), Defense +3 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative –1

Saving Throws: Toughness +8 (+2 from size included), Fortitude —, Reflex +2, Will —

Abilities –27 + Skills 0 + Feats 0 + Powers 59 + Combat 20 + Saves 3 = 55

A flesh golem is made from different body parts, stitched together and animated by magic or a work of mad science. Flesh golems are little more than powerful zombies (see page 235).

MONSTROUS FLYTRAP — POWER LEVEL 8 / MINION RANK 4

Str 26	Dex 13	Con 18	Int —	Wis 11	Cha —

Skills: Stealth 4 (+5)

Feats: Improved Grab

Powers: Growth 8 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), Immunity 2 (suffocation), **Protection 6**

Combat: Attack +6 (includes –2 due to size), Damage (bite) +8, Defense +4 (includes –2 due to size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +10, Fortitude +6, Reflex –1, Will —

Drawbacks: Disability (immobile, –5 points)

Abilities –17 + Skills 1 (4 ranks) + Feats 1+ Powers 33 + Combat 28 + Saves 0 – Drawbacks 5 = 41

A favorite minion of plant-villains as well as a hazard for lost world settings and alien planets, the monstrous flytrap is a giant version of the more mundane carnivorous plant that catches insects in its "jaws" to devour them.

MONSTROUS INSECT — POWER LEVEL 4 / MINION RANK 3

Str 18	Dex 12	Con 14	Int —	Wis 13	Cha 11

Skills: Notice 8 (+9)

Powers: Growth 4 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), Protection 2, **Super-Senses 4** (darkvision, scent, track)

Combat: Attack +2 (includes –1 due to size), Damage +4 (unarmed), Defense +3 (includes –1 due to size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +5, Reflex +1, Will +1

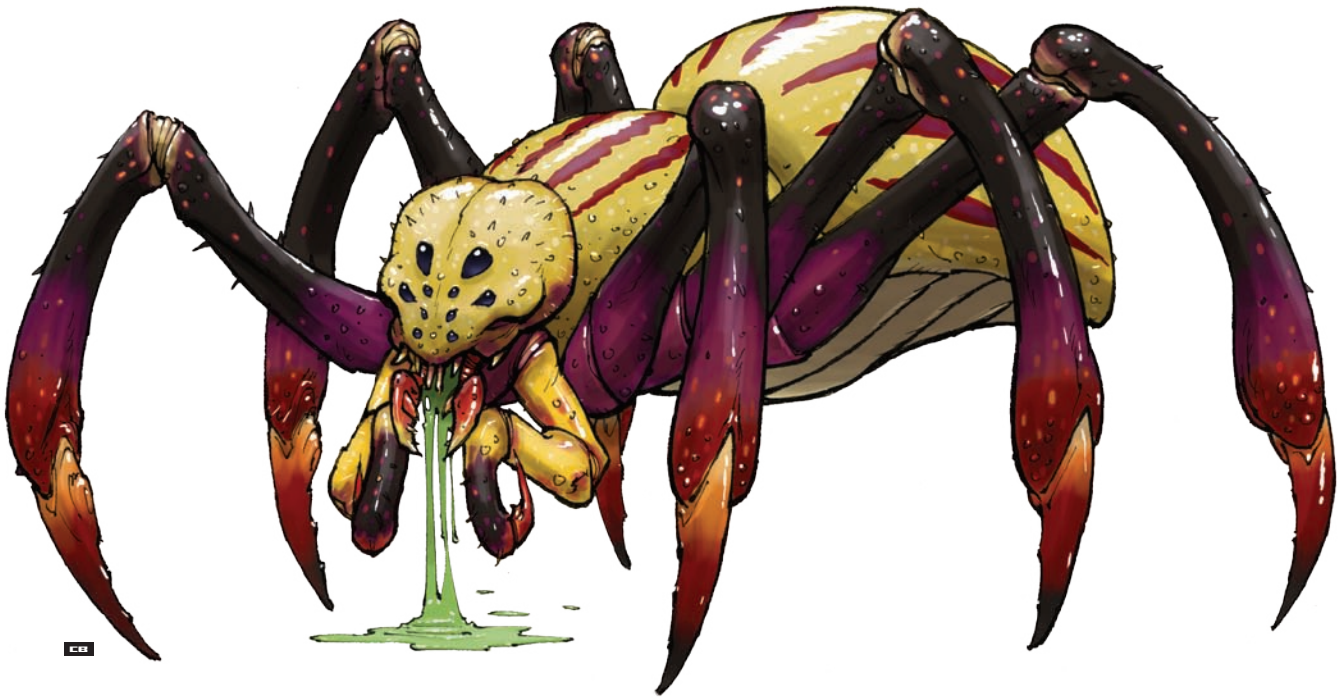
Abilities –4 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 19 + Combat 14 + Saves 3 = 34

Various sorts of monstrous giant insects appear as a result of scientific experiments gone awry, mutagens (radiations or biochemicals), or as visitors from alien worlds. The archetype here is a standard sort of giant insect. Add appropriate powers—including Flight for wings and Poison Drains for toxins—to create specific types of giant insects. For even bigger insects, add ranks of Growth.

MONSTROUS SPIDER — POWER LEVEL 7 / MINION RANK 6

Str 19	Dex 17	Con 14	Int —	Wis 10	Cha 2

Skills: Notice 4 (+4)



Powers: Drain Strength 8 (*Extras:* Poison), **Growth 8** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Snare 8**, **Super-Movement 1** (wall-crawling), **Super-Senses 5** (darkvision, tremorsense)

Combat: Attack +6 (includes –2 due to size), Damage +4 (bite, plus poison), Defense +6 (includes –2 due to size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +6, Fortitude +8, Reflex +5, Will +2

Abilities –22 + Skills 1 (4 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 64 + Combat 32 + Saves 14 = 89

Like the monstrous insect (see previous entry), monstrous spiders are commonly alien creatures or the results of scientific accidents, although they may also be created or summoned by magic.

ROBOT, MEDIUM — POWER LEVEL 5 / MINION RANK 3

Str 20	Dex 9	Con —	Int —	Wis 11	Cha —

Powers: Immunity 30 (Fortitude effects), **Protection 10**

Combat: Attack +5, Damage +5 (unarmed), Defense +0, Initiative –1

Saving Throws: Toughness +10, Fortitude —, Reflex +2, Will —

Abilities –20 + Skills 0 + Feats 0 + Powers 40 + Combat 10 + Saves 3 = 33

This is a fairly simple human-sized and -shaped robot operating on programmed instructions. Such robots make great minions for super-science villains.

ROBOT, COLOSSAL — POWER LEVEL 12 / MINION RANK 7

Str 42	Dex 10	Con —	Int —	Wis 11	Cha —

Powers: Growth 16 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Immunity 30** (Fortitude effects), **Protection 12** (*Extras:* Impervious)

Combat: Attack +0 (includes –8 due to size), Damage +16 (unarmed), Defense –6 (includes –8 due to size), Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +20, Fortitude —, Reflex +2, Will —

Abilities –29 + Skills 0 + Feats 0 + Powers 103 + Combat 20 + Saves 2 = 96

This massive (64-foot tall) robot is a good threat or powerful minion for a supervillain.

SEA MONSTER — POWER LEVEL 15 / MINION RANK 11

Str 42	Dex 10	Con 30	Int 2	Wis 15	Cha 10

Skills: Notice 12 (+14), Survival 4 (+6)

Feats: Defensive Attack, Endurance, Improved Grab, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip

Powers: Additional Limbs 4 (10 tentacles), **Growth 16** (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Obscure 3** (visual, 15 ft. radius; *Flaws:* Limited to underwater), **Protection 6**, **Swimming 5**

Combat: Attack +6 (includes –8 due to size), Damage +16, Defense +6 (includes –8 due to size), Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +16, Fortitude +20, Reflex +12, Will +13

Abilities 1 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) + Feats 5+ Powers 67 + Combat 56 + Saves 23 = 156

This archetype is a gargantuan squid, sometimes known as a kraken, suitable as a mythic monster, prehistoric survival, or Atlantean creature for invading the surface world.

SKELETON — POWER LEVEL 1 / MINION RANK 2

Str 10	Dex 12	Con —	Int —	Wis 10	Cha —

Feats: Improved Initiative

Powers: Immunity 40 (Fortitude effects, cold damage, half damage from slashing and piercing weapons), **Protection 1**, **Strike 1** (*Power Feats:* Mighty)

Combat: Attack +1, Damage +1, Defense +1, Initiative +5

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude —, Reflex +1, Will —

Abilities –28 + Skills 0 + Feats 1+ Powers 43 + Combat 4 + Saves 0 = 20

Animated skeletons are common minions for necromantic and death-themed villains.

TYRANNOSAURUS REX — POWER LEVEL 12 / MINION RANK 8

Str 28	Dex 12	Con 21	Int 2	Wis 15	Cha 10

Skills: Notice 12 (+14)

Feats: Improved Grab

Powers: Growth 8 (*Power Feats:* Innate; *Flaws:* Permanent), **Protection 9**, **Strike 1** (*Power Feats:* Mighty), **Super-Senses 3** (low-light vision, scent, track)

Combat: Attack +12 (includes –2 due to size), Damage +10 (bite), Defense +6 (includes –2 due to size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +14, Fortitude +16, Reflex +12, Will +8

Abilities 4 + Skills 3 (12 ranks) + Feats 1+ Powers 39 + Combat 42 + Saves 28 = 117

A huge, predatory dinosaur, commonly encountered in lost world settings (see page 190) or as a result of time travel.

WEREWOLF — POWER LEVEL 3 / MINION RANK 3

Str 15	Dex 15	Con 26	Int 10	Wis 11	Cha 8

Feats: Animal Empathy, Attack Focus (bite), Improved Initiative

Powers: Strike 1 (*Power Feats:* Mighty), **Protection 1**, **Super-Senses 3** (low-light vision, scent, track)

Combat: Attack +2 (+3 bite), Damage +3 (bite), Defense +2, Initiative +6

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +8, Reflex +5, Will +2

Drawbacks: Involuntary Transformation (full moon, automatic, –4 points)

Abilities 15 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 6 + Combat 8 + Saves 10 – Drawbacks –4 = 40

This archetype is the classic Hollywood lycanthrope, transforming from a normal human into a ravening man-beast by the light of the full moon.

ZOMBIE — POWER LEVEL 1 / MINION RANK 1

Str 13	Dex 8	Con —	Int —	Wis 10	Cha —

Powers: Immunity 30 (Fortitude effects), **Protection 2**

Combat: Attack +1, Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +0, Initiative –1

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude —, Reflex –1, Will —

Abilities –29 + Skills 0 + Feats 0+ Powers 32 + Combat 2 + Saves 0 = 5

Zombies are animated human corpses given "life" through magic or by scientific accident (exposure to a disease or toxic waste). They're a common threat on their own, as well as serving as minions of necromantic villains.

INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURES

So, you're ready to play *Mutants & Masterminds*. Now for your first adventures in the wonderful world of superheroics! Here are two introductory adventures to get a feel for the game and how it plays, while also providing some villains and supporting characters you can use in creating your own adventures.

ADVENTURE ONE: THE HEIST

The Heist is an introductory adventure designed for four power level 10 heroes, although it can be modified for a larger group or lower PL heroes. The heroes have to thwart Rant and Rave, a brother/sister villain duo attempting to rob a bank in Freedom City with the aid of some hired muscle.

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

There are two simple ways of getting the heroes involved in the adventure. First, some or all of the heroes might be visiting the bank in their secret identities to conduct some routine business. They are there when the villains show up and have to figure some way to slip away from the action long enough to change into their superhero identities (assuming they maintain secret identities). Having two or more of the heroes duck into the same storage closet to change into their costumes can make for an amusing scene and a fun introduction for heroes who haven't met before.

Alternately, heroes may be patrolling the city, on the lookout for trouble, or just going about their business in their heroic or secret identities. They hear the bank alarm, pick up word of the robbery on the police band, or are alerted by the authorities and asked to help out, depending on the heroes' reputations and relationships with the law. They can show up at the bank just as things are starting to happen. You can even use both approaches to get a group of disparate heroes together, with some of them already in the bank, and others arriving on the scene.

THE ACTION

Read the following aloud to the players:

> *It's a fairly ordinary afternoon at the central branch of the Eastern Seaboard Bank in downtown Freedom City. You've stopped by to handle some routine banking, but it turns out today is anything but routine.*
>
> *A group of armed men suddenly burst through the front doors of the building and into the lobby. They order the bank patrons to lie on the floor and clear the way for a man and woman to enter behind them. The pair is in their early 20s, both are dressed in raver-style clothes. The woman's hair is long and flowing and the man's short and spiky. There's a definite family resemblance.*
>
> *"Rant and Rave are in da house!" the man says with a smirk. "Nobody messes with us, nobody gets hurt. Got it?" For emphasis he turns toward the bank guard edging toward the alarm and gives a loud shout. The man goes flying up against the wall and slumps to the floor, unconscious.*

The Eastern Seaboard Bank is the largest in Freedom City. Rant and Rave have eight armed thugs with them, mainly to keep an eye on the bank patrons and to help carry the loot. Rant tries to make an example of anyone defying him or trying to make a break for it, using his sonic shout to stun or knock that person unconscious.

Heroes who act quickly when the thugs first enter the bank may be able to slip out of sight before Rant and Rave enter, otherwise they'll have to come up with some sort of distraction to get away unnoticed. Clever uses of powers and the Bluff skill are encouraged here.

If unopposed, the thugs begin forcing the bank tellers to put money into bags while Rant and Rave use their combined powers to dissolve the bank vault door, literally melting it into a puddle of liquid metal. Then the thugs begin to loot the vault. A couple minutes later, the villains flee the bank with their ill-gotten gains, getting into two vans waiting outside and driving off.

HERO POINTS

Heroes caught in the bank in their secret identities have to deal with the complication of slipping away to change into their costumes without being noticed. Award them a hero point for successfully roleplaying this. Heroes who arrive from outside the bank and show proper caution in dealing with a potential hostage situation should also get a hero point for good roleplaying.

THE FIGHT

When a hero takes action, roll initiative. A hero or heroes who manage to sneak up on the villains (successful Stealth check vs. their Notice checks) may get the drop on them. Otherwise, everyone acts in order of initiative, with no surprise round.

Rave's first action is to activate her Obscure power. Rather than blacking out the heroes' visual senses, Rave's Obscure wildly distorts things. The effect is the same: the villains and their thugs gain total visual concealment from the heroes, meaning the heroes' attacks have a 50% miss chance and the villains can surprise attack them (see **Surprise Attacks**, page 163). Heroes with accurate Super-Senses may be able to overcome the effect to a degree. Since Rave's power is Selective, it doesn't hinder her, Rant, or their thugs.

Once her Obscure is in place, Rave generally sows confusion, both literally and figuratively. She'll use her Confusion power as well as her Illusion power. A favorite trick is to use Illusion to make two of the heroes look like her and Rant so their teammates will attack them instead (an easy mistake to make amidst Rave's distortion effect).

Rant attacks the first hero on the scene with a sonic blast. Rant's tactics tend to be pretty straightforward, although he's clever enough to try a power stunt if just blasting away at a hero doesn't seem to be working. Possible stunts include Alternate Powers like an Area Blast or a Stun attack for fast or tough heroes, or Affects Incorporeal for an incorporeal target (modulating his sonic waves to affect them). If Rant pulls off a power stunt, the affected hero or heroes get a hero point for the complication.

The thugs open fire on the heroes on their actions. They basically do as Rant and Rave tell them, although you can have a thug take a bank patron or employee hostage for a potential complication (giving the heroes a hero point if they roleplay the situation well).

Stevens '05

HERO POINTS

In addition to the complications mentioned previously, award a hero point to any player whose hero gets knocked out in the fight. If any other complications come into play—such as a hero's loved-one being at the bank and in harm's way, or Rave playing on a hero's phobias with her Illusion power—award hero points for them as well.

THE ESCAPE

If things start to go badly for the villains, they're likely to either try taking the bank patrons and employees hostage or creating a distraction for the heroes so they can escape. If Rant or Rave (or both) are knocked out or disabled, the thugs may try taking hostages or they may simply flee, splitting up in hopes of some of them getting away.

If Rant and Rave are still conscious, they combine their powers and damage the structural supports of the building, making it start to collapse. Then they make a run for it. Heroes who do the right thing and let the villains go so they can try and save the building and the innocent people inside get a hero point.

It requires a total carrying capacity of at least 300 tons to hold up the damaged building, and a total of 10 rounds to evacuate all the people. Heroes can use Super-Strength, Telekinesis, and similar powers to hold off the building's collapse while the civilians escape (possibly with the aid of the other heroes). Heroes working together combine their carrying capacities. Keep in mind that a player can use extra effort to double a hero's carrying capacity for one round, and can spend a hero point to overcome the fatigue of using extra effort, possibly allowing a single weaker hero to hold up the building long enough.

Heroes with Quickness can clear the building faster than usual. Other powers—like Telekinesis or Teleport—can also speed things up. Let the players come up with their own plans for holding off the collapse of the building and getting everyone to safety.

PURSUIT

If some or all of the robbers escape, the heroes can give chase. Heroes may also choose not to confront the villains inside the bank, waiting instead until they leave, then pursuing them.

The criminals have two vans as getaway vehicles (see page 143 for game stats). Overtaking them isn't difficult for a hero with the right movement powers, while other heroes may attempt to stop or disable the vehicles before they get out of range.

The vans are Toughness 9, but their tires are only Toughness 3 and taking one or more of them out stops a van. The thugs shoot at any pursuing heroes and Rave may use her powers to cause heroes to careen off into buildings or crash into the street. She can also cause traffic accidents to provide additional complications (as the heroes stop to save innocent commuters). If a van is stopped, the criminals try to flee on foot, although Rant and Rave stand and fight if the heroes confront them.

Finally, the heroes may try to follow the villains to their lair, an old warehouse building in the Greenbank neighborhood of the city. Use the guidelines for tailing (see **Stealth**, page 55) if they try to follow the criminals unseen, and for finding people and extended searches (see pages 48 and 53) if they have to try tracking down Rant and Rave after they have gotten away.

If the heroes confront the villains at their lair, run another fight there, using the guidelines and tactics for the fight at the bank. This time, the

heroes should be better prepared for their opponents' tricks and have more hero points to help them out.

HERO POINTS

If the heroes let the bank robbers get away in order to help save people endangered by the chase, award them a hero point. You can grant additional hero point awards if Rant & Rave place significant complications in the heroes' path.

MODIFYING THE ADVENTURE

The Heist is designed as a simple adventure for a group of four 10th-level heroes. You can modify the adventure to suit a larger group of heroes or a different style of play, if desired.

For larger groups, add another super-villain for each hero above four. You can simply take one of the heroic archetypes (see pages 17–23) or one of the villain archetypes (see pages 212–225), give the new villain a name and description, and assume Rant and Rave have formed their own gang of super-criminals. The Battlesuit, Martial Artist, and Powerhouse archetypes are particularly appropriate, but any of the archetypes are suitable.

Rather than adding more villains, you can make Rant and Rave's thugs more effective. Supply them with high-tech blaster rifles (+8 damage) and body armor (+4 Protection) and use the Combined Attack rules from **Chapter 8** to their advantage.

For a group of low-powered heroes (power level 8 or lower) either reduce Rant and Rave's power levels accordingly or eliminate one or both of them, leaving just the thugs for the heroes to deal with.

EPILOGUE

Once the heroes have captured Rant and Rave and their henchmen (or the villains have gotten away), they can turn the defeated villains over to police custody. Both the police and people at the bank thank the heroes for their help, while Rant and Rave (if either is conscious) swears vengeance on the heroes when they get out of prison.

If this is the heroes' first outing, either individually or as a team, this is a good time for reporters to ask them who they are, where they came from, and what they can do. If the heroes are inclined to form a team, someone might ask them what they call themselves. If you think the players need a little push toward team building, perhaps the grateful owner of the Eastern Seaboard Bank or a bank-patron takes interest in funding a new super-team. A team patron could also approach the heroes in the aftermath of the bank incident, having seen them in action, with an offer to help set up a new team of heroes in town.

AWARDS

If the players did well in the adventure, thwarted the robbery, and captured at least one of the villains, award each of them a power point. If things went poorly, you may wish to withhold any power point award until the heroes have had the opportunity to make amends and capture the villains.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

While *The Heist* is a simple case of a super-criminal bank robbery, you can also make it into the introduction of a longer and more involved adventure, if desired.

Rant and Rave may be robbing banks to collect money for some other scheme, either on their own or working for a master criminal behind the scenes. Other heists may take place in different parts of the city, maybe even at the same time so the heroes and the authorities cannot respond to all of them at once. Rant and Rave's heist could just be a distraction for a larger scheme.

The money from the robberies might be going into the coffers of a criminal organization or a master villain. It might be used to buy weapons or technology on the black market or further research into creating superhumans.

Rant and Rave are likely to hold a grudge against the heroes responsible for busting up their plan and putting them away. They might come looking for payback at some point in the future. If they are working for a patron, he may break them out of prison to use them against the heroes again.

FREEDOM CITY

The introductory adventures are set in "Freedom City," the default setting for *Mutants & Masterminds,* as described in the *Freedom City* campaign setting sourcebook. You don't need to have the sourcebook to use these adventures, and you don't even have to set them in Freedom City, if you don't want to. If you have a different setting in mind for your *Mutants & Masterminds* series, feel free to modify the descriptions of the adventures as needed, the Freedom City setting just provides a convenient common frame of reference.

RANT & RAVE

Rant and Rave are a brother and sister duo of super-criminals. They were exposed to an experimental designer drug that triggered latent genetic mutations in each of them. The drug may have also made them mentally unstable, or they may have always been a little crazy. Now the pair wants nothing more than to enjoy the high lifestyle they've become accustomed to through theft, hiring out their services to anyone willing to meet their price.

Rant is 22 years old and his sister is 20. They're both tall and thin and always dressed in rave-scene clothes, including baggy pants and large amounts of multicolored beaded jewelry. Rave's hair is straight, worn past her shoulders, dyed red. Her brother's is short and spiky, dyed bright blue. Neither of them wears a mask.

RANT — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+3	+1	+0	+1	+2
10	16	12	10	13	15

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+8/+1*	+7	+10	+6

*faltfooted

Skills: Bluff 6 (+8), Concentration 4 (+5), Drive 4 (+7), Intimidate 6 (+7), Notice 4 (+5), Sense Motive 4 (+5)

Feats: Attack Focus 2 (ranged), Defensive Roll 7, Dodge Focus 2

Powers: Disintegrate 12 (*Flaws:* Limited to while in contact with Rave), **Sonic Control 12** (*Power Feats:* Alternate Powers — **Blast 12**), **Super-Senses 5** (auditory blindsight, ultra-hearing)

Combat: Attack +6 (+8 ranged), Damage +0 (unarmed), +12 (blast), Defense +12 (+5 flat-footed), Initiative +3

Abilities 16 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 11 + Powers 66 + Combat 32 + Saves 18 = 150

RAVE — POWER LEVEL 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+3	+1	+0	+1	+2
10	16	12	10	13	15

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+8/+1*	+6	+10	+8

*flat-footed

Skills: Bluff 8 (+10), Concentration 8 (+9), Drive 4 (+6), Notice 4 (+5), Sense Motive 4 (+5)

Feats: Attack Focus (ranged) 2, Defensive Roll 5, Dodge Focus 2,

Powers: Disintegrate 12 (*Flaws:* Limited to while in contact with Rant), **Illusion 10** (visual and auditory; *Flaws:* Limited to confusing sensory perception; *Power Feats:* Alternate Powers — **Confuse 10**, **Nauseate 8** [Perception, Will save], Progression 4 [100-ft. radius]), **Obscure 5** (visual and auditory; *Power Feats:* Selective), **Super-Senses 1** (ultra-hearing)

Combat: Attack +6 (+8 ranged), Damage +0 (unarmed), Defense +14 (+6 flat-footed), Initiative +3

Abilities 16 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 9 + Powers 79 + Combat 36 + Saves 19 = 166

THUGS

Rant and Rave's hired muscle is modestly capable, but no real match for a group of superheroes. There are eight of them, however, and they try to use their superior numbers to their advantage (using combined attacks). Use the **Thug** stats (see page 229) for Rant and Rave's henchmen.

IF YOU HAVE PLAYED MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS BEFORE

If you have played *Mutants & Masterminds* before and already have your own series set in the *Freedom City* world, you can use this adventure, but you may need to make a few adjustments.

The expansion of the Freedom League (detailed in the second edition of the *Freedom City* sourcebook) may lead to established heroes or teams signing on as "franchise" operatives. Even if the heroes are already members of the League, there may be a need for reevaluations, in the light of recent crises, and the League may encourage members to go through the testing process to provide a good example.

If your campaign isn't set in Freedom City, you can adapt the adventure by replacing the Freedom League (or the Claremont Academy) with a similar suitable organization the heroes wish to join. Alternately, an established group of heroes might need to undergo testing by a government agency or other oversight group to renew their security clearance or something similar.

If the player character heroes are a well-established team then *they* may be the ones looking to expand with "farm teams" of new heroes. This allows the players the opportunity to create new heroes, with their old heroes as the ones administering the tests!

If none of those options work, you can use the adventure as a change of pace, featuring entirely different characters, and "test drive" of the Second Edition *Mutants & Masterminds* rules for your players before implementing them in your regular campaign.

ADVENTURE TWO: A LEAGUE OF YOUR OWN

This adventure is intended to kick off your own *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign. *The Heist* provides a quick glimpse of how to play the game; *A League of Your Own* is a full-length adventure to establish your player characters as the newest heroes of Freedom City. Although it uses the *Freedom City* campaign setting, that book is not required to run this adventure.

The adventure is suitable for a group of 4 to 6 heroes and a power level 10 campaign (the recommended starting power level). To use it with more or fewer characters, or a different power level, adjust the challenges in the adventure to suit.

GETTING STARTED

If you plan to play in this adventure, read no further! It may spoil your enjoyment of the story.

If you plan to run this adventure as the Gamemaster, continue reading. This section offers some suggestions on getting started and setting up the adventure before you begin to play.

First, read over this adventure and the rest of this book carefully. You'll want to familiarize yourself with the plot of the adventure and at least the basic rules of *Mutants & Masterminds* before you play. If you haven't run *The Heist* yet, you may want to do so, just to get a feel for how to run the game, before running this adventure.

Have your players create the heroes they intend to play, or choose the archetypes (see pages 17–23) they want to use as their heroes. Ideally, the new heroes should be team-oriented, or at least inclined to join a team of other heroes. Inform the players of this in advance and help them to create suitable heroes.

When running the adventure, read the sections in *italics* out loud to the players.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The newly expanded Freedom League, the world's premier superhero team, is looking for new members and invites some new heroes (the players' characters) to try out for the team. The League puts the heroes through a series of tests to determine their capabilities before an emergency calls the League away for a short while.

During that time, Freedom City is surrounded by a mysterious force field and struck by a minor earthquake. The interstellar pirate Captain Kraken informs an awe-struck populace that he has taken Freedom City as his rightful spoils.

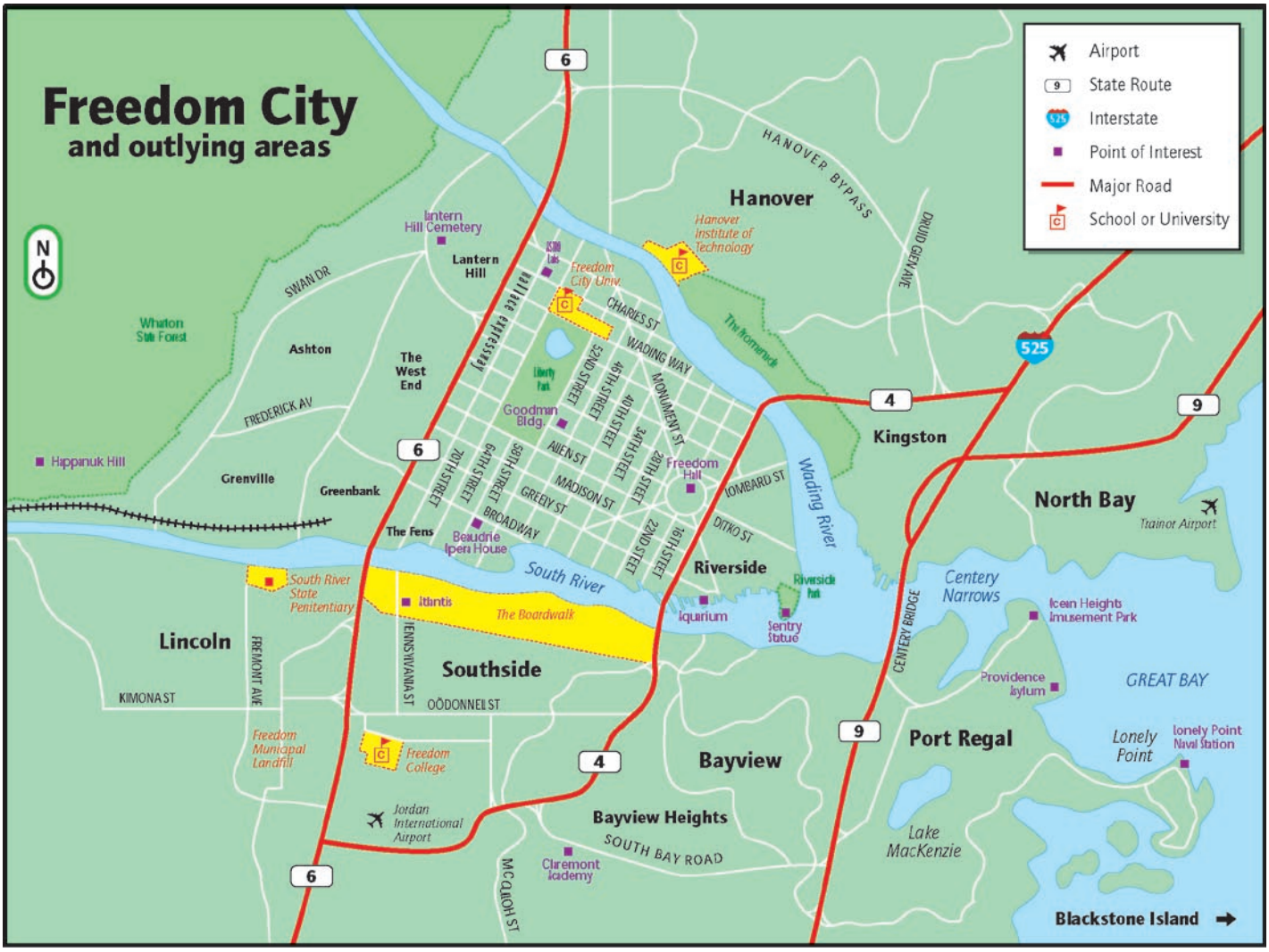
When the heroes go to put a stop to the space-pirate's shenanigans, they discover Captain Kraken and his Stellar Buccaneers have literally *taken* Freedom City... into space! The alien pirate threatens to expose the whole city to hard vacuum unless his demands are met. The heroes must make a fateful decision and, whatever the outcome, deal with one final test....

ROLL CALL

In addition to the heroes, the following characters are involved in this adventure.

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE

The Freedom League is the world's oldest and most famous superhero team. It has been active, in one form or another, since the 1960s, primarily in Freedom City. Recently, the League decided to greatly expand its



operations, in cooperation with the Star Knights, interstellar champions of justice. The team's main headquarters is the Citadel, high in orbit above the Earth, allowing the League to keep watch over the whole world.

For most of its history, the League has had between five and ten members at a time. Their recent plans have led to an expansion of the team. The player characters are part of that planned expansion. Here are brief descriptions of some of the League's prominent members. No game stats are provided, since the Leaguers aren't expected to get directly involved in the events of this adventure, except for interacting with the heroes. Make up any game stats required, or consult the *Freedom City* campaign setting sourcebook for much more information on the Freedom League, its members, and its history.

- **Bowman:** The current Bowman is only the latest to carry the name and a heroic legacy dating back to the Golden Age. He's the grandson of the original Bowman and a recent graduate of the Claremont Academy. Bowman has gone from senior leader of his fellow Academy students to junior member of the League, which has been a bit of a transition for him. He has no powers other than tremendous skill with a bow and a quiver of trick arrows.
- **Captain Thunder:** Chairman and leader of the Freedom League, Captain Thunder is a long-time hero. He has superhuman strength and toughness, flight, and electrical control powers. Married with a teenaged son, the Captain's true identity as test pilot Ray Gardener was revealed to the world several years ago by his archenemy Dr. Stratos.
- **Daedalus:** Daedalus is a world-renowned scientist and inventor. What few people know is he is the actual mytho-historical Daedalus, who created the labyrinth to contain the Minotaur. The Greek gods granted him immortality as the death of his son, Icarus. Daedalus wears a sophisticated battlesuit of his own design, giving him super-strength, protection, and gravitic force blasters.
- **Dr. Metropolis:** A "city spirit," Dr. Metropolis is a mysterious figure of concrete and steel, clad in a hooded green cloak. He can shape and control the structures of cities and communicate with them on an empathic level. He can pass through city-structures and move instantly from one city to another (or to different points within a city).
- **Johnny Rocket:** The grandson of the original Johnny Rocket from the 1940s, who inherited his grandfather's super-speed powers. Johnny is best known for his quick temper and for becoming Freedom City's first openly gay superhero a few years ago.
- **Lady Liberty:** The star-spangled champion of the Spirit of Liberty, Lady Liberty is super-strong, able to fly, and wields "the light of freedom" which she can use to protect and heal as well as banishing forces which restrain, trap, or imprison.

- **The Raven:** The dark-cloaked Raven follows in her father's footsteps as a master detective and tactician. She has also inherited the brilliance of her grandfather, the criminal mastermind Dr. Sin. Raven supplements her skill and training with an arsenal of crime-fighting devices.
- **Siren:** A Voodoo goddess come to Earth, Siren inhabits a human form and is the mistress of the oceans and a champion of humanity. She controls water and the weather, and wields a magical net as a weapon.

CAPTAIN KRAKEN — POWER LEVEL 11

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+4	+3	+1	+0	+2
14	18	16	13	11	15

TOUGHNESS	FORTITUDE	REFLEX	WILL
+9/+3*	+5	+9	+3

*without Space Suit

Skills: Bluff 6 (+8), Craft (mechanics) 5 (+6), Intimidate 4 (+6), Language (English), Notice 8 (+8), Pilot 8 (+12), Search 4 (+5), Sense Motive 8 (+8)

Feats: Defensive Attack, Defensive Roll 6, Dodge Focus 2, Environmental Adaptation (aquatic), Equipment (spaceship, see *The Stellar Buccaneer*) 23, Evasion, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Minions (50 30-pt. space pirates) 7

Powers: Additional Limbs 3 (5 prehensile facial tentacles), **Device 5** (easy to lose, see Blaster Pistol and Energy Cutlass), **Device 2** (hard to lose, see Spacesuit), **Immunity 1** (drowning), **Obscure 3** (visual, ink cloud; *Flaws:* Range [touch]), **Super-Senses 2** (darkvision), **Swimming 1**
Devices: Blaster Pistol (**Blast 8**, Homing), Energy Cutlass (**Strike 8**), Spacesuit (**Immunity 9**)

Equipment: The Stellar Buccaneer: Colossal Size, Strength 100, Toughness 15, Speed 12, Defense 5, Powers: Blast 12 (energy cannons), Blast 12 (energy torpedoes, Explosion, Homing; Alternate Power: tractor beam, Telekinesis 12, Perception range), Immunity 9 (life support), Space Travel 12 (Alternate Power of Flight Speed)

Combat: Attack +13, Damage +8 (cutlass or blaster), Defense +12 (+5 flat-footed), Initiative +8

Abilities 27 + Skills 11 (44 ranks) + Feats 43 + Powers 33 + Combat 46 + Saves 10 = 170

SPACE PIRATES — POWER LEVEL 3 / MINION RANK 2

Str 14	Dex 12	Con 15	Int 10	Wis 10	Cha 8

Skills: Craft (mechanical) 4 (+4), Intimidate 4 (+3), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+4), Pilot 4 (+5), Profession 4 (+4)

Feats: Equipment 4

Equipment: Armor (+1 Toughness; *Extras:* Impervious), blaster pistol (Blast +4), commlink, space-suit (life-support)

Combat: Attack +2, Damage +2 (punch), +4 (pistol), Defense +3, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +3 (+2 without armor), Fortitude +4, Reflex +1, Will +0

Abilities 9 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 4 + Powers 0 + Combat 10 + Saves 2 = 30

- **Star Knight:** Star Knight is an officer of an interstellar order of knights, devoted to peace and justice throughout the galaxy. She wears a suit of alien power-armor able to project force fields that form her "sword" and "shield" in combat.

CAPTAIN KRAKEN

Krak-En Vas was hatched on the distant planet Illthus, a dark and dreary water-world on the edge of the Grue Empire. After some training as a soldier working for the Empire, Krak-En deserted his unit, and began a career as a pirate and privateer. Raiding various small shipments, he parlayed his successes into a larger crew and a larger ship, becoming known as a scourge of the spaceways in the Grue Empire, the Lor Republic, and many other parts of known space.

After years on the most-wanted lists of authorities across the galaxy, Captain Krak-En's luck ran out when his ship was damaged in a space battle with a Lor cruiser near Earth. The space pirate managed a controlled entry of Earth's atmosphere, but his vessel's hyperdrive was badly damaged. To repair it, Krak-En needed parts, equipment, and supplies. As a pirate, he naturally set to stealing them.

Krak-En's translation matrix latched onto information about Earth pirates (kindred spirits), so Krak-En's English sounds like it came out of a Hollywood pirate movie (since, essentially, it did) and he has developed a fondness for dressing like a pirate from Earth's Age of Sail. The alien pirate and his crew fought the Earth heroine Siren on several occasions, and "Captain Kraken" (as he become known on Earth) has become known as a scourge of the stars on Earth.

SPACE PIRATE

Captain Kraken's scurvy crew of space pirates is made up of various humanoid aliens with similar game abilities. The space pirates are armed with blaster weapons and their fists and generally obedient to their captain's commands. Kraken's crew is subject to the minion rules (see page 163).

TEEN HEROES AND THE CLAREMONT ACADEMY

If the heroes in your game are teenagers under the age of 18, the Freedom League won't recruit them (since the League's charter prohibits minors from joining). That doesn't mean you can't run this adventure, however. The Freedom League works in cooperation with a private school in Freedom City called the Claremont Academy, which acts as a training ground for young superhumans. There they learn to control their powers as well as gaining a sense of responsibility. Some Claremont students go on to become superheroes in their own right, perhaps even members of the League.

If you're running a teen heroes campaign, this adventure consists of the students' invitation to initial testing at the Claremont Academy rather than an invitation to join the Freedom League. The Academy's headmaster, Duncan Summers, extends the invitation and administers the tests. Mr. Summers was a superhero himself once, under the dark cowl of the Raven. Now his daughter Callie is the Raven and a member of the League. Although a strict taskmaster and something of a curmudgeon, Summers cares a great deal about his students and his work.

If your use the Academy option for this adventure, adjust the descriptions of events accordingly. The Freedom League is still called away to deal with a crisis (and therefore isn't around when Captain Kraken shows up), leaving the young heroes the only ones able to deal with the situation.

INTRODUCTION

This section looks at getting the heroes involved with the events of this adventure and modifying the adventure to work for a group of younger (teenaged) superheroes.

THE INVITATION

The heroes each receive an invitation from the Freedom League to attend a recruitment drive for the team. The invitation arrives in whatever form is appropriate for each particular hero. For example, if a hero has a known contact or headquarters, the message is delivered there. A mysterious hero who operates through message-drops may receive the invitation through one of them, while a mystic hero may receive a magical sending or vision. Keep in mind the Freedom League has considerable resources and capabilities of its own when it comes to passing invitations on to the heroes.

If you have run *The Heist,* then the Freedom League likely became aware of the heroes due to their actions in that adventure. You can even have a member or representative of the League approach the heroes at the end of the adventure to extend the invitation to join.

However the heroes receive the message, read or paraphrase the following to them:

> *The League needs you!*
>
> *The Freedom League is in need of people willing to use their abilities to further the cause of peace, justice, and freedom in the world. We think you have the potential to work with us and would like to offer you the opportunity to join our ranks.*
>
> *There will be a series of tests to measure your ability and determine if you are Freedom League material. If you're interested, please report to Freedom Hall in downtown Freedom City at the appointed date and time. We hope you will answer our call and we look forward to meeting you.*
>
> *Sincerely,*
> *Captain Thunder, chairman*
> *Freedom League*

THERE SHALL COME... A TESTING!

When the heroes arrive at Freedom Hall for their appointment, Nancy Gardener, Captain Thunder's wife–who is also the League's administrator–greets them. She escorts them to an elevator and down to the sub-basement of the building to a largely featureless chamber, the "Wreck Room," where the tests will take place. Mrs. Gardener leaves the heroes alone in the room and the door closes behind her.

TEST 1: ROBOT RUMBLE

The first test is of the heroes' powers and combat abilities.

> *"All right, heroes," comes a voice over hidden speakers in the room. "Let's start by seeing how you handle yourselves in a combat situation, starting... now!"*

Robots, one for each hero, emerge from sliding panels in the room's walls and move to attack the heroes. Ask the players to make Notice checks (DC 15). Those who succeed can act during the surprise round (see **Surprise**, page 153, for details). Have everyone roll initiative; make one roll for the robots.

The combat robots have fairly simple tactics: they each attack one of the heroes and keep attacking until their opponent is unconscious. They're immune to interaction skills, mental effects, and anything requiring a Fortitude saving throw that doesn't specifically affect inanimate objects. The robots don't use teamwork, but smart heroes will do so to help each other defeat their opponents.

COMBAT ROBOTS					POWER LEVEL 8
Str 30	**Dex 9**	**Con –**	**Int –**	**Wis 11**	**Cha –**
Powers: Blast 10 (force), **Immunity 30** (Fortitude), **Protection 10**					
Combat: Attack +5, Damage +10 (unarmed), +10 (blast), Defense +5, Initiative –1					
Saving Throws: Toughness +10, Fortitude –, Reflexes +2, Will –					
Abilities –10 + Skills 0 + Feats 0 + Powers 60 + Combat 20 + Saves 3 = 73					

While the heroes should be able to deal with the robots without too much trouble, the testers will be evaluating things like their tactics and teamwork. Do they work together to deal with their opponents quickly or do they attack without regard for each other?

This fight is also an opportunity for the players to get a feel for the combat rules if they haven't played *Mutants & Masterminds* before.

HERO POINTS

If the heroes make a good fight of it, award them each a hero point. Any hero knocked out during the fight gets another hero point for the setback. Generally, encourage the players *not* to spend hero points in this scene, but to save them for later. They can still get some use out of extra effort (see page 120) and they're given time enough to rest up for the next test.

If you want to liven up the fight, you can throw other tricks from the Wreck Room at the heroes. They can include pop-up weapons (with powers like Blast, Dazzle, Nauseate, or Stun), more specialized robots, devices to create illusions, or blacking out the room (a visual Obscure effect).

TEST 2: KEEP AWAY

After the fight with the robots ends (win, lose, or draw), the Wreck Room's automated systems clear away any debris and the room re-sets. This time, an elaborate "jungle gym" of metal pipes, hoops, and frameworks fills the chamber, creating a kind of elaborate obstacle course with only a limited amount of open space.

> *"This test is a bit trickier," the unseen tester says. "This time you'll be divided up into two teams. The game is 'Keep Away' and the goal is to keep the ball out of the hands of the other team for a full 30 seconds. Anything goes, but the ball must stay in the room and in a team-member's hands. Go!"*

After reading aloud the paragraph above split the heroes up in to two even teams (as much as possible).

THE BALL

A red-rubber ball pops up out of the floor, then bounces off the ceiling and back down again. Have the players roll for initiative. Grabbing the bouncing ball requires a melee attack roll against Defense 14. Taking it away from someone else is handled like a disarm attempt (see page 156). The ball itself is Toughness 5, but destroying it forfeits the game. If it's dropped or knocked out someone's grasp, it bounces in a random direction (requiring another attack roll to grab it). A stunned character automatically drops the ball.

OTHER TESTS

Feel free to extend the battery of tests administered to the heroes if you wish. The Freedom League may require any number of other tests for membership. Some possibilities may include:

- Full medical exams to ensure the heroes are in good health, don't have any unusual or dangerous medical conditions, and aren't imposters attempting to infiltrate the team. (Not a lot of fun to play out, but a logical and sensible precaution.) If one of the heroes has an unknown medical problem, this offers a good opportunity to reveal or hint at it.
- Various psychological tests to supplement the questions given in Test #3. For example, the Wreck Room might be programmed to present each hero with a manifestation of his or her greatest fear, just to see how the hero deals with it.
- Tests of accuracy, such as target shooting on a firing range, or tests of hand-to-hand combat skill in sparring matches.
- Shooting at targets in a simulated combat situation, but with occasional non-hostile targets where the hero has to show restraint (making a Notice check to tell the difference before making an attack, for example).
- Heroes with various skills may be tested in them, such as having to repair a damaged device or disable a weapon (Craft and Disable Device checks, respectively). Tests of Acrobatics, Diplomacy, Notice, and Stealth are also good possibilities.
- If you have the *Freedom City* sourcebook, members of the Freedom League might personally test the applicants in sparring matches, or by re-staging the Keep-Away game (Test #2) with the heroes all on one team against a team of Freedom Leaguers.

If there are particular game system rules you want to try out, give some thought to making up a test involving them. This lets you and the players "test drive" things under controlled conditions during this adventure. Other tests, especially personality and psychological tests, also offer roleplaying opportunities and chances to introduce complications (and perhaps award additional hero points, if you want to give the players a bit more of an edge in the later parts of this adventure).

Heroes can pass the ball between them as a standard action. The thrower makes a ranged attack roll (DC 10). If successful the catcher gets a +2 bonus on the melee attack roll (Defense 14) to catch the ball. An opponent can attempt to intercept the ball in mid-flight with an attack roll (Defense 14).

THE OBSTACLES

The "jungle gym" in the Wreck Room limits movement to 30 feet per round. Characters trying to move faster need to make a Acrobatics check (DC 15). A failed check means the hero only moves 15 feet, while a failure by 5 or more means the hero falls or slams into an obstacle, suffering +6 damage. The obstacles provide cover for any character more than 30 feet or so away from another, limiting ranged attacks and Notice checks. The obstacles are Toughness 10; some heroes may just try to smash through them (there's no rule against it, although they may get a lecture on finesse and property damage later).

WINNING THE TEST

It's up to one of the heroes on a team to grab the ball and hold on to it for 30 seconds (five rounds). It has to be five *consecutive* rounds; if a team loses the ball, the "counter" resets and they have to start over again.

Heroes who don't have the ball can try and run interference for their teammate with the ball. Anything goes here, although obviously the heroes are expected to show some restraint and use only nonlethal attacks (it's just a game, after all!). The Freedom League is most interested in seeing the heroes' tactics, cleverness, and teamwork. Feel free to encourage the players to be creative and try new things. This is an excellent opportunity to try out different combat maneuvers and options, for example.

After one team has had the ball in its possession for five rounds, the test ends. There's a buzzer and the Wreck Room resets once again. There's a break to allow the heroes to recover from any damage or fatigue before the next test. If things went too quickly, you can have the League reset things and do the test again, this time requiring the winning team to hold on to the ball for a full minute (ten rounds).

HERO POINTS

During this test you may want to allow players to spend their hero points freely and then regain them at the end of the test (since they're only playing against each other) with an additional bonus hero point if the heroes did well (win or lose). This allows the players to get the feel of spending and using hero points without actually losing any of them. If you decide to do this, inform the players of it before the test begins, so they can spend their points accordingly.

TEST 3: WHAT DO YOU DO?

After the physical tests, the heroes also go through an interview process, where they are asked to answer a series of hypothetical questions. Give each player one of the following questions, and about a minute to answer (and elaborate on the answer, if desired). Feel free to change the questions or add new ones to suit the style of the campaign.

1. A supervillain has placed a device of tremendous power high atop a building in downtown Freedom City. During your struggle with the villain, a nearby building is badly damaged, and begins to topple, threatening the lives of hundreds of people. If you go to help them, you give the villain time to activate his device, which may potentially threaten the whole world. What do you do?
2. One of your teammates is acting strangely: distracted, irritable, and less on-the-ball than usual. You walk in on your teammate unexpectedly and get a strong impression of guilt and an attempt to cover something up. What do you do?
3. The authorities arrive at your headquarters with a warrant for your arrest and evidence of crimes you know you did not commit. You're ordered to surrender and come along peacefully to await arraignment and trail. What do you do?
4. After weeks of work, you have tracked down and defeated a psychotic responsible for the brutal murders of dozens of people. You know it is a virtual certainty the killer will be declared incompetent to stand trail and placed in Lovecraft Asylum for treatment. He says he will

escape and kill again. The killer is at your mercy and no one else is around. What do you do?

5. A loved one is dying of an untreatable illness. An infamous supervillain offers you a cure, in exchange for an undisclosed favor at some point in the future. What do you do?
6. After thwarting one of their schemes, you discover a major multinational corporation is actually a front for a powerful criminal organization. However, you have no real evidence, and the corporation's lawyers get the case thrown out of court, putting the criminals beyond the reach of the law. What do you do?

There are no clear "right" or "wrong" answers to the questions. What the interviewers are most interested in is how the heroes respond. Those who answer quickly and decisively show they can make tough decisions under pressure. Heroes who waffle or obviously try to offer the answers they think the interviewers want to hear are treated less favorably. Those who show a blatant disregard for the law and justice may also get a lecture on those matters at some point.

This test also allows you to tell the players what's expected of them, using the interviewers as a medium. How their answers are received helps tell the players how their heroes should act. If you expect to have problematic situations like the ones described in the questions crop up in your series, pose those situations to the players and find out in advance how they'd handle them. You can also give them a chance to think about those things before you introduce them in one of your adventures. This may be helpful for players who aren't as familiar with the style and attitude of comic book superheroes to get into character.

HERO POINTS

If the players handled the questions well, award them each a hero point.

FREEDOM CAGED

As the tests are wrapping up, the Freedom League receives an urgent alert and has to leave suddenly. Read the following to the players:

As you are regrouping from the testing, a powerful wind blows through the room as Freedom League speedster Johnny Rocket zips to a stop.

"We've got a situation," he says. "Near-space tracking up at the Lighthouse has picked up a small asteroid headed for South America!"

"All-right people, get to the Pegasus!" Captain Thunder barks. Turning to you he says, "sorry, but we're going to have to finish this later. You're welcome to wait here until we return. We shouldn't be long. Let's move, Freedom League!"

Any offers to go along or help the League are politely rebuffed. Captain Thunder tells the heroes they're not checked out on the League's equipment for near-space operations and there's no time to bring them up to speed. He also makes it clear he doesn't have time to debate the matter, and heroes who intend to be members of the League need to learn to follow orders, especially in a crisis where lives are at stake.

The League departs on-board their *Pegasus*-class spaceplane, rocketing off to deal with the crisis, and leaving the heroes at Freedom Hall.

Allow the players a bit of time to decide what they want their heroes to do. Will they try to follow the Freedom League, wait things out, spend time practicing in the Wreck Room, and so forth? Before they have time to act on their decision, however, something happens. How much the heroes notice depends on where they are at the time.

The sky above Freedom City turns a deep crimson. Any investigation reveals an impenetrable, opaque dome of red energy has covered the city; none of the heroes' powers can perceive past it or damage it. Moments later, a minor earthquake shakes the city. The damage is minimal, but you can still give the heroes opportunities to save people falling from high buildings, threatened by debris, and so forth.

As the tremors settle, the crimson dome shimmers at its highest point over the city and what looks like a flying pirate ship descends from it. The ship hovers near the top of Pyramid Plaza, the trio of tallest buildings in Freedom City, as if mooring at a dock. Then, almost echoing off the inside of the dome, a voice booms out.

"Avast, ye scurvy Terran dogs! Yer city is now the rightful spoils of the scourge of the spaceways, Cap'n Kraken! I'll venture it'll fetch a high price on the interstellar market, too. If ye value yer miserable lives, ye'll do as yer told, for if ye give me any grief, ye'll be walkin' the plank... inta hard vacuum!"

Despite the bad Hollywood pirate accent, it appears Captain Kraken's threat is quite serious. Heroes who tune in to any of the local television news stations hear reports that the Freedom City authorities are asking citizens to remain calm and to stay indoors, if at all possible. They also learn the city's other heroes were called away on various emergencies. They're presumably on their way back, but there's no communications outside the force-dome, and no apparent way through it. So far as they know, the heroes are on their own.

If the players want to examine the force dome more closely, allow them to do so. However, none of the heroes' powers can penetrate the dome in any way: they can't perceive beyond it, they can't damage it, and they can't move past it, including the use of abilities like Teleport or Dimensional Movement. For all intents and purposes, the force dome is impenetrable.

Heroes looking for more information on Captain Kraken can find it in the database at Freedom Hall (no check required); Nancy Gardener assists them in retrieving the information, if asked. You can read or paraphrase the villain's background (see page 242) for the players and tell them generally about his abilities.

HERO POINTS

The players don't necessarily earn any hero points for this scene, unless you feel they did an especially good job roleplaying or performed heroically during the earthquake. They should have earned a fair number of hero points from the testing encounters, helping prepare them for the final encounters of the adventure. If they're still short, give them an interim crisis or two to handle and boost up their total.

STORMING THE STELLAR BUCCANEER

Leave it up to the heroes how they want to deal with Captain Kraken and the *Stellar Buccaneer*. The space-pirate ship is "moored" with a tractor beam to the top of Pyramid Plaza, a trio of 90-story buildings in the city's downtown financial district. Ten of its pirate crew are stationed on the roof of the nearest tower to keep watch for intruders approaching from within the building.

If the heroes approach the *Buccaneer* under a flag of truce, or otherwise looking to peacefully parley, Captain Kraken will meet with them on the deck of the ship. Ultimately, he will play his ace card to try and force the heroes to surrender to him (see **Ace in the Hole**). The space-pirate holds all the cards, so he has little reason to give in to any demands the heroes might make of him.

If the heroes sneak aboard the *Buccaneer* to try and find out more or take the villains unaware, use Stealth checks (opposed by the pirates' Notice checks), to determine success. Some heroes may have powers to aid in sneaking aboard. If they are discovered, the crew attacks, until Captain Kraken appears to threaten the heroes with the city's destruction.

Lastly, if the heroes stage a frontal assault of the space-pirate ship, the crew of the *Stellar Buccaneer* fights back, using the ship's photon "cannons" (Attack +2, Blast 12) and then their own weapons if the heroes board the ship. If the heroes start winning or threaten him personally, Captain Kraken plays his ace card. Keep in mind while the heroes are attempting to storm the ship that photon cannon shots that miss are likely to hit parts of the downtown area, causing damage to buildings or streets, and giving heroes other things to worry about (and the pirates opportunities to make surprise attacks against distracted heroes).

HERO POINTS

Players earn a hero point if they're knocked out or disabled by the space pirates, waking up in chains (Toughness 10) as Captain Kraken's prisoners. They also earn hero points from any setbacks or uses of Gamemaster Fiat you choose to apply to this encounter (see page 124).

ACE IN THE HOLE

Whatever the heroes' approach in dealing with Captain Kraken, sooner or later the ruthless space-pirate plays his hidden ace.

*Captain Kraken reaches into the inside pocket of his coat and produces a small device. "Before ye decide to fight, mateys, ye first might want to have a look at **this**," he says, pressing a button on its side.*

Suddenly, the red skies over Freedom City darken, becoming as black as night, spangled with shimmering stars. That's strange, since it was broad daylight when the dome first appeared—but then you look and see the blue globe of the Earth looming on the horizon...

"That's right," Captain Kraken hisses, tentacles twitching, "Yer city be in space! Now, if ye don't surrender, I'll contract the force field and leave the outskirts breathin' vacuum. After all, what are a few thousand less Terran vermin?" The space pirate raises the control, one clawed finger resting on the button.

It's the moment of truth. Faced with the possible deaths of thousands of innocent people, what will the heroes do? There are a number of options:

SURRENDER

The heroes can surrender as Kraken demands, in which case he has them put in irons and thrown into the ship's brig, which nullifies their powers (Continuous Nullify 12), until he decides to have them "walk the plank" into the vacuum of space. If you want, you can allow the heroes to try to escape and come up with a plan to defeat the space-pirates and save the city. Otherwise, you can simply skip to the end of the adventure and the results of the test.

NEGOTIATE

The heroes can attempt to negotiate with Captain Kraken. Obviously, the space-pirate has little to gain, since he holds all the cards. Still, a negotiation might provide the heroes with a distraction, giving them time to put another plan into action. Selfless heroes may offer themselves in exchange for Kraken's prize, or ask that he let the innocent people of Freedom go and keep them as hostages. Kraken isn't inclined to bargain, but if the heroes propose something reasonable, give them a chance of success. They can use interaction skills in an attempt to persuade their foe. His initial attitude toward them is hostile, however, and he's not likely to accept anything other than their unconditional surrender.

ATTACK

The heroes can attack, in hopes of getting the remote-control device away from Kraken before he can carry out his threat. Keep in mind Captain Kraken has a decent initiative bonus, and feel free to tell the players that before they attempt to overpower him. Still, a hero (especially a fast one) may be able to get the drop on the space-pirate.

Shooting the device out of Kraken's hand requires an attack roll against Defense 35 (Cap'n Kraken's Defense + 5 + 8 for the control's tiny size). The Difficulty drops to 18 if the heroes somehow catch Kraken flat-footed. Taking the control away requires a disarm attempt.

If the heroes don't manage to take the device away from Kraken immediately, his first action is to press a button, causing the force field to slowly contract. Matter passes harmlessly through it, causing the atmosphere to begin venting into space. The heroes have five rounds to get the remote before the field reaches the *Stellar Buccaneer* and they're exposed to vacuum.

Anyone with the remote can stop the force field's contraction with a move action and a successful Knowledge (technology) check (DC 10) to press the right button. Naturally, the heroes can also flee the ship and the approaching force field, but then they expose the city to even greater risk. Captain Kraken and his crew have automatic space suits and are in no danger.

The retracting force field provides some tension for a final battle. When the heroes either win or get exposed to space, move on to **Making the Grade**.

TRICKERY

Lastly, the heroes might try to trick Captain Kraken in some way to get the control away from him to otherwise put him at a disadvantage. You can assess the chances of success based on interaction checks, such as Bluff against Capt. Kraken's Sense Motive check result. Otherwise, handle these on an individual basis, depending on the heroes' skills, powers, and plan.

HERO POINTS

The players each get a hero point for the setback when Captain Kraken reveals his master plan. Award other hero points as you see fit based on heroism, setbacks, uses of GM Fiat, and other events in this encounter. Also encourage players to spend their earned hero points during this scene, since it's the climax of the adventure.

MAKING THE GRADE

Once the heroes achieve a fairly decisive victory or defeat, they find out the real nature of the threat to Freedom City.

> *"Pause simulation," a voice says from out of nowhere. Suddenly, everything apart from you freezes, like time has stopped. From an invisible door in the air steps Captain Thunder, the leader of the Freedom League.*
>
> *"End simulation," he says, and the world around you fades away, revealing the featureless silver-gray walls of the "Wreck Room" in Freedom Hall once more. Captain Thunder nods to you.*
>
> *"Congratulations, the testing is complete."*
>
> *(Or, if the heroes did poorly, "Congratulations, you're dead.")*

The Freedom League explains to the heroes: the emergency call was faked, and everything the heroes *think* they experienced since the League "left" was actually a sophisticated simulation running in the Wreck Room, which is capable of creating realistic illusions for training purposes. The attack by the *Stellar Buccaneer* and the threat to Freedom City was the final test, to see how the heroes handled themselves under actual mission conditions and, more importantly, how they dealt with life-or-death situations.

You can follow the conclusion of the test with some feedback and analysis by the Freedom League. Such suggestions may help your players to better understand the style of your *Mutants & Masterminds* series and get into character even better the next time. The League also encourages the heroes to offer their own feedback on their performance. They offer praise where it's due, and try to keep the heroes from being too self-critical, particularly if they did well.

Assuming the heroes did well, they may be invited to join the Freedom League. It's up to the players whether or not to accept the offer. If the heroes did poorly on the tests, particularly the last one, or they react badly to the Freedom League's deception or feedback, then an offer of membership is less likely. Perhaps the heroes need additional training, allowing you to run a series where senior members of the Freedom League train the rookie heroes. On the other hand, perhaps the heroes (and their players) prefer to go it on their own. They may refuse membership in the League and go their own way, either on good terms or seen as potential loose cannons by more established superheroes. The final outcome of the adventure is up to you and your plans for your own *Mutants & Masterminds* series.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Gamemasters interested in further adventures in Freedom City should consult the *Freedom City* campaign setting sourcebook, available from Green Ronin Publishing. This adventure is intended to introduce the players' heroes to the world of Freedom City. Once you have done that, the possibilities are endless. Some possible spin-offs of *A League of Your Own* include:

- A villain has tapped into the Freedom League's computer system and has all the information from the heroes' tests. This could provide a foe with knowledge of the team's tactics, psychology, personal life, vulnerabilities, powers, and other details. The villain may sell the information on the black market or have plans to use it against the heroes in some way. Good *Freedom City* villains for this scheme include Conundrum, Dr. Simian, Freebooter, Mastermind, Talos, or Warden.
- The *real* Captain Kraken can always show up to cause trouble for the heroes and Freedom City. How will they handle the real thing, having faced-off against a simulation? What happens when it turns out the genuine article doesn't act quite the way the heroes expect?
- Not long after the heroes become members of the Freedom League, several (if not all) of the other members of the team vanish. What happened to them, and are the player characters ready to take over responsibility for the entire League?
- Another training exercise in the Wreck Room goes awry and the simulation won't shut down. Worse, the normal safety protocols don't function, meaning the Wreck Room's systems could potentially injure or kill one of the heroes!

AWARDS

If the heroes did well in this adventure, award each player 1 power point to save or spend on character advancement.

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AFTERWARD

How do you sum up the work of a lifetime in a few hundred words? I asked that question in the **Afterward** of the first edition of *Mutants & Masterminds,* and it's even more relevant here, because I think, in many ways, this book is the answer.

I've been playing roleplaying games for a *long* time now (never you mind how long). I've been reading superhero comic books even longer than that, making superhero RPGs my favorite kind to play or run. Being involved in creating, and now developing and refining, a superhero game has been a dream come true for me.

Dreams are a big part of roleplaying games: the opportunity to play a character that's larger than life, with powers and abilities far beyond those we mere mortals possess, the chance to create your own worlds of wonder and imagination. I know of no genre of roleplaying that exemplifies this better than superhero games like *Mutants & Masterminds*.

In a superhero game, your hero can have abilities truly beyond those of mere mortals: able to lift tanks, bounce bullets, and fly through the air. It can be a real rush, but more importantly, it offers you the opportunity to decide what to *do* with all that power. You might play a true hero who believes that "with great power comes great responsibility," dedicated to the ideals of truth and justice, but you can just as easily take a different approach. Maybe your hero is a vigilante; acting as both judge and jury to handle the crimes and the criminals the law cannot touch. Maybe your heroes have the power to truly change the world, making it a better place, at least as long as they're successful. The choice is up to you; the options are endless.

That's one of the other appeals of roleplaying games: the opportunity to create and tell your own stories. Millions of people have thrilled to the adventures of comic book superheroes over the years, across a multitude of genres and styles. How many of us have wondered what might have happened if our favorite stories had ended differently, or if some particular heroes or villains encountered each other? How many discussions have there been about how *we* would write our favorite comic books, given the opportunity, how many arguments about which character would win in a fight if they ever happened to meet up?

Mutants & Masterminds lets you create your own heroes and villains, your own fantastic places, and your own superhero adventures, which can be as thrilling to you and your friends as your favorite comic books. You have the chance to be the hero (or the villain!) and to decide how things are going to go. Best of all, *you* create the story with your friends, so nobody knows exactly how it's going to go until it's all done.

This book represents hundreds of hours of work by many people, along with the feedback, input, and interest of countless *M&M* players and fans. It's intended to provide you with a vehicle you can use to create stories where you are the hero of your imagination, and you have the power to defeat the villain, save the day, and protect the world. It gives you the power to create your own stories, your own worlds, and your own heroes.

I've always been a fan of comic book stories featuring "parallel Earths," the idea that there is a "multiverse" of infinite parallel worlds, each with its own history, heroes, and villains, each with its own stories to tell. I hope *Mutants & Masterminds* leads to the creation of an all new "multiverse" of superhero worlds: all the many worlds and stories that you, its players, create and enjoy.

Our work on this book is done. The power is in your hands now. Use it well, have fun, and remember to always use your power for good! Now get out there and save the day. The world is waiting for heroes.

— Steve Kenson

CONTRIBUTORS

Steve Kenson, Designer & Developer: Rocketed to Earth from a dying world orbiting a pink sun, Steve was adopted by kindly parents who raised him in places all over the United States, showing him the diverse nature of his new home. Under Earth's yellow sun, he developed amazing powers of comic book trivia and game design and worked on over eighty different roleplaying game products. In 2002, Steve designed the first edition of *Mutants & Masterminds,* followed by *Freedom City* and the design and development of *Blue Rose* and *True20 Adventure Roleplaying.* He became Green Ronin's *Mutants & Masterminds* Line Developer in 2004. Steve maintains a mild-mannered identity in New Hampshire with his partner, Christopher Penczak, and has a website at *www.stevekenson.com.*

Hal Mangold, Graphic Design & Art Direction: Hal has been involved with roleplaying games since he was 9 years old, and shows no sign of stopping now. His graphic design skills have been applied to over well over sixty gaming products, and he's written material for Pinnacle Entertainment Group, White Wolf Publishing, Atlas Games, Twilight Creations, and Green Ronin Publishing. Hal resides in Alexandria, VA.

Jon Leithauser, EdItor: Jon edited the book you're holding and he enjoyed every minute of it. He's worked in every tier of the gaming industry, plays a lot of games, and reads a lot of comics. He currently lives in Bellevue, Washington and works at WizKids as the Director of Game Design and the HeroClix Game Designer. He likes to keep busy.

ARTISTS

Attila Adórjány, Art: Comicbook creator and sci-fi/fantasy artist Attila Adórjány was born in Canada. He spent many years in Australia before returning to Canada to attend OCAD. Since 1995 He has worked as an illustrator, conceptual artist, graphic designer and sculptor. He has worked in all areas of the print and entertainment industries from magazines, gaming and comicbooks to film, TV and Video Games. His credits include work for *Dungeon* Magazine, Wizards of the Coast, Image Comics, Udon Entertainment, White Wolf, Warner Bros, Mirimax, Sony Entertainment, EA Games, and BBDO. His upcoming comic projects include Breathe, and the Night. Attila collaborates regularly with his friends Tom Fowler, Eric Kim and Ramon Perez in a group called the Hive. They can be reached at www.enterthehive.com. Attila's website can be found at www.600poundgorilla.com

Balaskas, Art: Balaskas is a freelance artist living in Brooklyn, NY. He lives on manga, coffee, four hours of sleep, and spends weekends in a coma. CB

Brett Barkley, Art: Brett Barkley has always been driven to create. As a boy, drawing and writing occupied the majority of his energies, as a long list of disappointed teachers will attest. As he grew, he explored building and working with his hands. Today, a professional comic artist, illustrator and writer, as well as having served in the television and print advertising industries, he pulls from a wide spectrum of life experience and interests.From working on the home he and his wife share, to restoring his '67 Camaro RS, to building computers, illustrating and coloring comics, and through his writing, Brett seeks to discover the inherent expression of the Lord's work. It is his sincere hope and ambition this search can be evidenced in all he does. BB

Greg Boychuk, Art: Born and raised in Toronto, Ontario, Greg Boychuk is a graduate of the Sheridan College Illustration programme. Having worked in various industries as an illustrator and designer he tuned his attention to what has always interested him the most; fantasy and sci-fi art. He currently works providing illustrations for a variety of role playing games and is an artist for an ongoing monthly comic. He is also a member of the artist collective Hive. GB

Eric Canete, Art: Eric Canete is an accomplished illustrator, designer, and storyboard artist. He began his career as designer and board artist on Peter Chung's highly-acclaimed MTV series *Aeon Flux*, currently in development as a live-action feature at Paramount with *Terminator* producer Gale Anne Hurd. He has since provided concept art, designs, and boards for projects including *Men In Black*, *Godzilla*, and *Starship Troopers* at Sony and the Cartoon Network's revival of *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe*. Select comics credits include *Mr. Majestic* and *Cybernary 2.0* at DC Comic's WildStorm imprint, *Superman* , and Marvel Comics' *Deathlok* (which is also in development as a feature at Paramount). He is once again working with director Peter Chung, this time on a brand new animated franchise at Universal Pictures. For more of Eric's talent and imagination, please visit his studio website at http://www.blackvelvetstudios.com. EC

Jeff Carlisle, Art: Jeff Carlisle has designed and illustrated for magazines, roleplaying games, collectable card games, video games, and entertainment environments for clients such as Alderac Entertainment Group, COSI Studios, Green Ronin Publishing, Lucasfilm, Ltd., Paizo Publishing, Presto Studios, The Scarefactory, Inc. and Wizards of the Coast. His work has appeared in *Dragon*, *Dungeon/Polyhedron*, and *Star Wars Gamer* magazines as well as the *Warlord* CCG, *Legend of the Five Rings* CCG and the *Star Wars: New Jedi Order*, *Star Wars: Power of the Jedi*, and *Mutants and Masterminds Annual* sourcebooks. He lives in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and cat. JC

Sean Chen, Art: Although he studied Industrial Design and most of his family works in the medical field, Sean opted instead for drawing pictures of everyone's favorite flying shell-head, Iron Man, and that short Canadian with the bad attitude, Wolverine. His recent work includes *X-Men: The End* for Marvel Comics. CHEN

Steve Cobb, Colors: Steve Cobb triple majored at the Art Institute of Phoenix in sleep, college girls and beer drinking. After sleeping in most of his classes, graduation time finally came and steve was not even sure what state he was in. I think he colors comic books now or is a test subject for the tobacco industry. COBB

Steve Conley, Art: Eisner nominated and Eagle Award winner Steve Conley is a cartoonist, self-publisher, and online pioneer. He has written and illustrated his online and printed comics series *Astounding Space Thrills* since 1998, and has run the award-winning design studio Conley Interactive since 1996. In addition to his co-creation COMICON.com, Conley owns and manages such comics-related web sites as iCOMICS, BLOOP.tv, and The Pulse, a popular daily comics news site found at www.comicon.com/pulse/. He currently serves as Executive Director of SPX, the Small Press Expo. His most recent mainstream comics work was penciling, inking, lettering and coloring the 38-page "Escapist 2966" story In Michael Chabon's *Amazing Adventures of the Escapist* #4 (Dark Horse Comics). SC

Storn A. Cook, Art: Freelanced through art school, Columbus College of Art and Design, due to an insane love of Role Playing Games. Which I've been involved in since 1978. I strive to be a little bit better every day. I continue to freelance, wishing to get my artwork in every superhero (or villain) RPG possible. SAC

Talon Dunning, Art: Talon Dunning is a fantasy illustrator in the great Southern metropolis of Atlanta, Georgia where he was born in 1972. A survivor of both Auburn University's Fine Art school and White Wolf's intern program, he is now known as an illustrator for the *Ravenloft 3rd Edition Roleplaying Game* as well as a regular in other RPG projects. He's also done work for West End Games (*D6*, *Star Wars*, *TORG Revised*), Wizards of the Coast (*Legend of the 5 Rings* CCG), Eden Studios (*All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, *Terra Primate*), Kenzer&Co. (Kingdoms of Kalamar) and, most recently, Green Ronin (*Thieves' World*, *Mutants & Masterminds*). Talon is also an avid roleplayer, comic book collector, movie-buff and all around nice-guy. Ask anyone. They'll tell you. (And yes, that IS his real name.) TD

Tom Fowler, Art: Tom Fowler is Canadian. Very Canadian. Tom is a member of the artist collective The Hive, and has worked on a wide variety of RPG and comics projects. Currently he has a regular gig working on *Green Arrow* for DC Comics. Did we mention he was Canadian? TF

Cully Hamner, Art: Cully Hamner is chiefly known for critically-acclaimed projects like: *Batman: Tenses* for DC Comics; Red for DC/Wildstorm; and *The Ride* for 12 Gauge/Image Comics, as well as more recent fare like *Spider-Man Unlimited*, *Metal Hurlant*, *Star Wars Tales*, and others. He is again working with Warren Ellis (along with fellow Gaijin alumni Tony Harris) on *Down* for Top Cow/Image. He brings the ruckus. CH

Tariq Hassan, Art, Colors: Tariq Hassan or Riq is an illustrator and designer, working commercially with ad agencies and design firms. He is currently working on the comic *Arkadian*, out in January 2005. For more of his work go to RiqArt.com. TH

Scott James, Art: Scott graduated from Northern Illinois University in 1995, and hasn't looked back since. He began freelancing right out of collage. He began working for Fasa's *Battletech*, *Shadowrun*, and *Earthdawn*. At this time he began to do work for White Wolf and Pinnacle Entertainment Group as well. He then began doing work for AEG, which he parlayed into a part time staff position for a year working on all their game lines. Aftre that, he did conceptual design for Hasbro on the movie *Small Solders* doing character designs, and creating the look for the toy and computer animated cartoon *Action Man*. He continues to freelance for a multitude of companies, along with teaching collage art classes. SJ

Georges Jeanty, Art: Georges is celebrating his 10th year in comics and in that span has done a plethora of work for a host of independant books and most of the major companies including Wonder Woman, Superman, Superboy and Green Lantern for DC and long stints on *Bishop The Last X-Man*, *Deadpool*, *Weapon X* and *Gambit* for Marvel. *Legion of SuperHeroes* for DC and *Majestic* for Wildstorm are among Georges' current work availible this summer. GJ

Christopher Jones, Art: Christopher Jones is the penciller of *The Batman Strikes* for DC Comics, and the co-creator and artist of *Dr. Blink, Superhero Shrink* with John Kovalic. Visit his web site at www.ChristopherJonesArt.com. CJ

Melissa Kaercher, Colors: Melissa Kaercher is the colorist for *Dr. Blink, Superhero Shrink*, and an accomplished web designer. Her work in both fields can be seen at www.DrBlink.com. MK

"Rey" Lewis, Art: Corey Lewis, "the rey," was born in Los Angeles, California in 1982. He relocated to Bremerton, Washington quickly thereafter. He spent about 21 years there learning how to live, and how to love. He lives a relatively peaceful life as a comic artist and illustrator and sometimes writer in Seattle, WA. He self-publishes his own comics and draws big, important things for big, important people. Soon he plans on unleashing a magnum renaissance opus of stories to totally blow your brain out the back of your skull. RL

Axel Ortiz, Art: A Latin boy who got out of Art Center College of Design and went out to the cruel world, Ortiz works at Sony Picture Family Entertainment. Axel has contributed conceptual designs for Steve Johnson's XFX, and Creature Effects Studios for small movies and videos. Lucky number 13, Axel also has contributed work to many Wildstorm Studio's projects. AO

Tony Parker, Art: Tony Parker is a Phoenix, Arizona based artist. He still loves giving hugs. TP

Ramon k Perez, Art: The majority of Ramon's artistic catalogue can be found in Role-Playing Games, Collectible Card Games and related publications. A veteran of the industry he has worked on *Rifts*, Mutants & Masterminds, and *Star Wars* amongst many others. He is also a regular contributor in the pages of both *Dragon* and *Dungeon* agazines. Currently, Ramon is making his move into mainstream comics with his current monthly book *Spell Game* for Speak Easy Comics as well as his creator owned *Butternutsquash*. Other projects have seen him work on Marvel's elusive *Hulk: Gamma Games* and such high profile projects as *The Incredibles* for Dark Horse Comics. Check out his work at calaverastudio.com and butternutsquash.net. RP

Conley Philpott, Art: Conley Philpott is a desert storm veteran and 10 year professional tattoo artist with a love of tanks, hockey, rpgs and comics. His website can be found at www.flintlockfaerie.com, and is suggested for mature audiences. CP

Brian Reber, Colors: Brian Reber, or Kaiju as he is known on the Internet, is from sunny Orlando, Florida. Before working in the industry he was a technical analyst for a major corporation. After combining his computer skills with his traditional art talents, Brian was discovered on the Internet after roughly 4 months of coloring. He has been in the industry for five years now, and has worked with Image, Tidalwave Studios, Marvel Comics, and others. BR

Steve Scott, Art: Steve Steve Scott got his start as a sequential illustrator in the mid-nineties working for Malibu comics, but he was probably best known for his work on *Razor* for London Night. During this time he also produced a large body of work for other publishers such as; Avatar, Brainstorm, Chaos!, Image and others. He has since gone on to work on various projects for Marvel and DC Comics. Some of these include; *New Warriors*, *Hourman*, *JLA*, and various licensed projects. Steve is currently wrapping up the first of a series of portfolios for Nebula One and his latest work can be seen in the pages of *ATP Presents* for Across the Pond Studios. Also, for Across the Pond, Steve is collaborating with writer Stephan Nilson on the science fiction comics epic, *Metal Locus, Hard Drive*. SS

Kevin Stokes, Art: Kevin Stokes has been published under various small press comic companies along with a short series under Image called *Shut Up and Die!*. He has assisted with the inks on Batman books while working on his own projects and cartoons for a local newspaper. KS

Craig Taillifer, Art: Born November 29, 1968 in Ottawa Canada, Craig was raised on a diet of crayons, play-doh, and comic books. An early exposure to Uncle Scrooge, Asterix, Turok Son Of Stone, and the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs left an indelible impression on the budding young artist's psyche. Against the urgings of much saner voices, he chose to pursue art as a career. Stumbling into professional work at a very young age, Craig has made a living of sorts at drawing for the better part of the past two decades. His work has spanned the black and white boom at Aircel and Malibu to a long residency at WaRP Graphics working on the *ElfQuest* titles. Craig currently works in TV Animation, RPG Illustration, and selfpublishes *Wahoo Morris* through his company Too Hip Gotta Go Graphics. He splits his time between work with an unhealthy obsession for comic books, old records, and hammocks. JC

Udon with Chris Stevens, Art: Udon is a collective of artists formed in 2000 based out of Toronto, Canada. Udon provides top quality artwork and creative services to many fields including gaming, comic books, toy design, video games and advertising. Chris Stevens is a veteran Udon illustrator working out of Winterville, North Carolina. His detailed line work and dynamic action scenes have graced role-playing game books for White Wolf, Paizo and Hero Games as well as comic book series for Marvel and Devil's Due Publishing. UD

Dexter Vines, Art: Dexter Vines is best known for his inks for Marvel and DC Comics, working with the likes of Ed McGuinness, Leinil Yu and Joshua Middleton. Dexter lives in Atlanta with his wife Nikki. DV

Eric Wight, Art: Before venturing into RPG illustration, Eric Wight worked as a professional animator on such projects as *Superman*, *Batman Beyond*, and the proposed *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* cartoon. In addition, his art has been featured on *The O.C.* and *Six Feet Under*. In 2004, Wight won the Russ Manning Award for Most Promising Newcomer, and his contribution to Dark Horse Comics' *Amazing Adventures of the Escapist* helped the book garner a 2005 Eisner Award for Best Anthology. EW

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MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS

Character Name _____ Group Affiliation _____

Alternate Identity _____ Identity ❑Secret ❑Public

Base of Operations _____ First Appearance _____

Power Level _____ Power Point Total _____ Size _____ Height _____

Gender _____ Age _____ Weight _____ Eyes _____ Hair _____

ABILITIES

	MODIFIER	TOTAL SCORE		BASE SCORE		ENHANCED SCORE
STRENGTH			=		+	
DEXTERITY			=		+	
CONSTITUTION			=		+	
INTELLIGENCE			=		+	
WISDOM			=		+	
CHARISMA			=		+	

ABILITIES

	TOTAL		BASE MODIFIER		ABILITY MODIFIER		MISC. MODIFIERS
TOUGHNESS		=		+	CON	+	
FORTITUDE		=		+	CON	+	
REFLEX		=		+	DEX	+	
WILL		=		+	WIS	+	

COMBAT

	TOTAL		DEFENSE BONUS		DODGE BONUS		SIZE MODIFIER	FLAT-FOOTED
DEFENSE		=		+		+		

	TOTAL		DEX MODIFIER		POWER MODIFIER		FEAT MODIFIER
INITIATIVE		=		+		+	

HERO POINTS

ATTACKS

ATTACK BONUS ____ RANGED ATTACK BONUS ____ MELEE ATTACK BONUS ____

DAMAGE CONDITIONS

BRUISED	STAGGERED	UNCONSCIOUS
	❑	❑
	❑	❑
INJURED	DISABLED	DYING

FATIGUE CONDITIONS

FATIGUED	EXHAUSTED	UNCONSCIOUS
❑	❑	❑

POWERS/DEVICES

NAME	RANK	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION

CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

CAMPAIGN	GAMEMASTER	POWER POINTS
FELLOW HEROES		
SIDEKICKS OR MINIONS		ARCH ENEMY

EQUIPMENT

LIGHT LOAD ☐ MEDIUM LOAD ☐ HEAVY LOAD ☐

LIFT OVER HEAD ☐ LIFT OFF GROUND ☐ PUSH OR DRAG ☐

ORIGIN

DRAWBACKS & COMPLICATIONS

SKILLS

MAX RANKS ☐

	KEY ABILITY	SKILL BONUS	SKILL RANK	ABILITY MODIFIER	MISC. MODIFIER
ACROBATICS†	DEX	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
BLUFF	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
CLIMB	STR	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
COMPUTERS†	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
CONCENTRATION	WIS	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
CRAFT†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
CRAFT†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
CRAFT†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
CRAFT†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
DIPLOMACY	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
DISABLE DEVICE†	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
DISGUISE	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
DRIVE†	DEX	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
ESCAPE ARTIST	DEX	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
GATHER INFORMATION	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
HANDLE ANIMAL	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
INTIMIDATE	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
KNOWLEDGE†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
KNOWLEDGE†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
KNOWLEDGE†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
KNOWLEDGE†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
KNOWLEDGE†_____	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
LANGUAGE†	–	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
MEDICINE	WIS	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
NOTICE	WIS	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
PERFORM†_____	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
PERFORM†_____	CHA	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
PILOT†	DEX	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
PROFESSION†	WIS	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
RIDE†	DEX	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
SEARCH	INT	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
SENSE MOTIVE	WIS	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
SLEIGHT OF HAND†	DEX	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
STEALTH	DEX	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
SURVIVAL	WIS	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____
SWIM	STR	____	= ____	+ ____	+ ____

† TRAINED ONLY

CHARACTER SKETCH

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JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE BIG BAD CITY...

FREEDOM CITY, SECOND EDITION

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